

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
U.S. Labor and Working-Class History

VOLUME 1
A-F
INDEX



Eric Arnesen
EDITOR

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International Brotherhood of Teamsters
International Confederation of Free Trade
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 National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees
 National Association for the Advancement of
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 National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses
 National Child Labor Committee
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 National Education Association
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 National Football League Players Association
 National Hockey League Players Association
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ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ENTRIES

New York City Fiscal Crisis (1970s)
New York City Hospital Strike (1959)
Newman, Pauline M.
Nixon, Edgar Daniel
Norris-LaGuardia Federal Anti-Injunction Act
North American Free Trade Agreement
No-Strike Pledge
Novels, Poetry, Drama
Nursing and Health Care

O

Oakland General Strike (1946)
Occupational Safety and Health
Administration
Ocean Hill-Brownsville Strikes (1968)
O'Connor, Jessie Lloyd
O'Hare, Frank P.
Operation Dixie
Order of United American Mechanics
O'Reilly, Lenora
Organized Crime
O'Sullivan, Mary Kenney
Owen, Robert Dale
Oxnard Strike (1903)

P

P-9 Strike
Pacific Northwest
Paine, Thomas
Parsons, Albert
Parsons, Lucy
Paterson (NJ) Silk Strike (1913)
Pattern Bargaining
Peonage
Perkins, Frances
Perlman, Selig
Personnel Management
Pesotta, Rose
Peterson, Esther
Petrillo, James Caesar
Phelps Dodge Copper Strike (1983–1984)
Philadelphia Journeymen Cordwainers
Strike (1806)
Philadelphia Plan
Philadelphia Printers Strike (1786)
Philadelphia Transit Strike (1944)
Pinkerton Detectives
Pittston Coal Strike (1989–1990)
Plumb Plan

Politics and Labor, Nineteenth Century
Politics and Labor, Twentieth Century
Poor People's Campaign
Popular Front
Populism/People's Party
Portal-to-Portal Pay
Postal Strike (1970)
Powderly, Terence
Presser, Jackie
Printing and Publishing Industry
Professional Air Traffic Controllers
Organization
Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization
Strike (1981)
Progressive Era
Prostitution
Protocol of Peace
Public-Sector Unionism
Pueblo Revolt (1680)
Puerto Ricans
Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)
Pullman, George Mortimer

Q

Quill, Michael J.

R

Racketeering and RICO
Railroad Brotherhoods
Railroad Shopmen's Strike (1922)
Railroad Strikes (1877)
Railroads
Railway Labor Acts (1920–1934)
Ramsey, Claude
Randolph, A. Philip
Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union
Reuther, Walter
Revolution and Early National Period
Rice, Monsignor Charles Owen
Riley, William
Rivera, Dennis
Robins, Margaret Dreier
Rock Springs, Wyoming, Strike of 1885
Rodgers, Elizabeth Flynn
Rosie the Riveter
Rustin, Bayard
Ruttenberg, Harold
Ryan, Joseph

S

Sacco and Vanzetti
 Sadlowski, Ed
 Sailors' Union of the Pacific
 San Joaquin Valley Cotton Strike (1933)
 Schneiderman, Rose
 Scottsboro Case
 Sellins, Fannie
 Service Employees' International Union
 Sexual Harassment
 Shanker, Albert
 Share Croppers Union (1930s)
 Sharecropping and Tenancy
 Sheffield, Horace
 Sherman Anti-Trust Act
 Shoemaking
 Significant Gains and Missed Opportunities: 1950s
 and 1960s
 Single Tax
 Sit-Down Strikes (1937)
 Skidmore, Thomas
 Slave Rebellions
 Slave Trade
 Slave Trade, Domestic
 Slavery
 Slichter, Sumner
 Smith-Connally Act
 Socialist Labor Party
 Socialist Party of America
 Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance
 Socialist Workers' Party
 Sons of Liberty
 Sons of Vulcan
 Sorge, Frederick
 South
 South Asians
 Southeast Asians
 Southern Tenant Farmers' Union
 Southwest
 Sovereign, James R.
 Sovereigns of Industry
 Spies, August
 Spies, Labor
 Springer, Maida
 Steel and Iron
 Steel Strike (1959)
*Steele v. Louisville and Nashville Railroad
 Company* (1944)
 Stevens, Uriah
 Steward, Ira
 Stockyards Labor Council
 Stokes, Rose Pastor
 Strasser, Adolph

Strike Wave (1919)
 Strikebreaking
 Sweeney, John J.
 Swinton, John
 Sylvis, William
 Syndicalism

T

Taft, Philip
 Taft-Hartley Act
 Tappes, Shelton
 Teaching
 Teamsters for a Democratic Union
 Telephone Operators Union
 Tennessee Convict Uprising (1891–1892)
 Textile Workers Union of America
 Textiles
 Thirteenth Amendment
 Thomas, Norman
 Tobin, Daniel J.
 Tompkins Square Riot (1874)
 Townsend, Willard
 Trade Union Unity League
 Transport Workers Union
 Trelvelick, Richard F.
 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire
 Trumka, Richard L.
 Truth, Sojourner
 Tubman, Harriet

U

Underclass
 Unemployed League (1930s)
 Unemployment
 Unemployment, Insecurity, and the Decline of
 Labor: 1970s
 Union League Movement
 Union Summer
 United Brewery Workers
 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners
 of America
 United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied
 Workers of America
 United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers
 of America
 United Farm Workers of America
 United Food and Commercial Workers' Union
 United Government Employees
 United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers'
 International Union

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ENTRIES

United Mine Workers of America
United Office and Professional Workers of America
United Packinghouse Workers of America/
Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee
United Parcel Service Strike (1997)
United Public Workers of America/United Federal
Workers of America
United Rubber Workers of America
United States Employment Service
United States Industrial Commission (1898–1902)
United Steelworkers of America
United Textile Workers
Uprising of the 20,000 (1909)

V

Van Kleeck, Mary
Vietnam War
Voluntarism
Vorse, Mary Heaton

W

Wage Losses and Union Decline: 1980s through the
Early 2000s
Wages for Housework
Waitressing and Waiting/Food Service
Walsh, Mike
Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act (1936)
Washington, Booker T.
Webster, Milton Price
Welfare Capitalism
Welfare Rights

West Virginia Mine War (1920–1921)
West, Don
Western Federation of Miners/International Union of
Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers
Wheatland Strike/Riot (1913)
Women's Auxiliaries
Women's Bureau
Women's Trade Union League
Woodhull, Victoria
Work Ethic
Worker Mobilization, Management Resistance: 1920s
Workers Alliance of America
Workers' Defense League
Workers' Compensation
Workfare
Working Girls' Clubs
Working-Class Feminism
Workplace Hazards, Disability, and Injury
Works Project Administration
World War I
World War II
Wright, Frances
Wurf, Jerry

Y

Yablonski, Joseph A. "Jock"
"Yellow-Dog" Contract
Yoneda, Karl

Z

Zoot Suit Riots

THEMATIC LIST OF ENTRIES

Concepts and Developments

Abolitionism
Affirmative Action
American Exceptionalism
American Standard of Living
Anarchism
Anticommunism
Apprenticeship
Arbitration
Artisans
Arts and Crafts Movement
Assembly Line Production
Blacklists
Boycotts
Capital Flight
Catholic Church
Central Labor Unions
Child Care
Child Labor
Civil Rights
Cold War
Collective Bargaining
Company Towns
Convict Labor in the New South
Cooperation
Coxey's Army
Culture, Working-Class
De-Industrialization
Disfranchisement
"Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" Campaigns
Dorr War
Dual Unionism
Education, Labor
Emancipation and Reconstruction
Environmentalism
Family Wage
Film
Five Dollar Day
Foreign Policy
Fourierism
Free-Soilism
Gender
Globalization
Gold Rush
Great Migration
Great Society/War on Poverty (1960s)
Historiography of American Labor History
Hoboes
Housework
Immigration Restriction
Indentured Servitude
Industrial Democracy
Industrial Unionism
Injunctions
Labor Day
Labor Republicanism
Labor Theory of Value
Living Wage
Living Wage Campaigns
Maquiladoras
May Day
Migrant Farmworkers
Music
New Left
New South
New York City Fiscal Crisis (1970s)
No-Strike Pledge
Novels, Poetry, Drama
Operation Dixie
Organized Crime
Pattern Bargaining
Peonage
Philadelphia Plan
Plumb Plan
Politics and Labor, Nineteenth Century
Portal-to-Portal Pay
Protocol of Peace
Racketeering and RICO
Rosie the Riveter
Sacco and Vanzetti
Sexual Harassment
Sharecropping and Tenancy

THEMATIC LIST OF ENTRIES

Single Tax
Slave Rebellions
Slave Trade
Slave Trade, Domestic
Slavery
Spies, Labor
Strikebreaking
Syndicalism
Triangle Shirtwaist Fire
Underclass
Unemployment
Voluntarism
Welfare Rights
Women's Auxiliaries
Work Ethic
Workers' Compensation
Workfare
Working-Class Feminism
Workplace Hazards, Disability, and Injury
"Yellow-Dog" Contract

Economic Sectors and Occupations

Aircraft Construction
Airlines (Operation and Service)
Barbers
Beauticians
Clerical Work and Office Work
Communications/Telegraphy
Computers
Construction Trades
Domestic Service
Food Processing
Garment Industry
Graduate Teaching Assistants
Home Economics
Janitorial/Custodial
Laundry
Longshoring
Maritime Labor
Mining, Coal
Mining, Hardrock
Nursing and Health Care
Printing and Publishing Industry
Prostitution
Public-Sector Unionism
Railroads
Shoemaking
Steel and Iron
Teaching
Textiles
Waitressing and Waiting/Food Service

Government Agencies and Committees

Agriculture Adjustment Administration
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Children's Bureau
Commission on Industrial Relations (1910s)
Department of Labor
Dillingham Commission
Dunlop Commission
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Fair Employment Practice Committee
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Federal Emergency Relief Administration
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service
H-2 Program
House Un-American Activities Committee/Dies
Committee
LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee
National Labor Relations Board
National War Labor Board (WWI)
National War Labor Board (WWII)
Occupational Safety and Health Administration
United States Employment Service
United States Industrial Commission (1898–1902)
Women's Bureau
Works Project Administration

Individuals

Addams, Jane
Alinsky, Saul David, and the Industrial Areas
Foundation
Anderson, Mary
Bagley, Sarah George
Barry-Lake, Leonora Marie (Kearney)
Beck, David
Bellamy, Edward
Bennett, Harry
Berger, Victor
Berkman, Alexander
Bisno, Abraham
Bloor, Ella Reeve
Boyle, W. A. (Tony)
Bridges, Harry Renton
Brisbane, Albert
Brophy, John
Browder, Earl
Cameron, Andrew
Carey, James
Carey, Ronald
Chávez, César Estrada

THEMATIC LIST OF ENTRIES

Chavez-Thompson, Linda	Labadie, Joseph A.
Cohn, Fannia	Leggett, William
Commons, John Rogers	Lemlich, Clara Shavelson
Corona, Bert	Lewis, John L.
Davis, Leon	Lippard, George
Davis, Richard L.	Lloyd, Henry Demarest
Day, Dorothy	Lovestone, Jay
Debs, Eugene V.	Lucia, Carmen
DeLeon, Daniel	Luther, Seth
Dellums, C. L.	Marx, Karl
Donahue, Thomas	Mason, Lucy Randolph
Dubinsky, David	McBride, John
Du Bois, W. E. B.	McEntee, Gerald W.
Evans, George Henry	McEntee, William J.
Ferrell, Frank	McGlynn, Father Edward
Fitzpatrick, John	McGuire, Peter J.
Fitzsimmons, Frank E.	McNamara Brothers
Fletcher, Benjamin Harrison	McNeil, George Edwin
Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley	Meany, George
Foner, Moe	Miller, Arnold
Foster, Frank K.	Mills, C. Wright
Foster, William Z.	Mitch, William A.
Frey, John	Mitchell, H. L. ("Mitch")
Furuseth, Andrew	Mitchell, John
Garvey, Marcus	Mooney, Tom
George, Henry	Morgan, Elizabeth Chambers
Goldman, Emma	Morgan, Thomas J.
Gompers, Samuel	Morrison, Frank
Gutman, Herbert	Muste, A. J.
Haley, Margaret	Myers, Isaac
Hamilton, Alice	Nestor, Agnes
Hapgood, Powers	Newman, Pauline M.
Harrington, Michael	Nixon, Edgar Daniel
Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"	O'Connor, Jessie Lloyd
Heighton, William	O'Hare, Frank P.
Henry, John	O'Reilly, Lenora
Herstein, Lillian	O'Sullivan, Mary Kenney
Higgins, Monsignor George G.	Owen, Robert Dale
Hill, Joe	Paine, Thomas
Hillman, Bessie Abramowitz	Parsons, Albert
Hillman, Sidney	Parsons, Lucy
Hoffa, James P.	Perkins, Frances
Hoffa, James R.	Perlman, Selig
Horton, Myles	Pesotta, Rose
Hudson, Hosea	Peterson, Esther
Huerta, Dolores C.	Petrillo, James Caesar
Hutcheson, William L.	Powderly, Terence
Irons, Martin	Presser, Jackie
Jones, Claudia	Pullman, George Mortimer
Jones, "Mother" Mary Harris	Quill, Michael J.
Kearney, Denis	Ramsey, Claude
Keefe, Daniel	Randolph, A. Philip
Kelley, Florence	Reuther, Walter
Kenney O'Sullivan, Mary	Rice, Monsignor Charles Owen
Kirkland, Lane	Riley, William

THEMATIC LIST OF ENTRIES

Rivera, Dennis
Robins, Margaret Dreier
Rodgers, Elizabeth Flynn
Rustin, Bayard
Ruttenberg, Harold
Ryan, Joseph
Sadlowski, Ed
Schneiderman, Rose
Sellins, Fannie
Shanker, Albert
Sheffield, Horace
Skidmore, Thomas
Slichter, Sumner
Sorge, Frederick
Sovereign, James R.
Spies, August
Springer, Maida
Stevens, Uriah
Steward, Ira
Stokes, Rose Pastor
Strasser, Adolph
Sweeney, John J.
Swinton, John
Sylvis, William
Taft, Philip
Tappes, Shelton
Thomas, Norman
Tobin, Daniel J.
Townsend, Willard
Trevellick, Richard F.
Trumka, Richard L.
Truth, Soujourner
Tubman, Harriet
Van Kleeck, Mary
Vorse, Mary Heaton
Walsh, Mike
Washington, Booker T.
Webster, Milton Price
West, Don
Woodhull, Victoria
Wright, Frances
Wurf, Jerry
Yablonski, Joseph A. "Jock"
Yoneda, Karl

Legal Cases, Acts, and Legislation

Adair v. United States (1908)
Adamson Act
Adkins v. Children's Hospital (1918)
Agricultural Labor Relations Act (1975)
Aid to Families with Dependent Children

Alien Contract Labor Law
At-Will Employment
Brandeis Brief
Bunting v. Oregon (1917)
Chinese Exclusion Acts
Civil Rights Act of 1964/Title VII
Clayton Antitrust Act (1914)
Commonwealth v. Hunt (1842)
Danbury Hatters Case: *Loewe v. Lawlor* (1908, 1915)
Davis-Bacon Act
Electromation v. Teamsters Local 1094 (1992)
Employee Retirement Income Security Act (1974)
Equal Pay Act of 1963
Erdman Act
Fair Labor Standards Act
Family and Medical Leave Act
Fansteel v. United States (1939)
Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act
Foreign Miners Tax
Fugitive Slave Acts
GI Bill
Gompers v. Buck's Stove and Range Co. (1911)
Hitchman Coal & Coke Company v. Mitchell (1916)
Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965
Johnson-Reed (Immigration Restriction) Act (1924)
Kansas Court of Industrial Relations
Keating-Owen Child Labor Act (1916)
LaFollette Seamen's Act (1915)
Landrum-Griffin Act (1959)
Law and Labor
Lochner v. New York (1905)
McCarran-Walter Act (1952)
McClellan Committee Hearings
Mechanics' Lien Law
Minimum-Wage Laws
National Industrial Recovery Act
National Labor Relations Board v. Jones-Laughlin Steel Corporation (1937)
Norris-LaGuardia Federal Anti-Injunction Act
North American Free Trade Agreement
Railway Labor Acts (1920–1934)
Sherman Anti-Trust Act
Smith-Connally Act
Steele v. Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company (1944)
Taft-Hartley Act
Thirteenth Amendment
Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act (1936)

Management

American Anti-Boycott Association
Employee Representation Plans/Company Unions

Labor-Management Cooperation
 National Civic Federation
 National Right to Work Committee
 Personnel Management
 Pinkerton Detectives
 Welfare Capitalism

Organizations

A. Philip Randolph Institute
 Actors' Equity Association
 African Blood Brotherhood
 Alliance for Labor Action
 American Alliance for Labor and Democracy
 American Labor Party
 Association of Catholic Trade Unionists
 Black Lung Associations
 Black Panther Party
 Black Workers Congress
 Brookwood Labor College
 Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers
 in Industry
 Civil Rights Congress
 Colored Farmers' Alliance
 Communist Party
 Conference for Progressive Political Action
 Delmarva Poultry Justice Alliance
 DRUM, FRUM, ELRUM
 Farmer-Labor Party
 Future Outlook League of Cleveland
 Greenback-Labor Party
 Highlander Folk School/Highlander Research and
 Education Center
 Home Club
 Hull-House Settlement (1889–1963)
 Illinois Woman's Alliance
 International Labor Defense
 International Workers' Order
 Jewish Labor Committee
 Justice for Janitors
 Know-Nothing Party
 Ku Klux Klan (Reconstruction and WWI Era)
 Labor Research Association
 Labor's Non-Partisan League (1936–1944)
 League for Industrial Democracy (LID)
 League of Revolutionary Black Workers
 Liberal Party
 Locofoco Democrats
 Lowell Female Labor Reform Association (LFLRA)
 Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen
 March on Washington Movement
 Miners for Democracy
 Molly Maguires

National Ad Hoc Committee of Black Steelworkers
 National Association for the Advancement of
 Colored People (NAACP)
 National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses
 National Child Labor Committee
 National Consumers League
 National Labor Reform Party
 National Negro Congress
 National Negro Labor Council
 National Urban League
 New England Labor Reform League
 New England Workingmen's Association
 Poor People's Campaign
 Popular Front
 Populism/People's Party
 Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization
 Socialist Labor Party
 Socialist Party of America
 Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance
 Socialist Workers' Party
 Sons of Liberty
 Trade Union Unity League
 Unemployed League (1930s)
 Union League Movement
 Union Summer
 Wages for Housework
 Women's Trade Union League
 Workers Alliance of America
 Workers' Defense League
 Working Girls' Clubs
 Zoot Suit Riots

Periods

Antebellum Era
 Civil War and Reconstruction
 Colonial Era
 Dominance and Influence of Organized Labor: 1940s
 Gilded Age
 Great Depression: 1930s
 Politics and Labor, Twentieth Century
 Progressive Era
 Revolution and Early National Period
 Significant Gains and Missed Opportunities: 1950s
 and 1960s
 Unemployment, Insecurity, and the Decline of Labor:
 1970s
 Vietnam War
 Wage Losses and Union Decline: 1980s through the
 Early 2000s
 Worker Mobilization, Management Resistance: 1920s
 World War I
 World War II

THEMATIC LIST OF ENTRIES

Racial and Ethnic Categories of Workers

African-Americans
Africans (Twentieth Century)
Central Americans
Croatians
Cubans
English Workers
Finns
French-Canadians
Germans
Guatemalans
Irish
Italians
Jamaicans
Jews
Mexican and Mexican American Workers
Native Americans
Puerto Ricans
South Asians
Southeast Asians

Regions

Borders: Mexico/U.S.
California
Hawaii
Midwest
Pacific Northwest
South
Southwest

Strikes

A. E. Staley Strike (1995)
Actors' Strike (1919)
Anthracite Coal Strike (1902)
Anti-Rent Wars (New York)
Atlanta Washerwomen's Strike (1881)
Bacon's Rebellion
Bisbee Deportation/Copper Strike (1917)
Bogalusa Labor Conflict of 1919
C&O Canal Workers Strike (1834)
Chicago Teamsters Strike (1905)
Chinese Laborers' Strike on the Transcontinental Railroad (1867)
Cripple Creek Strikes
Delano Grape Strike (1965–1970)
Elaine, Arkansas Massacre (1919)

Gastonia Strike (1929)
Great Upheaval
Haymarket Affair (1886)
Homestead Strike (1892)
J.P. Stevens Campaign (1963–1980)
Japanese Strike in Hawai'i (1909)
Journeymen Carpenters Strike in New York (1833)
Kohler Strike (1954)
Lawrence Strike (1912)
Lord Dunmore's Proclamation
Louisiana Sugar Strike (1887)
Lowell Turnouts (1834, 1836)
Ludlow Massacre (1914)
Lynn Shoe Strike (1860)
Memorial Day Massacre (1937)
Memphis Sanitation Strike (1968)
New Orleans General Strike (1892)
New York City Hospital Strike (1959)
Oakland General Strike (1946)
Ocean Hill-Brownsville Strikes (1968)
Oxnard Strike (1903)
P-9 Strike
Paterson (NJ) Silk Strike (1913)
Phelps Dodge Copper Strike (1983–1984)
Philadelphia Journeymen Cordwainers Strike (1806)
Philadelphia Printers Strike (1786)
Philadelphia Transit Strike (1944)
Pittston Coal Strike (1989–1990)
Postal Strike (1970)
Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization Strike (1981)
Pueblo Revolt (1680)
Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)
Railroad Shopmen's Strike (1922)
Railroad Strikes (1877)
Rock Springs, Wyoming, Strike of 1885
San Joaquin Valley Cotton Strike (1933)
Scottsboro Case
Sit-Down Strikes (1937)
Steel Strike (1959)
Strike Wave (1919)
Tennessee Convict Uprising (1891–1892)
Tompkins Square Riot (1874)
United Parcel Service Strike (1997)
Uprising of the 20,000 (1909)
West Virginia Mine War (1920–1921)
Wheatland Strike/Riot (1913)

Trade Unions

Agricultural Workers Organization
Air Line Pilots' Association

Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers
 Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees/American Association of Street and Electrical Railway Employees
 Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America
 Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butchers Workmen
 American Federation of Government Employees
 American Federation of Labor
 American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations
 American Federation of Musicians
 American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
 American Federation of Teachers
 American Labor Union
 American Negro Labor Congress
 American Postal Workers' Union
 American Railway Union
 Association of Professional Flight Attendants
 Bakery and Confectionery Workers Union
 Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
 Brotherhood of Timber Workers
 Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union
 Chicago Federation of Labor
 Chicago Teachers' Federation
 Cigar Makers International Union
 Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
 Coalition of Labor Union Women
 Congress of Industrial Organizations
 Directors Guild of America
 Dock and Cotton Council
 Farm Equipment and Metal Workers Union
 Farm Labor Organizing Committee
 Fraternal Order of Police
 General Workers' League
 Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers
 Hawaii Laborers' Association
 Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union
 Independent Union of All Workers
 Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America (IUMSWA)
 Industrial Workers of the World
 International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
 International Brotherhood of Red Caps/United Transport Service Employees of America
 International Brotherhood of Teamsters
 International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)
 International Fishermen and Allied Workers of America
 International Fur and Leather Workers Union
 International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995)
 International Longshoremen's Association
 International Typographical Union
 International Union of Operating Engineers
 International Woodworkers of America
 International Workingmen's Association ("First International")
 Joint Council of Dining Car Employees
 Knights of Labor
 Knights of St. Crispin and the Daughters of St. Crispin
 Laborers' International Union of North America
 Louisiana Farmers' Union
 Major League Baseball Players Association
 Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union
 Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations of Philadelphia
 National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees
 National Education Association
 National Federation of Federal Employees
 National Football League Players Association
 National Hockey League Players Association
 National Labor Union
 National Miners Union
 National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards
 National Union of Textile Workers
 New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Working Men
 Order of United American Mechanics
 Railroad Brotherhoods
 Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union
 Sailors' Union of the Pacific
 Service Employees' International Union
 Share Croppers Union (1930s)
 Sons of Vulcan
 Southern Tenant Farmers' Union
 Sovereigns of Industry
 Stockyards Labor Council
 Teamsters for a Democratic Union
 Telephone Operators Union
 Textile Workers Union of America
 Transport Workers Union
 United Brewery Workers
 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
 United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America
 United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America
 United Farm Workers of America
 United Food and Commercial Workers' Union
 United Government Employees
 United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers' International Union

THEMATIC LIST OF ENTRIES

United Mine Workers of America
United Office and Professional Workers of America
United Packinghouse Workers of America/
Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee
United Public Workers of America/United Federal
Workers of America

United Rubber Workers of America
United Steelworkers of America
United Textile Workers
Western Federation of Miners/International Union of
Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers

INTRODUCTION

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the scholarly field of labor history is a large, sophisticated, and diverse one. Prior to the 1960s, economists, political scientists, and historians largely took individual trade unions and the labor movement as the subjects of their academic investigations. Since the 1960s, however, the emergence of the “new labor history” has broadened the investigative lens considerably, embracing countless topics that earlier scholars might not even recognize as belonging to their field. Trade unions and labor movements continue, of course, to be legitimate subjects of exploration, but labor history has come to embrace much more. Initially concerned with grassroots activism, the experiences of the rank and file, and working-class communities and their cultures, the “new labor history”—which by 2006 is no longer very new—is deeply concerned with politics, law, race, ethnicity, gender, law, and migration. The sheer heterogeneity of America’s working classes now stands at the heart of much of the field. Historians clearly recognize that just as there was no single working class possessing shared interests, so too was there no single working-class identity, culture, or ideology.

Today, a large and growing number of labor historians and labor studies scholars have produced a large and rich body of literature on a vast array of subjects. The Labor and Working-Class History Association and the Labor Studies Association boast hundreds of members, the field publishes multiple journals, articles on labor’s past regularly find their way into non-labor oriented journals, and the themes explored by labor historians are routinely covered in U.S. history textbooks. To a significant extent, labor history, long considered by its practitioners to be a vital component of the larger drama of American history, is recognized as such by the larger field of American historians as well.

The *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History* builds upon the past several generations of scholarship to explore numerous dimensions of the working-class past. Its conception of what constitutes labor history is expansive and capacious, its sense of the borders between different fields porous. While attentive to the field’s traditional focus on skilled craft and semi-skilled manufacturing workers, it devotes considerable attention to occupations that have only more recently attracted scholarly attention, such as longshoring, domestic service, prostitution, nursing, teaching, hair styling, computer programming, sleeping car portering, housework, and agriculture. It erodes the artificial boundaries between labor history and African-American history, treating the subjects of slavery, the slave trade, slave rebellions, and abolitionism, for instance, as integral to the recounting of the history of American labor. The heterogeneity of the working class is a central theme, with the *Encyclopedia* providing extensive coverage of race and gender divisions and the experiences of a multitude of immigrant groups.

How to Use This Book

Organization

The *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History* is organized in a straightforward and easy to use **A to Z format**. Users will find a number of useful features accompanying the entries, including **References and Further Reading** and **See Also** suggestions for easy cross-referencing. The volumes each include a thematic list of entries, in addition to an alphabetical list of entries and a **thorough, analytical index**.

Illustrations

The *Encyclopedia* includes 78 illustrations. These photographs, culled from the archives of the Library of Congress, accompany specific entries, and depict strikes, union meetings, workers, and influential leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Thematic Coverage

The *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History* features 662 independent entries ranging in length from 500 to 6,000 words. The topics covered fall into 11 broad categories:

Concepts and Developments: Entries included in this category look in depth at central concepts, ideas, and broad developments in the history of American workers. American exceptionalism, sexual harassment, music, affirmative action, syndicalism, strikebreaking, living wage campaigns, immigration restriction, indentured servitude, and the historiography of labor history are only a few of the subjects treated in this broad-ranging category.

Government Agencies and Committees: Entries falling into this category examine government agencies affecting labor. Among the many covered are the Fair Employment Practice Committee, the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee, the U.S. Women's Bureau, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Individuals: Entries in this category cover a diverse set of figures intimately involved in labor relations and working-class life over the past two and a half centuries. Familiar figures like Walter Reuther, Jimmy Hoffa, George Meany, and A. Philip Randolph will be found in this section. But the list of key figures includes a host of less familiar names, including labor poet George Lippard, community activist Saul Alinsky, settlement house leaders Florence Kelley and Jane Addams, the mythic figure John Henry, labor troubadour Joe Hill, African-American labor activists Richard L. Davis, Willard Townsend, and Maida Springer, anarchist Lucy Parsons, and labor journalist John Swinton.

Legal Cases, Acts, and Legislation: This category focuses on laws and court cases affecting labor relations and working-class life. Examples in this group include the Chinese Exclusion Acts, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Management: Business organizations and programs (such as labor-management cooperation, welfare capitalism, and the National Right to Work Committee) are examined in this category.

Organizations: Organizations that are not unions, but nonetheless were working-class associations or bodies that dealt with working-class issues, compose another category. The Socialist Party of America, the Colored Farmers' Alliance, the Populist Party, and the March on Washington Movement fall into this category.

Periods: Lengthy chronological entries provide broad coverage of the principal contours of the evolution of labor systems and labor relations from the colonial era to the present. The period covered in each essay (the colonial era, the antebellum era, the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, the 1940s, and 1980 to the present, for example) conforms to an established periodization or logical block of time corresponding to key developments.

Racial and Ethnic Categories of Workers: Racial and ethnic/immigration groups constitute another category of entries, with coverage of a wide range of groups including the Irish, Mexican and Mexican Americans, French Canadians, and recent immigrants from Southeast and South Asia and Central America.

Regions: Key geographical regions with a defined historical scholarship (including the South, the Pacific Northwest, the Southwest, and California) are explored in this category of entries.

Strikes: Strikes and labor-related conflicts represent a significant group of entries. Well-known events such as the Pullman Strike of 1894, the 1912 Lawrence Textile Strike, the 1937 Memorial Day Massacre, and the J.P. Stevens campaign are examined, as are many lesser known conflicts including the 1881 Atlanta Washerwomen's Strike, the 1919 Bogalusa, Louisiana strike, and the 1891–1892 Tennessee Convict Uprising.

Trade Unions: Numerous entries explore the history of trade unions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While commonly recognized and major unions and union federations such as the United Steelworkers of America, the Knights of Labor, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and the Industrial Workers of the World are covered, so too are unions that are not household names, such as the Stockyards Labor Council, the International Fur and Leather Workers Union, and the United Hatters', Cap and Millinery Workers' International Union. Particular attention is paid to unions and labor associations composed of non-white workers and women, including the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the United Farm Workers of America, the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

A total of 298 scholars in the United States and Europe have contributed to the *Encyclopedia*. These individuals are specialists in their fields and bring to the project a vast wealth of knowledge and expertise. They share no historiographical or political perspective, and each has approached their subjects as she or he saw fit. Indeed, the interpretations offered are those of the authors and, at times, similar topics are explored from different or even conflicting interpretive positions.

Acknowledgments

Since the actual labor that goes into creating an encyclopedia of this sort is vast and collective, numerous people necessarily contributed significant to bringing this project to fruition. The five associate editors—Leon Fink, Cindy Hahamovitch, Tera Hunter, Bruce Laurie, and Joseph McCartin—are all superb scholars of labor’s past who devoted considerable time and energy to conceptualizing the volume, identifying potential authors, and reading, editing, and engaging the arguments of the hundreds of entries in this volume. Without their editorial care and expertise, this project would have been impossible to complete. At Routledge, Mark L. Georgiev helped shape the project in its early stages, while Kristen Holt oversaw the massive logistical operation of contacting authors, answering queries, and shepherding the project through the editorial process. Closer to home, fellow historian Katrin Schultheiss provided her usual and invaluable intellectual support and guidance throughout the project’s life, while our children Rachel, Samuel, and William patiently, and sometimes not so patiently, endured my continual thinking-out-loud about the project and countless of its individual subjects. While their interests remained largely fixed on baseball, soccer, and children’s fiction—they provided no editorial support but did occasionally ask good questions—I suspect that they learned something about the history of labor and the craft of history in the process. I look forward to the day when they too can use and learn from the *Encyclopedia*.

Eric Arnesen

A

A. E. STALEY STRIKE (1995)

From 1992–1995, the Staley workers were at the forefront of a labor upsurge in central Illinois. In 1988, Tate & Lyle, the largest sugar conglomerate in the world, bought the A. E. Staley Company and launched an assault on the union at Staley’s largest corn-processing plant in Decatur, Illinois. The company demanded the union replace its 117-page contract, culminating 50 years of collective bargaining, with the company’s 16-page contract. The local union, which began the conflict as Allied Industrial Workers Local 837 but in January 1994, merged with the paper workers to become United Paperworkers International Union Local 7837, responded by educating and mobilizing the 850 unionists in a 9-month work-to-rule campaign, then built a national solidarity movement when the company locked the unionists out of the plant.

When the Staley workers were joined on the picket lines in 1994–1995 by striking United Auto Workers Local 751 Caterpillar workers and United Rubber Workers Local 751 Bridgestone/Firestone workers, the *New York Times* labeled Decatur “Strike City, USA.” Decatur unionists united forces in what they labeled the Illinois war zone. “Decatur was a turning point,” says AFL-CIO staffer Joe Uehlein. “What happened in Decatur during that period, and the Staley workers right on point with it, was as big a moment as was the Homestead strike of 1892.”

In October 1992, when A. E. Staley first imposed a contract with 12-hour rotating shifts, loss of seniority,

and gutted grievance procedures, workers brought in St. Louis-based Jerry Tucker, founder and director of the New Directions caucus in the United Auto Workers union, to coordinate an in-plant strategy known as “work-to-rule.” “The workers engaged in one of the most creative and ultimately empowering activities I’ve seen in years,” declared Tucker, labor’s foremost expert on the tactic. Rather than bring their wealth of experience and skill to the job, workers would strictly follow the contract and company work rules. In many ways, the Decatur Staley plant was ideal for a work-to-rule campaign. It was an old plant, run by an experienced workforce. Much of the machinery was decades old, and some machinery dated back to the origins of the plant in 1912. “You just did what you had to do to get by,” explained Staley worker Mike Dulaney. “The little extras that you might have done on your own to make things run smoother, we didn’t do that.”

After Tate & Lyle took over A. E. Staley, the new management fired half of the white-collar workforce, including dozens of plant supervisors, most of whom had cordial, respectful relationships with the union workforce and decades on the job. Most Staley workers had more than two decades in the plant, often working at the same job. The newly hired supervisors were ignorant of the idiosyncrasies of the aging plant and thus contributed to the success of the workers’ work-to-rule effort. “With work-to-rule, you leave your brain outside the plant,” said Staley worker Dan Lane. “People were very aggressive with that.

A. E. STALEY STRIKE (1995)

Production started flying down, things were going the way we wanted to. It was getting to be like a real strike *in* the plant.”

In addition to impacting production, the workers launched a series of actions that demonstrated the magnitude of their solidarity and their resolve for a just contract. Both types of actions were fundamental to the campaign and served to fuel one another. The Staley workers regularly wore red union T-shirts to work, along with union caps and an extensive array of union buttons. Workers honked their car horns as they drove out of the plant parking lot after their shift. At times the union leadership called for demonstrations where hundreds of workers gathered at the plant gate before they marched *en masse* into work.

Often when a worker was called into a supervisor's office to be reprimanded, large numbers of Staley workers stopped work and went to the meeting. When the company began mandatory in-plant meetings, workers responded with creative tactics. At one meeting, workers suddenly stood and sang “God Bless America” in the midst of management's presentation; and at another meeting, workers recited the Pledge of Allegiance. At other meetings, workers chanted loudly, “No contract, no peace!” and “Union, union, union!” In one department, Staley worker Nancy Hanna bought Groucho Marx masks at a novelty store; when management began its presentation, workers put on the masks, then got up and walked out.

“This is the most solid group of people I've ever seen in my life,” noted worker Bob Willoughby in the union's *Deadly Corn* video. “It's almost like a school of fish. When one turns, they all turn.” The company ended dues check-off, but 97% of the members turned their dues, which the membership had voted to increase fivefold to \$100 a month, in to their stewards. The work-to-rule campaign reached a peak in June 1993, when production was cut by one-third and nearly the entire workforce staged a two-day walkout over dangerous conditions in the plant.

When the company locked out the workers one week later on June 27, 1993, and began to hire hundreds of scab replacement workers, the unionists launched a national solidarity campaign. Rank-and-file workers, calling themselves Road Warriors, hit the road to build support, organize dozens of Staley Worker Solidarity committees, and build activism around the local's corporate campaign coordinated by union adviser Ray Rogers and his Corporate Campaign, Inc., staff.

A corporate campaign is a mobilization of the labor movement and the community to tarnish a corporation's image and to inflict serious economic damage on the company to pressure management to negotiate a fair contract. A corporate campaign hits

the company from every conceivable angle. As AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka explains it, “You fire fifty arrows out of the quiver. Each one of them has some effect, but you don't know how much. But collectively they achieve the result you want to get to. And you keep firing arrows” until the employer breaks down and agrees to bargain a fair contract. If a corporation that is attacking its workers has received tax subsidies from local or state governments, then this may be a way to build an alliance with homeowners burdened with high property taxes. If a corporation has a record of damaging the environment through toxic emissions into the city's air, water, and ground, then neighborhood groups, civic leaders, and environmental organizations may be a natural ally of the embattled union.

A central aspect of the Staley workers' corporate campaign was targeting the company's largest purchasers of Staley high-fructose corn syrup, Miller Beer and Pepsi Cola. The Staley Workers Solidarity committees distributed flyers at supermarkets, then-Pepsi subsidiaries Taco Bell and Kentucky Fried Chicken, and at company-sponsored festivals and concerts to ask people to tell Staley's customers to end their financial relationship with Staley. The campaign had its first big success in early 1994, when Miller Beer announced it was switching to another corn syrup manufacturer.

Solidarity committees also mobilized hundreds of people to attend Decatur rallies, held local rallies, raised funds, and organized local unions to adopt a family with a \$600 monthly pledge. Over the course of the lockout, \$3.5 million was raised by the Road Warriors and Solidarity committees. The Staley local also welcomed unpaid, full-time organizers from Detroit, St. Louis, and Chicago into the union's Campaign for Justice office, further strengthening ties to the solidarity committees.

Before the lockout, the Staley workers had gone door-to-door four times in Decatur explaining the local's stance. Most Decatur residents were sympathetic, and when the lockout occurred, hundreds posted signs of support on their lawns. Community outreach continued during the lockout as workers built a labor-religious coalition that advocated for the unionists. Father Martin Mangan of Decatur's St. James Catholic Church soon became a spokesperson for the workers. African-American workers organized a caucus and two marches on the theme of labor rights equals civil rights.

After the local brought in activists for training on nonviolent civil disobedience, 50 supporters staged a sit-in at the main A. E. Staley gate on June 4, 1994, blocking trucks and virtually shutting down the plant for the day. Three weeks later, five thousand

protesters marked the first anniversary of the lockout, and over four hundred people crossed the Staley property line in a nonviolent protest. Police sprayed the crowd with pepper gas, with the rank-and-file Staley workers in front suffering the worst of its effects. The union and its solidarity committees rapidly distributed hundreds of copies of *Struggle in the Heartland*, second video produced by the St. Louis-based Labor Vision independent film group, which depicted the two civil disobedience actions and the police assault.

Problems of racism and sexism troubled the local and initially hampered broader support. In the 50 years of its existence, only one woman and no African-American had ever been elected to the Executive Board. With only 7% and 10% of the membership, respectively, a woman or black candidate would need broad support from the white male majority. During the lockout, and as a result of marches initiated by the African-American caucus, Jeanette Hawkins, the first African-American woman to be hired at the plant, was elected to the bargaining committee. Three white male candidates who supported diversifying the leadership withdrew their own candidacies and campaigned for Hawkins' election. Prior to the marches, only one African-American had been traveling regularly with the Road Warriors, but soon a number of locked-out African-Americans became regulars on the road.

Early in the fight, the local ignored its by-laws and began holding weekly solidarity meetings that welcomed spouses, children, and supporters. The wives and women workers later formed a bimonthly support group where the women shared the hardships of the lockout on family life and organized support for the union.

In December 1995, under severe financial duress, under pressure from paper workers, and having failed to gain the promised escalation of labor solidarity from newly elected AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, the membership voted to accept the company's contract. Although the company, after downsizing the workforce and outsourcing jobs, offered work to just 350 union members, barely a hundred Local 7837 members returned to the plant.

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A. PHILIP RANDOLPH INSTITUTE

In 1965, in the wake of the twentieth century's two greatest civil rights legislative victories, A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, and a group of labor and civil rights activists established the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) to blaze a new path for progressive change. Supported by a \$25,000 grant from the American Federation of Labor (AFL)–Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), Randolph and Rustin transformed their old Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters headquarters in Harlem into the first national headquarters for the APRI. The institute's leaders shared a belief that the future struggle would not be centered on gaining access to public accommodations. Rather they were convinced that the social movement created in part by Randolph and propelled by such people as Martin Luther King, Jr., must face the deep-seated political and economic injustices suffered by working-class Americans of all backgrounds. The institute's goal therefore has been, in the words of Rustin, to forge "a new and dynamic unity between black Americans and those other groups that advocate social progress—the trade union movement, religious organizations, liberals, and students." This unity was intended to lend support to trade unions; to work to increase progressive political participation; to expand governmental programs from education to health care; to advocate integration, nonviolence, democratic reform; to instigate and support job-training and job creation programs; and to voice sympathy for other people and movements in the world engaged in related struggles.

To fulfill its mission, the institute pursued a number of strategies. After the 1965 Voting Rights Act passed, the institute sponsored registration and voting drives. It also actively sought to bridge the gulf between white and black trade unionists through conferences and educational campaigns. Finally in 1970, the institute's associate director, Norman Hill, spearheaded an operation to open branch offices in cities that had large black populations. Since 1974, the A. Philip Randolph Institute has operated roughly 150 branch offices in 36 states.

In all its activities, the A. Philip Randolph has been an advocate for the working poor of all backgrounds and has sought to improve race relations by supporting unionization and economic reforms that ameliorate the conditions of poverty. Perhaps its most radical idea was the Freedom Budget. Randolph himself introduced the plan in 1966. In the midst of a national social crisis in which some advocated violence to change society, Randolph called on the federal government to invest nearly \$20 billion over a

decade to eradicate poverty in the United States. Randolph did not receive the support of any politicians, so he in turn questioned the commitment of President Johnson and his administration to the antipoverty and civil rights programs of the Great Society. Regardless the Freedom Budget did represent well the institute's philosophy and outlook.

Since the 1960s, the A. Philip Randolph Institute has continued to fight for economic, political, and social justice. Its support of César Chávez and the United Farm Workers, the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike, and the 1969 General Electric Strike were important but generated little public controversy. However the institute did take several controversial stands. For example, unlike Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Randolph and the APRI did not attack President Johnson on his cold war foreign policy or even the Vietnam War.

Furthermore the institute's involvement in the 1968 New York City public school teachers' strike generated much contention. In 1968, the city's board of education attempted to reassign white teachers in the Ocean Hill–Brownsville district in order to introduce more black and Hispanic teachers in that area. The move precipitated a United Federation of Teachers' strike and created one of the most divisive political and racial episodes in New York City's history. In a response that some young black radicals and nationalists saw as betrayal, the APRI stood behind the UFT. Randolph and the institute were seen as sell-outs and opponents to the black power movement. Both then and now, the institute has honored its namesake by taking controversial and even unpopular positions to advance the cause of unions and civil rights.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Ocean Hill-Brownsville Strikes (1968); Randolph, A. Philip; Rustin, Bayard

ABOLITIONISM

Abolitionism, or the movement to end slavery in the decades before the Civil War, had two important predecessors—gradualism and African colonization—that differed from one another and from their successor. Gradual emancipation, which typically required the children of slaves to remain in service until their late twenties, was the preferred solution of the Revolutionary and Federalist eras. Following the precedent established in 1780 by the state of Pennsylvania, more and more states in the North passed gradualist laws, the last being New York (1799) and New Jersey (1804), which together had half the slaves in the region. Not long after gradualism ran its course, colonizationism rose to the fore. This movement, which formally began in 1816–1817 with the formation of the American Colonization Society (ACS), promoted emancipation of slaves followed by the emigration of free blacks and former slaves to Africa or the Caribbean. Though the ACS attracted leading jurists and politicians in the North and South, it failed in its own right and especially by comparison to gradualism. The ACS settled only a few thousand African-Americans in Africa (notably Liberia, which the ACS established in 1822), a puny figure compared to the 75,000 slaves freed by the actions of the Revolutionary generation. Both movements are important, not only for what they did or did not achieve; but because they served as negative reference points for the abolitionist movement that took shape in the early 1830s.

Most leading abolitionists in the 1830s started out as colonizationists. This included William Lloyd Garrison of Boston, the new movement's towering figure. The son of a struggling Newburyport, Massachusetts, ship captain who abandoned his family when Garrison was still a toddler, young Garrison was raised by his mother in want and poverty. As a teenager he became an apprentice to a local printer, completing his training in newspaper shops in Boston and Bennington, Vermont, before returning to Boston in 1828 to work for *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*. This abolitionist sheet was founded in 1821 by the Quaker activist Benjamin Lundy who lured Garrison to Baltimore in 1829 when he moved the paper there. Historians used to believe that Garrison found his lifetime calling as an antislavery agitator partly because of Lundy's influence and partly because of his firsthand experience with the horrors of slavery in Baltimore. It appears however that he was also influenced by black men who can justly be considered the founders of the abolitionist movement before the Civil War as we have come to know it. It was they who rejected the gradualism of the

Revolutionary Era and the colonizationism of the Era of Good Feelings.

African-American activists in the major northern port cities in the second half of the 1820 loudly denounced colonization. In Boston David Walker joined together with fellow blacks to form the Massachusetts General Colored Association (MGCA), one of the earliest anticolonizationist groups in the nation. At first blush Walker appears to be a very unlikely source of inspiration for the pacifistic, nonviolent Garrison. After all his 1829 blockbuster, *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, calling for resistance to slavery by the slaves themselves, is laced with withering denunciations of white injustice and apocalyptic visions of black revolution. However the larger project of the *Appeal* and of the MGCA, for that matter, was immediate emancipation, or what became known simply as immediatism, along with equal rights for blacks following emancipation. The policies of immediate liberation and civil rights along with anticolonizationism made a huge impression on Garrison and his followers.

Having jettisoned colonizationism by the late 1820s, Garrison and his colleagues moved quickly to put together a movement premised on immediatism and equality. In January 1831, he published the first edition of the *Liberator*, the voice of the movement in New England and the larger movement's best-known sheet. A year later he called the meeting that launched the New England Anti-Slavery Society (renamed the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in 1835). Similar groups in New York, Boston, and other cities gathered in Philadelphia in 1833 to begin the American Anti-Slavery Society, the national voice of the movement. This small group of some 62 white male delegates (four women and three blacks attended as observers) launched a crusade that would boast nearly 200,000 acolytes by the end of the decade. It was to exercise influence far in excess of its numbers.

Who were these people? Apart from Garrison and perhaps a few of his counterparts who were nationally known, the more prominent leaders, and not a few local ones, were rich and well-born. This exclusive circle included the New York merchants and financiers Arthur and Lewis Tappan, as well as the Boston Brahmin Wendell Phillips, to name just a few. The vast majority of the membership however consisted of neither the rich nor the poor of the city nor the farmer nor landless laborer of the country. Most were drawn from the ranks of the "middling sort"—petty professionals, small employers, and working people in the villages and small towns of the country disproportionately located in New England and western New York as well as in pockets of the Midwest settled by

Yankee migrants. About a third of them and possibly more were women.

This geographic pattern hints at the intellectual sources of abolitionism. New England and western New York were "burned over" by the revivals of the Second Great Awakening, which left in its wake thousands of converts and born-again Christians girded to prepare the world for the second coming of Christ by cleansing it of depravity. Most of them eagerly joined the crusade against liquor. A smaller but significant minority of the newly churched identified slavery as sin, and such evangelicals formed the vast majority of abolitionism's rank and file. Some quickened Christians found slavery to be a violation of the rights of man enshrined in the Declaration. It appears however that advocates of equal rights were a separate group and probably a much smaller one. The evangelicals gave the movement its moralistic ethos—and defining strategy as well. They would end slavery, neither through violence nor political action, but with the "bibles and tracts" policy of converting all Americans, including southern planters, to their version of Christianity—that is, through moral suasion.

The New York office, funded mainly by wealthy merchants, built support through a busy agenda of activities. Led by the transplanted Yankees Joshua Leavitt and Elizur Wright, the New Yorkers hired and coordinated a field staff to carry out national policy and promote debates and discussions on slavery as well as lectures featuring appearances by fugitive slaves testifying firsthand to the brutality that was slavery. One of their chief projects was the great propaganda drop in spring 1835, alternatively known as the pamphlet or postal campaign because it involved distributing unheard-of numbers of tracts and other pieces of antislavery propaganda. This massive effort was made possible by using the recently invented steam press, which elevated output to unimagined levels. In 1835 alone, the New York office sent out over a million items, nearly ten times the 1834 rate. The second project involved petitioning Congress in the name of emancipation, an effort that also began in 1835 with the national office and then devolved in 1836 to state and local organizations. The second project easily rivaled and perhaps surpassed the postal campaign in scope, barraging lawmakers with petitions demanding the abolition of slavery in Washington, D.C., and of the slave traffic in the South as well as banning the admission of more slave states to the union.

These initiatives at once strongly affected national politics and abolitionism itself. The postal campaign outraged politicians and officials in the South, who

appealed to the national administration for relief. Postmaster Amos Kendall responded in late 1835 by banning abolitionist material from the mail service even though he knew it was illegal. The petitions continued to pour into Washington, some 30,000 in 1836, further angering southern Democrats and their allies in the North, popularly known as Doughface Democrats, who drew together to pass a resolution automatically tabling petitions on slavery and thereby choking off debate on the subject. These groups approved similar gag rules every year until 1840, when a four-year rule was imposed. Such audacious violations of free speech and expression probably turned some northern Democrats against slavery and may well have recruited abolitionists.

There is no question that the petition campaign deeply impressed a faction of abolitionists previously associated with moral suasion. Garrison was not among them. The premier moral suasionist of the age, “the great agitator” had come around to the position that political action of all sorts—up to and including voting—was morally repugnant and wholly unacceptable because politics required sacrificing principle to compromise and coalition building. Garrison and his friends took a harder and harder line against political engagement as the 1830s wore on, insisting that moral cleansing had to precede voting. The middle of the new decade found Garrison asking why people found it so hard to see that voting was “not moral action—any more than a box on the ear is an argument?” (*Liberator*, Mar. 13, 1846). He simultaneously came out for women’s rights in the second half of the decade, siding with a small faction of women in the movement chastised by men for having stepped out their sphere and determined to lay claim to equal rights.

A substantial faction of abolitionists, already impatient with Garrison’s feminist sympathies, was even more discouraged by his tendentious opposition to politics. Men like Wright and Edwin B. Stanton, husband-to-be of Elizabeth Cady, had seen potential in the petition campaign in 1836 and in several abolitionist forays into electoral politics in 1838 and 1839 in New York and Massachusetts. The sides sparred with one another over political action at the state and national levels in 1837 and 1838 and then had a showdown at the 1839 national convention of the AASS. Garrison mustered enough votes to sink a resolution that would have committed the organization to political action. Defeated on the convention floor, Wright and the New Yorkers’ faction in 1840 organized the Liberty Party, the nation’s first political organization committed to the abolition of slavery. The split between old-org and new-org abolitionists transformed the movement forever.

Old-org and new-org abolitionism developed over the next two decades in the context of tightening sectional tensions over slavery in national politics. First came the Mexican War in 1846–1848, a war many northerners in both parties saw as a southern plot for appropriating additional slave land. The 1850 compromise that disposed of the land taken in the war only heated northern tempers. Northerners, and Yankees especially, felt that the South benefited disproportionately from the settlement, taking special umbrage at the Fugitive Slave Act for investing the federal government with more power to return runaway slaves and punishing those who obstructed government agents. Yankee outrage over that law was only beginning to abate in 1854 when Congress passed Stephen Douglas’s Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which repealed the Missouri Compromise and theoretically at least opened new territory in the West to slavery. On top of all that came the hated Dred Scott decision in 1857 in which the Supreme Court ruled that Congress had no power to limit the property rights of slaveholders. The court said in effect that the Missouri Compromise was null and void, that the South had been right all along when it insisted that slaves were property protected by no less a force than the Constitution. Taken together such events lend credence to the northern idea that “slave power” ran the nation.

Through all of that, old and new org remained divided against one another despite shared goals and objectives. Garrison’s old org proved far more hostile and uncooperative, routinely rejecting overtures from new-org men and openly condemning them as opportunists. Garrison clung fast to apolitical agitation into the early 1840s, then adopted the extreme position of letting the South secede if it chose to do so under the slogan “no union with slaveholders.” His reasoning was that if the South left the Union, both regions would be better off because the North would become a haven for runaways, which would gradually erode the southern economy and eat away at what remained of slavery. He also continued to support civil rights for blacks, relentlessly assailing racism and organizing popular demonstrations against Jim Crow in private and public accommodations. Even historians who doubt the efficacy of Garrison’s abolitionist strategy applaud his principled stand for racial equality, arguing that the old org had a moral edge over the new org.

This distinction between the factions is only partly correct on the question of abolitionism. The new org beat something of a retreat from the immediatism of the Garrisonians because its dominant voices took the position that the federal government could not interfere with slavery where it existed. It therefore

supported policies that would weaken the South politically—such as ending the three-fifths clause and prohibiting the admission of more slave states to the union—or that would weaken slavery itself—such as cutting off the internal traffic. However others argued strongly that the federal government could act to end slavery itself, and not simply prohibit its expansion. Libertyites who adhered to this line of reasoning, such as Lysander Spooner, were full-blown abolitionists, not compromising antislavery advocates.

The new party was also divided over legal equality. In New York, and possibly in Ohio as well, Liberty men balked at extending the rights of citizenship to black men and showed very little interest in fighting Jim Crow; in New England, where African-American men enjoyed the vote (except in Connecticut), Libertyites were as liberal-minded on civil rights as the Garrisonians. Having gained the balance of power in the elections of 1842 in Massachusetts, Liberty politicians had the legislature repeal an ancient law barring intermarriage between the races and pass a personal liberty law that prohibited state officials from cooperating with federal authorities in the trail of runaway slaves. When the legislature came within a few votes of forcing railways to end separate accommodations for African-Americans, the carriers caved in and ended segregation on their own. Several cities and towns soon integrated their public schools.

The civil rights laws approved by the Bay State legislature in 1843 were not the work of white abolitionists alone. Prominent African-Americans who were personally loyal to Garrison and putative advocates of apolitical moral suasion came out strongly for the personal liberty law and for the effort to desegregate the railways; several years later, they started the drive for school desegregation that featured a massive boycott of Boston's Jim Crow classrooms. This group included William Cooper Nell, Garrison's former apprentice, and Charles Lenox Remond, a close friend of Garrison, who nonetheless testified before the Bay State legislature on the need for laws to end segregation on public carriers. They gained new colleagues in the second half of the 1840s when several runaway slaves—Lewis Hayden and Leonard Grimes, for instance—arrived in the city of Boston and quickly emerged as leaders. Though such men continued to admire Garrison, they thought less and less of his hostility to politics. Nearly all joined the Free Soil party, which subsumed the Libertyites in 1848. The new party proved hospitable despite the stigma later attached to it by historians as a white supremacist force. It nominated African-Americans for public office and supplied legal assistance for suits filed against racist school boards that refused to close black schools.

Nor did Free Soil support for blacks end there. Slaveholders and their agents in the early 1850s sought to take advantage of the Fugitive Slave Act. Nowhere did they face stiffer resistance than in Massachusetts. Free Soilers tried without success to strengthen the personal liberty law of 1843 (a feat achieved by the Know-Nothings in 1855). In Boston white party activists, working separately but in cooperation with blacks, held massive rallies against the hated law and hounded and harassed southerners on the prowl for fugitive slaves, on one occasion intimidating two of them into giving up and leaving town. Free Soilers proved no less compromising on the question of slavery. Instead of opposing expansionism, they denounced slavery itself, coming within several votes in 1851–1852 of putting the state house on record against slavery.

So it went into the 1850s when the Know-Nothings replaced the Free Soilers and the Republicans replaced the Know-Nothings. Black and white abolitionists in Massachusetts supported an end to Jim Crow as well as an end to slavery. That they did not always succeed in the legislature is unsurprising. They were after all participants in broad coalitions in the successive third-party organizations that cropped up in the 1850s, coalitions that grew broader and more popular with each insurgency. They were a plurality among the Free Soilers and probably smaller still among the Republicans. They were not egalitarians. They instead are best understood as paternalists with patronizing attitudes toward blacks who hoped that integrated public schools and other public accommodations would literally integrate blacks into the dominant culture. They were not much different from Garrison on the question of race.

The point is neither to lionize political abolitionists nor to make Massachusetts a stand-in for the North. The Bay State's liberal version of political abolitionism coexisted with a more narrow expression of antislavery, which one scholar aptly calls a "northern rights" outlook. This position, first articulated in the early 1840s by the Libertyite Joshua Leavitt, held that slavery was wrong, not because it was sinful, but because it was economically backward and burdensome. Slavery diverted investment that would have gone into more productive pursuits in the North, holding down growth in the region as a whole and penalizing workers in particular. Free labor and slave labor could not coexist without the latter constraining the former in the North. Such a northern rights outlook found its way into Free Soilism and Republicanism, intensifying the regional consciousness, which itself was an important byproduct of antislavery politics. It was the dominant outlook of Free Soilers and Republicans in the Middle West and quite common in

New England as well. In New England at least it was not inconsistent with political abolitionism, for the same people who saw slavery as contrary to Scripture also saw it as contrary to sound economics. It is still unclear if this intellectual pattern prevailed in antislavery parties elsewhere.

As with abolitionism, so with race. Garrisonianism was not the sole voice of racial toleration, limited though it was, in the North before the Civil War. Some political abolitionists fought to overcome their region's legacy of racism and Jim Crow. Their seeming failure does not mean that we can ignore them. It means instead that civil rights politics in the North was more complicated than we have been led to believe. It is a story that has not been properly told. It cannot be told without looking at what political actors—and workers especially—actually did, without delving more deeply into state and local politics, and without paying more serious attention to black activists.

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ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

In its origins, the Actors' Equity Association (AEA), a trade union founded in 1912 to represent performers working on the so-called legitimate stage, was an institutionalized response to a radical restructuring of the commercial theater business in the late nineteenth century that transformed the relationship between actors and their employers. In the wake of the depression of the early 1870s, combination companies, groups of actors touring the country in shows that were built around the talents of a single star performer, began to displace resident stock companies as the chief purveyors of theatrical entertainment in the United States. Stripped of their role as producers, theater managers were left with little alternative but to reinvent themselves as theatrical shopkeepers, traveling each summer to New York, the emergent capital of the entertainment industry, to book shows for the upcoming season.

In its early years, the combination system was characterized by intense and unrestricted competition. To combat the resulting problems, theater managers began to group their theaters into circuits, a strategy that strengthened their bargaining position by making it possible for them to offer touring companies several weeks of business in a single transaction. In the wake of this shift, enterprising businessmen in New York began to set themselves up as booking agents. Initially they were simply theatrical middlemen coordinating negotiations between New York-based producers and representatives of the theatrical circuits. As their businesses prospered however, they expanded their operations, investing in theaters and eventually setting themselves up as producers in their own right. During the 1890s, the most successful of these theatrical entrepreneurs began to pool their resources, creating chains of theaters that extended across the entire country. By 1910, two rival groups of producing managers—the Theatrical Syndicate and the Shubert Organization—had established an iron grip over the theater business in the United States.

What contemporary commentators were quick to label the theater trusts transformed U.S. show business, centralizing and rationalizing a wasteful and inefficient booking system and generating vast profits in the process. Among the thousands of men and women who earned a living treading the boards, however, they aroused considerable hostility. Though they injected an element of stability into a notoriously volatile industry, they did little to improve the working conditions of ordinary actors and actresses. In the absence of a standard theatrical contract, they were free to dictate the terms of an actor's employment.



Crowd of striking actors on 45th Street, New York City. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-B2-4997-10].

If they reneged on their contractual responsibilities, the actor had little recourse beyond a long and costly legal battle. So dominant was their position that any performer who challenged them in the courts risked being permanently frozen out.

Of the 18 founder members of the AEA, all were male and most belonged to that large and amorphous group of performers who had successfully plied their trade on the metropolitan stage but whose careers had peaked some way short of stardom. They were bound together by their grievances against the new-style businessmen of the theater and a shared perception that actors, in their failure to organize, were out of step with other occupational groups. Successful professionals with a great deal invested in the prevailing theatrical order, they were not looking for a radical reconfiguration of labor-management relations in the theater industry. Framing their objectives in terms of the well being of the theatrical community as a whole, they put forward a proposal for the adoption of a standard theatrical contract that would, in their words, “protect the high-minded actor and high-minded manager in equal part.” What they were offering to the producing managers was a mutually beneficial compact: In return for standardized conditions of employment they would serve up a compliant theatrical workforce. To a group of employers who, no less than their counterparts in other sectors of the economy, needed disciplined and reliable workers,

such an arrangement had much to recommend it. Even so the theater magnates quickly concluded that they did not wish to relinquish something that they saw as a key managerial prerogative—the right to determine the terms on which individual performers were employed—and they rejected the AEA’s demands. In the face of managerial intransigence, actors’ leaders soon concluded that “the only Trail out of the Wilderness” was affiliation with the organized labor movement. But for many actors, the idea of allying themselves with industrial workers was anathema, and for the next few years, a bitter debate about the wisdom of pursuing such a course raged within the acting community. With the managers refusing to give any ground however, frustration among the men and women of the legitimate stage began to mount, and in July 1919, Equity members voted overwhelmingly to cast their lot with organized labor. Eager to accommodate a group of workers who, in the eyes of most contemporary commentators, made rather incongruous trade unionists, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) issued an international charter covering the entire field of theatrical entertainment under a new umbrella organization, the Associated Actors and Artistes of America. Shortly thereafter Equity members passed a resolution to the effect that they would not work for any member of the Producing Managers’ Association (PMA), an association that represented the collective interests of

the managerial establishment until the entire PMA membership recognized the AEA and signed its standard minimum contract. The subsequent walkouts eventually brought production in the metropolitan theater to a standstill.

An unlikely victory in the month-long strike brought recognition to the AEA, but its position remained far from secure. Even in the wake of the settlement, irreconcilables within the managerial camp continued to evade their contractual responsibilities. Moreover with the benefits of the Equity contract available to all actors regardless of whether or not they were union members, most newcomers to the legitimate stage chose not to join the AEA, while many one-time loyalists simply stopped paying their dues. Faced with a precipitous decline in membership, AEA leaders put forward a scheme for the gradual implementation of an Equity shop, an arrangement whereby Equity members would be forbidden to play alongside non-Equity performers. It was a move that provoked outrage on the part of the major producers for whom anything even remotely akin to a closed shop was anathema. Their growing reliance on outside capital however meant that they could not risk another strike, and in 1924, they signed a compromise agreement that allowed them to employ non-Equity performers as long as they did not make up more than 20% of any given cast.

Having established itself as the legitimate bargaining agent for the U.S. stage actor, the AEA proceeded to transform labor-management relations in the theater industry in the United States. To the men and women of the stage, it brought vast improvements in working conditions, standardizing conditions of employment and eliminating the worst abuses to which they had been subjected. In an effort to eliminate the managerial practice of stranding unsuccessful touring companies wherever a show happened to close, for example, the AEA began checking the credentials of prospective producers and warning its members against accepting work with employers who did not appear to be financially secure. As a direct result, the number of companies left stranded in the theatrical hinterland fell from 56 during the 1921–1922 season to just four during the 1924–1925 season. The AEA also did much to redress the power imbalance between actors and their employers by vigorously enforcing the 2-week notice clause in the standard Equity contract and preventing producing managers from discharging performers without warning. The AEA worked hard moreover to protect members against loss of earnings resulting from canceled performances, insisting, for example, that if a star fell ill and could not complete the run of a show, the supporting cast should still get paid.

For all their concern for the welfare of their members however, Equity leaders were no less committed to upholding managerial authority in the workplace, insisting that actors no less than their employers had a responsibility to uphold the sanctity of the theatrical contract. Performers who reneged on that responsibility felt the full weight of their union's coercive powers. The AEA was particularly tough on contract jumpers, demanding that actors, like managers, abide by the terms of the 2-week notice clause and routinely requiring those who failed to do so to pay their former employers the equivalent of 2 weeks' salary. If Equity officials felt that a contract-jumping instance had damaged a show's chances of success, they imposed an even stiffer penalty, suspending offenders from the AEA, sometimes indefinitely, and thereby making it almost impossible for them to earn a living on the legitimate stage. By the late 1920s, most theatrical employers, large and small, had accepted that they had as much to gain from a strong actors' union as their employees. "If Equity were wiped out tomorrow," producer Brock Pemberton told an industrial relations analyst in 1926, "we'd revert to barbarism."

Just as significant as the AEA's efforts to monitor the contractual relationship between actors and their employers was the campaign it conducted in the 1920s to cleanse the acting community of the taint of immorality. Anxious to purge the U.S. stage of undesirables, its leaders undertook to extend their authority beyond the confines of the rehearsal room and the theater and into the private lives of their members. Against the backdrop of Prohibition, drunkenness emerged as a particularly significant issue. A performer who drank to excess was a threat not only to the livelihood of his or her fellow performers but also to the occupational aspirations of the acting elite, so Equity officials worked hand-in-hand with both actors and managers to rid the theater of inveterate drunkards. The AEA's incursions across the ill-defined boundary between the public and the private did not end with its often overzealous efforts to regulate the drinking habits of its members. Where possible it attempted to police their sexual lives as well, imposing harsh penalties on performers whose conduct brought them into conflict with prevailing notions of respectability, most obviously sexually promiscuous women and gay men. The campaign also had an important external dimension. Eager to reshape popular perceptions of the stage performer as a socially marginal figure, for example, Equity officials repeatedly petitioned the Methodist church to open its doors to actors and to lift its ban on theater attendance.

Even as the AEA sought to impose its authority on the U.S. stage-acting community, the cultural landscape of the United States was changing. By the early 1920s, the movie theater had displaced the playhouse as the principal arena for the consumption of popular entertainment, and screen acting had emerged as an important area of artistic endeavor in its own right. Seemingly blind to the implications of this upheaval, Equity leaders continued to claim the right, as practitioners of the highest expression of the actors' art, to speak for the entire acting community, and they resolved to extend their jurisdiction to the movie industry. A series of organizing drives in Hollywood in the mid-1920s yielded little in the way of permanent gains. The advent of sound and the subsequent migration of hundreds of stage performers to the West Coast however created a new window of opportunity for the AEA, and in June 1929, its leaders announced that their members would no longer accept non-Equity contracts or work alongside non-Equity performers. The quasi-strike split the Hollywood acting community in two. Thousands of lesser players flocked to the Equity banner. A majority of the stars in contrast reacted with hostility to what they saw as an attempt by the old theatrical aristocracy to "Broadwayize" the movie industry. Without the support of Hollywood's biggest names, the AEA had no chance of forcing the movie moguls to terms, and in August 1929, it called off its job action and withdrew from the motion picture studios in disarray.

The onset of the Depression entirely transformed both the economic and political contexts in which the AEA operated. In the wake of the Wall Street Crash, the theatrical economy, already seriously weakened by overexpansion on Broadway, rising production costs, and competition from the movies, collapsed. In the provinces, theatrical activity ground to a virtual halt. From 1927–1931, the number of resident stock companies operating outside New York City fell from 165 to just 30. By 1933, there were only 12 cities in the country capable of supporting first-class touring companies. In New York City, the collapse was almost as precipitous. The number of shows opening on Broadway slumped from an all-time peak of 264 in the 1927–1928 season to 187 in the 1930–1931 season. As production fell off, unemployment in the perennially overcrowded acting profession rose dramatically. Paid-up membership in the AEA, a reasonably accurate indicator of the number of performers finding steady work in the legitimate theater at any given historical moment, dropped from 9,857 in 1930 to 3,364 in 1933. Even for actors and actresses who did find work, times were hard. With salaries declining

to less than 50% of their pre-Depression levels, a growing number of performers found it impossible to make ends meet.

Faced with a crisis of unprecedented proportions, the AEA began to reorient its activities, working with producers under the aegis of the National Industrial Recovery Administration for example to negotiate a minimum wage for its members. In the politically charged atmosphere of the 1930s however, traditional patterns of deference within the acting community were breaking down, and such measures notwithstanding, the power and authority of the Equity old guard was on the wane. In 1934, disgruntled rank-and-filers formed a pressure group, the so-called Actors' Forum, to agitate for a more effective response to the problems facing the men and women of the U.S. stage. Its leaders, self-confessed radicals who had cut their ideological teeth in New York City's left-wing theater groups, accused Equity officials of having lost touch with the average performer and called on them to adopt a program of reforms that would meet the basic economic needs of their constituents. At a highly charged emergency meeting in November 1934, attended by almost two thousand members, the AEA leadership fought off a challenge from the Actors' Forum, winning a vote of confidence by a margin of more than two to one. But the AEA emerged from the controversy not only more sensitive to the bread-and-butter concerns of ordinary stage actors but also more willing to enlist the assistance of the federal government in addressing them. In an effort to maximize job opportunities for its members, it entered into an interchangeability agreement with the Screen Actors Guild, the American Guild of Musical Artists, and the American Federation of Radio Artists that made it easier for performers to move between different branches of the commercial entertainment industry. More significantly it gave its full backing to the Federal Theatre Project (FTP), a branch of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) set up in 1935 both to provide jobs for unemployed theatrical workers and to bring theatrical entertainment to a wider audience than ever before. When the Dies Committee, a precursor of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, charged the FTP with engaging in subversive activities and called for its dismantling, the AEA campaigned vigorously, though ultimately unsuccessfully, to save a body that had become a major employer of theatrical talent.

The AEA emerged from the economic and political turbulence of the 1930s intact but deeply divided. Its growing politicization moreover meant that it was vulnerable to the attacks of conservative elements

both inside and outside the theatrical community. In July 1940, for instance, Congressman William P. Lambertson accused seven members of the Equity Council of being Communists. Anxious to insulate themselves against charges of subversion, union leaders refused to put the seven members forward for re-election. When one of the seven ran successfully without the endorsement of the Equity leadership, 10 senior officials resigned in protest. Nor did the in-fighting end there. In 1945, Frank Fay, a one-time vaudevillian and star of the hit play *Harvey*, called for the expulsion of five Equity members who had appeared in a benefit show for the Spanish Republic in 1936 at which both the Catholic church and the pope had been heavily criticized. Though the AEA eventually cleared all five of anything that might have constituted a breach of union rules, the controversy demonstrated the vulnerability of performers who had associated themselves with progressive causes in the 1930s to the conservative backlash that followed in the wake of World War II. To its credit the AEA acted promptly to pre-empt an internal witch hunt, censuring Faye and passing a rule forbidding any Equity member from defaming another. Unlike the Screen Actors Guild moreover, the AEA spoke out forcibly against blacklisting, passing a resolution in September 1951, condemning the practice of denying performers employment on account of their political views and promising to help blacklisted members to continue to work in the theater. In a further demonstration of its liberal credentials, the AEA also placed itself in the vanguard of the struggle against racial segregation. In 1947, for example, it announced that unless the National Theatre in Washington, DC, abandoned its policy of audience segregation within a year, it would forbid its members to play there. Rather than submit to the AEA's demands, the National's management opted to turn it into a movie theater. When the National reopened its doors as a legitimate playhouse 5 years later however, it did so to an integrated audience.

Since the 1950s, the theatrical landscape of the United States has undergone profound transformations, most notably the advent of Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway entertainment and the massive expansion of regional theater. Even so the AEA has remained relatively consistent in terms of how it has operated. The economic well being of the men and women of the U.S. stage has remained central to its mission. In May 1960, for example, it shut down Broadway for 2 weeks in response to the refusal of the League of New York Theatres and Producers to back its proposals for a pension plan for actors. Its members returned to work only after Mayor Robert

Wagner, Jr., agreed to scrap the city's amusement tax so that theatrical employers could afford to donate a portion of box office receipts to a pension fund. In February 1964, another strike ended after just 27 hours with a settlement, again brokered by Wagner, that brought an increase in the minimum salary for actors and the equalization of performance and rehearsal pay. In November 1970, the AEA extended its campaign for improved pay and working conditions to Off-Broadway, ordering its members to strike and eventually winning a salary increase and the extension of the Equity shop to Off-Broadway theaters. The AEA has not always relied on industry action to bring about improvements in the working conditions of U.S. stage actors, however. In 1980, for instance, it managed to negotiate the insertion of a just-cause clause into its standard contract to protect actors against arbitrary dismissal. Nor has the AEA confined its activities to regulating the contractual relationship between actors and their employers. During the mid-1980s, it emerged as a major player in the fight against AIDS, setting up the Equity Fights AIDS Committee to raise funds for victims of an epidemic that has disproportionately impacted the theatrical community. As an extension of its role as the guardian of the collective interests of U.S. stage actors, the AEA has also been a perennial advocate of federal funding for the theater. From 1959–1965, Equity officials appeared before nine congressional committees to speak in favor of the creation of a governmental agency to promote the arts, and over the last 40 years, the AEA has been an outspoken supporter of the National Endowment for the Arts. Though its members have always resisted proposals to merge with unions representing other sections of the acting community, the AEA has managed to cast off many of the antilabor prejudices that characterized it during its formative years. As recently as 2003, it gave its unqualified backing to the American Federation of Musicians in its battle with the League of New York Theatres and Producers over minimum orchestra size requirements. The AEA has remained firm in its commitment to the principle of equality, campaigning vigorously to increase employment opportunities for members of racial and ethnic minorities and embracing wholeheartedly the principle of nontraditional casting to break down barriers of race, gender, age, and disability. It has also been steadfast in its opposition to blacklisting, even backing the British actress Vanessa Redgrave in her 1984 lawsuit against the Boston Symphony Orchestra for allegedly terminating her contract on account of her political views.

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ACTORS' STRIKE (1919)

In studies of the great wave of labor unrest that swept the United States in the wake of World War I, the actors' strike of 1919 rarely receives more than a cursory mention. It is significant however, and not simply for what it reveals about industrial relations in the commercial entertainment industry. It highlights many of the problems in organizing workers in the culture industries and draws our attention to the resources that such workers are able to deploy in their struggles with their employers.

The roots of the strike lay in the restructuring of the U.S. theater that took place in the late nineteenth century as pre-industrial modes of production gave way to something more closely akin to modern business practice. By 1910, two rival groups of producing managers—the Theatrical Syndicate and the Shuberts—had established an iron grip over the so-called legitimate theater in the United States, operating national entertainment networks that integrated the processes of production, distribution, and exhibition. Though the rise of the so-called "theater trusts" injected an element of stability into a notoriously volatile business, it also led to worsening working conditions across the industry. The Actors' Equity Association (AEA), a body founded in 1913 to protect the interests of stage performers and to raise the collective status of acting as an occupation, responded to growing resentment among ordinary actors and actresses by launching a campaign for the introduction of a standard contract. The theatrical magnates however were unwilling to relinquish the right to determine the terms on which individual performers were employed, and though they negotiated intermittently with the AEA through their employers' association, the Producing Managers' Association (PMA), they refused to give any ground. In July 1919, convinced that only militant action would force concessions, Equity members voted to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Less

than a month later, on August 7 1919, they passed a resolution to the effect that they would not work for any manager who belonged to the PMA until the PMA had recognized the AEA as the legitimate bargaining agent of the U.S. actor.

The odds in the strike were heavily stacked against the AEA. With a large pool of nonunion talent at their disposal—chorus girls and vaudevillians, as well as the hundreds of legitimate performers who had never embraced the Equity cause—the managers began rebuilding their shows immediately. Union leaders moved quickly to win the allegiance of nonmembers, setting up a chorus auxiliary to address the needs of young women who earned their living in the chorus lines and welcoming performers from every branch of the acting profession into their ranks. Reinvented as a genuine mass movement of theatrical workers, the AEA was able to turn up the pressure on the managers. Strikers in New York City took their fight into the streets, where they used their celebrity status to transform the streets into an entertainment spectacle, charming theatergoers with parades, playlets, and song-and-dance routines and shifting the balance of public opinion decisively in their favor. Consumers as well as objects of consumption, strikers also secured the support of the many small-business owners in the theater district—restaurant proprietors, shopkeepers, landladies of theatrical boarding houses, barbers, and so forth—who depended on their continued patronage and goodwill. To raise funds, they organized a series of benefit shows that proved spectacularly successful both critically and financially. The theater magnates hit back by filing lawsuits against the AEA collectively and several hundred of its members individually. However their legal counteroffensive had the unanticipated effect of persuading members of other theatrical unions, most notably the stagehands and musicians, to walk out in support of the striking actors. With theatrical production at a virtual standstill, the venture capitalists who had brokered the massive expansion of the entertainment industry in the early twentieth century began to grow restive, sensing that their investments might be at risk. Shorn of their support, the producing managers had no alternative but to give in to the AEA's demands, and on September 6, 1919, the strike ended.

Though the managerial moguls cautioned its leaders against crowing, the AEA had won a significant victory. Over the course of the month-long strike, its membership had risen from around 2,700 to over 14,000, and the amount of money in its coffers increased. By the time its members returned to work, the AEA had secured the right to bargain collectively on behalf of the men and women of the

ACTORS' STRIKE (1919)

U.S. stage and established itself as a permanent feature of the theatrical landscape.

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ADAIR V. UNITED STATES (1908)

In *Adair v. United States*, the Supreme Court invalidated a federal law that had prohibited contracts that required employees to promise not to join a union while employed. This decision essentially legalized "yellow dog" contracts and undermined Congress' ambivalent efforts to assuage labor unrest in the railway industry.

After the Civil War, railroad companies aggressively expanded the railway system with little government regulation. Characterized as robber barons, owners demanded dangerous labor from their employees while paying low and unpredictable wages. In response railroad workers, similar to laborers in other fields, organized into trade unions and increasingly protested this treatment through strikes. In 1888, after more than a decade of railway strikes, including extensive and violent strikes in 1877 and 1885–1886, Congress attempted to intervene. It passed the Arbitration Act, which authorized establishing panels with investigative powers to identify the source of labor disputes and issue nonbinding opinions. Railroad companies refused to arbitrate, so the act proved ineffective.

A decade later in response to continued labor unrest, Congress passed the Erdman Act (1898). This act also authorized voluntary arbitration, but unlike its predecessor, it made panel decisions binding. Further Section 10 made it a misdemeanor to discriminate against employees of an interstate carrier for belonging to a union. While this provision provided some legislative support for labor unions, it was not decisive. In 1908, in a case involving the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company (L&NRR), the United States Supreme Court found Section 10 to be unconstitutional.

The L&NRR, as a common carrier engaged in interstate commerce, was subject to Section 10. When L&NRR agent William Adair fired employee O. B. Coppage for being a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, federal prosecutors charged Adair with a misdemeanor. The district court found Section 10 constitutional and Adair guilty.

Adair appealed on the grounds that Section 10 violated the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution by depriving L&NRR of its liberty and property without due process.

The Supreme Court reversed its decision, finding that Section 10 did violate the Fifth Amendment. The Court reasoned that L&NRR and its agent Adair had a liberty and property right in its employment decisions and that these rights were protected so long as they did not injure a public interest. The Court acknowledged that Congress had the power to override those rights to regulate interstate commerce but found that in this case, there was no legal or logical connection between an employee's membership in a labor organization and carrying on interstate commerce. Therefore it deemed that Congress could not make it a crime for an employer to fire an employee because of union membership.

The two dissenting opinions, by Justices McKenna and Holmes, identified a larger public policy issue raised by the case: The negative effect on the public welfare of continued conflict between railroad companies and railroad employees' unions. Both suggested that employers' Fifth Amendment rights were not absolute and that the provisions of the Erdman Act were permissible restraints to further important public policy. Nonetheless yellow dog contracts remained legal until 1932 when Congress passed the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which the Supreme Court upheld in 1938.

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ADAMSON ACT

The demand for an 8-hour workday has a long history in U.S. labor affairs. Despite nearly continuous efforts by various labor organizations dating back many decades into the nineteenth century, the 8-hour day did not become the norm for industrial workers

until well into the twentieth century. The Adamson Act, drafted hurriedly in the midst of a strike crisis, was the genesis of that change. For all its wider significance, the bill itself applied only to a small subset of railway employees, the members of the four brotherhoods—conductors, engineers, trainmen, and firemen—in all less than 20% of the total railroad workforce. Castigated by railway executives as a craven capitulation to threatened economic violence, the Adamson Act was a momentous victory for the railway brotherhoods and a clear statement of the breadth of the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce.

The narrative of the act begins in the fall of 1915. Executives of the railway brotherhoods, responding to a persistent clamor from within their ranks, announced their decision to present 52 major railroads with a demand for an 8-hour day and time-and-a-half pay after 8 hours. They stated further that they would not submit to the arbitration of the United States Mediation Board established under the provisions of the Newlands Act of 1913. The carriers received the formal proposal on March 30, 1916, and announced their rejection of its terms in mid-June. At that time they offered to submit the issue to arbitration. The brotherhoods responded by setting a strike deadline of September 4, 1916. Throughout that spring and summer, the brotherhoods prepared for a national strike, setting up committees and obtaining strike authorizations. Railroad managers, likewise determined to defeat the brotherhoods, set plans to operate the trunk lines with supervisory personnel and strikebreakers.

By early August President Woodrow Wilson concluded that a catastrophic national railway strike was imminent and the issue at hand so contentious as to preclude the parties negotiating any resolution without outside assistance. From August 13 to August 27, Wilson alternately lectured, cajoled, and threatened the disputants in an effort to arrange some reasonable compromise. Wilson personally sympathized with the brotherhood's demand for an 8-hour day, but he believed that the appeal for time-and-a-half was without merit. Equally convinced of the rectitude of their respective positions, the carriers and the brotherhoods adamantly refused to negotiate despite the efforts of the President. On August 28, concerned that a strike would hinder military preparedness, Wilson decided he had no other choice but to request the passage of legislation granting an 8-hour day to train service employees.

Wilson outlined his proposal in a joint address to Congress on August 29. He asked for a prohibition on strikes to give a proposed federal commission the opportunity to investigate railway labor issues; called

for an expansion of the size of the Interstate Commerce Commission, with a mandate to assess whether the increase in labor costs warranted a rate increase; and for the executive branch, sought the authority to compel the operation of the railways for military purposes. The bill drafted by William C. Adamson, chair of the House Interstate Commerce Committee, and Claude Kitchen, House Majority Leader, reflected political realities and the need for swift legislative action with the strike deadline looming. It stated that "eight hours shall, in contracts for labor and service, be deemed a day's work and the measure or standard of a day's work for the purpose of reckoning the compensation of all employees who are now or may hereafter be employed by any common carrier by railroad..." The law further stipulated that the wages previously paid for a full day, generally understood to be 10 hours, were now to be paid for 8 hours, and called for the creation of a temporary three-member federal commission to study railroad problems in general.

Railroad executives immediately challenged the constitutionality of the act. The carriers asserted that Congress did not possess the power to determine the length of a workday. Further if it did possess that authority, it was strictly limited and the act clearly exceeded those limitations. Because the carriers, the brotherhoods, and the Wilson administration all sought a swift resolution of the case, they agreed to a number of measures—including dismissal of union representatives from the suit—that hastened its movement through the court system. Consequently the Supreme Court heard arguments on January 8–10, 1917, as *Wilson v. New*. While the court considered the case, it enjoined the application of the wage provisions of the bill but required the railroads to maintain a record of the wages they would have to pay retroactively should it uphold the law. The brotherhoods, fearful of a reversal, responded with a general strike order on March 15, 1917. Finally on March 19, 1917, the court upheld the Adamson Act in its entirety on a 5 to 4 vote. Ironically under great pressure from President Wilson and the Council of National Defense, the carriers had capitulated the previous day, agreeing to abide by the provisions of the law in the interest of national unity. With the looming threat of war, both sides concentrated their efforts on the terrible gridlock and car shortages that plagued the industry throughout the remainder of the year.

The bill is significant for a number of reasons. First it set an 8-hour standard for industrial labor, a pattern that would later become ubiquitous. Second it seemed to confirm for many railway managers the onset of active antipathy toward the industry by the

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state. Third it firmly established the power of Congress in regulating interstate commerce. Fourth Wilson's support of the 8-hour day opened a new phase in the relationship between union labor and politics, moving such conservative labor unions as the brotherhoods into direct collaboration with the Democratic party. Finally the prominent role of the brotherhoods in the political debates before and after the passage of the 1920 Transportation Act is evidence of that shift.

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ADDAMS, JANE (1860–1935) Chicago Settlement House Leader, Social Reformer, and Peace Activist

Jane Addams used her position as head resident of Chicago's Hull-House settlement to operate as a middle-class ally of the labor movement and an advocate for the interests of the working class from the 1890s until her death in 1935. Born in Cedarville, Illinois, at the start of the Civil War, Addams grew up in material comfort under the tutelage of her father, a successful grain miller, banker, and Republican state senator. A four-year education at Rockford Female Seminary, her father's death, and 6 subsequent years of illness, family duty, and European travel left Addams impatient for the authority of a steward in society but without an avenue for realizing her ambition. It was in an effort to find a demanding, independent, and socially useful role for herself that Addams, along with her friend, Ellen Gates Starr,



Jane Addams. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ61-144].

decided to import to Chicago the British concept of the settlement house, where they would settle among the working poor and offer their neighborly services.

Addams and Starr insisted from the start that Hull-House was not a charity, nor was it devoted to Protestant evangelizing. But when the settlement opened, its novice leaders knew little about the daily struggles of their working-class neighbors and less about labor organizing or labor legislation. In impressively short order however, Addams democratized her ambitions to be a steward, recognizing that her neighbors had as much to teach her as she had to teach them. By 1892 and for the subsequent 43 years, Addams was a persuasive advocate for the pragmatic view that a democratic state relies on the "character of its citizens, therefore if certain industrial conditions are forcing the workers below the standard of decency," it is appropriate for workers to organize to alter industrial conditions and equally appropriate for the state itself to regulate those conditions (Jane Addams,

Twenty Years at Hull-House with Autobiographical Notes, 1910). Her dual advocacy of labor unions and labor legislation often put her at odds with partisans of each approach, but it is consistent with her pragmatic view that any method that improves the living standards of the working class benefits the ultimate goal: An expanded and strengthened democracy.

The keystone in Addams' role as a middle-class advocate for working-class interests is her persistent focus on a harmonious, class-diverse, and culturally diverse democracy. That focus grew out of her daily experiences at Hull-House, her philosophical commitment to pacifist Christian humanism, and her aversion to conflict. The combination of ideology and personality, along with her considerable rhetorical skill, made Addams the most famous, most articulate, most stubborn, and most annoying advocate for peaceful, cross-class cooperation in U.S. history. She irritated labor unionists by chiding them for being so materialistic and combative that they strayed from the noble high road of democratic brotherhood; she infuriated socialists for offering a programmatic "speck in an ocean of misery," and she regularly enraged procapitalists for what they viewed as her prolabor and, therefore, her "socialistic" stance (Jane Addams, "An Oft-Told Tale," 1912). In the bitterly divided world of pre-World War I industrial relations, Addams persistently defined her role as that of mediator because she held the pacifist's conviction that only arbitration would achieve the desired democratic end. Among all the industrial foxes, Addams was the hedgehog; she knew one thing and she knew it well: Peaceful, cross-class cooperation produces political, economic, and social democracy. Her record of activism on behalf of the working class only makes sense within that firm philosophical context.

The Pullman Strike of 1894 is often cited as Addams' baptism in the labor struggle, but she had felt "almost forced into the trades unions" years before that dramatic strike because of the desperate conditions her neighbors faced. By the end of 1891, she had offered Hull-House as a meeting place for the Women's Bookbinding Union, led by Mary Kenney. In early 1892, Addams welcomed Florence Kelley, a forceful advocate for socialist ideals, as a new Hull-House resident, and she was deeply influenced by Kelley's own shift from revolutionary socialism to cross-class endeavors on behalf of prolabor legislation. Ultimately Kelley's path was more attractive to Addams than Starr's path, which led toward passionately partisan Christian socialism. Addams fully supported Kelley's sweatshop investigations in the summer of 1892 alongside immigrant labor leaders like Abraham Bisno, endorsed Kelley's Factory Inspection Bill in 1893, and delighted when the

bill's passage meant Kelley could serve from her Hull-House base as the nation's first female factory inspector. Addams drew on her disappointment when the Illinois State Supreme Court ruled the Inspection Act unconstitutional whenever she argued that workers' alienation was increased by the "growing distrust of the integrity of the courts" and their justifiable suspicion that judges' "whole view of life is on the corporation side" (Jane Addams, "Remarks on John R. Commons' Paper," 1907).

Addams's unsuccessful attempt to mediate the Pullman Strike in June of 1894 did not mark an end to her occasional role as a labor mediator; over the course of her career, she met both success and failure in her efforts to use arbitration to bring about peaceful compromise between striking workers and resistant employers. But hands-on labor arbitration was not Addams' primary contribution to the history of the labor movement or working-class advocacy. It was as a writer and public speaker that Addams proved most useful to the cause of labor, affirming workers' rights to organize by rhetorically assuming such rights were obvious in a modern industrial democracy and then explaining to her middle-class audiences why "we must all acknowledge" that the obligation to satisfy the fundamental demands of the labor movement is a duty belonging "to all of us." Indeed, wrote Addams in 1895, those who did not recognize that "the injury to one" must be "the concern of all," had fallen "below the standard ethics of [the] day" (Jane Addams, "The Settlement as a Factor in the Labor Movement," 1895).

It was in the 1890s that Addams crafted her most significant statements on the rights of labor and on the most appropriate means within a democracy for ensuring those rights. Her analysis of the Pullman Strike in her 1894 essay, "A Modern Lear," reads today like an even-handed critique of both George Pullman's outdated paternalism and workers' impulsive indulgence in anger, but it was regarded at the time as so harsh toward Pullman that Addams could not get the essay published until 1912. In 1895 she included "The Settlement as a Factor in the Labor Movement" in the collection of essays, *Hull-House Maps and Papers*, which secured the Chicago settlement's status as a leader in social reform. And early in 1899, Addams published "Trades Unions and Public Duty" in the *American Journal of Sociology*, gathering together in that 15-page essay the arguments that she had been developing over the course of a decade of public speeches (Jane Addams, "A Modern Lear," 1912; "The Settlement as a Factor in the Labor Movement," 1895; "Trades Unions and Public Duty," 1899).

In "The Settlement as a Factor in the Labor Movement," Addams performed a signature maneuver: She

asserted that “organization for working people was a necessity” in order to translate “democracy into social affairs,” and then positioned the settlement between workers and employers as the agent capable of taking “a larger and steadier view than is always possible to the workingman, smarting under a sense of wrong; or to the capitalist . . . insisting upon the inalienable right of ‘invested capital’ to a return of at least four percent.” The settlement, said Addams, could “recall them both to a sense of the larger development,” which she defined as “the unity of life . . . the betterment not of one kind of people or class of people, but for the common good” (Jane Addams, “The Settlement as a Factor in the Labor Movement,” 1895).

Four years later in “Trades Union and Public Duty,” Addams made a surprisingly aggressive argument for the logic of labor union strategies, defending unionists’ harsh treatment of scab labor and their use of the walking delegate, the boycott, sympathy strikes, and limited apprenticeships as utterly logical given the circumstances workers faced. At the same time, she told the readers of the *American Journal of Sociology* that if they did not like such divisive tactics, then it was their “public duty” to insist that the state achieve the “noble purpose of trades unions” and stop blaming labor unions for struggling to do “alone . . . what the community as a whole should undertake.” While endorsing organized workers’ goals and nonviolent means, Addams maintained that “if the objects of trades unions could find quiet and orderly expression in legislative enactment, and if their measures could be submitted to the examination and judgment of the whole without a sense of division or of warfare, we should have the ideal development of the democratic state” (Jane Addams, “Trades Unions and Public Duty,” 1899).

Addams advanced the cause of labor by insisting that any harmonious ideal in a modern, industrial, democratic state had to take seriously workers’ demands, their right to make demands, and their right to a place at any policy-making table. But her detached commitment to the higher ideal of unity and the common good often made Addams a frustrating ally for labor unionists. She aligned with the general cause of labor but refused to abandon her philosophical commitment to mediation in order to become a full-fledged partisan for organized labor. As Margaret Dreier Robins of the Women’s Trade Union League put it, Addams was the only person in the United States who could “reach the honorable conservatives of this country and raise for them a rallying cry,” yet Addams’s insistence on criticizing both labor and capital for an insufficiently cooperative spirit did not feel like much of a rallying cry to organizers engaged in daily struggle on the ground (“Margaret Dreier

Robins to Jane Addams,” 1907). From the perspective of some labor leaders at the time and labor historians since, Addams’s reticence to take sides with labor against capital appeared inconsistent with her support of labor’s goals. From Addams’s pacifist perspective, her stance was most consistent with democracy; her support for labor strikes was a major concession on her part to industrial reality; and her mediationist approach to unions and legislation had the greatest chance of long-term success. Still she saw the problems with her approach and admitted in her autobiography that her “desire to bear independent witness to social righteousness often resulted in a sense of compromise difficult to endure, and at many times it seemed to me that were destined to alienate everybody” (Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 1910).

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See also **Hull-House Settlement (1889–1963)**

ADKINS V. CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL (1918)

In 1918, the United States Congress passed a minimum wage law for women and children workers in the District of Columbia. Children’s Hospital, one of the national capital’s largest employers, sued Jesse C. Adkins, the head of Washington, D.C.’s minimum wage board, claiming that the statute violated its due process rights under the U.S. Constitution’s Fifth Amendment. The case eventually reached the nation’s highest court in early 1923.

While the U.S. Supreme Court had upheld a minimum wage law for men in 1917, two factors presaged a possible defeat for the minimum wage law in *Adkins*. First the Supreme Court had ruled twice in 1918 and 1922 against federal child labor legislation. Second President Warren G. Harding had appointed conservative Republicans to the nation's highest court, including George Sutherland and William Howard Taft. These new appointments tipped the Supreme Court toward judicial support of the "freedom of contract" principle, which held that the state could not interfere with an employment contract.

Harvard Law School professor Felix Frankfurter and his assistant, Mary Williams (Molly) Dewson, argued in their brief supporting the minimum wage law that the statute proved constitutional for two reasons. First they asserted that a mandated floor wage preserved living standards for working women. Second they emphasized the contribution of a minimum wage to business efficiency.

In early April 1923, a six-to-three majority of the Court ruled that the District of Columbia's minimum wage law violated the freedom of contract principle. Thus legislatures could not pass laws regulating wages for women workers, regardless of economic realities. Surprisingly Chief Justice Taft dissented from the majority decision.

Adkins v. Children's Hospital became a turning point for reformers in the United States, particularly Florence Kelley, general secretary of the National Consumers' League (NCL). Ever since *Muller v. Oregon*, the 1908 Supreme Court case that upheld an Oregon hours law for working women, Kelley and her coworkers in the NCL's legal network, such as Frankfurter and Dewson, had hoped that working women's legislation could provide an entering wedge for the inclusion of all workers under state protection. *Adkins* now proved a difficult obstacle to that objective. Eventually Kelley broke with Frankfurter, the NCL's counsel, over what approach to take to the decision.

Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, sharp divisions continued among progressive reformers about a response to *Adkins*. Some urged that minimum wage laws be promoted in state legislatures, but others argued that until the Supreme Court reversed itself, further action would prove futile. There was also a concern that minimum wage laws might lead to a double standard, with workers of color excluded from state protection. Not until the Great Depression of the early 1930s would reformers again aggressively promote minimum wage legislation. The Supreme Court would reverse *Adkins* in *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish* (1937), thus establishing a judicial

precedent for the introduction of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Affirmative action was the policy answer activists and public officials developed in the 1960s to remedy the cumulative injustice inflicted on African-Americans in the United States. Because the country was founded on slavery, the U.S. working class was divided at its creation. For generations the racial division of labor, which originated in slavery and was later enforced by government-sponsored white supremacy, impoverished African-Americans, strained black families and communities, and limited chances of black children relative to their white counterparts in every class. Affirmative action began first in employment, and then it was adapted to educational institutions. A key demand of the civil rights movement since the 1960s, it was then embraced as a strategy for inclusion by other groups, most prominently women and Mexican-Americans.

The phrase affirmative action became popular in the mid-1960s as an umbrella term for a range of active strategies to break down segregation and ensure inclusion of those historically excluded from full citizenship. Plans may be voluntary, as they typically are in education, adopted through conciliation with such government agencies as the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), or imposed by the courts. Some programs have been promoted by labor unions in collective-bargaining agreements. The specific content varies. All include soft measures to expand applicant pools: More pro-active recruitment, for example, using black media, community

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organizations, and institutions. The plans often provide for training those who have the ability to perform the work, but not the specific skills needed. Some programs also include hard measures: Numerical goals and timetables for hiring or admitting the underrepresented. The toughest affirmative action, such as programs requiring that for every white person hired a black person must also be hired, is the rarest form and typically results from litigation. The precedent-setting cases involved the construction industry beginning in 1969, as courts found perpetrators guilty of chronic discrimination and saw demonstrated unwillingness to change course without supervision. In 1969, the Nixon administration also instituted the landmark Philadelphia Plan, which imposed hiring goals and timetables on Philadelphia construction employers and unions to overcome their continuing refusal to allow blacks into skilled work.

These policies answered decades of grassroots struggle against job discrimination on the part of African-American activists, who traced the problems of poor black communities to the lack of good jobs and saw the racial division of labor as the pivot of U.S. apartheid. The commission of inquiry into the causes of the Harlem riot in 1935, chaired by the eminent sociologist E. Franklin Frazier, came to this conclusion. Its report, suppressed by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, recommended that the city deny contracts to firms that discriminated. During the Depression community activists in cities across the country also mounted “don’t buy where you can’t work” boycotts of stores that refused to hire black workers. In 1936, the Public Works Administration responded to the demand for jobs by requiring contractors to hire set numbers of blacks on public-housing construction projects. The pressure for fair employment grew with the mass March on Washington Movement, organized by A. Philip Randolph during World War II. It led to the wartime federal Fair Employment Practices Committee, a watershed in government recognition of discrimination as a serious problem demanding action. Gunnar Myrdal’s massive 1944 study, *An American Dilemma*, confirmed that of all the forms of discrimination African-Americans faced, economic discrimination concerned them most.

The Communist left, which played an important role in organizing several unions in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), believed racism was the Achilles’ heel of the U.S. labor movement and developed precursors of affirmative action to address it in the 1940s especially. In New York, the center of a vibrant black left, progressive labor and black organizations often worked together to end discrimination

in employment and to get blacks into better paying jobs. In the recession of 1949, Communists fought to preserve the foothold blacks had acquired in industry during the war years. Communists argued that seniority should be suspended to keep blacks, the last hired, from being first fired. In the two left-led unions that also had a say in hiring, they ensured that one in every four workers placed in jobs was black and pushed for work sharing instead of layoffs. But the Cold War then accelerating fueled domestic anticommunism that inflicted mortal blows on such civil rights unionism. It also weakened the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), since it emboldened the opponents of both labor and civil rights, notably southern white supremacists and northern business interests.

The mass civil rights movement that developed in the mid-1950s relied on the newly merged American Federation of Labor (AFL)-CIO as a lobbying partner but found it could not trust unions to practice solidarity on the shop floor. The building trades of the AFL proved the most recalcitrant. As craft unions, they had historically relied on restricting the workforce to elevate wages and conditions for their members, an economic strategy reinforced by racism. Through their control of training in apprenticeship programs and of hiring in the referral system, the skilled trades locked out blacks, sometimes even building racial exclusion and nepotism into their constitutions. Industrial unions in contrast enabled black workers to achieve considerable advances in wages, conditions, and job security, and occasionally, as the case of the United Packinghouse Workers of America best illustrates, in civil rights as well. Still even some of the most progressive industrial unions, such as the United Auto Workers, kept white workers in a privileged position and black workers in a subordinate position by maintaining separate departmental seniority lines that entrenched occupational segregation.

Aided in particular by the labor secretary of the NAACP, Herbert Hill, black workers waged mounting challenges to job segregation in the late 1950s and 1960s. On the one hand, especially in the South, they worked to outlaw discrimination. On the other hand, they also fought for race-conscious measures that would remedy long and continuing exclusion from better jobs. Contrary to popular belief today, no one made the case for such measures more eloquently than Martin Luther King, Jr. In his 1963 book, *Why We Can’t Wait*, King urged “some compensatory consideration for the handicaps” blacks had “inherited from the past” and insisted that what is today called color blindness was not enough. “It is impossible to create a formula for the future which

does not take into account that our society has been doing something special *against* the Negro for hundreds of years,” reasoned King. “How then can he be absorbed into the mainstream of American life if we do not do something *for* him now, in order to balance the equation and equip him to compete on a just and equal basis?” (Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait*, 1963). Fairness demanded more than formal equality. Such arguments persuaded President Lyndon Johnson; his famous Howard University speech in 1965, which announced that “freedom is not enough,” borrowed its central metaphor from King.

An often-unrecognized factor that made such policies necessary was conservative opposition to other strategies of fighting discrimination, such as cease-and-desist orders and criminal penalties for perpetrators, both of which were proposed by civil rights advocates. In Congress, the anti-Deal alliance of southern Dixiecrats and northern business Republicans became the anti-civil rights alliance, backed by a growing popular right at the grassroots level and encouraged by such public intellectuals as William F. Buckley and other writers for the *National Review*. As blacks faced strong resistance to what seemed to so many as elementary fairness and few U.S. whites proved willing to work for universal policies to achieve more equity, such as mass job creation or classic redistributive policies, the demand for affirmative actionlike policies grew. Ironically the exceptionally sharp differentials in rewards to different kinds of labor in the United States, a system that AFL-CIO leaders had come to accept, also pushed workers toward targeted remedies that promised to break down the division of labor and open better jobs to all.

Not only abstract justice but also practical concerns made pro-active measures seem urgent. Thanks to the mechanization of southern cotton farming and the shift of much northern industry to the suburbs, poverty was growing worse among African-Americans in the midst of the nation's longest economic boom. The 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and the National Urban League's campaign for a Domestic Marshall Plan that started in the same year contributed to passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act but won few visible practical gains. Riots erupted in black ghettos across the country in the mid-1960s, most notably in Watts, California; blacks vented widespread rage over the failure of civil rights legislation to deliver improvement to the most strapped communities, especially to end chronic unemployment and underemployment. Affirmative action seemed to offer an economically cheap and politically feasible response to the mounting crisis. The policy appealed

to working-class blacks shut out of higher paying blue-collar and white-collar jobs, to middle-class African-Americans expecting the better jobs for which their training had prepared them, to government officials juggling many urgent problems tied to low incomes, and even to large employers seeking protection from costly lawsuits for discrimination.

As policymakers sought language to frame what they were doing, they borrowed the phrase affirmative action from the 1935 Wagner Act. President John F. Kennedy first used the phrase in association with racial justice in a 1961 executive order on federal contracts. But the policies took their current form as first Lyndon Johnson and then Richard Nixon issued executive orders broadening the mandate of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC) to require employers who accepted government contractors to take active steps to include black workers in particular. Most important the employment section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, empowered courts to order such “affirmative action as may be appropriate” to remedy discrimination. In carrying out the mandate of Title VII, the courts have built up a large body of case law defining discrimination and delineating equal access.

Meanwhile other long-excluded groups covered by Title VII also began fighting discrimination more actively and seeking inclusion in affirmative action policies. The National Organization for Women (NOW), soon the nation's best-known feminist group, came into being out of anger over the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC's) early refusal to take sex discrimination seriously—even though two of every five complaints to the agency came from women. The new feminist movement fought hard for affirmative action programs thereafter, a commitment that has since united women's groups from the Girl Scouts to the Gray Panthers. Mexican-Americans also mobilized from the 1960s onward for affirmative action through such organizations as the American GI Forum and the League of United Latin American citizens.

The combination of conservative resistance, a weak left, and unreliable labor allies drove seekers of inclusion to look more and more to the courts and affirmative action for help. These policies worked where little else had to open jobs and opportunities. Nearly all civil rights experts and social scientists who have studied the impact agree that these policies worked far better than their predecessors and that they had a limited but significant impact on improving employment and reducing poverty in the heyday of their application in the 1970s. Yet job loss due to economic restructuring has undercut progress in the industries where working-class blacks scored the greatest gains, packinghouse, textiles, and steel among

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these. Efficacy then declined markedly in the Reagan era as federal commitment gave way to federal hostility and as the problems of the poor became more distinct from those of other African-Americans due to the altered labor market and the growing concentration of poverty. Antidiscrimination efforts have also been enervated over the years by chronic underfunding and government unwillingness to cancel large contracts even for egregious discrimination.

As the mass movement that had won reform receded in the mid-1970s, affirmative action also proved amenable to agitation by a growing conservative mobilization. The spread of such policies coincided with a major recession that turned much of corporate United States against the regulatory state and opened many white workers to zero-sum arguments about why they faced mounting layoffs. As economic restructuring devastated black and white employment in once better paying blue-collar jobs, tough questions arose about who should get the remaining jobs and on what basis: Long group exclusion or seniority. The AFL-CIO hostility to work-sharing compromises widened the gap, and right-wing politicians moved in to fill it. The classic example was North Carolina U.S. Senator Jesse Helms, who ran a campaign ad featuring a white worker crumpling a pink slip. "You needed that job," intoned the voice-over, "but it had to go to a minority because of a racial quota."

The outcome by the early years of the twenty-first century was a seeming stalemate on affirmative action: Unlikely to be rescinded entirely, it also seemed unlikely to advance or to achieve as much as it had in the 1970s. Meanwhile affirmative action had acquired backers from new sources, among them some corporations eager to avoid lawsuits for discrimination and to demonstrate their diversity to promising new consumer markets at home and abroad. The business edge they sought was far from the social justice that King and other movement supporters of race-conscious policies envisioned. That affirmative action advocates more and more made their case in the language of diversity rather than social justice seemed a measure of the toll decades of being on the defensive had taken. The policies were preserved but at a cost to the more robust egalitarian vision that originally inspired them.

NANCY MACLEAN

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AFRICAN-AMERICANS

The shortage of labor in the European colonies of the New World brought about a new kind of servitude: Large-scale, race-based, hereditary chattel slavery. In the English North American colonies that became the United States, this system had taken coherent shape by 1700. The approximately 600,000 Africans who were brought there endured a variety of experiences and changes over time, growing into four million free people after the Civil War.

Slaves were owned throughout the 13 colonies and engaged in almost every kind of labor. They composed very little of the northern colonial population but were perhaps 20% of New York City's population in the eighteenth century. They comprised nearly half of the Chesapeake colonies' population (Virginia and Maryland), where they worked mostly in tobacco cultivation. Slaves were a majority of the deep South's colonies (South Carolina and Georgia), working principally in rice and indigo, and later in sugar and cotton, which spread into the southwestern territories and became the mainstay of the southern economy. Generally labor was more arduous and lethal the further south one went. Slaves also mastered skilled trades and domestic work needed for largely self-sufficient plantations—nearly 30% of South Carolina male slaves, and 9% of females, were skilled workers in 1790. Perhaps a third of Virginia female slaves worked in domestic service in 1800.

The typical slave lived on a large plantation, though the typical slaveholder owned few slaves, and three-fourths of white southerners owned no



An African-American laborer at Wheeler Dam, Alabama, carrying a construction tool. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USZ62-116592].

slaves. This produced a variety of labor systems. The largest plantations used overseers and gang labor; some farms worked on the “task” system; the smallest might see owner and slave toiling beside one another. The slave population was stratified. The vast bulk of field hands considered lower in status than skilled slaves and domestics, with illegitimate children of masters passing into the free black population or even passing for white.

The Constitution permitted Congress to prohibit the importation of African slaves in 1808, and this ensured that the southern United States would remain a white majority slave society—unusual among New World slave regimes. A significant free black population emerged in the nineteenth century. Almost all Delaware African-Americans were free by 1860, as were nearly half of Maryland’s. A few free blacks owned slaves themselves. Free blacks faced a number of legal disabilities (including outright exclusion from several states), and white workingmen’s organizations often lobbied for relief from competition from slave

or free black labor. Though there were few large cities in the antebellum South, free blacks gravitated toward these cities, and even slaves enjoyed greater autonomy there, sometimes being hired out by their masters and allowed to keep some surplus earnings. Free blacks engaged in almost every kind of work in antebellum cities except those involving authority over whites, or those that might promote slave resistance. Frederick Douglass’s oft-told autobiography highlighted the hazards of urban slavery. In northern cities blacks began to lose ground in trades that they had held under slavery, a pattern that would be repeated in the postemancipation South. Free blacks declined from nearly 40% to under 30% of New York City’s artisanal force from 1790–1810. The influx of immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s intensified the crisis of northern black tradesmen.

During the Civil War the Union adopted a policy of emancipation and abolition gradually, and as it did, it provoked the question of the postwar position of African-American workers. northern workers were

ambivalent about black freedom, many fearing the competition of emancipated slaves. Proposals for colonization addressed this concern. For their part, African-Americans sought economic opportunity and the legal equality needed to protect their right, as Lincoln put it, “to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns.”

Republicans believed that blacks could be integrated into their philosophy of free labor. In this theory, part of the Anglo-Scot Enlightenment liberal theory most often associated with Adam Smith, labor relations were ideally voluntary and contractual. Employer and employee were equally free to bargain; the relation was individual, “at will,” and equally terminable. Employers could not compel employees to work (this was the essence of slavery); nor could employees compel employers to pay certain wages (as labor unions sought to do).

Many southern whites were determined to keep the freedmen in a situation as close to slavery as possible. Southern legislatures expressed this goal in the Black Codes of 1865, which limited black rights to own land, firearms, and engage in certain occupations and provided harsh punishments for breaches of labor contracts, disrespect to employers, and vagrancy. Laws also protected white artisans from competition from former slaves.

Republicans in Congress responded with the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Fourteenth Amendment. These acts emphasized the principal Republican goals of economic freedom and equality before the law. The rights in the Civil Rights Act were fundamentally economic: “The right to make and enforce contracts; to sue, be parties, and give evidence; to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold and convey real and personal property; and to full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property.” When President Johnson vetoed the Civil Rights bill and the southern states refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress imposed black suffrage on the former Confederate states.

Republican concern for limited government, federalism, property rights, and a desire to restore the Union with as few recriminations as possible from the southern white majority, led them to eschew plans to confiscate antebellum plantations and redistribute the land to the freedmen—the promise of 40 acres and a mule. Nor did the most racial of southern Reconstruction governments, where blacks had the most influence, enact such laws. White landowners and black workers usually accepted a compromise system known as sharecropping. In exchange for a share (usually one-third) of the crop, owners provided land, tools, seed, and other capital, while the freedmen supplied the labor. While land ownership

would not have provided a panacea for the freed people’s economic needs, it surely would have improved their fortunes. Up to World War I, African-American workers remained overwhelmingly southern and agricultural, in many ways trapped in an isolated, undesirable regional labor market.

The organized labor movement, which had been revived by the economic growth and strain of wartime industrialization, largely rejected the liberal or *laissez faire* philosophy of free labor and the wage system and sought collective action to empower workers. Like most contemporary historians, they concluded that industrialization had made the individualistic free labor philosophy obsolete. The overwhelming market power of corporate enterprises enabled them to impose wage slavery on their workers. However most unions continued to exclude and discriminate against black workers. Despite the appeals of its national leaders, the National Labor Union, the first U.S. national labor federation, did not act against the discriminatory policies of its member unions. This led Isaac Myers, a black shipwright, to form a parallel Colored National Labor Union that would organize black workers and also support the Republican party. Though some black and white workers cooperated against employers, for the most part they remained competitors who often broke one another’s strikes. Both labor associations were largely eliminated by the depression of 1873. The relationship of blacks and white unions were not off to a good start, as reflected in the title of Frederick Douglass’ 1874 essay, “The Folly, Tyranny, and Wickedness of Labor Unions.”

Black workers made considerable economic progress in the late nineteenth century; in relative terms probably greater than any other period in history. Though they tried, planters were unable to conspire to depress agricultural wages, and African-Americans exercised their freedom to move in search of better working conditions. Perhaps 10% of black South Carolinians left the state during Reconstruction, and many blacks headed to the southwest frontier of Mississippi, Texas, or Kansas. When collective action such as labor organization was unsuccessful, this strategy of moving, or threatening to move (known as exit), often improved their circumstances.

In the period after white Democrats regained control of the former Confederate states (completed by 1877), and especially after the 1890s, southern states enacted a variety of laws to restrict black exit. Convict labor was the most direct and brutal means. The Thirteenth Amendment permitted involuntary servitude “as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.” The state then leased these convicts to southern employers. Laws also punished enticement—offering higher wages to somebody

working under an annual labor contract. Licensing laws restricted black employment in skilled construction trades and even in barbering. Heavy license fees also prevented emigrant agents from telling blacks about economic opportunities elsewhere. "White capping," lynching, and other terrorist devices also kept black workers in place. Before the Supreme Court declared them unconstitutional in 1910 (and sometimes after), debt peonage laws kept blacks tied to their plantations. Finally the formal segregation that began in the 1890s also limited black job opportunities, and disfranchisement prevented them from doing much about it.

The labor movement revival of the 1880s, led by the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, did a better job than the National Labor Union at including black workers. Perhaps fifty to a hundred thousand blacks joined the Knights, whose total membership was estimated at 700,000, forming separate Colored assemblies. But the Knights of Labor was so disparate an organization, a combination of utopians, anarchists, trade unionists, and others, that it was unable to provide the spearhead of a national labor movement. It collapsed nearly as quickly as it rose after the Haymarket bombing of 1886, and by 1894 it called for the voluntary expatriation of blacks to Africa.

After emancipation, African-Americans lost ground in many skilled trades, particularly in construction, that they had occupied under slavery, and they were excluded from new, technologically advanced trades like electrical work. Blacks were almost entirely excluded from the cotton textile industry, whose sponsors engaged in a promotional campaign depicting it as a benefit for Confederate veterans, widows, and orphans and a refuge for white workers from black competition. Iron and steel promoters made a similar paternal appeal to racial solidarity, but workers in this industry relied instead on their union for job security and kept blacks limited to undesirable jobs. In coal mining blacks were well-represented in the South from the outset, and there was more cooperation between white and black workers in the United Mine Workers than in perhaps any other union. Outside of the South however, white coal unionists resisted black competition, often by violent means.

On the whole the relationship between blacks and organized labor was largely a negative one after the turn of the century. The great Pullman strike of 1894 was coordinated by the American Railway Union, which excluded blacks. Thus Chicago blacks formed an Antistrikers Railroad Union to help break the strike. The next year Booker T. Washington, the most prominent black leader after Frederick Douglass's death that year, emphasized *laissez faire* principles in his famous Atlanta Compromise

address. He called on blacks to "cast down your bucket" among southern whites, whom he also exhorted to "cast down your bucket among these people who have, without strikes or labor wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, builded up your railroads and cities, and brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth." Washington believed that blacks could benefit in a system of separate-but-equal if their right to work was respected. However black economic progress only augmented white hostility, and without the vote African-Americans had few remedies.

The mainstream U.S. labor movement that emerged in the 1890s, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), also established segregation as its system of race relations. The AFL was constitutionally committed to worker organization without regard to race, and during the early 1890s, AFL president Samuel Gompers did act to force member unions to remove color bars from their constitutions. This did not however result in black admission to such unions, for informal means were available to keep them out. By the end of the decade, the AFL had abandoned even the pretense of racial equality. When black workers could not be excluded entirely, they were relegated to federal labor unions with few of the privileges of white national unions. While Gompers recognized that keeping blacks outside of organized labor allowed employers to use them to break strikes, he blamed black leaders like Washington, not discriminatory white unions, for the problem. The exclusion of blacks by these unions was part of their general strategy of controlling the labor supply, which led them to demand the end of Chinese immigration and the restriction of white immigration. Moreover the AFL was composed primarily of craft, or skilled, unions and exerted little effort in organizing unskilled workers, among whose ranks blacks were concentrated. While Gompers and the AFL became more exclusionist in the early twentieth century, black workers were able to gain footholds in some unions, such as construction, dock work, and coal mining, where they were too numerous to exclude. They also preserved their jobs in southern railroad occupations despite the hostility of the white brotherhoods.

Blacks did the best that they could in the system of segregation, which actually provided opportunities for black businessmen and union leaders in a captive market. Blacks were also able to control their own segregated local unions, a position that they usually lost in integrated ones. Booker T. Washington's emphasis on black entrepreneurship and control of black organizations recognized this—an idea shared by black separatists and nationalists throughout U.S. history. Though sociologists and historians usually denigrate the phenomenon of black capitalism, there

was considerable black entrepreneurship in the early twentieth century, one that compared favorably to new immigrant groups. Though a black business and professional class did exist, the class structure among African-Americans was compressed toward the bottom: The best-off strata of blacks comparable to middle-class whites, middle-class blacks comparable to working-class whites, and a large poor segment at the bottom. In 1910, 90% of black women were engaged in agricultural or domestic service. In the late nineteenth century, about half of African-American women were in the labor force, compared to only 17% of white women, a gap that persisted until the later twentieth century.

An important organization to arise out of the black bourgeoisie, in response to the general progressive neglect of or disdain for blacks, was the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). While the association concerned itself primarily with issues of social and political equality, it also kept an eye on economic discrimination. The next year black leaders more sympathetic to Booker T. Washington launched the National Urban League, which worked more closely with employers—its detractors accusing it of serving as a strike-breaking agency.

And blacks did often break strikes as a way of entering border state and northern industries. But African-American strike breaking was often exaggerated—most strike breakers were white, and most blacks did not enter northern industries as strike breakers. White unionists often exaggerated the black role in strike breaking, accusing employers of playing a nefarious game of divide-and-conquer, while themselves trying to capitalize on white racial animosity. Upton Sinclair's lurid description of black strike breakers in the *Jungle* (1906) is a good example. For African-Americans excluded from unions strike breaking was a perfectly rational and just economic tactic. Moreover it often demonstrated that blacks were courageous and capable, and many race leaders believed that black competition was good for race relations and would ultimately convince white unions to cease exclusion and discrimination.

Racial job competition intensified in the World War I period. The return of the Democratic party to power in 1913 was good for the AFL and bad for black workers. At the same time, southern blacks began to move in great numbers to northern cities in the Great Migration. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 effectively curtailed European immigration, and black migrants began to take the place of white immigrants in northern industries. Black industrial employment doubled in the 1910s. The migration and integration into northern job lines accelerated

when the United States entered the war in 1917. The Wilson administration augmented the power of the AFL as part of the national economic mobilization, and the AFL used that power to resist the efforts of employers to maintain an open (nonunion) shop. Rapid migration and job competition also produced two of the worst race riots in U.S. history, in East St. Louis in 1917, and Chicago in 1919.

When the war ended, the Republicans regained control of the government and ended most of the pro-union policies of the wartime years. While the war years appeared to have only intensified black union hostility, migration assured that blacks would be a major factor in the great mass production industries of the North—steel, meatpacking, and automobiles especially.

The power of organized labor did not abate entirely in the 1920s. The railroad unions in particular won extended powers under the Railway Labor Act of 1926 and used it and its later amendments to drive blacks out of the railroad workforce. The U.S. blacks also acquired more political power by the Great Migration, which continued, as Congress severely restricted European immigration in 1921 and 1924. In northern cities where they could vote, black organizations sought to use political power to soften the practices of the AFL. The most prominent figure in the cautious black union *rapprochement* of the 1920s was A. Philip Randolph. Randolph had been a socialist union organizer and editor before the war and had denounced the AFL as “the most wicked machine for the propagation of race prejudices in the country” in 1919. After his disillusionment with the Communists, Randolph then took the presidency of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and attempted to gain affiliation in the AFL. By the end of the decade, the federation conceded only nine federal charters to the brotherhood. While the NAACP and AFL both opposed President Hoover's nomination of John J. Parker to the Supreme Court in 1930, they did not work together in their lobbying efforts.

The Great Depression and New Deal altered fundamentally the place of organized labor in the U.S. political economy and the relationship of blacks to organized labor. At first it appeared that the power of organized labor (which had supported the Democrats) would be used to increase discrimination against blacks (who had remained Republican). The first major pieces of Roosevelt's New Deal, the National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA) and Agricultural Adjustment Act, also had deleterious effects on black workers and farmers in their attempts to reduce production and raise prices and wages. The black press called the NRA the “Negro Run-Around,” “Negro Removal Act,” or “Negro Ruined

Again.” Most blacks remained southern and agricultural in the 1930s, and New Deal agricultural policies affected them harshly. Acreage reduction incentives fell most heavily on black sharecroppers, and displaced black farmers—especially men—had trouble making a sudden adjustment to nonagricultural work in a period of high unemployment. Blacks also faced discrimination in New Deal public works and relief programs.

At the same time the New Dealers did begin to make some provision for U.S. blacks. The most important of these was in relief programs—these more than anything else won black voters to the Democratic party in the 1934 and 1936 elections. The Public Works Administration established racial quotas for black employment in federal construction contractors—much less than a racially proportionate share and less than African-Americans would have gotten in a free market but recognition nevertheless. Local black organizations also took advantage of pro-union legislation by engaging in their own direct-action job campaigns, known as the “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” movement, forcing white employers in black neighborhoods to hire blacks.

Employers resisted early New Deal legislation, and the Supreme Court struck most of it down, which limited the damage that it did to black workers. When Congress enacted a more effective plan, the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act of 1935, black organizations had reason to fear its effects. The act imposed compulsory, majority unionism on employers—they must bargain with the organization chosen by a majority of their employees. The act made no exception for unions that excluded or discriminated against minorities. Both the NAACP and Urban League warned of its potential to harm black workers, but the AFL refused to agree to an amendment to protect them. Urban League president Lester Granger later called the Wagner Act “the worst piece of legislation ever passed by Congress.”

At the annual AFL convention later that year, the federation leadership effectively stifled a committee effort to reform union racial practices. At the same time, the convention also saw the rise to prominence of the Committee on (later Congress of) Industrial Organizations (CIO), unionists who sought to organize unskilled workers in the mass production industries. Since blacks were present in these industries in such large numbers, a new departure in black union relations was likely.

Black workers responded in a variety of ways to the great CIO-organizing campaigns that followed Roosevelt’s 1936 re-election. Along with the change in national labor policy, state governments enacted “little New Deals,” and state and local officials took

the side of strikers against owners. Some remained suspicious of union appeals, others joined enthusiastically. By the end of the decade however, black organizations and workers could see that law and politics had shifted the balance of power to the union side, and they went along with the shift.

The CIO did a great deal to improve the relations of blacks and organized labor. Its inclusiveness forced the AFL to broaden its appeal to black workers. The living standards of blacks who joined unions certainly improved. And the period from 1940–1965 saw the most significant advances in relative black economic status since the late nineteenth century. On the other hand, industrial union organization often shifted the locus of discrimination from admission and hiring to job assignment, seniority, and promotion. More important the organization of the core, mass-production sector of the economy ultimately reduced employment in this area, though war deferred this decline until the 1950–1960s. Most blacks remained in the unorganized, peripheral sectors of the economy. Unemployment became a permanent feature of the U.S. economy, and the black unemployment rate was usually double the white rate. And this gap was even wider when it included those African-Americans who had dropped out of the labor force altogether.

The federal government took the first major steps to end employer and union discrimination on the eve of World War II. A. Philip Randolph organized a “March on Washington Movement” to protest discrimination in U.S. industry, and he threatened to bring thousands of marchers to the capital unless President Roosevelt prohibited job discrimination and segregation in the armed forces. President Roosevelt agreed to the former in a June 1941, executive order that created the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC). The committee publicized extensive discrimination and was able to win some improvement in black employment, though some recalcitrant contractors and unions were able to ignore FEPC directives. It was effective enough that southern Democrats cut off its funding in 1946, and civil rights groups lobbied for Congress to create a new one for the next 20 years.

The federal courts and the states built on the FEPC effort. Courts sustained black workers’ lawsuits against discriminatory unions. In suits against the railroad brotherhoods, the Supreme Court ruled that unions, since federal legislation had given them special privileges, they had a duty of “fair representation.” They could not use government power to discriminate against black workers—though the Court did not require them to admit blacks as members.

World War II dealt a serious blow to the ideology of white supremacy, with the United States fighting

Hitler's race-based regime. The United States then needed to bolster its reputation for democracy and equality in its rivalry with the Soviet Union for influence in the postcolonial Third World. The challenge for the white United States to make its behavior conform to its egalitarian ideals was expressed in Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* (1944).

The postwar industrialization of the South, and continued urbanization of blacks North and South, added to the movement for equality. The desire to attract investment often moderated southern resistance to desegregation. The AFL and CIO (the federations merged in 1955), supported desegregation but faced significant resistance from southern locals, especially after the 1954 *Brown* decision. At the same time, a host of postwar government policies at the national and state levels—the location of transportation and public housing, reinforcing private-sector housing discrimination—tended to augment residential segregation, which in turn restricted the job opportunities available to black workers.

While Congress did not enact a fair employment statute until 1964, many states in the Northeast, upper Midwest, and on the West Coast did. These agencies made some progress against discrimination in the first decade after the war but faced increasing problems thereafter. These agencies adopted an individual rights, equal treatment, color-blind approach to discrimination, which could have only limited effect given the profound historical and structural aspects of racial inequality in the United States. Quite simply equal treatment produced unequal outcomes. Moreover the supply of low-skilled, high-paying jobs began to decline after 1955 as the U.S. economy became more service-oriented and faced global competition. But black migration into northern cities continued long after jobs began leaving these cities as northern states adopted more generous welfare policies. By the 1960s, a permanently unemployed and socially devastated underclass existed.

The federal government added some impetus to the antidiscrimination campaign. Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy established executive orders against discrimination in government contracting, but they all suffered from the weaknesses of the original FEPC—lack of statutory authority and budget especially. By 1960, these committees began to pressure contractors to grant racial preferences to blacks and to take affirmative action to ensure equal employment opportunities, but civil rights organizations dismissed these as token efforts.

Both state and executive antidiscrimination organizations could do little against union exclusion. Partly this was because unions were not direct government contractors; partly it was because organized labor was

a powerful constituency in the Democratic party. The National Labor Relations Board also handled unions with kid gloves, regarding itself as a labor-management rather than a civil rights agency.

Ten years after the *Brown* decision, in the midst of increasingly intense civil rights protest and segregationist reaction, Congress finally outlawed racial job discrimination throughout the nation in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The act was written in color-blind language; it would be equally illegal to discriminate in favor of as against minorities. The act was also prospective, providing no remedies for discrimination that had taken place in the past and explicitly securing *bona fide* union seniority rights and prohibiting racial quotas. But the interpretation of the Civil Rights Act changed rapidly in the face of urban riots and increasing black militancy in the late 1960s.

Bureaucrats and judges turned the Civil Rights Act from a simple command of desegregation into a mandate for integration and affirmative action. President Johnson's commencement address at Howard University in 1965 set the tone. "You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair . . . We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result." Perhaps the most important government policy affecting black employment in the 1960s was the expansion and improvement of government employment itself. As public sector employment grew and became proportionately more African-American, it raised the socioeconomic status of black women especially. Whereas black women were the least well-off group in the labor market in 1950, they had pulled ahead of black men and approximately equal to white women by the end of the century. For black men construction and transportation—industries heavily affected by government spending—were the principal areas of employment. But both African-American men and women participated in a much greater variety of occupations, and saw more intraracial social stratification, than at the beginning of the century.

The Civil Rights Act certainly helped to open job opportunities for African-Americans, particularly in southern manufacturing. Black female employment in clerical work increased from under 10% to over 30% in the decade after 1964. Overall black professional employment doubled from 1961–1977. Both the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, established to enforce the Civil Rights Act, and the Labor Department, which took over the enforcement

of executive orders against discrimination in government contracting, began to require preferential treatment for racial minorities and women. Employers were not permitted to use tests that had a “disparate impact” on minority applicants unless they were shown to be clearly necessary to the operation of the business. Similarly courts abrogated union seniority systems that made it riskier for blacks to move out of previously all-black job lines. The most visible and controversial of these programs was the Philadelphia Plan, in which the Labor Department required government contractors to establish hiring quotas for minorities. Initially adopted for the most exclusive skilled construction crafts in a few U.S. cities, the program soon covered all government contractors—nearly half of the U.S. labor market. The government also used the threat of loss of government contracts to pressure employers to adopt voluntary affirmative action plans. Colleges and universities also extended preferential treatment to black applicants, though not using overt quotas. In these ways the government could uproot the “present effects of past discrimination” despite the text of the Civil Rights Act.

The establishment of legal equality in the labor market did little more than counteract the ill effects that earlier government policies had on black workers but could not control the great changes in the U.S. economy in the last quarter of the century. The United States faced global competition as a free-trade nation for the first time since the Civil War. One out of every seven manufacturing jobs were lost in the 1979–1982 recession. The little-noted Immigration Reform Act of 1965 also increased competition in the labor market for low-skilled, native-born workers.

African-Americans were more heavily unionized than white Americans by the end of the century—a remarkable inversion of the long-term under-representation of blacks in unions. The South at last caught up to the national average in economic terms, and African-Americans began to migrate from the urban North to the South. At the same time, the unionized share of the U.S. workforce shrunk to pre-New Deal levels. Simultaneous with the erosion of the industrial core of the U.S. economy and its unions, there was an explosion of public-sector employment and unionization. Public employment grew from 7% to 16% of overall employment from 1940–1970. The African-American share of public employment rose from 6% to 14%. Government employees began to unionize in the 1950s, and the organized proportion of public employment rose while the proportion of private employees declined. While seniority and affirmative action caused dissension between civil rights organizations and blue-collar unionists in the private

sector, public employee unions were close to African-American organizations.

While there were some notable clashes between blacks and public unions—the 1968 New York City teachers’ strike among the most prominent—for the most part a solid black union alliance prevailed. But the growth of public-sector employment reached a limit by the 1980s, as public reaction to statism set in. The problems of unemployment, welfare reform, and education had a disproportionate impact on African-Americans. The concentration of blacks in the low-wage, service sector of the economy, and the need for unions to organize them, led to a serious turnover of AFL-CIO leadership in 1995 and a schism in 2005.

Debate continues regarding the overall economic effects of affirmative action. The clearest benefits occurred in the decade immediately after the Civil Rights Act, and especially in the South. Similarly, widespread disagreement exists over the relative position of blacks and whites in the U.S. economy. On the whole there has not been much improvement in the relative position of African-Americans since the 1960s. Black per capita income remains around 60% of the white average, and nearly every statistic of socioeconomic well-being shows U.S. blacks to be less well-off than whites. Notable achievements at the top of the social scale have been seen alongside acute deprivation at the bottom. Even more intense debate surrounds the question of whether these disparities are due to discrimination or cultural differences. The anguish and tortured discussion of the concentration of black poverty and crime in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans exposed the continuing problem.

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See also **Agriculture Adjustment Administration; Civil Rights Act of 1964/Title VII; Fair Employment Practice Committee; Gompers, Samuel; March on Washington Movement; National Industrial Recovery Act; Randolph, A. Philip; Slave Trade**

AFRICAN BLOOD BROTHERHOOD

An organization of black militants based in Harlem, the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB) existed as an independent body from October of 1919 until 1922, when it was absorbed by the Communist party.

Historians dispute whether or not the African Blood Brotherhood was ever independent of the political control of the Communist party or if it was essentially the black branch of the party from its inception. In either case the African Blood Brotherhood offered a class-based critique of racism that competed with Marcus Garvey's ideas in the period after World War I. Before the ABB's founding, Cyril Briggs, its main leader, had published a newspaper called the *Crusader*, which became the organ of the ABB in 1919. Briggs was attracted to communism by the example of the Russian Revolution and the USSR's denunciation of colonialism and racism. He argued that Woodrow Wilson and the Allies offered no hope for colonized peoples, since they applied the idea of national self-determination only to Europe while extending the colonial empires of France and Britain after the war. The *Crusader* was clear however that black people needed to rely on their own forces both for their own defense and for their eventual liberation from racial oppression. It called for black people to defend themselves with arms during the race riots of 1919 in Chicago and East St. Louis and 1921 in Tulsa.

Membership figures for the ABB and the circulation of the *Crusader* are widely disputed. Briggs himself was unclear on the matter, claiming from 3,000–30,000

members for the organization at its peak and from 4,000–36,000 for the circulation of the paper. In any case the ABB was not a mass organization, and it was dwarfed in its time by Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The one major fight that the ABB might have led took place in Tulsa. A group of black Tulsans who might have been organized as a branch of the ABB defended Dick Rowland from a lynching. This event touched off the Tulsa race riot in which whites burned down the Greenwood section of that city where most black Tulsans lived. The evidence is inconclusive as to whether or not the black Tulsans who defended Rowland were actually ABB members, but it seems clear that they were influenced by the ABB and the ideas of black self-defense promoted by the *Crusader*.

The main importance of the ABB lies in the intellectual connection that its members drew among communism, working class militancy, and black liberation, rather than its limited organizational successes. In an era when race starkly divided the U.S. working class and when the dominant black organizations looked to the black middle class, the ABB argued that black workers could be at the forefront of the fight against racism. The intellectual foundations laid by the ABB were later built on by black Communists in the 1930s.

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See also **African-Americans; Communist Party**

AFRICANS (TWENTIETH CENTURY)

People of African descent have lived on the North American continent for centuries, but it was not until the Immigration Act of 1965 eliminated country-by-country quotas to admit peoples by regions of the world that large new numbers of Africans began voluntarily coming from Africa to the United States. Initially the majority of post-1965 immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa came to the United States for educational opportunities, and large numbers returned to the African countries from which they came. Since the late 1980s however, permanent African immigration has increased greatly, as many

sought opportunities for work overseas when conditions in their home countries declined. Structural adjustment policies administered by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank accompanied the retreat of the state from the realms of health, education, and public security, incurring a decline in numbers of jobs, job security, and the availability of healthcare and education. In some cases immigrants also come abroad to evade political and ethnic persecution and civil war. Of all Western nations, the United States accepts the largest numbers of African immigrants, and today there are at least one million foreign-born Africans living in the United States, making up 3% of the total foreign-born population.

African immigrant experiences reflect how Africa is the most underdeveloped and most indebted region of the world. Relatively wealthy and well-educated Africans, or those with wealthy sponsors on the continent or within the United States, tend to be the only people who have the means to emigrate. Additionally African refugees originating from contexts of political persecution or wars in their home countries also receive international and nonprofit assistance in their journeys to the United States.

African immigrants are very diverse, coming from over 50 countries and countless African ethnic groups with separate traditions and languages. As of 2002, the largest African national groups within the United States were Nigerians (139,000), Ethiopians (87,500), and South Africans (70,000). Of the 69,000 refugees arriving in the United States in 2001, 28% percent were from Africa, mostly from Sudan and Somalia. Even with such a diversity of cultural and economic backgrounds, within the United States, African immigrants can be roughly divided into three labor groups: Professionals, nonprofessionals (including most refugees), and international itinerant traders.

Professional immigrants from Africa come from the wealthiest and best-educated sectors of African countries, draining local economies and institutions of valuable human capital. Indeed African immigrants in the United States have the highest educational levels of all post-1965 immigrant groups; more than half have college degrees. Most professional immigrants leave Africa for the United States to ensure their access to dignified, stable and relatively high-paying professional employment, better education for their children, and for secondary issues like access to health care or to build up retirement assets. Additionally high numbers of U.S. professional African immigrants are native to countries where English is an official language or is at least widely taught in schools. Immigrants who speak no European languages or who come from countries in which French or Portuguese is the official language have greater

difficulty finding professional employment. Once in the United States, a large number of these immigrants obtain H1B professional visas, or in the case of younger immigrants, they may have enrolled in additional higher education to obtain student visas, thereby continuing to attain education, greater earning potential, and better chances at becoming naturalized citizens. (Some well-educated immigrants do enter nonprofessional employment sectors, as later discussion shows.) These African physicians, teachers, accountants, engineers, and middle- and upper-level managers typically settle in the neighborhoods and suburbs where their professional peers live, and they often integrate relatively seamlessly into the U.S. mainstream. Their children have of late been the center of controversy at U.S. colleges and universities, where ethnically African (and Caribbean) students have qualified for minority scholarships that some African-American advocates claim were intended for the descendents of nineteenth-century U.S. slaves.

Since the early 1990s, recently arriving Africans have increasingly entered into nonprofessional labor markets in the United States, settling in major U.S. major cities and taking such wage jobs as valets, car parks, and child-care workers. These nonprofessionals are also joined by many highly educated Africans who may have difficulty finding professional work either because of visa problems or problems with validating their African educational credentials within U.S. institutions. Many nonprofessional immigrants were also raised outside of English-speaking regions on the continent, and although they may learn English quickly, they have less cultural experience and comfort level with U.S. professional and mainstream work and educational environments. Nonprofessional immigrants tend to settle in loosely knit African enclaves within working-class African-American neighborhoods in such cities as Houston, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. There is also a trend in which Africans arriving in large cities decide to explore semiskilled work and unskilled factory labor in smaller U.S. cities, notably Greensboro, North Carolina, which has a significant African labor force. Additionally nonprofessional Africans enter the U.S. labor force by taking paraprofessional training in fields that have chronic worker shortages, like allied health care. It is noteworthy that African women tend to work outside the home even when children are present, relying on friends and relatives for child care as is the custom in Africa. Besides taking wage labor, many Africans in the United States become entrepreneurs and are visible to the general public through their own small businesses like hair salons, travel agencies, shops, restaurants, and cabs. Like many other post-1965 immigrant groups in the

United States, Africans have higher rates of savings and home ownership than native-born U.S. citizens at the same income levels.

A unique group of African itinerant traders have built up a complex international business sector, traveling and selling goods across the United States as well as Europe, the Middle East, and even Japan. Traders in African cloth, statuettes, and other Afrocentric merchandise, these itinerant businessmen (and a few women) generally hail from Francophone West African countries and are Muslims; they often rely on personal contacts through Islamic organizations in the United States to conduct their business. Although many traders are based in the United States legally, running large, legitimate business operations, other traders are undocumented, plying their trade on the streets of U.S. cities in the informal sector, selling items like bootlegged video and audio recordings, and counterfeit trademarked goods.

Most African immigrants intend to resettle in their countries of origin, although there is wide variation in the numbers who can and do return. In general African small-business owners and unskilled workers from politically stable and relatively prosperous countries like Ghana, Senegal, and Kenya are more likely to return after sojourning in the United States, using savings to purchase homes and businesses in Africa. Especially pressing on all immigrants however is the burden of remittances. Remittances involve sending home monies regularly to support family, build family homes, and to contribute to important public works projects, for example, the mosque in the city of Tuba in Senegal, or to build local schools and operate Catholic missions in Nigeria. In Ghana in 2003, private remittances from immigrants abroad made up over 13% of the Ghanaian GDP, with approximately half of those monies coming from North America.

Most Africans who come abroad to the United States, rely on ethnic networks to find housing, employment, and advice or advocacy for obtaining visas. These ethnic networks are often formalized as mutual assistance organizations or home town associations. Mutual assistance organizations provide rotating credit and financial education for members, for example, by helping members to obtain licenses to operate taxi cabs, an expense which can run into the tens of thousands of dollars. Home town associations (made up of individuals from a single region) provide referrals, information and opportunities to socialize, and they also engage in development projects in the home country, projects that help members maintain transnational connections. Besides groups within African immigrant communities, long-established U.S. settlement agencies are adapting to the needs of these

new immigrant populations. With recent conflicts in Eritrea, Sudan, and Liberia, U.S. nonprofit organizations like Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services have resettled refugees in smaller and midsized U.S. cities, where Africans work at low-wage service jobs, ideally while pursuing education in paraprofessional or professional fields.

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AGRICULTURAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT (1975)

California's Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) of 1975 was the first exception to the total exclusion of farm workers from labor relations law in the United States. It also signaled a transformation in the conflict between the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) and corporate agriculture in California. Beginning with the Delano Grape Strike in 1965, which marked the emergence of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), the precursor to the UFW, there had been continuous labor unrest in the fields. During the 10-year period, the UFW, led by César Chávez, launched strikes, engaged in protracted contract negotiations, built an impressive international boycott network, and developed a strong political power base. In response growers directed their vast economic and political resources to resist unionization, but in contrast to past disputes, they were unable to suppress labor organization of the largely Mexican-heritage and Filipino workforce. The early 1970s had witnessed the most violent relations as the UFW, growers, and Teamsters clashed in the lettuce fields and battled over the renewal of the expiring contracts with Gallo Winery and table-grape growers. In the face of this bitter confrontation, government mediation provided a possible alternative to unresolved labor strife. Politicians, agribusiness, and union officials gave serious consideration to historical precedents in formulating a legislative compromise

they hoped would end the continuous turmoil in the fields.

In the 1930s, the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) had authorized the federal government to mediate conflicts between industries and their workers. The NLRA affirmed workers' right to organize freely and required employers to sign collective-bargaining agreements with duly elected union leaders. The NLRA had given organized labor legal protection against employers' power to fire labor organizers, suppress strikes, and stifle unions, but the law specifically excluded unskilled workers, domestic laborers, and agricultural workers from its coverage. Thus agricultural workers could be intimidated and fired for labor activism, which dampened enthusiasm for organizing. The only benefit of exclusion from coverage was that farm workers had license to use strategies that were proscribed by U.S. labor law after the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947. Nevertheless the NLRA offered a precedent, and politicians in California saw it as a model on which to craft new legislation.

The limits imposed by Taft-Hartley left agricultural union leaders with mixed feelings about the prospect of including farm workers in federal labor relations law. As a result the UFW's position on legislation shifted over the years. Initially Chávez supported the inclusion of agricultural labor under the NLRA. But after grower resistance, acrimonious strikes, and extended boycotts, Chávez came to reject the tactic of simply including farm workers under the act's provisions. His objections concerned the restrictive Taft-Hartley Amendment of 1947. In addition to prohibiting mass picketing and sympathy strikes, it had also authorized the U.S. president to order strikers to return to work, and it held unions legally responsible for damages if their members struck in violation of union contracts. Most significantly it banned the use of the secondary boycott, which had become the UFW's most effective tool in its struggle with corporate agriculture.

Growers and their allies, confident of support from Republican Governor Ronald Reagan and President Richard Nixon, saw an opportunity in the early 1970s to push for a legislative resolution to the disorder in the fields. Progrower politicians drafted a bill that specified a craft rather than the industrywide approach to organization used by the UFW. This meant that workers would be divided into various groups (machine operators, truck drivers, irrigators, pruners, harvesters) rather than by farm or ranch. The measure provided for grievance hearings prior to an election, which could suspend or delay the voting process until after the harvest when most workers had left the area. The proposed law also prohibited the use of the secondary boycott.

Other unions were also interested in pursuing a legislative solution. Engaged in a jurisdictional contest with the UFW, the Teamsters had raided UFW contracts up for renewal in 1973. Growers preferred negotiating "sweetheart" contracts with the Teamsters, who wanted legislation that would protect the existing contracts they currently held. Packinghouse workers and the building trades wanted language inserted that exempted their members from the proposed law. Finally the Butchers' and Retail Clerks' unions, who felt the secondary boycott jeopardized their jobs, increasingly pressured the American Federation of Labor (AFL)-Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), under George Meany, to reign in the UFW. Meany grew increasingly frustrated by the independent UFW that proudly proclaimed its social movement origins and pursued unorthodox approaches in recruiting young, idealistic volunteers instead of paid professionals. The AFL-CIO president believed the UFW would become a more conventional union under government regulation.

The momentum for legislation continued even when Governor Reagan declined to run for re-election, opening the way for Democrat Jerry Brown's successful campaign for the statehouse. The Brown administration actively stepped into the fray to fashion an acceptable bill from all the competing proposals submitted by the UFW and growers. After considerable wrangling, negotiators reached a compromise. The ALRA established a five-person Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) charged with supervising secret-ballot elections. It stipulated that in order to petition for an election, 50% of the workforce had to sign authorization cards for union representation. Strikebreakers hired after the outbreak of a strike would not be able to vote. Elections would be held quickly, during peak harvest time, reflecting the unique conditions of agricultural labor. Challenges and grievances would be postponed until after an election in order to forestall procedural delays from impeding the election process. Workers were organized on a basis similar to the industrial form of organization by farm or employer as opposed to the craft approach by individual job classification. The already existing Teamster contracts were validated. Most importantly to the UFW, no limitations were placed on primary boycotts or harvest-season strikes. However restrictions were imposed on a secondary boycott (the union's most effective strategy); it could not be used to gain union recognition as a bargaining agent. It could be used only after an election and only to pressure unwilling growers to negotiate a union contract.

After the bill won the endorsement of the UFW, other unions, and representatives of agribusiness, its final passage was expedited through a special

legislative session called by Brown. The governor appointed the five members of the ALRB. Growers and Teamsters attacked the board for its alleged pro-UFW bias. Some UFW members opposed the law because of its limitations on the secondary boycott. Nevertheless passage of the ALRA unleashed a torrent of organizing. And with this scramble, additional problems arose. Primary among them was the issue of access to laborers at the work site. While the ALRB granted access to workers in the fields 1 hour before and after work and during the lunch break, growers argued that this policy infringed on their property rights—even as they blocked entry to UFW organizers while granting it to Teamster organizers. The board was also overwhelmed by unfair labor practice charges, such as threats of worker dismissals, firing of UFW supporters, company hiring of workers who agreed to vote either for the Teamsters or no union. Despite the heated competition, the UFW won over 50% of the elections; the Teamsters prevailed at around 40%; and votes of no-union accounted for the remainder. After 5 months of operation, the ALRB had conducted 423 elections involving over 50,000 workers. It had received 988 unfair labor charges, dispatching 254 of them. Inundated with election petitions and irregularities, the board exhausted its operating budget. Unable to force modifications to the law, a progrower coalition consisting of Republicans and conservative, rural Democrats defeated an effort to appropriate supplemental funding. To counter this effort, the UFW mobilized to place an initiative on the ballot, making it difficult to amend the law. Although endorsed by Governor Brown and presidential candidate Jimmy Carter, Proposition 14 was defeated in 1976. But the ALRA received increased funding in the next budget.

Although agribusiness has tried to amend ALRA provisions, such as the access rule, the make-whole remedy (which required grower payment of lost wages for bad-faith bargaining), and the secondary boycott, the law has remained intact and developed a body of case law. With the ALRA the UFW entered a new phase as the law introduced stability into agricultural labor relations. As a consequence of the law, the UFW moved away from its original identity as a social movement to the model of a more conventional union. After the first year of intensive organizing, the act slowed unionization campaigns and ultimately curbed the power of the UFW; but it also provided the union with a legislative foundation to secure its existence. Unwarranted delays and the tendency of the ALRB to become politicized depending on the ideology of officials making appointments continually frustrate workers and union officials. Although the ALRB provided a model for similar legislation in

other states, it has been extremely difficult for farm workers to achieve similar legislation elsewhere. With the exception of California, the majority of states, including Florida and North Carolina, two of the largest users of agricultural labor, have failed to provide farm workers with basic protections denied to them under U.S. federal law. In fact the minimum levels of protection established by state laws are often lower than those recognized under federal law, and state funds allotted for enforcement are generally inadequate. Even with this landmark legislation, the UFW has continued an uphill struggle for the rights of farm workers 30 years after the passage of the ALRA.

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See also **Chávez, César Estrada; Delano Grape Strike (1965–1970); Huerta, Dolores C.; United Farm Workers of America**

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ORGANIZATION

Members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), also known as Wobblies, began organizing agricultural workers soon after they had formed their union in 1905. In Washington, California, and North Dakota, Wobblies established a presence first in cities where they hoped to reach migrant farmworkers. Spokane, Fresno, and Minot were cities frequented by itinerant workers who would arrive in search of employment, a place to spend their wages, or a place to hole up for the winter. Much of the Wobbly presence was built out of free speech fights. Although advancing the First Amendment rights of free speech, the Wobblies did little to help organize migrant farmworkers. It was on-the-job organizing that positioned the IWW as a pragmatic labor union.

The Wheatland Strike in California, along with other organizing efforts in eastern Washington and

North Dakota in the early 1910s, motivated Wobblies at the September 1914 IWW convention to call for a conference of agricultural Wobblies. In April 1915, IWW delegates from various agricultural regions of the country, but primarily from western states, met at an agricultural workers conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Here they established initiation fees, monthly dues, and elected Walter T. Nef as secretary-treasurer and a five-member supervisory committee to head the new Agricultural Workers Organization (AWO). One of the most innovative features of the AWO was the field delegate system. The field delegates lived and worked among agricultural laborers whom they were trying to organize. Field delegates carried union application materials, union membership dues books, dues stamps, Wobbly literature, and other items essential for organizing and informing workers of the AWO's mission. Over the course of 1915 and 1916, the AWO (or harvest Wobblies) organized thousands of agricultural workers in California, the Pacific Northwest, and in the Great Plains.

In late 1916, the AWO claimed a membership of eighteen thousand laborers. Among those members were workers in various agricultural jobs but also workers in logging and construction. Bill Haywood and other members of the IWW leadership grew concerned that the AWO exercised too much influence on the IWW as a whole. At the November 1916 IWW general convention in Chicago, AWO delegates made up 75% of the delegates on the convention floor. Haywood and others were also concerned that the AWO would break free of the IWW to become an independent national union. Therefore Haywood and the executive board worked to persuade the convention delegates to support a restructuring of the member unions of the IWW into industrial unions under the supervision of the leadership in Chicago. They were successful. The Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union (AWIU) was created and charged with organizing only agricultural laborers.

By summer 1917, harvest Wobblies had established an effective, pragmatic, industrial union that could organize thousands of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the western countryside. The reason that the AWIU proved more successful in the West than in any other region had to do with the sociocultural nature of the workforce. The Wheat Belt of the Great Plains, the agricultural zones of the Pacific Northwest, and the industrial-agricultural valleys of central California together required hundreds of thousands of migrant and seasonal farmworkers. The majority of these workers were itinerant, white, native-born, young men, which was the predominant membership of the AWIU. Harvest workers had to steal rides on freight trains to get to job sites, and

many stayed in makeshift "jungle" camps between jobs. They confronted hostile townfolk and a criminal element that preyed on migrant harvest workers. The AWIU members shared this work life culture, which helped in recruiting new members.

With passage of the Espionage and Sedition Acts during World War I, Wobblies and thousands of other U.S. citizens and resident aliens experienced intense repression at the hands of the federal government and frequent violations of their civil rights. Before the AWIU, and the IWW as a whole, could rebound from federal wartime persecution, Wobblies had to endure a second wave of law enforcement attacks in the form of state criminal syndicalism statutes. California would be the most aggressive state in repressing harvest Wobblies with its criminal syndicalism laws, though other states in the Far West and in the Great Plains would use the same tactic for similar effect. Despite this legal offensive against the IWW in the West that included criminal syndicalism and vagrancy arrests, harvest Wobblies continued to work in the fields and orchards, institute organizing campaigns, and attend to AWIU affairs.

Harvest Wobblies persevered through the immediate postwar years. In the short term, the AWIU emerged in 1921 with renewed strength, assisting the IWW to achieve several years of noteworthy resurgence as a militant labor organization. By the mid-1920s, however, the AWIU went into steep decline. West Coast farm workers became increasingly more socially and culturally diverse as families of harvest workers, Latinos, and Asians made up a great share of the workforce. They along with the still-predominant white, native-born harvest workers in the Wheat Belt drove their own vehicles to work sites and avoided the jungle camps. The AWIU never found a way to accommodate these changes within its organizing strategy. Moreover mechanization of wheat harvesting eliminated thousands of agricultural jobs in the Wheat Belt after 1930.

Harvest Wobblies are historically significant for several reasons. They established one of the first unions to organize U.S. farmworkers. The AWO and the AWIU were the largest and most dynamic constituencies of the IWW. From 1915–1925, over half of the IWW's finances originated from the AWO or the AWIU. The agricultural branch of the IWW became a proving ground for many of the best organizers and leaders of the union, such as Walter Nef, Edwin Doree, George Speed, Mat Fox, and E. W. Latchem. Harvest Wobblies personified some of the most indelible features of the union membership. They were the militant casual laborers of the U.S. West, riding the rails, living in jungles, and preaching industrial unionism and revolution in the workplace. They, along with

other Wobblies of the West, helped to create the foot-loose, masculine, rebel worker culture of the IWW.

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See also **Industrial Workers of the World**

AGRICULTURE ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION

On May 12, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Agriculture Adjustment Act, creating the Agriculture Adjustment Administration (AAA) within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Farm commodity prices, which had been falling through the 1920s, accelerated downward with the advent of the Great Depression in 1929. Under this New Deal legislation, Congress and the President sought to increase the price of such key agricultural commodities as cotton, tobacco, wheat, corn, and dairy products in an effort to give farmers the same purchasing power they had during the prosperous years of 1909–1914. Unlike legislative efforts of the 1920s, this measure downplayed market expansion as a means to increase demand and instead encouraged farmers to limit production, or supply, in exchange for benefit payments from the AAA. A tax levied on processors of agricultural commodities paid for the program.

Charged with overseeing the implementation of this system, the AAA created a vast network of local, county, state and federal officials who coordinated administration. Like many New Deal programs, AAA officials built their network around existing structures and organizations, most notably the agriculture extension services, which operated on a state

and local level. Extension services helped promote the program and worked with federal officials to establish state and county committees, which were responsible for setting production quotas, publicizing the program, as well as overseeing the signing and enforcement of contracts.

Although it had a reputation as a well-managed agency, the AAA faced significant criticism. First of all the public found it disturbing that the government would cut agricultural production when many people did not have enough to eat or wear. Second contracts mandated that landowners share benefit payments with their tenants and sharecroppers, but this rarely happened, and enforcement remained lax because planters dominated committees charged with overseeing the contracts. Third landowners were now using smaller portions of their holdings and consequently began to evict tenants and sharecroppers. Finally many farmers began to invest in mechanization, sometimes using their benefit payments to purchase machines, which further lessened their need for workers. Estimates suggest that mechanization displaced one- to two-fifths of farmers in the 1930s. The situation was particularly dire on cotton plantations. Many tenants and sharecroppers became homeless and were forced to become farm wage laborers. Frustrated, one group of Arkansas tenants and sharecroppers decided to fight back by organizing the interracial Southern Tenant and Farmers’ Union (STFU) in July 1934. They used collective action in an attempt to win enforcement of Section 7 of the AAA contracts, which outlined tenant rights.

Confronted with large numbers of written complaints from tenants and sharecroppers, a small faction of AAA officials began to verbalize their discontent with AAA’s inaction on this issue. Within the agency a growing rift appeared between those, such as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Rexford Tugwell, who perceived the program as an opportunity to enact needed social reforms, and those who perceived the AAA as an administrative agency that should stay focused on commodity prices, not labor relations. Many of the latter believed that landlords had certain rights, including the right to lay off workers, whereas many of the former thought the AAA had an obligation to support tenants in their fight against the landlords. To this end reformers led by AAA legal counsel Jerome Frank formed a Committee on Landlord Tenant Relationships. The AAA’s first administrator, George N. Peek, however felt that the agency should focus on monitoring contract negotiations and facilitating benefit payments. Peek’s successor, Chester Davis, also clashed with agency reformers. Eventually this division led Davis to fire some reformers and move others into different posts. Tenants in general,

and the STFU specifically, received very little support from the AAA or the federal government. Overall the farm program, especially for cotton, tended to benefit larger landowners over small ones, and certainly over sharecroppers and tenants.

Conservatives too complained about the AAA's activities, and in 1936, the Supreme Court declared the Agriculture Adjustment Act unconstitutional in *U.S. v. Butler*, stipulating that Congress had overstepped its regulatory functions and that because of this, the processing tax was invalid. Rather than eliminate a program popular with landowners and that seemed to have some success in raising farm prices, Congress reconstituted the AAA under the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936. It abolished the processing tax and paid for the program through general revenues. With a new stress on soil conservation as a means of keeping production levels low, the AAA began to use farms rather than commodities as the basic contract unit. A reorganization of AAA from divisions based on crops to geographic regions reflected this shift in focus. Two years later Congress once again revised the law. This time it sought to control oversupply through a storage system and by monitoring interstate marketing and to provide loans to farmers. It also enacted the first federal crop insurance program.

Some commodity prices rose from 1933–1939, but they did not necessarily improve because of AAA programs. A good portion of the rise seemed to be due to a cut in supply caused by such natural disasters as the severe droughts of the early-to-mid-1930s rather than AAA's efforts to decrease farm output. As late as 1939, farm prices on most commodities had still not recovered to pre-1914 levels or even to pre-1929 prices.

During World War II, the AAA reversed course, working with farmers to increase production to meet new demand. In 1942, it changed its name to the Agricultural Adjustment Agency, and 3 years later, it ceased to exist as an entity, although its work lived on in other divisions. The AAA set a precedent for federal agriculture subsidies. Its mission of applying business models to the agricultural sector also oriented the subsidy program toward economic concerns rather than such social reform as improved labor and living standards for farm tenants, sharecroppers, and wage workers.

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See also Agricultural Labor Relations Act; Agriculture Adjustment Administration; Agricultural Workers Organization; Great Depression; Sharecropping and Tenancy; Southern Tenant Farmers' Union

AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), commonly referred to as welfare, was a joint federal-state grant-in-aid program for children of poor single parents, predominantly mothers. From its inception in the Social Security Act of 1935 to its demise in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, AFDC provided minimal financial support for some single-mother families, consistently one of the largest groups of impoverished Americans.

The Origins and Structure of AFDC, 1900–1935

Most scholars locate AFDC's origins in Progressive Era mothers' pension programs, a response to the specific problem of poor fatherless families and the more general disruptions wrought by industrialization, immigration, and urbanization. By the late nineteenth century, middle-class and elite reformers, along with working-class advocates, demanded a multitude of laws and programs aimed at improving the social and economic conditions of the laboring classes. While some efforts to regulate hours, wages, and working conditions overcame political elites' commitment to *laissez faire* economic policy, state governments and Congress scuttled proposals for social welfare provisions like old-age, health, and unemployment insurance programs. At the same time, women reformers began to define single motherhood as a particular social problem as fatherless families became more visible with the breakdown of traditional patriarchal

families and communities, increased geographic mobility, and the shift away from family-based economies toward wage labor. Their campaign to establish public responsibility for needy single mothers and their children proved more successful than other welfare proposals: State-level mothers' pensions legislation spread rapidly after Illinois enacted the first program in 1911 to affect 39 states by 1920 and all but two states (Georgia and South Carolina) by 1935.

The success of mothers' pension legislation reflected both ideological changes and political developments. By the early twentieth century, social reformers rejected institutionalization of poor children and emphasized the importance of a mother's care. Their celebration of home life and consequent commitment to keeping poor single mothers and their children together found sympathy among the editors of mass-circulation women's magazines reaching millions of middle-class readers across the country. At the same time, U.S. political circumstances—early achievement of universal white manhood suffrage, weakness of labor unions, and lack of a labor party, failure of civil service reform, and consequent weak bureaucracies, the intensity of *laissez faire* attitudes among elites, and the expansion of higher education for women—opened political space for a unique force: middle-class women. Prominent female social reformers in the nation's settlement houses demanded mothers' pensions as part of a larger campaign for social justice and as a recognition of both poor women's vulnerability in the labor market and their service to the state as mothers. Meanwhile the nearly two million members of federated women's clubs lobbied state legislators with more traditionalist arguments about the sacredness of motherhood.

Administration of mothers' pensions foreshadowed some of AFDC's later weaknesses. State laws authorized, but did not require, counties to provide aid, and a majority did not. Concerns about undermining fathers' breadwinning responsibilities along with chronic underfunding and reliance on private charity workers (who opposed outdoor relief) for administration combined to encourage stringent eligibility requirements. Many states limited the program to widows, long-time residents, and citizens, while social workers conducted home visits to evaluate recipients' fitness as mothers. Not surprisingly then, pensioners were overwhelmingly native-born whites or, in major cities, European immigrants, while black and Mexican women were virtually excluded. Immigrant recipients had to participate in Americanization campaigns, which included classes in English, citizenship, infant care, and nutrition. And despite reformers' rhetoric, pensions did not enable most recipients to devote themselves full-time to childrearing. Instead administrators—either social workers or juvenile court judges—channeled poor

single mothers into low-wage labor both by denying aid to women considered able to work (particularly African-American women) and by requiring that recipients and their older children supplement pensions with part-time, low-wage labor (such as taking in laundry, outwork, or part-time domestic service). A 1923 study found that more than half of all mothers aid recipients performed some kind of wage labor.

When the Great Depression pushed federal lawmakers to establish a broader welfare state, mothers' pensions became a federal program, Aid to Dependent Children (ADC). Title IV of the Social Security Act authorized federal funds for the support of families "deprived of parental support" because of death, absence, or incapacity. One of the act's least controversial features, ADC proved weak from its inception. Officials of the Children's Bureau, female social reformers who wrote the ADC title, were more concerned with maternal and infant health provisions. Convinced also that social insurance programs for male breadwinners would ultimately solve the problem of women's and children's poverty, they proposed a small ADC program. The bureau's commitment to state and local administration—reinforced by powerful southern legislators' defense of their region's low-wage agricultural labor force and racial order—precluded national benefit standards or federal administration. Congress refused to assure that grants offered "reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health," lowered federal funding for ADC, and tightened the definition of eligible children. As important, Congress gave administration of ADC not to its only institutional supporter, the Children's Bureau, but to the newly created Social Security Board, which launched a campaign to promote its social insurance programs by stigmatizing both public assistance programs (ADC, Old Age Assistance, and Aid to the Blind) and their clientele. Even among the public assistance programs, ADC was disadvantaged: It received lower funding levels (Congress raised the federal share in 1939, 1946, and 1948), but until the 1960s, the average monthly benefit was less than a quarter of the average monthly earnings of a manufacturing worker.

Reforming ADC for a New Clientele, 1940–1962

During the late 1940s and 1950s, changing and rising ADC rolls ignited backlash in many states and prompted reformers to rethink the program. The 1939 Social Security Amendments folded the widows and children of insured workers into the system's primary tier, turning Old Age Insurance into Old

Age and Survivors' Insurance. This change removed "deserving widows" from ADC and changed the program's clientele. The percentage of ADC children with widowed mothers declined to 20% by 1942 and 8% by 1961. The rest were children of divorced, deserted, or never-married mothers. In addition the percentage of nonwhite recipients rose to 30% by 1948 and 40% by 1960. This changing clientele rendered the ADC population increasingly vulnerable to racism as well as anxieties about female sexual immorality and male irresponsibility. After World War II, the rolls also began to rise, tripling from 1945–1960 to become the country's largest public assistance category, while postwar inflation and tax increases fueled resentment against welfare spending.

In response almost half of all states, mostly in the South and Southwest, sought to restrict AFDC rolls. During the 1950s, at least 18 states followed Georgia's lead by specifically denying aid to mothers who bore out-of-wedlock children. Many states also instituted residency and "substitute parent" or "man-in-the-house" regulations, by which welfare administrators deemed any man in the mother's life as responsible for child support and invaded recipients' privacy with surprise home inspections, dubbed midnight raids. Employable mother rules cut off welfare when agricultural labor was needed. Opinion polls revealed significant support for this kind of welfare reform, and Social Security Board statements opposing restrictions had little effect. Congress joined in the backlash in 1950 and 1951 with the Notice to Law Enforcement Officials (NOLEO), which required welfare workers to interrogate applicants about deserting fathers, and the Jenner Amendment, which allowed states to publicize welfare rolls.

A coalition of welfare and social work professionals centered in the American Public Welfare Association (APWA), along with allies in foundations and the academy, responded to the postwar welfare backlash by emphasizing its character as a family program (ADC became AFDC in 1960) and by changing the program's emphasis from an income support program to rehabilitation. While they pushed for higher federal funding levels, national standards (which consistently failed passage), and expanded coverage, their most innovative reform was to include in 1956 and 1961 federal funding for services aimed at improving family life and increasing recipients' employability. The 1961 reform also gave states the option to extend aid to two-parent families with an unemployed breadwinner (the AFDC-Unemployed Parent program), which never reached a majority of states and remained a tiny portion of AFDC rolls. Emphasis on employability and the inclusion of fathers muddied the program's stated purpose of

supporting full-time motherhood and justified the first AFDC-related work relief program, the Community Work and Training Program, explicitly opened to (volunteer) mothers in 1962.

Welfare Crisis and Backlash, 1967–1969

Welfare became the topic of sustained national debate in the late 1960s when rolls increased from 3.1 million in 1960 to 4.3 million in 1965 to 6.1 million in 1969 to 10.8 million by 1974. Most sources at the time blamed this welfare explosion on increasing illegitimacy, part of a broader "culture of poverty" that researchers and pundits associated especially with African-Americans. Most famously, the Labor Department's Daniel Patrick Moynihan implicated AFDC for reinforcing black matriarchy as part of a "tangle of pathology" rooted in black male disadvantage. Scholars have since demonstrated that rising AFDC rolls were the result not of increasing numbers of single-mother families but rather of more eligible families applying and getting aid. African-American migration outside the South enabled more black women to qualify, civil rights activism and urban rioting loosened welfare administration, and AFDC mothers began to join together to protest restrictions, publicize regulations, and pressure administrators. Funded by religious organizations and foundations, many groups in 1966 formed a National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), an unprecedented organization of poor, mostly black women who demanded "jobs or income now." In addition, federal Legal Aid attorneys successfully challenged welfare restrictions and established recipients' right to due process. As a result of these changes, the proportion of eligible families who received grants rose from one-third in 1960 to over 90% by the 1970s.

While many liberals hoped to solve the welfare crisis with full employment and a guaranteed income, most Americans supported conservative efforts to restrict welfare. Congress considered several punitive reforms but focused on moving AFDC mothers into jobs. In 1967, lawmakers allowed recipients to keep a portion of their wages without losing benefits and required some recipients to seek employment through the Work Incentive Program (WIN). Limited funding for job training and child care, administrators' emphasis on *male* employment, recipients' low educational levels, and women's (particularly minority women's) relegation to the low-wage labor market limited the ability of most recipients to climb out of poverty, whether through welfare or wage labor.

The conservative case against AFDC gained ground by the 1980s as part of a larger assault on federal social

spending. Increasing numbers of mothers in the labor market undermined support for a program that theoretically paid mothers to stay home with their children, while pundits and journalists emphasized the link between AFDC and a so-called underclass of poor, inner-city African-Americans. Perhaps most important in provoking opposition to AFDC was a sustained corporate funded attack. Conservative think-tanks funded a host of books and articles like Martin Anderson's *Welfare* (1978) and Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* (1984), which blasted AFDC for breaking up families, discouraging wage labor, and deepening social dysfunction, while politicians promoted the welfare queen stereotype to gain support for restrictive reforms ranging from mandatory paternity identification to stricter work requirements. In the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982, the Reagan administration targeted wage-earning recipients by cutting funding for child care and job training as well as reducing AFDC grants. As a result, the proportion of poor families with children under 18 receiving AFDC declined from an estimated 83% in the 1970s to 63% in 1983.

The Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA) sought once again to replace AFDC with wage labor, reflecting a shift toward employment-based welfare reform that reached back to the post-World War II period. It required AFDC mothers with children over age three to participate in Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS), a mandatory education, training, job-search program. The FSA also stepped up child support enforcement efforts and mandated that all states establish an AFDC-UP program. At the same time, the federal government permitted states to impose a series of conditions on welfare, from family caps to children's school attendance to vaccinations. Despite the fanfare surrounding the FSA, recession pushed the number of welfare recipients up from 10–11 million throughout the 1970s and early 1980s to a high of 14 million by the early 1990s, providing further pressure for reform.

The End of AFDC

By the 1990s, welfare reform had come to mean reducing rolls and cutting spending, even though AFDC represented a mere 1% of federal spending in the mid-1990s. Republican lawmakers included welfare reform in their 1994 "Contract with America," and Democratic President Bill Clinton, long an advocate of welfare reform as part of the New Democrat strategy, vetoed two bills as too punitive. But in 1996, he signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), fulfilling his

promise to "end welfare as we know it." The bill replaced AFDC with Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), a capped block grant to states, which were given almost complete control over eligibility and benefits. In addition to tightening child support enforcement, denying aid to legal immigrants, and requiring teenaged recipients to live with parents or other adults, the PRWORA limited welfare receipt to 2 years at a time and 5 years over a lifetime, effectively eliminating the federal government's 61-year guarantee to ensuring aid to poor female-headed families.

Most public discussion has declared the termination of AFDC a success. By June 1999, welfare rolls had fallen 49% from their historic high of five million families in 1994, likely as much a result of a booming economy accompanied by rising real earnings, expanded government aid to the working poor (through the Earned Income Tax Credit and expanded child care and Medicaid eligibility), and vigorous deterrence on the part of local welfare administrators. Yet while welfare rolls have declined, studies show that poor single mothers and their children are no better off financially, and often worse off, whatever combination of wage labor, government benefits, and other sources of support they draw on.

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See also **Workfare**

AIR LINE PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

In 1930, David L. Behncke, a United Airlines pilot, held secret meetings with a group of key men from several airlines including United, American, Eastern, and Northwest, to organize pilots employed by commercial airlines. Pilots interested signed undated letters of resignation and put down 50 dollars in escrow money. In 1931, the pilots officially formed the Air Line Pilots' Association (ALPA) and made their first successful stand at United Airlines when they confronted the company over hourly wages and their method of computation. Soon after Behncke convinced the pilots to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which chartered ALPA to represent the "craft of airline pilot." This distinction separated ALPA from earlier pilots' associations, including those open to all employed pilots and an earlier association of pilots working under contract with the U.S. Postal Service. The ALPA differed because membership was open only to pilots employed by commercial airlines and because of the formal tie to the labor movement.

While wages and working conditions on most airlines were comparable to those offered by the U.S.

Postal Service (post office airmail service ended in 1928), low wages and longer flying times resulted in the first labor showdown in the industry in 1932, when Century Air Lines slashed wages for pilots employed in the Midwest after hiring pilots on the West Coast at much lower rates. The ALPA members were locked out although the incident is known as the Century Air Line Strike. The ALPA turned to Democratic New Deal allies who helped crush Century's hopes for airmail contracts, which had to be approved by a congressional appropriations committee. This first critical strike exposed the insecurity caused by substantial numbers of unemployed pilots eager to fly and the importance of regulation for pilots. During the 1930s, ALPA's support of Franklin Roosevelt's cancellation of airmail contracts granted during Hoover's administration and its lobbying efforts resulted in federal protections through Decision 83 of the National Labor Board and later the Civil Aeronautics Board, which set pilot wages and working conditions. The ALPA also successfully lobbied for inclusion of the airline industry under the Railway Labor Act (RLA) in 1936, arguing that the RLA's mediation board system would promote labor peace in the industry and serve the public better.

The ALPA signed its first contract with American Airlines in 1939. Under Behncke's leadership the union bargained contracts at all the principal air carriers by 1947 with a total membership of over 5,000 pilots. During the 1940s, ALPA created such affiliates as the Airline Stewards and Stewardesses Association and the Airline Agents Association to organize workers in other craft categories with some success. In 1946, ALPA pilots at Transcontinental and Western Airlines walked out in the first nationwide strike in the industry. With a war-weary public (including blue-collar union members) skeptical of a strike by "Golden Boys," some earning \$10,000 a year, an enormous sum, ALPA (and especially Behncke) successfully opposed industrywide bargaining and held out for a federal resolution for computing wages on newer and much faster aircraft. In 1948, pilots and other workers struck National Airlines for over 6 months. While the airline employed replacement pilots, ALPA carried on a successful public relations campaign questioning the safety of National's operations, which resulted in a significant slump in passenger loads for National. In both strikes airlines and ALPA battled publicly over safety and the exclusive and glamorous image of airline pilots.

Behncke's health trouble, growing disconnectedness with a rapidly changing industry, and erratic behavior forced internal troubles at ALPA to a head. Frustrated by his autocratic style and grandstanding tactics during negotiations, a new era of

college-educated pilots and the ALPA staff (who formed its own union) both pushed for his ouster. In 1951, by special committee, Clarence N. Sayen, then executive vice-president, replaced the self-educated, working-class Behncke as president, although he battled his removal for another year. Behncke died a year later.

Sayen, a copilot for Braniff Airways with a master's degree in geography, worked to democratize ALPA's constitution and by-laws to avoid the complicated struggles at the end of the Behncke era. During Sayen's tenure, ALPA made substantial gains in wages and work rules for pilots as the industry introduced jet aircraft. The ALPA also battled with the Flight Engineers International Association (FEIA)—American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) with membership extended to all cockpit crew and then fought for all-pilot crews on new jet aircraft. Pushing to maintain full control of the cockpit, ALPA argued that all cockpit employees must be pilots, including those serving as flight engineers, and that FEIA was an illegal union challenging ALPA's jurisdiction. While the AFL-CIO Executive Council unsuccessfully urged the unions to merge, ALPA filed a petition with the National Mediation Board over representation of flight crews at United Airlines. By 1964, through cockpit crew complement, pilot training, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulation, new technology, and ALPA crossing FEIA picket lines, the ALPA-FEIA struggle was over. Sayen, criticized for never having been a captain, resigned from his post in 1962, during a bitter strike at Southern Airways.

According to ALPA historian George E. Hopkins, ALPA's next president, Charles H. Ruby, faced the retirement of the first generation of ALPA pilots and a rank and file disinterested in union politics. Ruby was politically conservative like much of ALPA's membership, and under his tenure, the union distanced itself from the rest of organized labor. In 1963, American Airlines pilots left ALPA and formed the Allied Pilots Association in a long-running dispute over national involvement in local union affairs, the FEIA struggle, and strike benefits.

Under the leadership of John J. O'Donnell, ALPA repaired its relationship with the rest of the labor movement and weathered two major crises: Skyjacking and deregulation. With 160 skyjackings of U.S. aircraft from 1968–1972, skyjacking was a job safety issue for flight crews, and ALPA pushed for increased security measures on the ground and the Antihijacking Act of 1974. The Deregulation Act of 1978 transformed the industry, and thousands of pilots lost their jobs through mergers, bankruptcies, and concession

bargaining through the 1980s. Since the 1990s, the attractive wages and working conditions bargained by ALPA also faced tremendous pressure from the success of low-cost and commuter airlines since deregulation where nonunion often fly for one-third the pay. The hijackings of September 11, 2001, pushed air safety again to center stage, and the bankruptcies and concession bargaining that followed have increased downward pressure on wages and working conditions. In 2004, ALPA represented 64,000 pilots, up from 24,000 in 1968, at 44 U.S. and Canadian airlines.

Flying overwhelmingly remains the domain of white males. In 1990, of the nearly 110,000 airplane pilots and navigators in the United States, over 102,000 were white males.

LIESL MILLER ORENIC

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See also Airlines (Operation and Service), Railway Labor Acts

AIRCRAFT CONSTRUCTION

The Wright brothers' epic flight in 1903 stood as truly one of the monumental technological achievements of the twentieth century. With the advent of the airplane, peoples, societies, and cultures became drawn together more closely geographically than ever before. Still in the decade following the Wrights' momentous flight at Kitty Hawk, the full technological potential of manned flight remained untapped, as aviation's innovators struggled to define a market for their novelty. Given the lack of economic development, aircraft construction in the period from 1903 until the onset of World War I remained centered in small workshops, highly dependent on the skills, abilities, and knowledge of its craft workers.

During this early era of aviation, small gangs of skilled craftsmen labored together building the entire wooden structure. Wheels were laid on the ground, with the group then setting to work on building the machine from the ground up, overseeing every aspect of the production process from construction to first flight. In terms of planning and engineering, the process had minimal preparation or overall organization beyond rudimentary drawings and calculations usually scrawled on the shop walls. Instead the process remained heavily dependent on the knowledge accumulated by a myriad of such skilled craftsmen as cabinetmakers, woodworkers, machinists, and

mechanic. These workers served as the pioneers in the earliest days of aviation.

The pre-industrial methods of aircraft manufacturing underwent a dramatic shift with the advent of the Great War in 1914. Warring nations suddenly looked to use this new aeronautical technology, adapting it to their war machines. Thus an industry that prior to 1914 typically produced no more than 40 airplanes in total during any given year suddenly became overwhelmed by requests for thousands of flying machines. The change brought an economic boom to an industry whose financial fate had always been tenuous. Still by far the most significant change occurred on the shop floor, since military demands for airplanes required an alteration in the manufacturing process, moving construction away from small craft shops to large-scale industrial enterprises.

To meet the war demands, companies began to break down the construction process. Manufacturing became divided into distinct phases or tasks. For example at the Curtiss Aeroplane & Motor Company, considered to be the largest aircraft manufacturer in the United States, production was centered in five separate departments: Motors, woodworking, metal or machine parts, hulls for seaplanes, and special government orders. Afterward the various manufactured components came together in an assembly department where the final airplane was pieced



Three men in shop polishing airplane propellers. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-93432].

AIRCRAFT CONSTRUCTION

together by semiskilled and unskilled laborers. This process at Curtiss was replicated throughout the industry during the war era as companies looked to meet military demands.

During the wartime reorganization, skilled work continued to remain a vital component of the production process. Trades ranging from woodworkers to mechanics continued to be used. Similarly countless new trades were also introduced into the process, bringing onto the shop floor electricians, painters, machinists, pipe fitters and toolmakers. However the autonomy and independence that once accompanied early manufacturing no longer existed. Planning became more orderly, with engineers and draftsmen designing the airplanes with an eye toward greater standardization. Likewise a system of managers and foremen emerged to oversee the production process, further removing the independence of manufacturing from the craftsmen. The days of aircraft workers building an entire airplane, and experimenting freely in the process, ended with World War I. Instead workers now toiled in an environment where they built distinct components of the machine under the direct supervision of trained professionals.

The 1920s and 1930s brought continued changes in the pattern of aircraft construction. First the industry's wartime trend of rationalizing the work environment continued in the postwar period. Employers continued to reorganize the construction process, seeking to limit production costs and control manufacturing schedules. This trend brought a growing reliance on laborsaving machinery on the shop floor and further broke down shop-floor production patterns. The second significant shift came with the industry's move toward metal aircraft. During the 1920s, metal increasingly became the material of choice in constructing aircraft. The process began gradually, starting with the introduction of metal fuselages. By the 1930s, the move to metal would become complete, resulting in aircraft entirely constructed of metal.

The net effect of these manufacturing changes fundamentally altered the composition of the industry's workforce. New trades and occupations entered the industry. Carpenters, cabinetmakers, and other highly skilled wood trades, once the dominant crafts in the prewar era, were replaced by machine operators and metal workers. Still by far the biggest change occurred in terms of the skilled composition of aircraft workers. Throughout the interwar period, changes in aircraft manufacturing ushered in a steady decline in the use of craft workers. According to a study by the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce, in 1922 nearly 75% of the industry's labor force held the designation of skilled labor. Conversely by 1938 only 10%–15% continued to be classified as skilled workers. Instead

the industry became the domain of semiskilled and unskilled laborers.

Further impacting the industry's manufacturing patterns, and by extension its labor force, were the external economic constraints placed on the industry in the 1920s and 1930s. Manufacturers, reliant almost entirely on the sparse military contracts for their livelihood, struggled in the postwar era. Often times a company's financial fate hinged on winning a single military contract, and more often than not, manufacturers lived from contract to contract. This atmosphere produced a boom or bust environment that not only impacted the economic well-being of the manufacturers but also shaped the experiences of workers on the shop floor. Companies financially struggling in the postwar period often sustained the barest labor force, selectively maintaining a skeletal force of workers who mastered the major skills required of aircraft manufacturing. Only on securing a military contract did companies begin expanding their labor force, looking to meet the new production demands. In the months that followed, the size of the labor force grew, with companies often hiring hundreds of new employees. Then as the contract neared completion, companies soon began scaling back their labor force until the contract was finally completed; at that point the company laid off the remaining new employees hired in the previous months and returned to the employment level of its core group of workers at the start of the process.

The cyclical manufacturing patterns that defined aircraft in the 1920s and 1930s exerted an enormous impact on workers. Stable and steady employment remained a benefit limited to a small segment of workers. These workers were highly skilled, representing a cross-section of trades employed in the industry. For the company these workers served as the foundation on which to expand production facilities as contracts dictated, maintaining continuity in production and serving as a liaison who could teach the new workers entering the factory gates at times of expansion. In return these workers or aircraftsmen, as they came to be termed, gained employment stability, remaining insulated from the employment fluctuations plaguing the industry. Aircraftsmen also enjoyed a degree of economic stability that few on the shop floor shared, since they received wages that typically exceeded local market standards. Additionally being among the ranks of aircraftsmen also brought the possibility of mobility, since companies periodically promoted these workers to positions of midlevel management, opening the doors to positions as foremen, group leaders, or inspectors.

In contrast the new hires or temporary workers were often most noticeable by their youth. Often

times they were just removed from vocational school, possessing no real industrial work experience beyond the classroom. Laboring in aircraft allowed them the opportunity to hone their skills and gain useful experience for future employment outside aviation. Likewise this arrangement proved appealing to manufacturers who, because of limited market demand, were unable to maintain the large labor force needed to operate their facilities. Under this cyclical production setting, the firm gained valuable workers who made it possible to meet the immediate contractual demands over short periods of time. Yet most importantly it did so at a relatively low cost, since these inexperienced workers typically labored at extremely low wages.

Worker-based efforts to try to counter the economic divisions proved difficult to maintain as employers skillfully balanced the dichotomy existing between aircraftsmen and temporary workers throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. As a result an open-shop environment dominated labor relations in the interwar era. Only with the onset of the Great Depression, as the economic conditions of both aircraftsmen and temporary workers were threatened, did organized labor begin to play a role in the industry.

The first true move toward unionization started with the emergence in 1933 of an independent union known as the Aeronautical Workers' Union (AWU), which operated from aircraft plants in Buffalo, New York. Early AWU success at Curtiss Aeroplane and Consolidated Aircraft drew the attention of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which granted the aircraft union a charter as Federal Labor Union No. 18286. Soon AWU organizers successfully brought into its ranks workers at Glenn Martin (Baltimore), Boeing (Seattle), Pratt-Whitney (Hartford), Sikorsky (Bridgeport), and 12 other facilities. Yet despite the optimistic start, the AWU's success proved short-lived, disbanding in 1934 due to employer repression, jurisdictional infighting within the AFL, and continued economic divisions between temporary workers and aircraftsmen.

The defeat of the AWU ushered a rise in independent organizations that varied from limited worker-based unions, such as the Aircraft at Curtiss Aeroplan, to company unions, such as the Douglas Employees Association, which operated out of Douglas Aircraft in Santa Monica. National organization did not emerge in aircraft until after 1940 when both the AFL and the Congress of Industrial Organizations openly committed their unions to organizing the industry and its growing labor force. By 1945, all the major aircraft manufacturing companies became organized whether under the auspices of the International Association of Machinists (AFL) or United Automobile Workers (CIO).

JOHN S. OLSZOWKA

AIRLINES (OPERATION AND SERVICE)

In the first three decades of the twentieth century, the U.S. airline industry grew through government support and regulation, the infusion of capital led by high-profile businessmen, the skill and popularity of former World War I pilots, and the U.S. public's frenzied obsession with flight. Flying the U.S. mail, not passengers, provided the profit for, and regulation of, early commercial air transportation. The United States Post Office opened its first regular airmail route between New York and Washington, D.C. in 1918. In 1925, the Kelly Act permitted postal contracts with private companies for mail transport at specified rates over designated routes. Among the first 12 contracts, 10 went to airlines that later became United, American, TWA, and Northwest. In response to growing concerns about air safety for those in the air and on the ground, Congress passed the Air Commerce Act of 1926, which created the Bureau of Aeronautics to regulate airways, airports, and navigation systems, license pilots and aircraft, and oversee the safe operation of a national air transportation system. In 1930, the Watres Act allowed for long-term airmail contracts with established airlines and encouraged experimentation with passenger service. That year the industry employed fewer than 3,500 people as pilots, mechanics, stewards and stewardesses, traffic agents, and office personnel nationwide, and fewer than a hundred of them were women. Scandal over the Watres Act soon erupted over unpublicized meetings between the Post Office and select airlines, and in 1934, the Black-McKellar Act restructured jurisdiction over aviation, including the regulation of hours and benefits of airline pilots and aircraft mechanics and airline executive salaries. In 1936, the Douglas DC-3 made passenger transport profitable, thus challenging the dependence airlines had on airmail. In 1938, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Civil Aeronautics Act, which regulated safety, defined personnel qualifications, required adherence to labor regulation, and allowed commercial competition under the authority of the Civil Aeronautics Authority and the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB). This system basically remained in effect until deregulation in 1978.

Early Organizing

In 1931, pilots at United Airlines formed the Air Line Pilots' Association (ALPA) and made their first successful stand when they confronted the airline over possible changes in hourly wages and their method of



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computation. Low wages and longer flying times resulted in the first labor showdown in the industry in 1932, when Century Air Lines slashed wages for pilots employed in the Midwest after hiring pilots on the West Coast at much lower rates. ALPA members were locked out although the incident is known as the Century Air Line Strike. The ALPA turned to Democratic New Deal allies and crushed Century's hopes for airmail contracts. In 1933, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) made initial inroads into the airline industry by organizing aircraft mechanics at Eastern Air Transport. In 1936, lobbied by both unions, President Roosevelt amended the Railway Labor Act (RLA) to include the airline industry. The ALPA and the IAM signed their first contracts with the airlines in 1939.

The World War II Era

The airline industry experienced tremendous growth during World War II as a supplier of aircraft, modification services, manpower, and training under lucrative federal contracts. In 1940, the industry employed over 22,000 people, 86% of them white males, almost all (92%) of them native-born. By 1945, 68,281 people worked in air transportation, with white women and African-American men and women employed at least for the duration in aircraft modification centers and at

airport operations. While white women found work as mechanics helpers and office staff (and stewardesses), most African-Americans worked as laborers, cleaners, or porters. Turnover among workers on the ground was high, reaching 50% in some regions, since wages were lower than in other industries. By the war's end the industry secured its position as essential for domestic transportation and national security. As a workplace the airlines changed from a rather informal and somewhat rustic place to work to a modern bustling terminal.

Wartime Organizing

During the war and immediately after, both American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions organized airline employees. Frustrated by layoffs, long hours, and low wages, wartime workers seemed less convinced to make sacrifices for the glamorous image of the industry or its prominent and sometimes revered leaders. Workers responded by organizing and going on strike. From 1937–1947, airlines and unions entered into 168 agreements, with the majority bargained from 1944–1947, and from 1946–1953, went on strike 32 times. The IAM, the Transport Workers' Union of America (TWU), the United Auto Workers, and the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks all organized skilled and unskilled ground employees, especially aircraft mechanics, fleet service clerks, store and stock employees, and porters, sometimes competing with smaller independent or company unions. Competition among the unions was fierce, and a sort of fragmented craft unionism developed. The ALPA created such affiliates as the Air Line Stewardesses Association and the Air Line Agents Association to organize workers in other craft categories, and the IAM and the TWU created separate airline divisions within their unions to appeal to these workers, many of whom viewed themselves as different from production workers in other industries. Personnel or job definitions, particularly among skilled employees, such as navigators, radio operators, and dispatchers, launched new unions, including the Flight Engineers International Association and the Air Line Dispatchers Association. Jurisdictional conflicts under the "craft or class" structure of the RLA and the CAB created conflicts among unions as they organized difficult-to-define work groups. For example ongoing disputes between the ALPA and FEIA and the BRC and IAM were heard before the National Mediation Board over flight engineers and equipment servicemen, respectively.

1950s Expansion and Conflict

In 1948, pilots, office workers, and mechanics at National Air Lines went on strike for 6 months. The length of the disputes, the unprecedented use of replacement workers by the airline, and public relations tactics by labor ushered in a new era of labor relations in the industry. National lost passengers during the strike and market share after; its image suffered; and it faced the possible loss of routes under CAB regulations. Air service as a perishable and regulated commodity could be profitable only through improved productivity, better service, and newer equipment. The airlines expanded welfare capital programs and training procedures to encourage loyalty and efficiency; invested in new equipment, such as the DC-6; and bargained hard on wages and work rules, particularly for flight crews and mechanics.

By 1955, air transportation carried 38 million passengers and employed over 122,000 people, over 95% of them white and 80% male. By the mid-1950s, most of the industry's crafts were organized, and by the end of the decade, union density at the top 10 airlines ranged from 50%–85%. Airlines responded to labor conflict and high union density by creating the Mutual Aid Pact (MAP) to protect profits and market share during strikes and in bargaining with such unions as ALPA and the IAM, which used “whip-saw” or pattern bargaining where individual contracts could push up wages and conditions across the industry. Through the MAP airlines paid struck airlines based on the increased revenue earned through shifted passenger traffic. Airline unions opposed the pact and formed the short-lived Association of Air Transport Unions to enforce common contract expiration dates and strategize across the industry.

The Jet Age

The airlines used MAP in 1966 during the industry's biggest strike when 35,400 IAM members went on strike at five major airlines after a year of joint negotiations and emergency board hearings over proposed 3.2% wage caps (the Johnson Administration's policy to curb wartime inflation), and health and welfare benefits. The strike halted 61% of the nation's certified air traffic. President Lyndon Johnson brought both sides to the table, but the IAM membership shocked the nation by rejecting the agreement. Faced with legislation that would result in longer back-to-work periods and compulsory arbitration, both sides went back to the table and settled the

43-day strike with a 3-year contract that favored the union's demands.

Technological advances transformed the airline industry. From 1958–1959, the airlines introduced turbojet aircraft, and over the next decade, jet aircraft cut flight time, fuel, and airframe maintenance costs and increased carrying capacity through seat space and containerized loading. Safety, training, and the staffing demands of the new aircraft were concerns for airline workers. The industry also faced the cultural and political climate of the Civil Rights Era but not without resistance. In 1961, the industry came under Executive Order 10925, which called for the equal employment of African-Americans at businesses engaged in interstate commerce. Cases before the Supreme Court and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and state fair employment practice committees ended racial discrimination in the hiring of African-American pilots and flight attendants and ended the marital restrictions for all female flight attendants. From 1960–1970, the air transportation labor force rose from nearly 200,000 to 388,000, and it diversified slightly in both racial and gender terms. Women went from 22% to 27% of the total workforce while African-Americans increased from only 5% to 6% of the workforce. Although the gross employment figures for African-American men and women rose significantly, they mostly found positions in such lower skilled ground jobs as fleet services.

Deregulation and Beyond

While the average airline worker experienced a 51% increase in wages (national average: 28%) from 1968–1972, the industry was on the verge of crisis. As the airlines introduced new wide-body jets, a recession curbed the demand for air travel, and rising oil prices dramatically increased operating costs. The airlines asked the CAB for higher fares to offset rising costs, thereby sparking consumer protest and calls for deregulation, particularly from free-market advocates associated with the Gerald Ford Administration. In April 1978, Congress passed the Airline Deregulation Act, which deregulated the industry and abolished the Civil Aeronautics Board (air traffic safety, including personnel certification, came under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration in 1958). Intense competition among airlines ensued, with daily fare discounting and new airlines entering the market. A second recession in the early 1980s proved deadly to many smaller airlines, and larger airlines responded with new route systems, such as the “hub and spoke,” and more efficient aircraft. Hostile takeovers and

explosive labor relations also marked the 1980s, first with the air traffic controllers union (PATCO) strike and then airline layoffs, the use of replacement workers and concession bargaining resulting in two-tier wage scales and outsourcing. Financiers like Frank Lorenzo and Carl Icahn purchased and merged various airlines, including TWA, Continental, and Eastern, resulting in extended and bitter battles with labor, particularly in the case of Eastern, where a standoff between Lorenzo and the IAM resulted in Eastern's demise. This new generation of airline executives reflected a management style that did not include a romantic attachment to flight.

By the early 1990s, with one exception, all the airlines started after deregulation had folded. The legacy carriers, such as United, American, TWA, Delta, and Northwest, controlled most of the domestic air market. By the late 1990s, low-cost start-up carriers with newer equipment and lower labor costs challenged the legacy carriers. With the hijacking of four U.S. airplanes by terrorists on September 11, 2001, the airline industry entered another crisis phase. The following severe drop in air travel, high debt levels and labor costs, poor management strategies, and high fuel costs served to push several major carriers to the brink of or into bankruptcy. Since 2001, airline unions and management have struggled over concessions and restructuring plans under the scrutiny of the federal government. Old-guard airline unions, such as the TWU and the IAM, have faced raiding by independent craft unions, such as the Allied Ground Workers, which hopes to represent fleet service clerks and the Airline Mechanics Fraternal Association, which represents mechanics at United and Northwest airlines. In 2003 air transportation employed 634,000 people, women were 40% of the workforce and minorities, 30% .

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See also Air Line Pilots' Association; Association of Professional Flight Attendants; International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; Railway Labor Acts; Transport Workers Union

ALIEN CONTRACT LABOR LAW

The Alien Contract Labor Law, also known as the Foran Act, was enacted by Congress on February 26, 1885. The bill was sponsored by Rep. Martin A. Foran, a Democrat from Ohio and former president of the Coopers International Union. The Alien Contract Labor Law prohibited the practice of contracting with laborers overseas and importing them into the United States; it was subsequently amended in 1887 and 1888 in order to create specific mechanisms for enforcement. The Alien Contract Labor Law was formally repealed with the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

The United States in the mid-nineteenth century experienced a labor shortage, so business and factory owners looked to immigrant labor to meet their needs. Workers were often imported in large groups under a system of contract labor that was quite similar to the indentured servitude of the Colonial Era. These contracts usually required the immigrant to repay the costs of importation by working wage-free for a period of time. The system of contract labor was supported by Congress with the Contract Labor Law of 1864, a law that provided federal enforcement for overseas labor contracts. The system of immigrant contract labor was opposed most notably by the

National Labor Union, which lobbied actively to repeal the Contract Labor Law. The opposition of organized labor stemmed from a fear of being undercut by contract laborers, both in terms of competition for work and the use of immigrant laborers as strikebreakers; racism played a role as well.

The Contract Labor Law was repealed in 1868, thanks in large part to the lobbying efforts of the National Labor Union, but this merely ended government support for the contracts; the practice could continue as before. Opposition to immigrant labor escalated, and in the years leading up to 1885, Congress received numerous petitions calling for restrictions on immigration. Congress responded with three bills designed to curtail contract labor, but it was the anticontract labor bill sponsored by Foran that made it through committee and after a few revisions, was voted into law on February 26, 1885. This first law lacked any enforcement mechanisms, and consequently the Knights of Labor lobbied for revisions: The amendment of 1887 empowered the Secretary of the Treasury to enforce the law and required that all immigrants be interrogated at point of entry, while the 1888 amendment provided for the expulsion of illegal immigrants and added incentives for individuals who turned in offenders. The Alien Contract Labor Law and its amendments were part of a larger constellation of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century legislation aimed at securing the United States from undesirable immigration. Many state and federal cases have cited the act or its amendments to support immigration restrictions, forming part of an edifice of precedence that has sought to protect U.S. workers from competition and has also sought to keep away populations deemed racially undesirable by U.S. citizens or their representatives in government.

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See also Indentured Servitude; Knights of Labor; National Labor Union

ALINSKY, SAUL DAVID, AND THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS FOUNDATION

Often referred to as an agitator, troublemaker, and Communist, Saul Alinsky (1909–1972) began his community organizing work in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood in the late 1930s. He believed that social justice could be achieved by ordinary people through democratic means and argued that controversy was necessary in affecting social change. Alinsky's legacy can be found in modern organizing efforts by broad-based community organizations across the United States, including the organization he founded, the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF). Additionally Alinsky's vision and organizing tactics, as well as his trainees, can be seen in other democratic movements, including the Civil Rights Movement and the Farmworkers Movement.

Born in 1909 to Russian immigrants, Alinsky grew up in a Jewish ghetto in Chicago. After obtaining a graduate degree in criminology from the University of Chicago, he worked briefly as a criminologist at a state prison in Joliet, Illinois. Before he emerged as a community organizer, Alinsky spent time during the 1930s working with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Specifically he helped organize the CIO Newspaper Guild and supported dissident members of the United Mine Workers. Strongly influenced by labor leader John L. Lewis (whose biography he wrote in 1949), he shifted his energy to community organizing and sought to empower politically and socially marginalized groups in society by teaching them how to use self-interest in order to bring disparate groups together toward a common goal. In Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood, home to the city's meat-packing industry and the setting for Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, Alinsky worked closely with community leader Joe Meegan and Chicago Bishop Bernard Sheil to form his first broad-based community organization called the Back of the Yards Council in 1939. Drawing support from the Catholic Church, the CIO, business leaders, and community members, and using a variety of militant tactics, Alinsky's group won major concessions from the city.

In his work with the Back of the Yards Council and with subsequent organizations, Alinsky relied on and further developed the tactics and strategies he

learned from the CIO. Alinsky's philosophy of community organizing used controlled conflict as its most important tool in extracting power from elites and redistributing that power among community members. Much like the CIO, Alinsky and his fellow organizers needed to be invited to a community, and that community needed to raise money on its own to support the organizing effort. Alinsky borrowed other strategies from the CIO, including his emphasis on organizing around multiple salient issues and his tactic of polarizing and personalizing the enemy in campaigns. Structurally Alinsky's organizations also resembled CIO unions. A typical Alinsky organization was governed by an annual convention, with monthly meetings of board members and representatives of member organizations.

In August of 1940, with financial assistance from Marshall Field III, Alinsky founded the IAF, which he intended to serve as an umbrella organization for the community groups he was developing across the United States. Unlike the modern IAF, Alinsky's initial organization included just a handful of professional organizers whose only training consisted of following Alinsky from city to city. In 1945, while spending time in jail for supporting union efforts in Chicago, the IAF leader documented his organizing vision and his experience with the Back of the Yards Council in *Reveille for Radicals*, in which he argued that the poor must salvage democracy through the creation of broad-based citizen's organizations. While these organizations would not be formed to fight for a specific issue or cause, the organizations would engage in issue-specific campaigns, with the broader goal of empowering local leaders.

Following his work in the Back of the Yards neighborhood, Alinsky and his small staff of two or three organizers continued to form organizations across the United States. Among these organizations were the Citizens Foundation of Lackawanna in Lackawanna, New York; the Organization for the Southwest Community in Chicago; The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) in Chicago; the BUILD Organization in Buffalo, New York; and Freedom, Integration, God, Honor, Today (FIGHT) in Rochester, New York.

Following the Montgomery bus boycott against racial segregation in public transportation in 1955, Alinsky began to think about ways to challenge residential segregation in Chicago. He created the first large-scale civil rights effort in the North with the Woodlawn Organization (TWO), born in January 1961. The organization was funded primarily by the Catholic church, the Presbyterian church, and the Schwarzhaupt Foundation and was led by IAF organizers Nick Von Hoffman and Bob Squires. After an inspiring community reaction to a visit from a group

of Freedom Riders working to integrate southern cities, Von Hoffman organized a massive African-American voter registration drive in the Woodlawn community. A caravan of 46 buses, with over 2,500 black passengers traveled to city hall to register voters and made TWO a serious player in city politics for several decades to follow.

The FIGHT's civil rights battle in Rochester, New York, is one of Alinsky's most well-documented campaigns. After a summer of race riots in 1964, the Rochester Council of Churches raised enough money to bring Alinsky to Rochester. Before he even arrived, Alinsky's critics denounced him as an outside agitator and argued against bringing the IAF to New York. This reaction was pleasing to Alinsky, since it created controversy for his new organization in Rochester without having to do any work. Alinsky named Edward Chambers lead organizer of the new broad-based community group whose main concern was the lack of jobs available to the African-American population in Rochester. Alinsky, Chambers, and the new organization, which called itself FIGHT, set their sights on Eastman Kodak, the largest employer in Rochester at the time. The FIGHT demanded that Kodak meet its social and community responsibilities by sponsoring a job-training program for unemployed community residents. After applying pressure in the form of mass community rallies, a Kodak negotiator initially signed an agreement with FIGHT to help develop job opportunities. However Kodak executives soon backed out of the agreement, and Alinsky and Chambers developed an innovative approach to get Kodak's attention. Using stock proxies and purchasing Kodak stock, FIGHT leaders were able to attend a Kodak shareholders' meeting to demand that the company honor the agreement it signed. While this tactic was not immediately successful, it put a significant amount pressure on the corporation, and it eventually gave into FIGHT's demands.

Leadership Transition

Alinsky died suddenly at the age of 63 in June of 1972. After working with Alinsky for 16 years, Edward Chambers took the helm of the IAF. A few years prior to Alinsky's death, Alinsky, Chambers, and fellow organizer Dick Harmon had created a training institute to teach future organizers the skills Alinsky had been developing in communities around the country and to institutionalize the organizing profession. While Alinsky traveled from one college campus to another speaking to young activists in the late 1960s, Harmon and Chambers focused on developing the

institute, designed to train both poor and working-class organizers from across the country with the goal that they would return to their communities armed with the skills necessary to revitalize democracy.

With the shift in leadership from Alinsky to Chambers came an institutionalization of many of the things Alinsky had done more casually. While Alinsky had trained organizers on the ground during campaigns, Chambers and other IAF leaders developed the training institute to teach potential organizers in larger numbers about the skills Alinsky had taught on the street. While Alinsky had required an invitation to a community from local leaders, Chambers developed a system in which a local organization interested in organizing its community and the IAF would sign a letter of agreement, stating the terms of the relationship. Beginning with the Back of the Yards Council, the IAF always desired to form strong organizations that could eventually function effectively without the IAF's assistance. Alinsky often admitted that his passion was in the birth of an organization and the controversy surrounding it. Chambers' IAF differs from Alinsky's in that it maintains a closer relationship with its local affiliates over time. Finally the process by which the IAF joins forces with local community groups has become more deliberate than it was under Alinsky. After determining that a significant amount of racial, ethnic, and religious diversity exists in a community and that community members are not focused on just one issue, the IAF begins to guide local leaders through the process of building an organization. Sponsoring committees form in the community to assess the level of interest and financial support available, and key leaders begin to attend IAF training sessions.

Modern IAF

Under the direction of Chambers, the modern IAF, a nonpartisan and not-for-profit organization, has refined Alinsky's vision and created a complex network of broad-based organizations across the United States. These organizations, located in New York, Maryland, Texas, California, and Illinois, among other places, bring institutions that are central to public life, such as churches, synagogues, unions, and neighborhood associations, together in local communities. The IAF organizers seek to revive democracy in these communities, so that the act of voting is not the only aspect of public life for community members. Institutional members, including religious institutions, as well as other community groups and associations, contribute annual dues to the local IAF affiliate to finance the

operation. The organizations' specific goals reflect the community's agenda and priorities and are developed through a series of individual and group meetings IAF organizers have with community leaders. Although each affiliate is led by a professional organizer employed by the IAF, developing local leaders is a central element in the IAF philosophy. Alinsky's creation of the broad-based citizens' organization that used leaders in pre-existing institutions demonstrated the importance of fostering grassroots leadership to create an organization that can survive long-term.

While each IAF organization develops its own agenda dependent on community members' priorities, the process by which that agenda is brought to life is consistent across IAF organizations. Each organization holds actions in which local political leaders and other targets are held publicly accountable for their actions. Following each action, professional organizers and local leaders gather together to evaluate their work. This required evaluation process allows the organization to reflect on the extent to which it has reached its goals, to assess its targets' reactions, and to plan subsequent action.

One example of a successful modern IAF organization is the Community Organized in Public Service (COPS), founded in 1973 in San Antonio, Texas. In 1990, there were 26 member churches in COPS, representing 50,000 families. Led by IAF regional supervisor, Ernesto Cortes, Jr., COPS has been victorious on issues ranging from education to city infrastructure. Departing from Alinsky's philosophy of leaving an organization to survive on its own, the modern IAF has maintained close relationships with its affiliates, evidenced by COPS's fifteenth anniversary in 1988. Another major victory for the modern IAF began in East Brooklyn, New York, with the Nehemiah Homes movement. In this devastated part of the city, IAF affiliate East Brooklyn Congregations (EBC) built 2,100 single-family houses that low-income families could afford. This program was replicated in other parts of New York, Baltimore, and California, and it was the model program for the National Housing Opportunity Act of 1988.

Since Alinsky founded the IAF in 1940, the organization has created over 60 independent organizations across the United States and has assisted in creating similar organizations in the United Kingdom, Germany, and South Africa. Although the daily activities of IAF affiliates are coordinated by local leaders and regional organizers, 10-day national training sessions and regular network meetings ensure philosophical continuity across the various IAF organizations. Unlike the days of Alinsky's IAF, the modern IAF now maintains close, continued relationships with the organizations it helps create. While the

pedagogical and philosophical foundation of the modern IAF is very much rooted in Alinsky's vision of broad-based organizing, the organization's relationship with its affiliates, professional organizers, and local leaders has become more institutionalized, allowing it to grow into a sophisticated network of organizations.

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ALLIANCE FOR LABOR ACTION

The Alliance for Labor Action (ALA) was founded in June of 1969, by the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Teamsters at the prompting of Walter Reuther, then head of the UAW. By the late 1960s, the union leadership was in crisis about how to address the political situation of the day. Four main issues divided the traditional leadership, epitomized by George Meaney, head of the American Federation of Labor (AFL)—Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and a dissident minority that wanted to revitalize the unions by seeking new allies within the social movements of the day at the expense of the old allies within the Democratic party. These issues were the war in Vietnam, the nature of the relationship between labor and the Democratic party, the problem of organizing the unorganized, and the internal structure of governance within the AFL-CIO.

In the late 1960s, the AFL-CIO was seen by many of those involved in the antiwar movement and the black movement as a part of the establishment that maintained the status quo. The AFL-CIO had defended the war and spent millions of dollars promoting anti-Communist unions in Vietnam. The AFL-CIO opposed reform in the Democratic party during and after the 1968 convention, and while many union leaders had supported civil rights, they were slow to promote many black workers into the union leadership

and demanded moderation from black leaders. Many within the labor movement also accused Meaney and those around him of running the AFL-CIO in a dictatorial fashion. Reuther, who had traditionally represented labor liberalism, wanted to change this image by reinvigorating the unions.

In 1968, Reuther demanded that Meaney call a special convention where the UAW could present its plan for revitalizing the labor movement. When Meaney refused, Reuther pulled the UAW out of the AFL-CIO and brought the Teamsters with him. Reuther wanted to organize the unorganized, who were being ignored by the old union federation, especially in the South and in the communications industries. The ALA was formed as an alternative to the AFL-CIO that would devote more energy and resources to recruiting new members and that would take more progressive stances on the issues of the day. To this end the ALA focused on Atlanta and sent many experienced organizers into that city. It spent millions of dollars on an advertising campaign in the local Atlanta media praising the benefits of union membership. These advertisements successfully branded the ALA. According to one poll, 43% of Atlanta residents knew the name. After 2 years however, the ALA had convinced only 4,590 people to vote to join the ALA unions. The ALA had spent \$1,200 per potential recruit.

The ALA failed to tap into the political energy of young people, African-Americans, or the women's movement. It used corporate methods of advertising and organizing that reinforced popular perceptions of the unions as part of the establishment. Also the northern organizers sent to Atlanta had few ties with the local community and were unable to build them. While it spent more money on organizing than the AFL-CIO, it used the same methods then current within the labor movement.

The ALA also took a stronger stand against the Vietnam War than the AFL-CIO. While Meaney and the AFL-CIO publicly stood for a negotiated peace, the ALA called for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. However it devoted few resources to the anti-Vietnam movement.

In 1970, Reuther died in a plane crash. Without this motivating force and with few results to show for its efforts, the ALA was dissolved in 1972.

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See also **American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Reuther, Walter; United Automobile Workers**

AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF IRON AND STEEL WORKERS

The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers was the only important trade union in the U.S. iron and steel industries between its founding in 1876 and 1937. As the word amalgamated implies, the union was formed by the merger of four separate craft unions: the United Sons of Vulcan; the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers; the Iron and Steel Roll Hands' Union; and the United Nailers. While the iron puddlers from the

Sons of Vulcan who made up most of its membership had been able to exercise extraordinary control over the production process during previous decades, an 1874–1875 Pittsburgh lockout, as well as the gradual changeover from iron to Bessemer steel production, signaled to workers that they had reason to fear for the future. Therefore despite the reputed power of the Amalgamated, the creation of the union was really a defensive measure.

The Amalgamated Association was always concerned with preserving the wage scale of its highly skilled core constituency. Therefore it negotiated uniform wage scales with employers each year. As wages in iron mills were generally paid as piece rates, the union had ultimate control over output. For the same reason, the union generally opposed the 8-hour day for iron workers, since this stood to decrease their compensation. This is a reflection of how skilled workers totally dominated the organization.



Two iron workers straddle steel girders on top of the Empire State Building as it nears completion. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-120926].

AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF IRON AND STEEL WORKERS

In order to judge the Amalgamated Association's strength, it is important to differentiate between two sectors of the industry. The power of the Amalgamated Association was overwhelmingly concentrated in the iron-producing sector of the industry, which became increasingly irrelevant as the size of the steel sector grew ever larger starting in the 1870s. The reason the Amalgamated Association was stronger in the older sector had to do with the difference between iron- and steel-producing technology. Bessemer steel production did not require puddling, a difficult process essential to iron making that took years of training to master. Yet an immigrant, nonunion, common laborer could become a skilled steelworker in as little as a few weeks. Despite this situation the union did not object to employers introducing new technology into their mills. In fact the Amalgamated had so little power over steel making that one might argue that it had no choice.

Because the Amalgamated Association had always concentrated its organizing efforts on highly skilled workers, less-skilled workers tended to view the union with contempt. Indeed the group's constitution did not even make common laborers eligible for membership. Therefore, the industry's increased need for less-skilled labor damaged the long-term viability of the organization. The Amalgamated Association was never able to organize even half the steel workers in the Pittsburgh district.

Because of the changing situation in the industry, the Amalgamated Association suffered a long series of setbacks at mills across the country beginning in the late-1880s. However unlike most of the strikes the union had lost in the past, the Amalgamated lost these mills permanently. In 1891, the Amalgamated Association lost strikes at iron and steel mills across Pennsylvania and neighboring states. In 1892, the conflict spread further. Virtually every firm in both the iron and steel sectors of the industry found the Amalgamated Association scale unacceptable that year. Most companies that had previously signed the scale refused that year. In fact manufacturers from every sector of the industry and every region of the country began proposing deep wage cuts even before the union first proposed its wage scale. In the struggle that followed, steel makers across the country managed to banish the Amalgamated permanently from their facilities.

But most of the attention of the public focused on the fight at Andrew Carnegie's mill in Homestead, Pennsylvania. Carnegie Steel had fought the union there in 1889 and eventually agreed to a 3-year contract instead of the 1-year scale that most firms signed. This is a sign of Carnegie's preference to work with the union at that time. But by 1892, the

market for the steel that Carnegie made had turned sour, and therefore Carnegie's attitude toward the Amalgamated changed drastically. While many observers have blamed Carnegie for destroying the Amalgamated Association, in truth it had terrible difficulties long before the infamous Homestead lockout occurred. In fact very few workers at the Homestead Works were Amalgamated members when the lockout began. It is better to think of Carnegie Steel as drastically accelerating the union's decline rather than initiating the process.

The damage that the Amalgamated suffered before Homestead is largely hidden by the growth of another steel-making sector. The McKinley Tariff of 1892 jumpstarted the U.S. tin plate industry, which was used primarily for roof shingles and cans. Starting in 1892, a flood of pro-union Welsh workers into the new industry masked the failure of the union to ever capture a significant portion of the steel industry's workforce. This is reflected in the union's decision to change its name to the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers in 1897.

After Homestead the Amalgamated Association retained a presence in those sectors of the industry that still required skilled workers. When United States Steel formed in 1901, the union hoped to take advantage of what it perceived to be a vulnerable position by striking. It lost, and since they struck in mills that had already signed contracts, the walkout also damaged the union's public reputation. In 1909, a lockout removed the Amalgamated Association from the last of U.S. Steel's plants. For the next few decades, the union existed only in a few specialty steel plants in the Midwest. When unorganized steel workers instigated the largest strike in the industry's history at that time in 1919, Amalgamated Association President Michael Tighe (nicknamed "grandmother" because of his conservatism) pulled his skilled constituents off the picket line just a month-and-a-half into the conflict in order to preserve the remaining power base of his now-inconsequential organization. By doing so he doomed the Great Steel Strike to failure.

In 1933, the largest union in the industry was still the Amalgamated Association. By this point this long-dormant organization was hardly even a shadow of its former self. Amalgamated membership dropped from 31,500 in 1920 to approximately 4,700 in mid-1933. Nearly all of these union members were highly skilled employees working in sheet mills or at wrought iron furnaces. Even though congressional debates over Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and the Iron and Steel Code set up under the same legislation had received an enormous amount of media attention, the Amalgamated Association had not planned to conduct an organizing campaign.

For this reason the initiative for an organizing campaign after the passage of the NIRA came from American Federation of Labor President William Green. Eventually the Amalgamated leadership relented to Green's cajoling. The union sent 106 organizers into the field during that summer of 1933. Most of them had few qualifications for the job. Many were retired Amalgamated members who used outdated organizing techniques from decades past or friends of the central union office who went into the field without training. From September 1933 to May 1934, the union reduced its organizing staff from 106 to 15. Potential recruits were essentially left to organize themselves.

And they did by the thousands. These new union members gave the old Amalgamated leadership lots of trouble. In February 1935, President Tighe felt compelled to revoke the charters of 13 lodges that supported the use of more militant organizing tactics. Together all the expelled lodges represented approximately 75% of the union's membership. Although the leadership re-admitted some locals in an October 1935 settlement, by then the Amalgamated Association's earlier membership gains had almost completely disappeared. Only 5,300 of the 100,000–150,000 recruits who had signed cards during the previous 2 years remained union members. Furthermore new organizing had completely ceased. The Amalgamated gained only four new lodges during the entire 1935 calendar year. When the Amalgamated ceded control of its own organizing to the Committee of Industrial Organizations' Steel Workers Organizing Committee, a new, more-successful union would be born.

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AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF STREET RAILWAY EMPLOYEES/ AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STREET AND ELECTRICAL RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Urban mass transportation seemed like the poor stepchild to the nation's burgeoning railroad system when in the 1830s lumbering omnibuses and primitive railed

horse cars appeared on the streets of New York City together. These slow, fledgling carriers patiently awaited the arrival of electric technology almost 50 years later that ignited the speed of a trolley system that crisscrossed the nation's cities and outstripped train service in frequency and capacity.

Despite the romance of horse cars as both machine and garden in a congested urban setting, transit workers—drivers and conductors—experienced a host of problems that would bedevil them even more with the widespread introduction of electric propulsion in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Shifts that stretched from sun-up to sun-down, overcrowded vehicles, truncated schedules, and a host of other irritants precipitated strikes as early as the 1860s and led to organizing drives in the 1880s by the Knights of Labor, especially in large, impersonal urban settings.

When the Knights' empire faltered in the late 1880s, Samuel Gompers, the first president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), issued a call for the formation of a national union of horse car and trolley workers. Fifty representatives of varied transit employees' interests answered the proclamation in 1892 in Indianapolis and formed the Amalgamated just as horse cars gave way to electrification and rationalization of service. Within a year the incipient organization faced the financial problems of the depression of 1893 but secured the services of William D. Mahon, who started his career with the reins of a horse car in Columbus, Ohio, before taking the reins of the new labor group. He led the union for 52 years until 1946 and like Gompers and the AFL, imprinted his personality on the infant organization.

Under Mahon, who was a close friend of Gompers as well as socialist Eugene V. Debs, the Amalgamated paralleled the practices of the Federation by stressing centralized organizing, health and safety, vocational skills, high wages, and a concomitant dues structure. On the other hand, the Amalgamated often skirted AFL guidelines by placing all members—skilled and unskilled—into the same union rather than fragmenting them into individual craft unions, especially in smaller operations. Mahon was a practical socialist like his colleague Debs.

However the Amalgamated instituted a scorched earth policy against hostile employers. The union harnessed the seething anger of ordinary citizens against the trolley enterprises, central targets of society's wrath as the excesses of the Gilded Age provoked the activism of the Progressive Era. Trolley workers, the public face of transit operations, centered around the conductor, who continued to collect fares as in horse car days. Horse drivers morphed into motormen in the technological shakeup. These employees, who

AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF STREET RAILWAY EMPLOYEES



Baltimore, Maryland. Trolley car conductor. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USW3-022047-E].

toiled together as a team, often lived on the same line they operated for decades, building a social network of daily solidarity with passengers almost unique in the world of work at the time. Courtesies between car men and riders cemented lifetime friendships that provided a phalanx of active supporters during trolley strikes, colloquially known as car wars, that punctuated the period from the union's formation in 1892 through World War I.

The widespread electrification of mass transportation in the 1890s set the stage for militant unionization. The alacrity of the new motor power that flowed from ubiquitous, overhead power lines through trolley poles that charged streetcar motors provided the fastest local service ever seen in urban corridors and eventually in rural areas as well. Horse car operations merged into single electric operations whose speed and convenience drew the public in unprecedented numbers with expanding schedules and longer destinations.

Vehicles soon rivaled steam cars in size, capacity, and in some suburban areas, speed as well. Ironically for the motormen at least operating an electric trolley took less dexterity than managing a team of horses; on the other hand, the conductors had to collect fares from more passengers than ever. Accidents increased dramatically as did the injured and dead, both among passengers and crews. Management also cut wages in order to pay for the capitalization of the expensive new system that required steel rails, miles of electric wire, and sophisticated trolleys. However over the

long haul, mechanization proved cheaper than expensive and vulnerable horses.

In this framework the Amalgamated organized disgruntled employees at a rapid pace, often in a violent manner. The union participated in 200 strikes during its first quarter of a century. Mahon cagily massaged the Progressive Era mentality by always offering to arbitrate any questions about collective bargaining, knowing full well any such tender would be refused outside of a few enlightened transit managers. The Amalgamated initiated walkouts that paralyzed mass transportation and hindered the employment of strikebreakers with inspired riots by irate passengers, who now stood on the street with the motormen and conductors, united against out-of-state corporations. Deaths and injuries in these battles, which eventually seemed to grip most cities in the United States sooner or later, totaled almost as many casualties as strikes in the country's coal-mining regions. Well-heeled companies at least initially combated the union in close cooperation with local militia, police, and judges—all of them usually under Republican control. Win or lose, the Amalgamated always seemed to return for another confrontation, since conditions seldom improved for employees without union recognition.

By 1919, the Amalgamated represented 300 properties. It unionized so thoroughly that it issued only 40 charters for the whole decade of the 1920s due to a lack of unorganized transit establishments. Mahon, re-elected president until his retirement in 1946, remained a progressive if crusty commander.

The Amalgamated endured as a major union on the U.S. scene until the demise of the streetcar and the trackless trolley after World War II. However as early as the 1920s and the proliferation of automobile ownership, many transit properties sought savings by replacing two-man crews with a single employee who collected fares and operated the vehicle at the same time. The widespread introduction of buses in the same period only facilitated the one-man operation. World War II, replete with automobile gas rationing on the home front, rejuvenated mass transportation at least for the duration of the conflict.

By the 1950s, many transit systems failed economically. Some state and local governments underwrote operations until the passage of the federal Urban Mass Transportation Act in 1964 that provided financial assistance for the transit infrastructure. The Amalgamated became adept at lobbying Congress and helped secure funding for bus, subway, and a few remaining railed operations.

Demographic changes in the United States favored automobile travel in the second half of the twentieth century, and mass transit lost most of its working and

middle-class riders. The Amalgamated still retained its representation on most properties, while the membership of the union included significantly more minorities and women.

SCOTT MOLLOY

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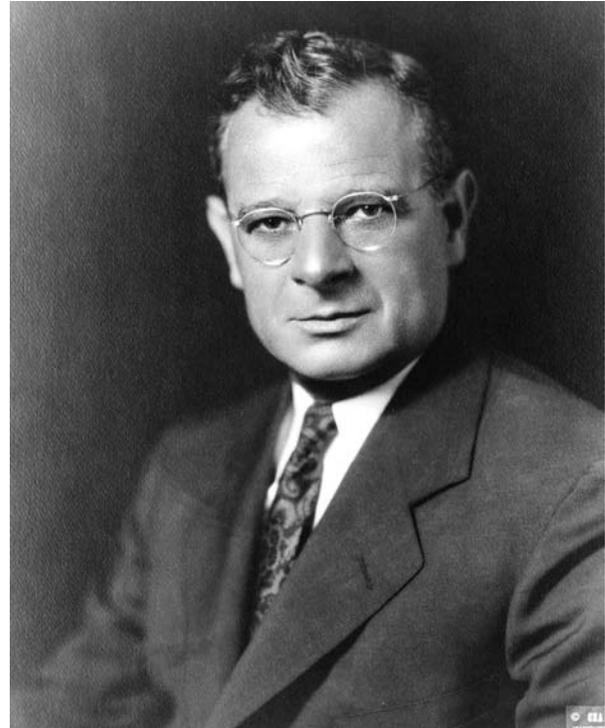
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See also **American Federation of Labor; Debs, Eugene V.; Gompers, Samuel**

AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS OF AMERICA

Officially founded in 1914, the origins of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) date back to the 1910 Chicago Men's Garment Workers Strike when on September 22, 1910, a small group of female workers led by Bessie Abramowitz walked off their hand-sewing jobs at Hart, Schaffner, and Marx (HSM) Shop Number 5 to protest the last in a series of arbitrary wage cuts. Chicago manufacturers produced more men's garments than any other city in the country and HSM was the largest firm in the city. Although known for its modernized management techniques, the factory's employees were not immune from the exploitive practices of meager wages and lengthy hours that plagued the industry. Workers in other shops where conditions were even worse soon joined these young, mostly immigrant women.

Within 3 weeks the more skilled male workers, including apprentice cutter and future union president, Sidney Hillman, packed their tools and left their jobs to join the strikers. By the beginning of October, strike ranks swelled to almost 40,000, virtually shutting down the production of men's clothes. Jane Addams, Hull-House founder, and Margaret Dreier Robins, Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) president, were among the first community members to come to the aid of the strikers. They offered organizing assistance and financial aid as well as meeting space for the strike leaders. The only union in the industry, the United Garment Workers (UGW), had no interest in organizing the mostly unskilled immigrant workers. Despite the fact that the unionized male cutters were involved in the strike, union leaders initially refused to help the strikers.



Sidney Hillman, former President [of] Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, C.I.O. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-127378].

Dragging on over 5 months, the strike turned violent as Chicago police on horseback smashed picket lines. Hundreds of strikers were injured, and two were killed. The strikers' plight provoked public sympathy and enlisted the support of a number of prominent Chicago citizens, including John Fitzpatrick, Chicago Federation of Labor president. A Citizen's Committee comprised of civic and business leaders made a number of unsuccessful attempts to settle the strike. In early November Thomas Rickert, UGW president, betrayed the strikers by secretly negotiating an agreement that provided for arbitration of grievances without union recognition.

Finally in January 1911, HSM employees represented by labor lawyer Clarence Darrow and the company owners agreed to settle the conflict. The agreement permitted unionization and guaranteed that an arbitration board would be established to mediate worker grievances at HSM. The tens of thousands of workers in the other shops went back to work the following month with no concessions or lost their jobs altogether. Yet despite the partial victory for the workers, the strike had several important consequences that laid the groundwork for future unionization. In addition to the establishment of an arbitration system that soon became the national

model for collective bargaining in the men's garment industry, the cross-class alliances generated by the cooperation of progressive Chicago marked the beginning of influential relationships that endured for at least half a century. More importantly the core group of strikers that emerged as leaders, such as Abramowitz, Hillman, Frank Rosenblum, A. D. Marimpietri, and Sam Levin, proved that they could unite multiple ethnic groups in the fight for industrial democracy. Hillman served as a worker representative on the arbitration board and along with Abramowitz and WTUL member Mary Anderson, he helped to organize workers into the reconfigured Chicago Local 39.

In October 1914, at the UGW convention in Nashville, Tennessee, the clothing worker delegations with the exception of those from Chicago were denied seats. Angered by this treatment, the clothing worker delegates began to leave the convention hall to reconvene a few blocks away to decide their course of action. The Chicago delegation stayed behind to make a case for the clothing workers, but when convention leaders declined to address their pleas, they too left for the Duncan Hotel. They wired Hillman, who at the time was working as an arbitration representative for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, to inform him of their actions and to encourage him to step in to lead them. When this group of so-called militants met in late December in New York, they renounced all connections to the UGW and adopted an entirely new name for their organization—the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). They united with the Tailors' Industrial Union, adopting a constitution calling for an industrial union that entitled all workers in the men's garment industry to membership regardless of their trade. The 134 delegates representing more than 40,000 clothing workers in 68 local unions decided to start an organizational campaign among female workers, who comprised roughly 60% of the workers in the men's garment industry. The convention also adopted resolutions for the 8-hour workday and division of work in slack seasons. The new union reinstated many of the insurgent leaders from the Nashville convention as its officers, and Hillman was elected as the first president.

During the 32 years Hillman spent at the ACWA's helm, the union surpassed all competition to become the largest organization of men's clothing workers in the country, and Hillman would become one of the most powerful labor leaders of the twentieth century. His vision for industrial democracy for the rank and file included "new unionism," where workers and management would work together to achieve greater efficiency and autonomy in the workplace. Collective bargaining practices became a vital part of the new

unionism in the men's garment industry. Hillman was not averse to politicizing the labor movement. He advocated for full citizenship rights for workers so that they could become active in their communities and enjoy a satisfying standard of living. Education and the right to vote were primary concerns for the rank and file, which in the beginning consisted of a large number of immigrant workers. Amalgamated leaders realized that worker education was crucial to establishing a broad base of loyal and community-minded unionists. The ACWA promoted education by offering classes in English, labor history, and trade union organizing by 1916. It established its own education department in 1921 and funded a national director. Union leaders encouraged workers to attend labor schools like the Brookwood Labor Institute and the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers. Yet in spite of its initial popularity, by the mid-1920s labor education lost some of its appeal for the increasingly native-born rank and file. The national director of education, J. B. S. Hardman, believed that workers learned from experience, and not from books. A hard-line socialist, he supported education that could be used for political purposes.

A series of intense campaigns to organize the nation's leading clothing centers punctuated the early years of the union's existence. The largest organizational drive took place in Chicago where unorganized shops remained notorious for sweatshop conditions and employer resistance. After several unsuccessful attempts to meet with employers, Hillman called a strike in September 1915. After 25,000 employees held out against police brutality, the UGW, the city administration, and individual employers began to capitulate. Even without a general agreement or modifications in the number of hours employees were allowed to work, Hillman considered the open-shop practices in the over 90 firms now operating under union contracts a victory. The Amalgamated gained the support of the workers and solidified the commitment of many involved in the city's reform circle, including lawyer Harold Ickes and his wife; George Mead, University of Chicago professor; Carl Sandburg, then a young reporter covering the strike; and Ellen Gates Starr from Hull-House. On May 3, 1916, Hillman married Abramowitz, by then a business agent for Local 152 and a member of the ACWA's General Executive Board. After their marriage the Hillmans relocated to New York to be closer to union headquarters. Bessie Hillman remained active in the union throughout her life.

By 1917, the union reached across the Canadian border, organizing workers in Montreal. Rochester, New York, one of the leading centers for the production of high-quality men's garments was organized in 1919. Rapid progress eluded the union in Baltimore,

but by 1920 the majority of the city's major firms fell under the union banner. New York presented another challenging situation: From 1920–1921, the New York City Manufacturers' Association tried to break the union by locking workers out of plants. Hillman relied on the skills of his centralized organization to deliver relief supplies and inform the locals on strike by calling mass meetings of workers. After 6 months Amalgamated leaders won a settlement. World War I provided a short-lived boost for union workers in military union factories awarded government contracts. By 1920, Amalgamated membership was at an all time high. The union claimed 177,000 members who enjoyed higher wages, a shorter workweek, and the benefits of the arbitration system. With a stable foundation the union began to implement such social benefits for its members as unemployment insurance for Chicago members and a cooperative bank and housing in New York.

Yet when the economy began to spiral downward in the late 1920s, membership also began to plummet. Racketeers demanding protection money from ACWA affiliates like the Cutters' Union and leftists vying for power in other locals exacerbated an already dire situation. Hillman acted quickly to expel both the criminal elements and the Communists from the union. For the most part, Hillman's efforts to oust undesirables from the union were successful. Acting on a policy of constructive cooperation, the ACWA lent money to financially strapped factories in an effort to keep jobs available to workers. The union created employment exchanges to match unemployed workers to jobs. Union leaders reorganized the union's structure so that one regional joint board dealt with all locals in that region. The joint boards reported directly to national ACWA headquarters. Despite the measures taken to solidify its foundation, by 1929 the ACWA had lost over 65,000 members. An anxious Hillman realized that the situation was beyond his control. To counter the divisive effects of the Depression, Hillman brought his union into the American Federation of Labor.

Like countless other Depression Era Americans, by 1933 Hillman turned to the government and to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in particular, to remedy the economic catastrophe. Immediately after the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act on June 15, 1933, Hillman committed the ACWA to organizing. The Amalgamated concentrated most of its resources in the drive to organize the shirt workers. In the 1920s and early 1930s, many of the manufacturers attempted to avoid union jurisdiction by closing their shops and leaving New York and other organized metropolitan areas. These "runaway shops" were re-established in small towns throughout

Connecticut, New Jersey, Upstate New York, and Pennsylvania. Rather than put workers out of work by forcing these shops to close, from 1933–1934, the ACWA exerted a massive effort to organize these workers. The majority of factory owners refused to allow their employees voluntarily to join the union, and as a result strikes erupted across the runaway regions. Many individuals came to the aid of the striking workers to lend support, including Cornelia Bryce Pinchot, wife of the governor of Pennsylvania, who garnered much publicity for her efforts in Northampton, Pennsylvania's Baby Strike, where so many of the strikers appeared to be child workers. In the mining towns where many of the owners relocated purposely so that they could offer jobs to the wives and children of miners, the United Mine Workers aided the strike leaders by helping to man the picket lines. Where the runaway outposts offered the most resistance, the shirt worker campaign continued until the end of the decade.

Both the newly organized shirt workers and the New York laundry workers campaign from 1937–1939 added thousands of new members to the ACWA's roster. In 1939 the union boasted almost 260,000 members. Old world ties were still visible as the depression began to lift. Southern and Eastern Europeans predominated in the organization. By the late 1930s Jewish unionists, who along with the Italian membership filled the majority of leadership positions, taken together accounted for approximately 75% of the union's membership (Italians 40% and Jews 35%). Fifteen percent of the members were Poles, 5% Lithuanians, and 10% fell into the other category, which included native-born workers.

The Laundry Workers campaign also marked the first time that union leaders actively recruited black workers into the ACWA. Largely as a result of their work bringing black workers into the laundry workers ranks, the ACWA began to advocate for civil rights. Education programs were revived in an effort to educate these new members—shirt workers and laundry workers—about the benefits of union membership. A national education department was re-established with a special branch dedicated to laundry worker education. Classes on current events, economics, and labor issues became part of the standard curriculum, and teachers who volunteered their services taught classes or were employees of the Works Progress Administration. Amalgamated members also attended Hudson Shore Labor School, one of the first of its kind to admit black students.

Hillman became a major figure in New Deal politics and a key advisor to Roosevelt. Hillman became a member of FDR's Labor Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration in 1933 and a

member of the Industrial Advisory Board in 1934. He helped influence the passage of the National Labor Relations Act that guaranteed workers' right to organize and established collective bargaining as the mechanism for industrial disputes. He championed labor's cause by establishing codes in the clothing industry guaranteeing minimum wages and lobbying for the Fair Labor Standards Act penned by Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, which granted minimum wages, maximum hour regulations, and limited child labor on its passage in 1938. Through his involvement in government agencies, he brought the ACWA into political affairs first by helping to establish Labor's Non-Partisan League in the mid-1930s to join labor's diverse interests under one banner with the potential of creating an independent party geared toward labor interests in the future. By the mid-1940s, Hillman created a Political Action Committee so that labor could raise funds and votes to secure Roosevelt's election to a fourth term.

In 1935, Hillman along with John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers founded the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—a national umbrella for all industrial unions. Two years later, the CIO headed by Lewis established the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee, which by 1939 evolved into the Textile Workers' Union of America (TWUA). With the U.S. participation in World War II imminent, Hillman reached the apex of his personal power. In December of 1940, Roosevelt appointed him associate director of the Office of Production Management. Hillman moved his staff to Washington and traveled home on the weekends. In the meantime the ACWA converted its Department of Cultural Activities into the Office of War Activities. Bessie Hillman stayed behind at New York headquarters to serve as the director of the new department. She helped to coordinate volunteer efforts designed to aid U.S. forces. She also coordinated a massive Russian food drive. When the War Manpower Commission replaced the Office of Production Management in 1942, Hillman did not receive an appointment. Physically exhausted and emotionally overwhelmed, he suffered his third heart attack shortly afterward.

Roosevelt may have failed to offer Hillman an official position in his last administration, but Hillman remained a trusted confidant and advisor for the remainder of FDR's tenure. By mid-1943, in an effort to maintain labor's voice in politics and to ensure the election of Roosevelt to an unprecedented fourth term, Hillman, under the auspices of the CIO created a Political Action Committee (PAC). Hillman's political activism came under scrutiny when the Republicans attempted to discredit FDR's candidacy by

fostering a *New York Times* article that reported when Democratic party leaders asked for an endorsement of the 1944 vice-presidential candidate, FDR supposedly replied, "Clear it with Sidney."

Nevertheless as the war continued, the union gained strength and benefited from government contracts in military uniform and parachute production. A year after the war ended, 59-year-old Hillman suffered a fatal heart attack at his Point Lookout residence on Long Island. Survivors included his wife, who was elected to the General Executive Board in 1946, and his two daughters, Philoine and Selma. At the conclusion of his impressive career, the Amalgamated numbered 350,000 workers—all of whom benefited from the passage of legislation that protected their rights as workers and improved their overall standard of living. During the war years an increasing number of African-Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and southern white women became ACWA members. Female workers continued to outnumber men in the Amalgamated. Hillman's legacy lived on with the establishment of the Sidney Hillman Foundation, which provides grants for excellence in media and publishing. In 1951, the first of many union health centers named for him was opened in New York City.

In the wake of Hillman's death, Jacob Potofsky became president of the ACWA. Potofsky had been a loyal follower of Hillman and an intimate family friend. A young boy at the time of the Chicago strikes, Potofsky had served as an organizer and vice president of the union for decades. In the aftermath of the war, Potofsky along with the leaders of the nation's other labor organizations grappled with anti-union sentiment. The Taft-Hartley Act passed in 1947 negated many of the Depression Era gains, making organization of workers more difficult. Uncomfortable with assuming a defensive posture, the CIO launched Operation Dixie, an extensive drive to organize southern workers. The CIO leaders believed that organizing the South's largest industrial sector, cotton textile production, was the key to organizing the entire region. Both the ACWA and TWUA participated, lending funds and organizers to the effort. The ACWA and the TWUA were the only CIO unions to send female organizers into the field. Although over two million dollars was spent and over two hundred organizers participated, the labor movement failed to organize more than 15% of southern textile workers. Racist attitudes on the part of both owners and workers and accusations of Communist sympathy that lay submerged in the labor movement extinguished the fires of unionization by 1953.

In 1952, the ACWA signed the first master contract in the industry. The contract covered all the

workers in the manufacture of men's clothing. The union continued its emphasis on economic and social benefits for its members. Health centers and union banks sprang up across the country. Lobbying endeavors paid off in 1956 when an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act pushed the federal minimum wage to \$1.00. Yet the union was not free from internal dissention.

In the postwar years female members in the Amalgamated began to protest their secondary status in the union. In the mid-1920s, they enjoyed the benefits of a separate Women's Department, but when its director, Dorothy Jacobs Bellanca, stepped down, the department was dissolved. Union women had always comprised more than half of the membership of the Amalgamated. They served as organizers, education directors, and even presidents of locals, but with the exception of Bessie Hillman, women did not have representation at the national level. At a 1961 Industrial Union Conference for female trade union leaders, 72-year-old Amalgamated Vice-President Bessie Hillman departed from her usual collegial demeanor to give a keynote address that took many in attendance by surprise. Speaking from her own experience, she articulated her labor feminist principles. Hillman accused male union leaders of offering women only token positions in their respective organizations or limiting their opportunities for leadership altogether. She encouraged female members to take the initiative to become leaders in their unions and to fight for their rights as workers. Acting on Hillman's cue in 1974 female labor activists established the Coalition of Labor Union Women to continue to seek civil and social rights for women in unions and broader U.S. society. In 1968, the union opened the first labor-sponsored day care center in the United States. Other centers, including one named for Bessie Hillman in the state office complex in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, followed.

Organizational drives entered uncharted territory during the 1970s. The ACWA organizers traveled to Puerto Rico to organize garment workers there, and when no other union would, the Amalgamated stepped in to organize the production workers at Xerox in Rochester, New York. By 1973, the ACWA claimed a membership of 365,000 in almost 797 local unions. The number of Latino workers continued to increase, as did the number of Asian workers joining the union. In 1974, a 22-month strike at the Farah Manufacturing Company, a renowned El Paso, Texas, manufacturer of men's and boys' pants, culminated with organization. In 1979, the union won a victory at the J. P. Stevens plant in Drakes Branch, Virginia, followed the next year with other Stevens contracts, ending a 17-year struggle depicted in the

movie *Norma Rae*, whose leading actress, Sally Field, won an Oscar Award. The J. P. Stevens workers reaped the benefits of victory in more stringent health and safety measures, contract enforcement, and educational programs. Other textile plants, like Fieldcrest Cannon Mills in the old company town of Kannapolis, North Carolina, proved more difficult to organize, with especially resistant employers who avoided unionization until 1999.

In 1976, the union initiated the first in a series of mergers, joining with the TWUA to form the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (ACTWU). The United Shoe Workers' Union and the Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers' International Union affiliated with the ACTWU within a decade after its establishment. By 1993, the union joined forces with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, workers, environmentalists, and consumers in the United States, Canada, and Mexico to achieve international workers' rights and environmental and social standards in all trade agreements. Together the two unions collaborated effort resulted in the first union contracts for workers in the Free Trade Zones of the Dominican Republic. These contracts were aimed at protecting the jobs of North American workers through fair trade policies and improvement of conditions for workers in the Third World. Closer to home the ACTWU initiated sit-ins at National Labor Relations Board offices around the country, demanding fair and democratic labor laws for U.S. workers. In 1994, the union and Levi-Strauss and Company announced a groundbreaking partnership agreement to reorganize the workplace in Levi's North American factories and distribution centers. In 1995, in the largest victory in a National Labor Relations Board election since 1979, 2,300 Tultex workers in Martinsville, Virginia, voted overwhelmingly for the ACTWU.

In 1995, the ACTWU merged with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union to establish the Union of Needle Trades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE). On July 12, 2004, UNITE joined forces with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) to form UNITE/HERE. On September 14, 2005, UNITE/HERE Executive Board members voted to disaffiliate from the American Federation of Labor (AFL)-Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) over strategic differences. Today UNITE/HERE represents 450,000 workers in the hotel, gaming, laundry, apparel and textile manufacturing, retail and food service sectors. It is part of a larger coalition—Change to Win—committed “to organizing new members and a proworker bipartisan political agenda.”

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See also **Hillman, Sidney**

AMALGAMATED MEAT CUTTERS AND BUTCHERS WORKMEN

The Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butchers Workmen (AMC) was founded in Cincinnati, Ohio, by Homer D. Call, a meat cutter from Syracuse, New York; George Byer, a butcher from Kansas City;

John F. Hart, a butcher from Utica, New York; and John F. O’Sullivan, a union organizer of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) from Boston in 1897, as the first national organization of packinghouse workers granted a charter under the AFL. In its early years Michael Donnelly, a sheep butcher from Omaha, Nebraska, was elected the first president of the growing union and oversaw the union’s organizing activities in smaller packinghouse communities before leading an operation to organize Chicago’s stockyards in 1900. In Chicago the AMC fell into the traditional patterns of organizing skilled labor and focused the bulk of its energies on organizing skilled butchers. However unlike other AFL unions, which maintained a policy of organizing only skilled laborers, by 1901 Amalgamated removed such restrictions; recruited a number of interpreters from ethnic groups within the stockyards; and began to organize the growing numbers of unskilled ethnic Poles, Bohemians, and Lithuanians, who moved into the meatpacking industry following strikes in 1886 and 1894, into department-based unions.

From 1901–1904, the AMC reached its epoch in popularity and boasted a membership exceeding 56,000 members. However despite these numbers, serious division, along both ethnic and skill lines, permeated throughout the organization as union leadership struggled with strategies designed to encourage a broader vision of class solidarity, where workers would see themselves as part of a broader movement rather than merely identify with a specific occupation. As the AMC grew, conflicts between union leadership and the rank-and-file became more apparent as conservative-minded AMC officials tried to contain more militant shop-floor activism over issues of better hours, wages, and working conditions.

In 1902, such job campaigns forced the packers to institute 10-hour days along with overtime provisions. These gains far exceeded the gains secured by the AMC national contract of the same year. By the summer of 1904, the general membership of the union called for an industrywide wage increase and rejected calls for moderation from Donnelly. When the packers refused their demands, a strike ensued. However this action undertaken by the AMC failed largely because many African-American, Greek, Slavic, and Lithuanian unskilled workers, who refused to organize with the AMC, remained in the plant. As a result of this failure, the union lost much of its prestige and membership: Membership dropped from 34,400 in 1904 to 6,200 in 1910.

With the beginning of U.S. involvement in World War I, the AMC, aided by the creation of the Stockyards Labor Councils (SLC) in July 1917, again began to organize the packinghouse industry. The SLC, which grew out of a conference of all local unions



Butchers idle at meat counter during meat boycott. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ggbain-04488].

that held jurisdiction over packinghouse workers, in its early stages worked to bring a growing number of African-American workers into the AMC. Although the AMC and the SLC officially remained a separate entity, the SLC's recruitment of black workers forced the AMC to reconsider its own treatment of African-Americans within its locals, since previous efforts led to *de facto* segregation in the stockyards. This move would prove vital to the long-term success of the AMC as the 1904 strike failed, in part because many African-Americans, who comprised 20% of the stockyard workforce by 1918, were not affiliated with the union, and a number of crafts and unions within the yards did not admit African-Americans or organized them into segregated locals. Amalgamated achieved some success in organizing black workers alongside white workers inside the stockyards. However the unions still faced obstacles as only one-third of black workers joined. In addition the packers continued their efforts to hold the allegiances of African-American workers by increasing the number of black workers in the plants, using demagogues who encouraged black workers to join pseudo-unions, and increasing racial tension by replacing laid-off white union members with unorganized African-Americans.

Despite the effort by the packers to curtail black membership into the Meat Cutters' union, by late

1917 Amalgamated and the other stockyard unions presented a list of demands to the packers. The packers refused to meet with union officials. However before any strike vote could be taken, the President's Mediation Commission interceded because a strike would negatively impact wartime meat production. Instead employers and union officials agreed to allow a federal arbitrator, Judge Samuel S. Alschuler, to settle any dispute between the two sides for the duration of the war.

With the conclusion of the war, the drives by Amalgamated in the yards to attract new members continued. Amalgamated pushed for, and was successful in attaining, far higher membership numbers by building on a promise of higher postwar wages. This success was short-lived however, because in July 1919, Chicago experienced a race riot. The intense conflict between union workers and packinghouse employers appears to have been among the causes for this riot. African-Americans, who were unable to reach the stockyards during the weeklong violence, returned to work under the protection of federal troops, and when the troops were withdrawn, a number of black workers found it difficult to remain loyal to the union. In addition to these racial tensions, by 1920 delegates at an annual convention approved a "100 percent American" resolution that stipulated

that all officers had to be U.S. citizens. This resolution came only 3 years after delegates who apparently saw the demographic shifts within the organization resolved to print some union reports and articles in Polish, Lithuanian, Bohemian, German, English, and Spanish. Moreover racial tension within the membership increased, and by 1921, new fears regarding unemployment surfaced.

Amalgamated suffered another setback as it faced competition from a newly formed company-backed union and an expiration deadline of the collective-bargaining agreement in 1921. Later that year the AMC called a strike to protest wage cuts, but unable to call on a firm base of support in the plants, the union faced severe challenges. Among these challenges were the facts that the Teamsters and Elevated Engineers chose to cross picket lines rather than remain on strike and that the AMC lost substantial black membership as many chose to remain loyal to the packers instead of aligning with the union. By January 1922, Amalgamated was driven out of the yards.

Although Amalgamated continued to exist during the Depression Era, it did not become an organizing force in the stockyards until the New Deal. During this period Amalgamated competed with various company unions and the Communist-led Packinghouse Workers' Industrial Union for members. Because of this new competition, the AMC faced difficulties in regaining its hold on the industry, especially because many white laborers still resented African-American workers for crossing the strike lines during the 1921–1922 strike. Moreover during the New Deal, the AMC fell under the control of more conservative-minded leadership of the AFL, whose industry made little effort to organize unskilled workers aggressively in the yards. By the time the United States entered World War II, the AMC faced another challenge from the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)-led Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee (PWOC), which later became the UPWA in 1943, whose direct-action campaigns and liberal racial positions seemed more attractive to many workers.

The UPWA and the AMC co-existed in the stockyards during the wartime and postwar period; however at times the groups presented less than a united front. For example in 1946, the AMC reluctantly worked with the UPWA as plans were developed to impose a strike deadline. Initially AMC leadership announced that its membership would remain at work in the event of a strike. However when it was seen that the packers were no more willing to negotiate with the AMC than they were with the UPWA, the AMC agreed to a work stoppage alongside the UPWA.

In another example the AMC sided with the packers in 1948 when the UPWA launched a strike. Following the 1948 strike, the AMC attempted to re-establish itself in the industry by claiming to be an alternative to the UPWA. However with the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, it appeared as if the influence union organizing held in the packing industry was fading.

By 1963, it was becoming more obvious that much of the organizing activities in the stockyards of the previous 63 years were waning. In was during this period when, facing a decline in prestige and in an attempt to sustain a semblance of industrial unionism in the meatpacking industry, the AMC and Butcher Workmen absorbed what was left of its rivals the UPWA. With the increase in nonunion shops in the meat industry during the 1970s and 1980s, the remnants of the Amalgamated union were forced to merge with the Retail Clerks to form the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). By the 1980s, the AMC found it impossible to launch any job campaigns with anemic membership and the closing of much of the meatpacking industry across the United States.

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AMERICAN ALLIANCE FOR LABOR AND DEMOCRACY

The American Alliance for Labor and Democracy (AALD) was created in the summer of 1917 by American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders, prowar socialists, and officials from the Central Federated Union of New York to encourage worker loyalty to the U.S. government during World War I and to prevent disruptive strikes that might hinder wartime production. Concerned that pacifist organizations like the Peoples' Council were encouraging worker unrest

in such important New York industries as the Jewish-dominated garment trades, AFL President Samuel Gompers first worked with labor union leaders from the Central Federated Union of New York to develop plans for an American Alliance for Labor and Democracy designed to counteract pacifist propaganda. Since Gompers, like President Woodrow Wilson, believed that immigrant workers were particularly prone to pacifist appeals, he also sought to use the proposed alliance to Americanize the working class in New York City. Such prowar socialists as Robert Maisel, J. G. Phelps Stokes, and John Spargo soon expressed interest in the AALD and at a meeting at the Continental hotel in New York on July 28, 1917, agreed to cooperate in launching the new organization. Gompers was appointed the president of the AALD and Maisel its director. Significantly Gompers was not authorized either by the AFL Executive Council or constituent AFL unions to create the AALD. Most prominent socialists who participated in founding the AALD had already left the Socialist party due to its antiwar positions.

Bankrolled by the government-sponsored Committee on Public Information, the AALD produced a steady stream of prowar propaganda, held labor loyalty and liberty loan rallies, and organized local chapters throughout the country to coordinate their activities. To promote the organization further, Gompers finally sought to gain the official endorsement of the AFL for the AALD and its activities at the federation's convention in November of 1917. The proposed endorsement provoked a bitter debate at the convention that raised fundamental questions about what role organized labor should play in supporting or opposing government foreign policy during a time of national crisis. Some questioned whether it was necessary or appropriate for the AFL to support an organization promoting labor loyalty to the government. They believed that the AFL ought to maintain its independent position as a representative of the working class. Others expressed concern that the AALD did not more systematically oppose the Wilson administration's suppression of civil liberties, for this had long been a critical function of labor organizations. Still others wondered why Gompers wanted to Americanize the labor movement. Yet the convention ultimately endorsed the AALD by a vote of 21,602 to 402.

Opposition to the Alliance however remained strong within some urban union movements, especially those with significant socialist or large Irish, German, and Jewish constituencies who were opposed to the Wilson administration's war policies. In New York City the AALD became involved in a bitter feud with the

United Hebrew Trades and Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. In Chicago, home to one of the most militant labor movements in the country, leaders of the municipal federation of labor expressed concern about some of the tactics of the AALD when solicited to create a local chapter and chose to ignore frequent angry pleas from Maisel to form an organization there. Poor attendance at AALD meetings by AFL delegates in 1917 may also have indicated a lack of enthusiasm for the organization among important segments of the labor movement.

During 1918, the AALD focused on promoting Wilson's 14 points, but its efforts were undercut by financial problems. Maisel continuously lobbied the Committee on Public Information to support new labor programs but was instead asked to restrict spending. The financial situation became particularly dire when Congress cut appropriations for the Committee on Public Information, and the AALD was placed under the financial direction of the Industrial Relations Division of the Committee on Public Information. The AALD however received a significant infusion of cash from the AFL when it was entrusted with creating a labor loyalty press to thwart alleged German activity in Mexico and South America in the summer of 1918.

Gompers and others expressed hope that the AALD would continue in peacetime as an AFL propaganda agency that would work to promote the AFL's public image, gain continued representation for labor on government councils, and oppose labor radicalism. But the AALD was depleted of funds by November of 1919 and disbanded.

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See also **Central Labor Unions; Chicago Federation of Labor; World War I**

AMERICAN ANTI-BOYCOTT ASSOCIATION

The American Anti-Boycott Association (AABA) represented the interests of business owners in court from 1902–1919. The AABA furnished employers with legal counsel in a number of precedent-setting cases that challenged various union tactics, including picketing, sympathetic strikes (refusals to deal with businesses that sell the products of a struck firm), and boycotts. It quickly earned a reputation as one of the most vocal and successful advocates of the management prerogatives over employees.

Two hat makers from Danbury, Connecticut, Dietrich Eduard Loewe and Charles Hart Merritt, created the AABA to protect themselves and other entrepreneurs from what they saw as the unfair efforts by unions to impose closed-shop agreements, which required employers to hire only members of a given union. Closed-shop movements, the organization's founders argued, denied employers the fundamental right to hire whomever they chose and infringed on workers' constitutional right not to join a union. Adopting the motto "a just man armed is potent for peace," Loewe and Merritt envisioned an association whose members would pool their financial resources to defend these rights in the courtroom through a series of carefully selected cases.

The character of the businesses that the AABA actually represented is open to debate. Its leaders claimed to speak for small business owners in competition with rich and powerful corporate competitors. These corporations supposedly had the luxury of cooperating with some unions' demands in order to maintain peaceful relations with their workers, leaving the smaller firms at the mercy of organized labor. Yet as historian Andrew Wender Cohen has pointed out, many of the AABA's allies, such as the Employers' Association of Chicago, the Citizens' Industrial Alliance of America, and especially the National Association of Manufacturers, included owners of large firms and corporations.

In any case Daniel Davenport, the AABA's chief counsel, pursued the organization's pro-employer agenda aggressively. Under his direction the association's lawyers argued test cases before courts throughout the nation in the hope of establishing binding legal precedents. In 1903, they represented the Kellogg Switchboard Company during a strike in Chicago. They successfully convinced the state courts to issue an injunction, or court order, that forbade union members to use threats, pickets, or even persuasion in their efforts to convince strikebreakers to leave the company's employ.

Perhaps the most important cases argued during Davenport's tenure as legal director were *Loewe v.*

Lawlor and Gompers v. Bucks Stove & Range Company. *Loewe v. Lawlor* came to be known as the "Danbury Hatter's Case." The dispute had actually provided the initial motivation for Loewe and Merritt's decision to organize the AABA in the first place. In 1902, the United Hatters of North America union had imposed a national boycott against hats made by Loewe's and Merritt's businesses because the two manufacturers had refused to sign closed-shop agreements. The litigation in this case lasted over 10 years and made its way twice to the United States Supreme Court. The Court's first decision, handed down in 1908, declared that the boycott in this instance violated the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890. The ruling signified the first definitive declaration that the Sherman law applied to labor unions as well as businesses. In the Supreme Court's second decision, submitted in 1915, the justices ruled that every single member of the Hatters' union was personally responsible for paying the large damage award granted to the hat manufacturers. In other words the court had set a precedent for holding all union members liable for the actions of union officers. In *Gompers v. Buck's Stove & Range Company*, the U.S. Supreme Court in 1911 upheld a court order that forbade the American Federation of Labor (AFL) from urging its members to boycott the products of a business that the American Federation of Labor deemed unfair to workers.

The holdings in these two cases strengthened the claims of AABA's leaders that they worked to secure individual rights and to protect business owners' property from harmful labor actions. For these leaders the Danbury Hatters' Case ensured that unscrupulous unionists could no longer hide behind the actions of their leaders, while the *Buck's Stove* case defended businesses from concerted, nationally organized attacks. Union supporters on the other hand argued that these cases unfairly exposed financially constrained workers to endless liability and impinged on union members' freedom of speech by forbidding them to urge consumers to refuse to patronize certain products.

By 1919, Walter Gordon Merritt had become head of the organization and renamed it the League for Industrial Rights. Merritt, the son of one of the original founders, Charles Hart Merritt, saw the League as more representative of corporations than the older AABA had been. But he continued the policy of defending management prerogatives in court. In the 1921 case *Duplex Printing Press Company v. Deering*, for example, his lawyers attacked the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914. The Supreme Court's *Duplex* decision eviscerated the act's exemption of labor unions from antistrike injunction. In other words the case

reaffirmed organized labor's subjection to hostile court orders.

In its short career the AABA had successes and setbacks. The organization succeeded remarkably at bringing its conception of individual rights to national attention. *Loewe v. Lawlor* and *Gompers v. Buck's Stove & Company* weakened workers' efforts to (in its view) coerce businesses to recognize unions because the decisions upheld sweeping court orders that forbade one of organized labor's most effective tools, the boycott. But some of these victories were Pyrrhic ones. Loewe was unable to collect all his damages from the Danbury case because the workers held liable did not own enough property to compensate him fully. More important the AABA never achieved one of its most cherished goals, a declaration that any strike for the purpose of establishing a closed shop be in and of itself illegal. The courts refused to accede completely to the organization's claim that all individuals had a constitutional right not to face compulsory union membership. One thing is clear however: The American Anti-Boycott Association serves as a reminder of the importance of the law in the evolution of labor relations in the United States.

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See also **Clayton Antitrust Act; Danbury Hatters Case; Loewe v. Lawlor (1908, 1915); Gompers v. Buck's Stove and Range Co.; Law and Labor; Sherman Antitrust Act**

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

In 1906, the German sociologist Werner Sombart posed a question that has continued to influence discussions about U.S. labor ever since. In his book, *Why Is There No Socialism in the United States*, Sombart advanced the notion that U.S. workers were

exceptional in comparison to workers in other industrial nations by virtue of their lack of support for socialism and their failure to develop a sense of class consciousness. Although at the time Sombart wrote, socialism was hardly a less potent political force in the United States than it was in Britain, his question would prove prescient about the future of socialism in the United States. Over the course of the twentieth century, the United States would in fact be the only industrial democracy in the world in which a socialist party did not permanently establish itself as a major factor in national politics.

Sombart and another early exponent of the theory of U.S. labor exceptionalism, labor economist Selig Perlman, saw the lack of support for socialism directly linked to the lack of class consciousness among U.S. workers. Workers throughout the rest of the industrialized world came to see themselves as a class apart and therefore to support the development of labor-based parties whose goal was to bring about socialism. Most U.S. workers on the other hand developed what Perlman, in his highly influential *A Theory of the Labor Movement* (1928), described as a form of "job consciousness" that caused them to focus on quite limited bread-and-butter issues relating to wages and working conditions and to eschew radical politics. The U.S. workers and their unions worked within the existing economic and political system instead of trying to replace it.

Sombart, Perlman, and other later proponents of the idea of U.S. exceptionalism offered a variety of explanations for what they saw as the U.S. labor movement's distinctive pattern of development. They argued that a higher standard of living and greater opportunities for upward social mobility produced by the rapidly expanding U.S. economy made U.S. workers more likely than their counterparts in Europe to see themselves as beneficiaries rather than victims of capitalism. The U.S. workers generally did not view themselves as part of a permanent working class, believing that if they did not themselves achieve prosperity, at least their children would have the opportunity to improve their social status. The pervasive individualism and emphasis on economic opportunity in U.S. society, including the historic opportunity provided by the safety valve of the frontier, thus undercut the development of class consciousness and worker support for efforts to put an end to a system based on the pursuit of individual profit.

The U.S. political system is also often cited as a factor in U.S. labor exceptionalism. Workers in Europe were largely excluded from the franchise until the twentieth century and saw support for socialist labor parties as an important means of gaining access to political power. In contrast universal white male

suffrage became the norm in the United States well before the full-scale industrialization that followed the Civil War. As a result U.S. wage earners had a history of regarding themselves as citizens who enjoyed equal rights in the body politic. Rather than acquiring an identity as members of an excluded and oppressed class in need of their own political party, U.S. workers had developed well-established partisan loyalties to the Republican or Democratic parties dating back to the nineteenth century—loyalties that were passed on from generation to generation. Workers in the United States therefore proved difficult recruits for the American Socialist party. The U.S. two-party system, with its winner-take-all form of presidential elections, also militated against the emergence of a socialist third party, because small minority parties had far less chance to influence public policy than did minority parties in a parliamentary system. In addition Sombart and Perlman pointed to the U.S. system of federalism as another barrier to the development of socialism. Because of the wide dispersal of power over many different political jurisdictions in the United States, workers had less incentive to seek political solutions to their problems than in more centralized European polities in which the effort either to capture or at least influence centralized authority offered a greater prospect of reward.

Although Sombart was silent on the issue, Perlman and many later commentators have argued that the development of a cohesive sense of class consciousness among U.S. workers was also significantly impeded by the much greater ethnic and racial diversity of the working population in the United States as compared to other industrial nations. Ethnic groups that had been traditional enemies in Europe had trouble working together on behalf of a common working-class agenda, and new immigrants were continually entering the U.S. labor market, making the development of a common working-class identity particularly difficult. White-black racial divisions were if anything even more of an obstacle to the formation of a single working-class identity, especially because employers often used African-Americans as strikebreakers when union-organized work stoppages occurred.

Post-World War II Expressions of U.S. Exceptionalism

The idea of U.S. exceptionalism was first fully developed early in the twentieth century, but this interpretation may have achieved its widest acceptance in the Cold War environment that emerged after the World War II. In the postwar period, labor exceptionalism

was reinforced by the pluralist approach that came to dominate U.S. political science. Pluralists, such as David Truman and Robert Dahl, argued that U.S. society was largely free of the sharp class divisions of European nations because people in the United States tended to identify with many different and cross-cutting groups based on religion, region, ethnicity, and other factors, and thereby failed to develop an overarching identity as members of a single class. Politics became an intricate game of building ever shifting coalitions composed of many different interest groups, so that there was little opportunity for a class-based party with a sweeping ideological agenda to gain any traction in the United States.

The consensus interpretation of U.S. history put forward by such scholars such as Louis Hartz also complemented the theory of U.S. labor exceptionalism. Consensus historians emphasized the lack of fundamental ideological conflict in a nation in which most people shared a belief in private property, the profit motive, individualism, and limited government. Hartz was especially influential in claiming in his widely read *Liberal Tradition in America* (1955) that the lack of a feudal past explained the overwhelming dominance of liberalism in the United States. Having been born equal, without the deeply entrenched social distinctions that characterized European societies, the United States failed to develop either a true conservative tradition that sought to defend the philosophical and social legacy of feudalism or a powerful socialist movement that sought to root out the remaining hierarchical vestiges of a feudal past.

Industrial relations experts in the postwar era, such as John Dunlop and Clark Kerr, helped to articulate a conception of industrial pluralism that was in many ways an extension of the theory of U.S. labor exceptionalism and had much in common with the dominant pluralist framework of political science and the consensus view of U.S. history. When Sombart first posed his famous question, few U.S. workers belonged to unions. The theory of U.S. labor exceptionalism however was not predicated on the assumption that U.S. workers were unlikely to join unions, only that they lacked a sense of class consciousness that would cause them to see themselves as having fundamentally different interests from their employers and that would propel them to support socialist politics. Perlman and his mentor, John Commons, one of the founders of the fields of labor economics and industrial relations, contended that the bread-and-butter unionism represented by Samuel Gompers's American Federation of Labor was entirely consistent with the narrowly focused job consciousness that they believed distinguished U.S. from European workers.

When U.S. workers finally began to join unions in large numbers in the two decades after the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1935, industrial pluralists saw the conservative collective-bargaining system that emerged in the postwar United States as in essence a confirmation of the exceptional character of the U.S. labor movement. The U.S. unions gained greater power, but they did not seek to create a truly independent political voice, nor did they challenge the premises of U.S. capitalism. Instead they focused on winning legally enforceable collective bargaining agreements, which included narrowly defined work rules, improved wages, and fringe benefits, and on providing political support for the Democratic party.

Challenges and New Directions

Beginning in the 1960s many historians began to challenge certain aspects of the theory of U.S. labor exceptionalism, including the notion that U.S. workers had never developed a sense of class consciousness. They brought new attention to the long history of labor violence in the United States and to the fact that in the late nineteenth century, many contemporary observers saw the U.S. labor movement as among the most militant in the world. The failure of socialism in their view was not necessarily a product of workers' contentment or their unquestioning acceptance of U.S. capitalism. Some radical historians pointed to state repression, especially that associated with World War I and its aftermath, as a critical factor in the collapse of what had been a growing socialist movement.

In the 1980s, Eric Foner, Aristide Zolberg, and others questioned the entire exceptionalist analytical framework. They argued that it was premised on the assumption that there was a single model of working-class development leading to the rise of labor-backed socialist parties that applied to all other industrial nations except the United States. Yet they contended that national variations among the labor movements of Europe have been so great as to invalidate the assumption that a single norm of historical development could be said to exist. Moreover the divergence in labor politics and labor relations between the United States and other Western industrial democracies that may have emerged in the first half of the twentieth century seemed to be disappearing in the last decades of the century as European Social Democratic parties appeared to back away from their historic commitment to socialism and unions began to lose power.

While some social scientists and historians have begun to question the validity of the exceptionalist framework, many more have continued to accept its basic assumption of the distinctive character of the U.S. labor movement but have sought to refine or amend Sombart and Perlman's original explanations for the failure of socialism to take hold in the United States. Political sociologists Seymour Martin Lipset and Gary Marks have provided a significant updating of Sombart in *It Didn't Happen Here* (2000). Lipset and Marks discount the importance of many of the factors cited by both Sombart and Perlman, including the constitutional structure of U.S. politics and the early granting of the franchise to U.S. workers. They still emphasize what they see as the pervasive and deeply rooted antistatism of U.S. society and the widely held belief in the possibility of social mobility as inhibiting factors in the development of socialism. They also acknowledge the significance of the ethnic and racial diversity of the U.S. working population.

Lipset and Marks however move beyond most earlier explanations of U.S. exceptionalism in arguing that the dominance of craft unions in the U.S. labor movement has distinguished organized labor in the United States from union movements in other Western industrial nations and was a crucial factor in the failure of U.S. workers to support the creation of a labor party. They contend that what they label exclusive craft unions are less likely than more inclusive general or industrial unions to turn to politics or to support a class-based political party to advance the interests of their members. Inclusive unions seek to organize large numbers of workers but have a very difficult time controlling their labor market through traditional union tactics because it includes unskilled as well as skilled workers. Consequently such unions typically view political involvement and legislative action as a key to accomplishing their objectives. Exclusive craft unions on the other hand seek to control a much smaller labor market and are much less likely to see concerted political action as a key to their success. Lipset and Marks argue that only in the United States did craft unions remain the dominant force in the organized labor movement into the twentieth century. Whereas in Western Europe inclusive unions played leading roles in every nation's labor movement and in supporting the development of labor parties, in the United States the dominance of craft unions caused organized labor movement to adopt an approach that relied on business unionism rather than on a more class-based strategy of labor politics. Not only did the U.S. union movement fail to coordinate its activities with the American Socialist party that emerged in the early twentieth century;

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it often came to see itself as a rival to the more ideologically oriented socialist organization. Lipset and Marks argue that the split proved crucial because it denied U.S. socialism a critical mass base on which to build, while socialist parties in other industrial nations benefited from the support of union movements characterized by more inclusive forms of organization.

William Forbath and Victoria Hattam offer a different revision of the traditional theory of exceptionalism. Writing in the 1990s, both scholars revisited the issue of how the structure of U.S. government may have worked to prevent the growth of a viable socialist movement. Each has separately argued that U.S. unions did in fact initially pursue political solutions to many of their problems, but the U.S. labor movement continually was thwarted by the judiciary's independent power to rule against union interests. British workers, they note, also encountered hostile judicial rulings, but because judges in Britain were subject to parliamentary supremacy, union involvement in politics was successful in reversing such judicial rulings. In the United States on the other hand, according to Forbath and Hattam, organized labor was continually frustrated at its inability to use its influence on the legislative process to overcome the antilabor decisions of judges. This experience, not some deeply ingrained ideological predisposition, led U.S. unions finally to adopt an antistatist position and to conclude that investing time and resources in electoral politics or the creation of a labor party was impractical.

While Sombart's initial framing of the problem of exceptionalism still helps to shape much of the ongoing discussion about the U.S. labor movement, a number of scholars have attempted to reformulate the issue by turning away from the issue of socialism and instead focusing on what they see as the distinctive nature of labor-management relations in the United States. Sanford Jacoby sums up the view of many other historians when he claims that one of the most distinctive features of U.S. industrial relations has long been the strength of employer opposition to unions and the ability of employers throughout most of U.S. history to prevent their employees from organizing. Although the NLRA seemed to have marked an historic change in the ability of employers to interfere with efforts at unionizing, the law's effects proved rather transitory, and the last decades of the twentieth century would see a resurgence of successful efforts by employers to reduce the role of unions in the U.S. economy. Thus both before the passage of the NLRA, and once again in the last quarter of the twentieth century, the United States had a lower level of union membership among its workers than most other industrial democracies.

Even when collective bargaining has occurred, it has taken a form that many observers see as peculiarly U.S. Whereas multi-employer and industrywide bargaining has been common in other nations, in the United States bargaining has typically taken place in a decentralized manner involving unions negotiating with individual employers. In fact the NLRA legally prohibited industrywide bargaining. Moreover collective bargaining in the United States has been distinctive because it became a means of developing highly detailed agreements about working conditions that were legally enforceable, a pattern that was generally not found in other industrial democracies. Labor historian David Brody has called this system workplace contractualism.

Brody and other economic and business historians, such as Williamazonick, offer one theory that may explain not only the exceptionally strong resistance of U.S. employers to unions, but also the form of collective bargaining that became fairly widespread for a relatively short period following the passage of the NLRA. They argue that in contrast to Britain and most other industrial nations, the United States witnessed the development of mass production carried out by huge, bureaucratically organized firms before unions had achieved a solid foothold in U.S. industry. In Britain until well into the twentieth century, manufacturing typically took place in relatively small-scale firms that did not have sufficient resources to build up large managerial hierarchies. These firms came to rely on already established unions to exercise a certain degree of control and supervision over the shop floor. Employers in Britain and elsewhere were also more willing to recognize unions than were employers in the United States because they sought to avoid competition over wages with other small-scale producers in the same industry. Industrywide collective bargaining agreements were one means of limiting cutthroat or unpredictable wage competition. In the United States on the other hand, the most influential employers sought to maintain total control over the production process and resisted unionization as an impediment to achieving that goal. Moreover the large scale of many U.S. firms meant that they were less concerned about chaotic competition with other firms in the same industry and hence saw little need for multi-employer collective bargaining. Once it became impossible to avoid unions altogether, U.S. employers favored a bureaucratic approach to collective bargaining that would limit their workers' ability to challenge managerial prerogatives.

Although a number of prominent labor historians in the 1980s and 1990s seemed ready to proclaim the demise of the theory of U.S. labor exceptionalism, Sombart's question seems likely to generate debate

and discussion for many years to come. Even if other Western industrial democracies continue to become in certain respects more like the United States, the failure of U.S. workers in the twentieth century to sustain a viable socialist party and the reasons for the historic weakness of unions in the U.S. political economy will remain fascinating questions subject to a variety of interpretations.

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See also **Commons, John Rogers; Perlman, Selig**

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

A disagreement between the leadership of the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), representing government workers, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) led to the establishment of a new civil service union, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). When members of NFFE voted to leave the AFL in 1931, a group of disaffected NFFE members worked with AFL leaders to form a rival union, AFGE. Chartered in August 1932, the core of the union consisted of former NFFE members and Washington, D.C., lodges that had not favored the break with the AFL. A third general federal union, the United Federal Workers of America (UFWA), formed in 1937 from a group of suspended AFGE lodges and affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The AFGE's first convention, held at the Hamilton Hotel in Washington, D.C., attracted 42 delegates, 14 of whom were women. They elected David R. Glass, an employee of the Veteran's Administration, as their first national president. Reflecting the significant presence of women in civil service unions, they chose convention chair Helen McCarty (later Voss) of the Navy Department as their chief organizer. McCarty Voss would serve the union for 38 years. In 1935, Berniece Heffner became secretary treasurer, a post she held for 18 years. During numerous transition periods, Heffner served as interim president.

In its early years AFGE had a reputation for attracting managers and supervisors into its ranks. It had a strong presence for instance in the Civil Service Commission, and many of its presidents had ties to managerial or upper-level positions. Charles Stengle, AFGE president from 1936–1939, was a former congressman and secretary for the New York City Civil Service Commission. James Yaden, a longtime national vice-president who served as president from 1948–1950, was the chief of the Civil Service Commission's Examining Division, and James Campbell, president from 1951–1962, had been director of the Civil Service Commission's St. Louis office. In the union's first few years, some of its more progressive members sought to bar Civil Service Commission officials from holding office, but they were defeated. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, at least one national vice-president echoed this sentiment, suggesting that supervisors should not be able to join the union, but as with the earlier effort, it did not succeed.

Although AFGE had only 562 members in early 1932, it recorded rapid growth through the mid-1930s. By 1936, it boasted 37,199 members in 328 lodges. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, membership

rolls once again burgeoned, and the union counted 61,315 members in 1952, the same year that UFWA folded. The AFGE's most rapid growth occurred in the 1960s, due to a major organizing campaign initiated by President John Griner (1962–1972), the civil rights movement, and a presidential executive order, which recognized the right of federal employees to join unions and negotiate on a limited number of issues. By December 1970, the union had over 300,000 members. This number declined starting in the mid-1970s, leveling off in the next decade to 180,000. It rose again through the 1990s, reaching 200,000 members in 1100 locals in 2002, representing occupations ranging from food inspector to plumber to lawyer.

Strategies

In the mid-1930s, young, idealistic workers who had joined AFGE because of its strong ties to the AFL and labor movement felt increasingly alienated by AFGE's conservative leadership. Agitating for the union to use more militant tactics, these members and their lodges soon found themselves at odds with AFGE leaders. In 1934, AFGE Lodge 91 and others picketed National Recovery Administration (NRA) headquarters after NRA head Hugh Johnson fired their lodge president during negotiations over an employee grievance. The AFGE leaders responded by adopting a no-picketing rule at the 1936 convention. Other lodges also earned the ire of leaders when they formed a Committee against False Economy in 1937 to protest President Franklin D. Roosevelt's budget cuts. The union's 1937 constitution stated that the union was "unequivocally opposed to and will not tolerate strikes, picketing [,] or other public acts against government authority which have the effect of embarrassing the Government." From 1936–1937, AFGE leaders suspended a number of lodges for insubordination, alleged ties to the Communist party, and engaging in acts deemed embarrassing to the union. These lodges eventually formed the nucleus of UFWA-CIO.

Like most civil service unions, AFGE focused on improving work conditions and pay for workers, while conceding that it could not engage in collective bargaining. Because taxpayers paid the salaries of federal workers, AFGE agreed with politicians that workers could not bargain with an employer but instead could improve pay and benefits only by lobbying Congress, the representative of taxpayers. The AFGE's ties to management and emphasis on political pressure led it to work as much as possible

within the system to publicize the interests of federal employees.

The AFGE's tone and tactics shifted in the 1960s with the advent of limited bargaining rights. By the late 1970s and 1980s and into the twenty-first century, when government budget cuts threatened federal jobs, the AFGE began to undertake more public demonstrations to promote its agenda. For instance it clashed publicly with the administration of George W. Bush, which it felt was seeking to undermine public-sector jobs and union rights. In 2002, for instance, the administration announced its desire to open large segments of government work to competition from private companies. Under this plan up to one-half of all federal jobs could become private-sector positions. In the late twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, the union emphasized legislative and political action along with collective bargaining. This shift in the union's identity was mirrored by its decision in 1968 to change the name of units from lodges, which connoted membership in a fraternal association, to locals, a name more in line with labor organizations.

This later stress on agency negotiations emerged after President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 10988 on January 17, 1962. This order not only explicitly recognized the right of federal workers to join a union, but also offered these workers limited bargaining rights. It established three levels of recognition—informal, formal, and exclusive—based on the percentage of employees belonging to a union in any given unit. If a majority of employees in an agency or unit of an agency belonged to the same union, the union earned exclusive recognition and the right to bargain with agency heads over general work conditions, personnel policies and practices, and grievances. The range of issues up for negotiation turned out to be narrow, because the order explicitly excluded negotiations over any personnel matter governed by congressional statute, which included pay and position classification. The order also recognized broad management rights, such as the right to hire, promote, transfer, demote, discharge, and discipline employees, as well as the ability to implement any personnel action deemed essential to accomplish agency objectives. In 1978, the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) institutionalized collective bargaining, expanding slightly the types of work conditions and personnel practices open to negotiation while maintaining the exclusion of such personnel policies as wages set by Congress. It also preserved extensive management rights. The law established boards to oversee agreements and protect whistleblowers. By the early 1990s, AFGE had achieved exclusive recognition for 26 of its units. Over a thousand locals had attained some form

of recognition with agreements covering some 700,000 workers.

Yet AFGE felt far from secure as a public-sector union. In 2002, AFGE along with other unions became locked in a bitter battle with President George W. Bush over the union status of employees in the proposed Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Bush asked for the power to hire, fire, and establish pay for DHS employees, which the union considered an assault on the merit system. In addition Bush requested that all DHS employees be exempt from collective bargaining rights as established under CSRA. The AFGE officials accused President Bush of anti-union bias; Bush had previously denied collective bargaining rights to employees of the Transportation Security Administration and to some employees in the Justice Department on the grounds of protecting national security. Eventually Congress compromised with the president, facilitating his ability to dismiss DHS employees to protect national security but also maintaining the right of these workers to join unions and bargain collectively.

Agenda

The AFGE women had a long tradition of setting union objectives. In the mid-1930s for instance, the union came out in opposition to Section 213 of the Economy Act, which sought to limit the number of married couples working for the federal government. The law disproportionately affected women. Publicly McCarty Voss argued that the law applied equally to the wives of legislators, and Heffner simply stated that job selection should be made solely on merit. In the 1950s, the union supported maternity leave policies, and in the early 1960s, Esther Johnson, secretary treasurer of the union from 1956–1970, served on President Kennedy's National Conference on the Status of Women. In 1974, the union established a Department of Women's Affairs to address discrimination.

Not until the 1960s would the AFGE begin to address noticeably the problem of racial discrimination. While its constitution did not explicitly bar African-Americans, it did not commit initially to fighting discrimination, and union officials did not actively recruit African-Americans during its first decades. After the merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955, and the emergence of the civil rights movement, greater numbers of African-Americans joined, and several national vice-presidents and district leaders brought attention to the issue of discrimination. By 1968, the

union had established a Fair Practices Department, and more African-Americans took leadership roles, culminating in the election in 1988 of John N. Sturdivant, who had previously served as executive vice-president. Sturdivant held the presidency until his death in 1997.

In its early years the AFGE's agenda resembled its rival NFFE. The AFGE supported extension of the merit and classification system, lobbied Congress for better pay, including overtime pay for holiday work as well as night differentials, and in 1936 began a drive to set a minimum wage of \$1,500 a year for all federal workers. It advocated for retirement benefits, in-service training and promotion from within, improvements to sick leave, greater transparency in the efficiency-rating process, and employee representation on personnel bodies. Although it suspended conventions during World War II, the union continued its activism, spearheading opposition to the government's decision to move a number of agencies out of Washington, D.C., because of overcrowding. During the 1950s, AFGE focused much of its attention on improved benefits, such as health, accident, death, hospitalization insurance, and travel per diems. In 1969, it helped win amendments to the Federal Retirement System. Starting in the 1950s and continuing into the 1990s, the union undertook a campaign against the growing practice of contracting out government work. Faced with significant reductions-in-force during the 1980s and 1990s, members and leaders also strove for greater control and oversight of layoff procedures. Calls for smaller government starting in the 1970s prompted AFGE to fund programs to fight negative images of federal employees. From the 1970s until the early 1990s, the union challenged the 1939 Hatch Act, which had severely limited the political activities of civil servants. Revisions to the act in 1993 enabled federal employees to run for local political offices without having to take a leave of absence and to engage in partisan activities on their own time and outside the office. The AFGE took particular note of the latter provision, because in 1985 the Merit Systems Protection Board successfully charged AFGE President Kenneth T. Blaylock with violating the Hatch Act for supporting Walter Mondale's run for the presidency.

From its inception AFGE used its AFL affiliation to build its membership and strengthen its legislative efforts. Its changing membership and agenda mirrored its evolving identity as a labor organization. This shift was evident in its growing desire to use the tactics and pursue an agenda traditionally associated with the private-sector labor movement.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; National Federation of Federal Employees; United Government Employees; United Public Workers of America/United Federal Workers of America**

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

The American Federation of Labor (AFL) was the most successful of a series of attempts to create cross-union labor organizations in the nineteenth century. While groups like the General Trades’ Union of New York or the National Labor Union failed largely because they could not withstand the worst dips of the business cycle, the AFL’s emphasis on organizing skilled, high-paying workers into craft unions provided the financial cushion needed for it to remain (albeit now as the AFL-CIO) to this day. Its politics were generally conservative and often aligned with employers on issues like tariffs and wars. This contributed to the group’s longevity by preventing it from being the target of antiradical crackdowns like those waged against the Knights of Labor or Industrial Workers of the World.

The origins of the AFL can be found in disgruntled workers in the Knights of Labor. In 1881, a group of trade unionist Knights, unhappy with the policies of Knights leader Terence Powderly, wanted to set up a national organization under which the officers of the union could be held more accountable, just as was the case with union locals. The new organization founded that year was called the Federation of Organized Trades’ and Labor Union of the United States and Canada (FOTLU), and one of its founding officers was a cigar maker named Samuel Gompers. His union had gained great stability through concentration during the 1870s, and Gompers’s presence on the

board of the FOTLU reflected his belief that the same thing done on a national scale could improve the lot of organized labor in general.

Unfortunately the FOTLU had no program besides a series of legislative demands, and even then it did not have enough power to get them enacted. While 108 delegates from member unions attended the group’s first convention in Pittsburgh, only 18 delegates attended the convention in Cleveland next year. While many believed an organization like the FOTLU would be helpful, few national unions were willing to sacrifice their autonomy to create a lasting national federation at this time. According to Philip Taft, this organization “made only a slight contribution to the subsequent policies and practices of the A. F. of L.”

The Early Years

Continued competition with the Knights was the chief reason that the FOTLU disappeared and the AFL formed in its place with many of the same member unions. The AFL originated at a December 1886, meeting in Columbus, Ohio. Its first president, Gompers, would serve as president with the exception of 1 year until his death in 1924. The founding national unions in the AFL were the iron molders, the typographers, the granite cutters, the stereotypers, the miners and mine laborers, the journeyman tailors, the journeymen bakers, the furniture workers, the metal workers, the carpenters and joiners, and the cigar makers. There were also local unions of barbers, waiters, bricklayers, and city trades councils from Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, Philadelphia, and New York. Ten more international unions joined the AFL during its first year of existence.

The unions that took part in the Federation were of unequal strength. The largest and most successful of these unions, like the International Molders’ Union, could wield disproportionate power over the weaker organizations. The vast majority of them (the mine workers being the notable exception) were craft unions, meaning they concentrated on organizing skilled workers. This differentiated the AFL from the Knights of Labor, their chief rival. The railway brotherhoods, whose membership contained workers who were perhaps the most skilled workers in the United States, did not affiliate because they had little need for the AFL’s aid. While the AFL was an umbrella organization for national unions, throughout its history there were also many locals that were directly affiliated with the AFL because no national union existed in that industry. Part of the mission

of the AFL was to organize the unorganized, and it employed organizers to achieve that goal. While the initial result of these efforts would be directly affiliated locals, the eventual result in ideal circumstances was supposed to be the creation of new national AFL affiliates.

Gompers's chief objective as president was to improve the economic position of the membership of the AFL's member unions. In his report to the 1890 AFL convention, Gompers wrote:

I am willing to subordinate my opinions to the well being, harmony and success of the labor movement; I am willing to sacrifice myself upon the altar of any phase or action it may take for its advancement; I am willing to step aside if it will promote our cause; but I cannot and will not prove false to my convictions that trade unions pure and simple are the natural organizations of wage workers to secure their present and practical improvement and to achieve their final emancipation. (Samuel Gompers, "Report to the 1890 AFL Convention")

While the phrase pure and simple unionism is often used to describe the AFL's program, it is quite vague. What pure and simple trade unionism definitely did not include at this juncture was entanglement with party politics. Gompers's chief opponents within the AFL during the early years of his presidency were socialists who had a different view than he on the question of politic involvement by the organization. But the AFL recognized that even though newly established unions often wanted to strike, such times were not conducive to victory, since new labor organizations were often unstable. Socialists instigated Gompers's defeat for the presidency by United Mine Workers' President John McBride at the 1894 Denver convention for this reason. Since Gompers was returned to the presidency the next year, he liked to refer to 1895 as his sabbatical year.

Besides its emphasis on craft unionism, another reflection of the AFL's conservatism was its hostility toward organizing workers of other races. While the AFL claimed to be race-blind, it did not really practice what it preached. It did not allow unions to bar African-Americans workers, but its emphasis on organizing skilled workers meant that most black workers were tacitly excluded. Those black workers in AFL member unions were usually relegated to segregated locals and were admitted only in order to prevent black workers from sabotaging future strikes. Similar prejudice can be seen in the AFL's attitude toward Chinese workers. Gompers's cigar makers union had been at the forefront of lobbying for the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. In 1903, when sugar beet workers struck in Oxnard, California, Gompers offered to

let the victorious workers directly affiliate with the AFL as long as they denied membership to Chinese workers.

The Progressive Era, World War I, and the 1920s

While many Progressive Era reform groups worked to improve the lot of U.S. workers, the AFL was suspicious of state involvement in industrial relations. Certainly some of this attitude is a reflection of the AFL's constituency of skilled workers, who were more likely to survive on their own than their less-skilled counterparts. However it also reflects a suspicion of government brought on by its hostility toward organized labor. A Bill of Grievances, drawn up by the AFL and submitted to Congress in 1906, included such complaints as the failure to enact an 8-hour law. The AFL also urged its members to be more politically active for the first time.

Faced with this kind of hostility from the public and private sector, it is no wonder that AFL leaders turned to more moderate employers to find some kind of common ground. Gompers and other AFL union presidents, such as John Mitchell of the United Mine Workers, were members of the National Civic Federation (NCF), a group of businessmen and labor leaders organized in 1899. In fact Gompers served as the group's vice-president. The NCF wanted to lower the rancor associated with industrial controversy by opening up lines of communication across the class divide. It intervened in many of the strikes of the era in the hopes of mediating a solution. While it had no luck with large disputes like the steel strike of 1901, it did help settle over one hundred industrial disputes. Another important part of the NCF's mission was to promote welfare work (historians now call it welfare capitalism), amenities provided by management to labor that went beyond ordinary monetary compensation.

Critics from the left condemned the organization as aiding in management attempts to steer workers away from class conflict. In 1905, a socialist resolution condemning Gompers's membership in the organization was voted down at the AFL convention. In 1911, three resolutions not directly tied to socialists (including one from the United Mine Workers, which had changed its position since Mitchell had been that group's president) were voted down. In truth Gompers's membership in the NCF was a perfect reflection of the AFL's willingness to compromise with the political and economic establishment. The

AFL officers remained part of the NCF's board until 1935.

When pro-labor Democrat Woodrow Wilson became president in 1913, the AFL welcomed its new-found influence. While the Republicans had rebuffed the AFL repeatedly, Wilson gladly wrote Gompers long letters. The most important fruit of this relationship was the AFL's support for the successful passage of the Clayton Act in 1914. Designed in part to end the prosecution of unions under the Sherman Antitrust Act, it included language that stated that "the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce." The act was widely hailed as "labor's Magna Carta," but the Supreme Court's narrow reading of the act left workers everywhere terribly disappointed.

When World War I began, the United States was not part of it, and the AFL wanted to keep it that way. But as time passed and the nation inched closer to war, the AFL grew increasingly supportive of the United States getting more involved. Once World War I began, the AFL signed an agreement with the government in which some union workers in defense industries forswore the right to strike in exchange for certain rights being protected. This was later extended to other industries through the rulings of the National War Labor Board (NWLB), which the government formed to regulate industrial relations during the conflict. Whether labor's rights under this agreement included the right to strike was always a matter of controversy; however there is no doubt that AFL unions grew significantly in membership during the war because of the NWLB's labor-friendly rulings.

Perhaps the best sign that the labor movement increased in stature during the war was the new-found respect that the government showed the AFL. In 1917, President Wilson visited its convention in Buffalo, the first time it had ever had such an important guest. Not only did the administration ask Gompers for advice on whom to appoint to certain government boards that dealt with labor matters, Gompers himself received an appointment to a government board that planned how labor would be allocated during the war. As wartime assaults on labor by employers increased, Gompers had the ear of President Wilson. An organization that had once eschewed politics had now found a way to make it work to its advantage.

The 1924 U.S. presidential election marked a significant turning point in the history of the AFL's political activity. Unhappy with both parties for their failure to provide any positive policies to aid labor, the AFL endorsed independent candidate Robert La Follette. Perhaps even more significant than this was the enthusiasm with which the AFL endorsed him. Gompers, while ill, came to the AFL convention.

Perhaps Gompers's efforts were the last bit of energy he had, since the longtime AFL president died shortly after the election. The leadership replaced Gompers with William Green, the secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers.

The Depression, the New Deal, and the Split

When the Depression struck, the AFL began by debating proposals to help unemployed union members. It backed shorter hours to promote work sharing in 1930, and eventually unemployment insurance. The AFL also strongly supported unemployment relief long before Roosevelt became president. The first great victory for the AFL during the Roosevelt administration was the inclusion of Section 7(a) in the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA). Although who suggested the exact language by which the government recognized the right of employees to organize for the first time has been lost to history, there were many drafts circulating in AFL headquarters beforehand. Some unions (such as the Mine Workers) made more of this vague legislation than others (such as the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, which essentially left its potential constituents to organize themselves). To Green's credit however, he did his best to prompt such slower unions to take action.

When the Supreme Court invalidated the NIRA, the AFL threw itself behind a replacement sponsored by Senator Robert Wagner of New York. Indeed AFL leaders met with Wagner to help design a bill that would protect their interests and be easier for the government to enforce. Once it passed, President Green even submitted names to the president for consideration as members of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and one of their suggestions was accepted. The AFL's opinion of the NLRB would soon change, since its leaders came to believe that it favored a rival federation during disputes.

That rival federation was of course the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO, first called the Committee of Industrial Organizations until its member unions were suspended in 1937). From the AFL's perspective, the primary sin of John L. Lewis' new industrial union movement was the fact that it was a dual union even though the CIO's member unions intended to concentrate on organizing workers in largely unorganized industries. Nevertheless the existence of tiny craft unions in industries like steel and in shipyards were enough to make the CIO look like traitors in the eyes of the AFL's leadership. The issue of whether to start organizing along industrial

lines had been debated for years by the time of the break-up, and the CIO unions had always lost. While the AFL technically suspended the CIO only after a 1937 trial, the severe charges that the AFL brought against the CIO strongly suggested that a break was coming and that the AFL was playing for the sympathy of workers who had yet to choose sides.

Peace talks between the two organizations in late-1937 failed, in large part because the AFL leadership was divided on whether to let the CIO back and the CIO itself was too committed to its efforts to want to return. In fact you can make a good case that rivalry with the CIO was good for the labor movement in the late-1930s, since it stimulated both organizations to make successful organizing efforts. The membership that the AFL lost when the CIO union left was more than made up for by 1938. While this did not compare to the unprecedented growth rate that the CIO experienced over the same time period, it certainly improved morale at AFL headquarters.

From World War II to the Merger

In late 1941, the AFL and CIO came together to support another no-strike pledge during the coming conflict. Over the course of World War II, representatives from the AFL and CIO met regularly in an effort to stop labor infighting from harming needed production. The no-strike pledge included the promise that the government would enforce maintenance of membership and dues check-off on employers with war contracts. This meant that the membership of both federations grew sharply over the course of the conflict. The chief problem that AFL leadership faced during the war was to get the administration to drop wage controls, embodied under the NWLB's "Little Steel" decision. This was the cause of many wildcat strikes by member union locals during the war, but in the end the government did not budge on this issue.

After the war the government offered the AFL the chance to participate in the postwar-planning process. The AFL also developed a foreign policy, reaching out to mainstream European labor through its newly formed International Affairs Department. The ex-Communist Jay Lovestone and the AFL's representative in Europe, Irving Brown, also tried to influence developing countries away from Soviet influence. Although many contend that the AFL took money from the Central Intelligence Agency once the Cold War began, the AFL (and later the AFL-CIO) has always denied this charge. Despite its efforts to be good citizens, the AFL suffered a series of legislative

setbacks in the late-1940s, most notably the Taft-Hartley ACT of 1947. The clause in the act that required union leaders to take loyalty oaths in order to benefit from the National Labor Relations Act led to the redisaffiliation of the United Mine Workers (which had rejoined the federation after a fallout between John L. Lewis and CIO President Philip Murray).

While there had been unity talks going on for years, the deaths of Green and CIO leader Murray in the early 1950s meant that there were new people at the top of each organization, leaders who did not participate in all the rancor of the late-1930s. George Meany, Green's secretary-treasurer, assumed the AFL presidency in 1952. Merger talks began with the signing of a mutual no-raiding agreement in 1954. The merger plan, ratified in 1955, solidified jurisdictional lines between member unions, recognized the independence of each member union, and recognized the legitimacy of industrial organization (the issue that had caused the split in the first place).

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See also Gompers, Samuel; Knights of Labor, National Civic Federation; National Industrial Recovery Act

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR-CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) is a federation of autonomous labor unions in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Panama, and U.S. dependencies. The merger of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) created the organization in 1955. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., officially the federation is governed by a quadrennial convention (originally bi-annual) and an executive council. Day-to-day power is vested in a president, an executive vice-president, and a secretary-treasurer. Key federation departments include International Affairs, Legislation, Civil Rights,

Organization, Research, and Industrial Unions. The Committee on Political Education (COPE) focuses on political mobilization for the federation.

From its start, the AFL-CIO's primary function has been to provide support and organizational services for affiliates, especially political lobbying on the national level. Although critics have maligned the AFL-CIO as more of an interest group than the spearhead of a movement, from its founding, the federation has been a conspicuous national force pressing for liberal reform and the interests of U.S. workers.

In December 1955, delegates from both the AFL and the CIO gathered in New York City with the goal of putting a permanent end to divisions that had wracked the labor movement since the 1930s. The deaths in close succession of AFL President William Green and CIO President Philip Murray in 1952 placed in power a new generation of leaders less tied to the conflicts of the past. Likewise by midcentury, a consensus based on Keynesian economics, anti-communism, and liberal reform at home emerged within the labor movement. Since the AFL was the larger, more prosperous of the two organizations, the merger tended to be on its terms. AFL President George Meany and AFL Secretary-Treasurer William F. Schnitzler thus, respectively, became president and secretary-treasurer of the new federation. The CIO President Walter Reuther took one of many vice-presidential slots and was placed at the head of the new Industrial Union Department.

While the quest for unity inspired the merger, fostering harmony between key AFL-CIO leaders still proved challenging. The ambitious Reuther pressed Meany and the AFL-CIO to take a more activist posture, particularly on the key issue of organizing. Likewise A. Philip Randolph, the legendary president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and an AFL-CIO vice-president, led a sometimes frustrating crusade against discriminatory practices in some federation trade unions. When Randolph rose at the 1959 AFL-CIO convention to press his cause, Meany snapped back: "Who the hell appointed you as the guardian of all the Negroes in America?"

Although a general anti-Communist consensus united federation leaders, differences regarding foreign policy also caused divisions. Jay Lovestone, the former head of the American Communist party turned sharply anti-Communist, had become a key advisor to Meany and the AFL leadership. Although Lovestone did not originally head the new AFL-CIO International Affairs Department (a position he took in 1963), he remained a forceful, controversial influence on Meany and others. Under Lovestone's sway, the AFL-CIO maintained a principled no-contact policy with trade unions in Communist countries.

Meanwhile Reuther and others in the AFL-CIO resented Lovestone's heavy-handed influence and pressed for dialogue with Communists and neutralists.

The early years of the AFL-CIO also saw continuing struggles over the corruption/racketeering endemic in some unions. In the late 1950s, congressional investigations into the Teamsters brought the issue again to the forefront. As evidence mounted, Meany moved against the Teamsters. In 1957, the AFL-CIO Executive Council suspended Teamsters President Dave Beck for violating the federation's ethical practices code. When the equally controversial Jimmy Hoffa replaced Beck, Meany expelled the Teamsters from the federation despite the union's yearly contribution of over \$800,000 to the AFL-CIO. Although Meany hoped to forestall federal action by handling corruption in-house, in 1959 Congress passed the Landrum-Griffin Act, expanding federal regulation of internal union affairs. Meany openly lamented that Congress "was stampeded" by public pressure into passing the new regulations.

Frequent recessions, growing concerns over automation, and conservative fiscal policies rendered the Eisenhower years frustrating for AFL-CIO leaders. The federation therefore eagerly embraced Senator John F. Kennedy's 1960 campaign for president and its mantra of "we can do better." Only a month after JFK's inauguration, the AFL-CIO Executive Council marveled: "The new administration has given the nation a new sense of purpose, urgency and hope."

In retrospect the early and mid-1960s were the federation's golden years. The rapid growth of public employee unions augmented union membership even as traditional unions began to lose numbers with the first signs of de-industrialization. Meanwhile the liberalism laced with strong anticommunism of JFK and his successor Lyndon Johnson, who quickly forged unprecedented bonds with federation leaders, echoed labor's long-held political agenda. The AFL-CIO applauded Johnson's War on Poverty and advances in the civil rights arena, although the AFL-CIO resisted openly endorsing the 1963 March on Washington, fearing the influence of a radical element. Meany celebrated the harmonious labor/liberal alliance times as he opened the 1965 AFL-CIO convention: "To a greater degree than ever before in the history of this country, the stated goals of the administration and of Congress, on the one hand, and of the labor movement on the other are practically identical."

During this era, the federation also expanded its foreign operations, working ever closer with the U.S. government, especially Kennedy's Agency for International Development (AID). Since World War II in fact, both the AFL and CIO had established an increasingly strong international presence as part of

their campaign against the perceived threat of communism. Beginning first in Western Europe then expanding to the Third World, labor operatives worked around the globe, sometimes closely with the CIA. Lovestone and other federation officials maintained close ties to the CIA well into the 1980s. Encouraged by Lovestone the federation founded in 1962 the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) to support anti-Communist trade unionism in Latin America. Two years later the federation christened the African Labor College, and in 1968, it organized the Asian American Free Labor Institute. In each case AID provided the majority of funding, while the AFL-CIO administered the semi-private organizations.

But the federation's stalwart anticommunism and extensive foreign operations quickly proved the source of controversy—especially with the beginning of the Vietnam War. Given its virulent anticommunism and its close ties to a trade union movement in Saigon, the AFL-CIO jumped to support intervention in Vietnam, offering its unstinting support for the war. In response an antiwar movement sprang up at the rank-and-file grassroots level. Among the rank-and-file, polls showed trade unionists as even more likely than the average citizen to oppose escalation and favor withdrawal—understandable given the working-class roots of many of those sent to Southeast Asia. As liberal doves ramped up attacks on the Johnson administration, the federation found itself alienated from many of its liberal allies. The controversial war also worsened relations between Meany and Reuther. In 1966, Victor Reuther, the activist brother of Walter, gave an extended interview to the *Los Angeles Times* in which he revealed the federation's joint work with the CIA. Other revelations quickly followed. The *Washington Post* soon was complaining that “a union which does secret government work is not the kind of ‘free trade union,’ responsive to its members’ will, which American ideals enshrine.”

The ordeal of the 1968 presidential campaign only added to a sense of crisis. Federation leaders were particularly shocked at President Johnson's withdrawal from the race in March 1968. “I don't know how long it will take me to recover from the atomic bomb which President Johnson hurled,” wrote Lovestone to Meany. The federation then pumped unprecedented resources into the campaign of Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, but to no avail.

Meanwhile discouraged by the war and frustrated by what he saw as the stagnant, unimaginative leadership of the AFL-CIO, Walter Reuther moved to pursue an independent destiny. In March 1968, he demanded a special AFL-CIO convention to modernize and revitalize the labor movement. When it

became clear that Meany would control such a convention, Reuther pulled his UAW out of the AFL-CIO. Initially Reuther hoped to weld together an alliance of former CIO unions to challenge Meany's leadership. But even among his allies, he found little support. Instead Reuther turned to the two million-member Teamsters, ousted by Meany in the late 1950s. In 1968, with the renegade Teamsters, Reuther launched the Alliance for Labor Action (ALA). With a membership of roughly 3.5 million, the new organization aimed to re-energize the labor movement, focusing on organization and forging alliances with liberal and radical groups. But with strong opposition from Meany and deep cultural and philosophical divides between the UAW and Teamsters, the organization struggled. Walter Reuther's death in a plane crash in 1970 effectively ended the experiment.

During the Nixon years, the federation strove to maintain its support for the war in Vietnam and to repair ties with its former liberal allies—both with limited success. Having won with a meager 43% of the popular vote, President Richard Nixon hoped to expand his political base. While Nixon relied largely on patriotic symbolism and his quest for “peace with honor” in Vietnam to attract blue-collar voters, his actions often undercut his cultivation plan. Nixon's successive nominations in 1969 of Clement F. Haynsworth and G. Harrold Carswell met with fierce opposition from the AFL-CIO, which could take pride in contributing to their defeat. Likewise the administration's introduction of the so-called Philadelphia Plan, a model requiring contractors on federal projects to make good faith efforts to integrate their workforce in accordance with the local black-white population ratio, also met with resistance from the federation.

As the first signs of inflation overtook the economy, many in Nixon's administration openly blamed labor, specifically construction workers, for rising prices. Nixon's suspension of the Davis-Bacon Act in 1971 and his introduction of price and wage controls that same year further angered AFL-CIO leaders. Meany, despite his reputation as a hawkish anachronism, emerged a leading critic of the president's economic plan. When Nixon appeared before the AFL-CIO biannual convention in November 1971, Meany and assembled delegates greeted the president with a notable lack of enthusiasm (some claimed a notable rudeness).

Yet despite tensions with Nixon, no fundamental reconciliation with liberals occurred. While the AFL-CIO hoped that a hawkish moderate, such as Senator Henry Jackson, might successfully challenge Nixon, federation leaders watched with anxiety the accession of liberal dove Senator George McGovern to the

Democratic nomination. Dismayed at McGovern's foreign policy stance and his dismissive treatment of labor, the AFL-CIO Executive Council voted 27-3 in favor of neutrality in the 1972 election. Nixon's overwhelming reelection however hardly mended fences between the federation and the president. By the fall of 1973, in the midst of the Watergate scandal, the AFL-CIO Executive Council called for Nixon's resignation or impeachment "in the interest of preserving our democratic system of government."

Grave concerns about a weakening economy—with unemployment running at 8.5% in 1975—also preoccupied the federation by the mid-1970s. Facing a deep recession, the AFL-CIO maintained its calls for full-employment policies, including lower interest rates, public works projects for the unemployed, and increased federal spending. Meany particularly assailed Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, as heading a "government of negativism." Ford's veto of situs picketing legislation in early 1976 particularly infuriated Meany, who blasted the president's "nihilistic use of veto power."

But the federation proved unable to recover the political power it lost in the late 1960s. During the 1976 campaign, the AFL-CIO found itself a potential liability for the Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter. Republican Vice-Presidential candidate Robert Dole brazenly suggested, "[I]f Jimmy Carter is elected . . . Meany would have the key to the front door and the back door of the White House." Relief at Carter's election, on which the federation had spent considerable funds and energies, quickly turned to frustration when the new president showed little interest in reversing controversial elements of the Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin Acts. Nor could the AFL-CIO take much solace in the passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act, which was so watered down by Congress it made little impact. Soon Meany was maligning Carter as a conservative. Meany's death in 1979 and his replacement by the staid Lane Kirkland served as only further confirmation that the era of labor power had passed.

Still the election of ultraconservative Ronald Reagan, with considerable support from blue-collar workers fed up with inflation and joblessness, came as a jolt to the federation. To rally opposition to Reagan's economic plans, the AFL-CIO organized a massive Solidarity Day march on Washington, which drew some 500,000 protesters. The 1980s also saw something of a spirit of reconciliation within the labor movement as both the Teamsters and United Auto Workers re-affiliated with the federation. Seeking to improve organized labor's public relations, Kirkland also created the Labor Institute for Public Affairs. A graduate of Georgetown University's Foreign Service

School, Kirkland, like Meany, was deeply drawn to foreign affairs and spent significant federation resources supporting the Solidarity movement in Poland.

While Kirkland could take credit for success in Poland, the AFL-CIO's fortunes at home continued to falter. While unionized workers made up 33% of the workforce in 1960, the figure fell precipitously to 14% by the early 1990s. Even the election of Democratic William J. Clinton in 1992 appeared a mixed blessing, since the new president proved a vigorous supporter of the North American Free Trade Agreement and other free trade initiatives. Meanwhile a generation of activists, centered in the Service Workers' International Union (SWIU), rallied against the lethargy of Kirkland and the AFL-CIO. When Republicans took control of both the House and the Senate in the 1994 off-year elections, the activists felt it was time to move. The next year SWIU President John Sweeney announced he would challenge Kirkland for the AFL-CIO presidency. Foreseeing his own defeat, Kirkland retired in favor of AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue. The reform, New Voice ticket headed by Sweeney however soundly defeated Donahue at the federation's 1995 convention.

Sweeney aimed to bring a new relevance to the AFL-CIO in part by pouring federation funds and energies into organizing and political campaigns. The new leadership introduced such ambitious programs as Union Summer, a 5-week internship program for young activists. The success of the 1997 AFL-CIO-sponsored strike against United Parcel Services seemed to herald a new day for the federation and organized labor. But continuing Republican control of Congress and the defeat of AFL-CIO supported candidates in the presidential elections of 2000 and 2004 dealt severe blows to Sweeney's political strategy. Likewise union membership continued to drop, and expensive organizing and political campaigns depleted federation coffers. In the summer of 2005, both the Teamsters and SWIU (Sweeney's own union) defected from the federation and formed the rival Work to Change alliance. Federation membership, which peaked in 1974 at 14 million, fell to a meager 9 million (representing 54 unions) by 2005. Still Sweeney managed re-election in the fall of 2005 and vows that the AFL-CIO will remain an active force fighting in the interest of workers.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS

The American Federation of Musicians (AFM) was established in Indianapolis on October 19, 1896. The formation of the AFM effectively ended a period of intense competition between the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) to organize musicians, since the majority of musician's guilds previously in the National League of Musicians joined the AFM. The AFM determined that any musician paid for his or her services could be considered a professional musician and was therefore eligible for membership. This new system of inclusion expanded the AFM's membership immediately; from 3,000 original members to 45,000 by 1906, and by World War II, the AFM had become the largest entertainers' union in the world. After peaking with a membership of over 200,000 during the 1950s, the AFM's membership has declined but remains strong at approximately 100,000 today. While the AFM has faced problems common to many unions, for much of its history the organization's principle concern has been the battle against technological displacement. The union has fought primarily to retain steady employment for its members, to preserve live musical performances, and to help musicians reap appropriate portions of the benefits derived from their recorded music.

In its early years, the AFM's primary threat was competition from European and military bands. European bands toured extensively in the United States from the middle of the nineteenth century, and were favored by U.S. booking agents because of their relatively low cost and high public appeal. The AFM, led by Joseph Weber (president, 1900-1914, 1915-1940), repeatedly fought to exclude European bands under the Alien Contract Labor Law of 1885, but the United States Congress continually rejected their case because they considered musicians artists, a category of worker exempted under that law. Only in 1932 did Congress narrow the definition of artist to restrict competition from European musicians. The

AFM had earlier but less-definitive success staving off competition from military bands. Military bands, effectively subsidized by the U.S. government, undercut union musicians with cheaper rates. Consistent lobbying efforts by the AFM eventually convinced Congress to restrict military bands from competing with civilian musicians in 1916, but after World War II the order was rescinded, and military band competition remained a problem until 1978, when the AFM voted to allow U.S. military personnel to join the union.

Through the years the naturally mobile nature of musicians and their work, the frequently blurred line between professional and amateur, and the ephemeral nature of the musician's product has made enforcing union lines difficult. Tensions between traveling and local musicians have risen within the AFM since its inception. In 1902, the AFM addressed jurisdictional problems through the transfer system, whereby a musician working in a new city could get a transfer card, pay limited dues, and play limited engagements. The AFM has tweaked the transfer system over the years, and since 1934, it has included a surcharge on traveling musicians' contracts. The transfer system has been an organizational and financial success. The surcharge has accounted for up to two-thirds of yearly union revenues collected nationally, and musician and historian George Seltzer credited it with the union's early growth in membership.

The maturation of recording technology and the increased use of canned, or recorded, music by the entertainment industry during the 1920s marked a turning point for musicians and the AFM. The development of recording and listening devices, the birth of talking movies, and the expansion of commercial radio changed the means and opportunities for musicians to earn a living. Theater musicians, who formed an important component of the AFM due to their steady employment and good wages, were particularly hard hit. Prior to the 1927 release of the *Jazz Singer*, the first talking picture, movie theaters employed tens of thousands of musicians nationally to provide musical accompaniment to silent films. By the Great Depression, the new movie technology resulted in 22,000 national theater musicians being replaced by just a few hundred studio musicians in Hollywood. The concurrent rise in commercial radio created new employment opportunities, but not nearly fast enough or in large enough numbers. Initially stations relied on musicians playing for publicity. Some used network and recorded programming. Even after major radio networks determined talent was worth paying for, however, employment was concentrated in a few major cities and fell far short of replacing jobs lost in the theater business.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS

The AFM leadership and rank-and-file fought technological displacement and Depression-related unemployment with limited results from 1927–1936. Although the AFM leadership, led still by President Weber, initially believed that the public would reject canned music in favor of live performances, this proved false. The AFM launched an unsuccessful publicity campaign aimed at convincing the public that recorded music debased the artform. In fact the popularity of movies with sound undermined the position of theater musicians over the course of the decade. While Chicago musicians successfully struck theaters in 1927, New York's theater musicians were unable to generate a popular boycott of theaters during the 1930s. Although WPA programs relieved some of the pressure caused by unemployment, by the late 1930s, the AFM rank and file were unsatisfied and turned to new leadership.

In 1940, the AFM chose James Caesar Petrillo to be its new president, largely on the basis of Petrillo's aggressive tactics to ensure employment for musicians. As president of the Chicago Federation of Musicians (CFM), Petrillo had effectively used strikes, and the threat of recording bans, to preserve jobs, force radio stations to bargain collectively and to hire standby musicians, and to organize hotel musicians. An outspoken critic of the AFM's failed publicity campaign tactics, Petrillo argued that musicians who made recordings were unique in actually creating the product that replaced them and argued that the music industry should share profits to ensure live musical performance. In 1942, Petrillo organized the first of two major labor actions under his reign, declaring that AFM musicians would no longer make recordings. The AFM sought to force music companies to pay a surcharge on recorded music, a fee that the AFM would use to hire unemployed musicians to play free, public concerts. Despite public pressure to end the wartime ban, the AFM eventually forced recording companies to concede. The result was the Recording and Transcription Fund (RTF), which required record labels to pay to the AFM a few cents per record, money that was then used to pay for live performances. The RTF was made illegal by the 1946 Lea Act (also known as the Anti-Petrillo Act), which also banned musicians from bargaining collectively with radio stations. In response Petrillo called for yet another recording ban in 1948, one that circumvented the legal logistics of the first. The resulting Musicians Performance Trust Fund (MPTF) eventually collected and paid millions of dollars for concerts.

While the AFM reached its peak membership during the 1950s, the diversity within its membership created new problems. The MPTF exposed one fault line between full-time, well-compensated musicians

and their part-time, or moonlighting, counterparts. Some of the elite musicians and the companies who employed them for instance balked at their recordings being used to subsidize the MPTF. The Los Angeles local was a particularly active opponent of the MPTF, since some of its members believed the surtax encouraged the entertainment industry to hire foreign competition. The disagreement hit a critical point in 1958, when the disgruntled musicians, many employed by national radio and television networks, formed a dual union, the Musicians Guild of America (MGA). The impasse was settled only when Petrillo stepped down as AFM president in 1958, and his handpicked successor, Herman Kenin, reduced the required contributions to the MPTF.

Black union members also challenged AFM practices during the 1950s. Since 1902, with the notable exception of New York Local 802, the AFM had segregated black musicians into separate or subsidiary locals. Again the initial challenge came from California. In 1953 Los Angeles's black and white locals decided to merge, and in 1956 they used the national AFM convention to propose an end to segregated locals nationwide. Petrillo actively resisted integration, and change occurred only slowly under Kenin. The issue of integrating locals was a divisive one, and one that did not break down simply or strictly along racial lines. Many white locals resisted integration, but many black locals resisted similarly, not wanting to give up their assets and fearing that their autonomy and representation would be curtailed in majority white locals. Throughout the 1960s, local activists, and Kenin at the national level, slowly worked out merger agreements in the majority of cities, and by the early 1970s, only two segregated locals remained. In many instances however, locals' mergers did not result in equitable unions, and initially few blacks achieved leadership positions.

The AFM's simple mandates remain the same today as they did at its inception: Securing good, full-time jobs for musicians and controlling their recorded product. For example it remains difficult for many musicians to earn a living playing live music. A 2003 National Endowment for the Arts report found that two-thirds of jazz musicians make less than \$7,000 a year. In addition the AFM has remained active in promoting legislation to secure musicians' rights to their recorded product. Since 1980, the AFM has supported several pieces of federal legislation designed to curb piracy. Considering recent technological advances, such as the growth of the internet, it appears likely that the AFM will find technological changes a major issue well into its second century of existence.

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See also **Petrillo, James Caesar**

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES (AFSCME)

Despite its start as an organization representing less than a hundred Wisconsin civil service employees in 1932, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME, pronounced afs-mee), grew to become the largest and one of the most powerful unions in the United States by the end of the twentieth century. The AFSCME's dynamic growth in the post-1945 period sets it apart from the downward trends experienced by organized labor through this era. The union's success comes from a variety of factors, largely the corresponding expansion in government employment in the twentieth century, and that fact that unlike the industrial sector, government service employment cannot be outsourced beyond U.S. boundaries. The AFSCME's unique position within the U.S. labor movement has drawn on its ability to pioneer in organizing sectors of the economy traditionally overlooked by craft and industrial unions, including health care services, higher education, clerical, technical, and professional employees in both the government and nonprofit sectors. Its power within the U.S. labor movement has also been characterized by highly visible national leadership committed to political activism and a kind of social movement unionism that seeks to connect workplace issues with the concerns of the broader community. This tradition of social unionism within AFSCME is usually associated with the major social changes of the 1960s, although the union's origins date back to the early New Deal period.

Local Origins of a National Union

The origins of the AFSCME trace back to 1932, when a small group of Wisconsin state employees organized to protect their jobs against a wave of politically

based firings. Before the 1932 gubernatorial election in Wisconsin, Col. A. E. Garey, Wisconsin's director of civil service, met with Republican Governor Philip LaFollette to discuss the possibility of establishing a state employee's organization. LaFollette accepted the idea just as Democratic victories in November ushered in the beginning of political dismissals, with jobs given to the victorious party's loyalists in disregard of existing civil service law. With LaFollette's favorable nod, Garey and a small group of organizers put together the Wisconsin State Employees' Association (WSEA), consisting of about 50 state administrators as well as clerical and technical employees. The small organization developed a campaign that called on local labor, farmer, women's, and veteran's groups to support them in their struggle. The WSEA, with help from this coalition of citizens, succeeded in both saving the jobs of its members and in strengthening the existing state civil service code. This early success gained the WSEA notoriety across the state, and the organization gradually grew.

Arnold Zander, Wisconsin's state personnel administrator, emerged as the early leader of the association. Active in the original organizing campaign and the chief architect of the publicity drive to save state jobs, Zander believed that the politicized climate of government employment demanded a permanent organization to represent state workers against the possibility of future attacks against the civil service system. Zander envisioned a union of professionals, men and women in all areas of government service who sought to make their government jobs respectable careers, rather than the spoils rewarded them for loyalty to specific political sponsors. Under his leadership the state organization grew, forming new units and incorporating existing civil service associations and mutual aid groups. Soon after forming, in an attempt to legitimize the association with labor councils, WSEA was granted an American Federation of Labor (AFL) charter as Federal Labor Union 18213. With continued success in membership drives through 1934, Zander was convinced that a larger, more powerful national organization of state and local government workers could be formed. Meetings with AFL President William Green provided Zander with the mandate to form a national union to organize local and state government workers not represented by existing federal organizations. Established in 1935 as a chapter within the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the organization soon emerged as its own chartered union the following year, with Zander elected its first president, a position he would hold for almost 30 years.

In August 1936, AFSCME had 119 locals with just under 4,000 members, expanding to 9,737 by the end

of the year. The union continued to expand in these early years, although its membership rates never equaled the successes of industrial unions of this period. The limited ability of public-sector unions to expand, despite the millions of potential members, reflected the realities of the legal environment faced by organized public employees of this era. Following the passing of the Wagner Act in 1937, new federal labor legislation guaranteed U.S. workers the right to join unions for the first time in U.S. history, leading to an unprecedented upward spike in membership and political influence. Government employees however at both federal and local levels were not covered by these laws. Their exemption reflects a long tradition of hostility to public employee organizations, both by public administrators and most of the tax-paying public. Even in the mid-1930s, the legacy of the failed 1918 Boston Police Strike, where civil chaos erupted after the city's police officers walked off the job, still shaped negative opinions about the unionization of government employees. Although federal organizations, such as the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) existed, along with the AFL's International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and scores of local police associations and mutual aid societies, these organizations lacked the legal rights to challenge power on the job formally and remained a weak presence, both in the government workplace and within the ranks of organized labor.

By 1940, AFSCME's numbers had grown to 29,087, claiming members in 33 states, including chapters in the South and Far West. The largest sections of the union in these early years were in Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and Wayne County, Michigan, all with membership from 1,000–2,000. Philadelphia emerged as an early innovator within the federation, with 2,500 members in the city's Public Works Department, and succeeded in pressuring the city's Republican administrations for wage increases, civil service reforms, and a say in workplace regulations and hiring practices. The typical local however was quite small and midwestern, such as the Davenport, Iowa, local of 48 members. Considering its national membership, AFSCME had a truly polyglot union, with locals representing white-collar employees and such professionals as librarians and social workers, clerical staff of all ranks, as well as blue-collar divisions made up primarily of public works employees. The AFSCME also innovated in the revival of police unionism in the late 1930s, representing 36 locals of police officers in 1946 in addition to units representing employees at county and state correctional facilities. The AFSCME was also known for organizing a wide range of workers traditionally overlooked by industrial and craft unions, including accountants, supervisors and

inspectors, playground workers, tree surgeons and grounds crew workers, life guards, and zookeepers. This broad jurisdictional scope marks AFSCME's membership to this day and largely accounts for its steady growth in the postwar period. The AFSCME experienced modest membership increases during World War II, raising its base to 61,082 by 1945.

The Rise of Civil Service Unionism

For most of the locals that AFSCME represented, the terms of union membership rarely included actual collective bargaining agreements, which were the norm in private industry. In 1946, AFSCME claimed 94 agreements with county administrators, city managers, and councils, 42 of which were legally binding contracts. In most of its dealings with government managers, AFSCME secured advancements in the workplace through memoranda, resolutions, statements of policy and ordinances. The early years of AFSCME are characterized mostly by a union philosophy that stressed the advancement of civil service regulations as the key to better government labor relations, a program that clearly set it apart from the rest of the labor movement. The union's agenda was advanced by Zander, who stood out as unique among the new cadre of U.S. labor leaders of the New Deal period. An intellectual with a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin, Zander was heavily influenced by the urban reform and management programs that dated back to the progressive period. Believing that the government workplace could be perfected through application of scientific management procedures administered by experts, Zander stressed the introduction of the merit system as key to the improved workplace.

The merit system would allow for uniformity in government employment, providing specific rules for wages and pensions, vacation time, promotion through testing, and immunity from political contributions and service that marked government workplaces across the country. As an advocate of these measures, Zander was active in national civil service reform movements, a member of the National Civil Service Reform League, and served on the executive board of the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada. Although largely a technical revisionist of the workplace, Zander was a visionary who sought to revolutionize the entire system and culture of U.S. government workplace relations that had dominated since the Jacksonian era.

The goals of civil service unionism were expressed in the union's official journal, the *Public Employee*,

which highlighted union achievements across the country, articulated union priorities, often with editorials stressing the need for civil service reform. With headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin, until the late 1940s, the national office acted as a major clearing house for civil service reform literature used in education and lobbying campaigns with elected officials, public workers, and the broader taxpaying public.

Strikes by AFSCME locals were rare, though not unheard of. In 1946, municipal workers joined industrial workers across the country in the nation's greatest strike wave, with 43 public employee strikes in cities with populations over 10,000. Certain AFSCME locals had reputations for militancy. Philadelphia's branch was fiery, with sections going out on strike five times from 1937–1944—with even more threats along the way. Locals in Buffalo and Cleveland also went out on strike, putting pressure on city officials by curtailing basic city services. One of the most famous strikes of the immediate postwar period that showed the potential militancy of local government employees occurred in May 1946, when a newly chartered AFSCME local in Rochester, New York, walked off the job for union recognition and wage increases. Following the firing of almost 500 union members, AFSCME reached out for public support and received official support from the city's AFL and CIO councils, which organized a general strike that brought Rochester to a halt. Within a day of this labor holiday, city workers succeeded in winning back their jobs, although falling short of achieving official union recognition.

The union's reluctance to use the strike weapon also reflected the spirit of public employee unionism as envisioned by its founder, Zander. The AFSCME was different from other unions because its interests ultimately extended beyond bread-and-butter issues of union membership to the protection of the wider public they served. Public employee organizations had a responsibility to citizens, not just because they ultimately paid their wages, but because they deserved the highest standards of professional service. This emphasis on public concern would mark the union's culture into the twenty-first century. The AFSCME also stressed citizenship issues in its recruitment rhetoric with potential members, claiming that the control exercised over public servants by political bosses negated the rights of government workers to function as independent citizens who could vote according to their own conscience rather than in accordance with the logic of the spoils system.

Not all embraced AFSCME's philosophy of civil service unionism. The first decade of the organization's existence was characterized by major jurisdictional

factions with competing organizations vying for allegiance of local government workers. The AFSCME's main rival was the similarly sounding State, County, and Municipal Workers of America (SCMWA), which was chartered by the CIO in the summer of 1937. Headed by Abram Flaxer, a social worker from New York City's Department of Welfare who had previously served as a vice-president of AFSCME, SCMWA embraced the CIO's industrial-unionizing tactics, organizing across government classifications, and generally engaging in more militant membership drives that sought not only to strengthen civil service laws, but to gain actual collective-bargaining contracts. Despite this rhetoric of militancy however, SCMWA recognized the legal limits of its programs and instituted no-strike clauses in its original constitution. Strongest in New York City, where it reached just over 10,000 members in sanitation, welfare, and clerical bureaus, SCMWA also had a presence in such cities as Milwaukee, Chicago, and Pittsburgh. A significant split between the rival organizations centered on politics, with Flaxer's organization considered more left leaning. This political agenda was apparent in the formation of the United Public Workers of America (UPWA), which incorporated the SCMWA and the United Federal Workers in 1946. In 1950, following the CIO crackdown on suspected Communist-influenced unions, the UPWA was disbanded. Although the CIO chartered a new union in its place, the Government and Civic Employees' Organizing Committee, the breaking of the UPWA gave AFSCME almost unrivaled jurisdiction in representing local government workers within the U.S. labor movement.

The jurisdictional advantages for AFSCME following the collapse of its CIO rival in the McCarthy era were most apparent in New York City. There a small and neglected AFSCME council was revived by the leadership of Jerry Wurf, a socialist who assumed control of the city's AFSCME District Council 37 in 1952. Wurf conducted tireless campaigns to organize New York's municipal workers, even taking on a city job himself to facilitate contact with potential workers. His bold campaigns and his mastery of the city's media gained him a reputation that helped to secure more members and gain important concessions from New York City government. Starting with a council of about 400 workers in 1952, Wurf transformed the union to become one of the most respected in the city, with 20,000 members in 1960. Wurf's successes would gain him an independent support base within AFSCME, projecting him into a national leadership position that would eventually shift the union's historical course.

The New Militancy of the 1960s

The year 1964 is usually seen as the dividing point in AFSCME's history, when the organization broke from earlier patterns of civil service reform toward a more militant form of unionization that sought to achieve parity with private sector workers. In that year Wurf defeated Zander as AFSCME international president after 6 years of internal disputes that divided AFSCME into two camps. Wurf brought a fundamentally different vision of AFSCME's role and transformed the union into a fighting organization committed to social-based unionism that fused workplace issues with such broader community campaigns as the African-American freedom movement. Initial reforms included an overhaul of the union's constitution, implementing more democratic procedures, tighter financial regulations, and the redrawing of the union's jurisdictional map to facilitate broader organizing campaigns. Wurf also changed the public image of the union by establishing green as the official color of the union. Used on posters, literature, and official letter head, green had long been used by Wurf in organizing campaigns in New York City, symbolizing the spirit of renewal, the symbol for go, and the color of money.

Wurf instituted the most aggressive unionizing campaign in the history of the organization, encouraged by a new legal environment that asserted a new day for government workers. Following President Kennedy's signing of Executive Order 10988 in 1962, the earlier achievement of collective bargaining rights in Wisconsin in 1959, and legal support from such groups as the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Bar Association's Section on Labor Relations Law, government workers of all levels organized in unprecedented numbers. The AFSCME led the way, achieving a remarkable organizing rate of 1,000 new members daily by 1969. The most famous and fateful organizing campaign of the late 1960s was the 1968 Memphis Sanitation strike, where over 2,000 predominantly African-American sanitation workers protested for higher pay, better work conditions, and union representation. The striking men forged ties within the African-American community with church groups and political organizations to place pressure on Memphis city council. Seeing their struggle as a basic attempt at human dignity, Martin Luther King came to Memphis to support the strikers and their families, where he was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Overwhelming national public pressure caused Memphis officials to grant the demands to the workers in the wake of King's death and linked AFSCME with the broader cause of the African-American freedom movement.

The 1970s saw the period of greatest growth for AFSCME. In 1973, Gerald McEntee concluded a 3-year organizing campaign of Pennsylvania's Commonwealth employees, bringing 75,000 workers into a single statewide council that signed a binding contract covering wages and health benefits. This campaign—the largest in U.S. labor history—became the blueprint for similar ones across the country and launched McEntee into national leadership—he was elected as AFSCME international president following Wurf's death in 1981. By that time AFSCME had grown to become one of the largest unions in the country, eclipsing the one million mark in 1978, with the incorporation of the Civil Service Employees' Association of New York. Under McEntee's leadership, the union continued to grow through the 1980s and 1990s, both through new organizing campaigns of such diverse working groups as university employees and nursing home staff and through major mergers with existing organizations, such as the United Nurses of America and Hospital Workers' Union 1199c.

Since the late 1960s, AFSCME has become one of the most politicized unions in the AFL-CIO, forging a political power base through such organizations as its political arm, the Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality (PEOPLE), one of the largest political action committees in the United States. Since 1972, the union has consistently been one of the primary forces within the progressive wing of the Democratic party, playing a major role in setting the legislative agenda and in choosing Democratic presidential candidates. The AFSCME's increased political role, its influence within the AFL-CIO, and its ongoing commitment to a social unionism that addresses community as well as workplace themes continue to make the union a model of twenty-first century unionism.

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See also McEntee, Gerald; McEntee, William J.; Nursing and Health Care; Wurf, Jerry

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is a major national union of white-collar workers that is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). Historically the AFT has been concerned with the problems of elementary, high school, and college teachers, but in the past 30 years the organization has embraced workers in health care and public service.

The AFT has its origins among public school teachers who organized to improve their working lives and the schools. In Chicago elementary public schoolteachers led by Margaret Haley and Catharine Goggin formed the Chicago Teachers' Federation (CTF) in 1897, seeking higher salaries, pensions, job security, and a greater say in classroom management. In November 1902, the 4,000-member CTF affiliated with the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), the municipal arm of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), becoming the first group of teachers to affiliate with a local labor federation. Teachers in San Antonio, Texas, became the first group of schoolteachers to join organized labor when it directly affiliated with the AFL a few months earlier. Other groups of teachers followed their lead. Men and women and high school and elementary teachers formed separate unions that reflected gender differences in pay, promotion prospects, and working conditions among teachers. In the segregated southern school districts, black and white teachers organized separate locals, but in the North racially integrated locals emerged.

As teacher unions began to appear in other towns and cities across the country, Chicago public schoolteachers played a major role in organizing a nationwide teachers' association. In April 1916, after the Chicago teachers' organizations issued a call for a national organization of teachers, eight locals formed the AFT. Chicago became the first headquarters of the AFT, and Charles Stillman of the Chicago Federation of Men Teachers became the first AFT president. Subsequently the AFT was governed by an annual convention and an executive council comprised of regional vice-presidents, but the AFT remained a loose federation of a few strong urban locals. The federation adopted a no-strike policy and pursued their demands by appealing to public opinion, lobbying local politicians, and depending on the strength of organized labor. The AFT distinguished itself from its main

rival, the National Education Association (NEA), by its affiliation with organized labor and its insistence on excluding school administrators from membership. With wartime conditions favoring labor organization, membership of the AFT reached 11,000 in approximately 100 locals in 1919, 1.5% of the teaching force.

The AFT faced persistent opposition to its attempts to organize public schoolteachers. Teachers, it was commonly believed, should be selfless and not pursue their own demands at the expense of the school system and the students. The public expected female teachers in particular to eschew unions and maintain proper decorum and not participate in demonstrations or strikes. Presidents, governors, mayors, and judges argued that the public schools belonged to all the people who controlled the schools through their elected representatives and their appointees. For school administrators to share their decision-making authority with unelected union leaders would violate the sovereignty of the government and the democratic will of the people. As the popular term public servant signified, teachers were seen as servants of the whole public who should not show allegiance to any particular segment of society, such as organized labor. Superintendents suggested that to help public education, teachers should join the NEA, which represented the whole education profession and sought to improve the professional development of teachers rather than a special interest groups like labor.

The World War I years saw a concerted nationwide attempt to destroy the fledgling teacher unions by politicians and boards of education. The onslaught started in Cleveland in 1914, when the board of education announced that it would not rehire teachers who were members of a labor union. Inspired by the events in Cleveland, unionized teachers were fired in St. Louis, New York, and Washington, D.C. In June 1916, the Chicago Board of Education refused to re-employ 68 teachers, the majority of whom were members of Margaret Haley's CTF. In return for the re-instatement of the teachers, in May 1917, the CTF, one of the most influential affiliates of the AFT, disaffiliated from the CFL and the AFL, thus breaking all formal links with organized labor. Facing enormous hostility from local school administrators, politicians, and the rival NEA, which dubbed teacher unions unprofessional, the AFT struggled to sustain itself as an organization over the next decade. During the presidencies of grade schoolteachers Florence Rood from St. Paul, Minnesota, and Mary C. Barker from Atlanta, Georgia, many locals collapsed, and membership declined to 7,000 in 1930. As a result the organization had little impact on local or national education policy.

During the Depression of the 1930s, when public education was curtailed as cities and states cut public expenditures, AFT membership steadily climbed again until it reached 33,000 in 1939. Many public schools closed, and schoolteachers who faced wage cuts, months without pay, and deteriorating working conditions turned toward unions to pursue their demands. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935, which helped private-sector unions to organize and bargain with employees, however did not apply to public-sector workers. In the larger cities, where there was a strong labor federation and politicians and administrators who tolerated teacher unionism, teachers were able to organize unions if not bargain with school boards. The Chicago Teachers' Union formed by an amalgamation of elementary and high school locals in 1937, and with over 8,000 members by the end of the decade, two-thirds of the workforce, became the largest teachers' local in the country. In smaller communities the AFT found it much harder to prosper. While a third of industrial workers had joined unions by the end of the decade, only 3.4% of the teacher workforce joined the AFT.

While the majority of AFT members were found in the nation's public schools, the organization also included college instructors. In the 1930s, teachers in higher education, such as the progressive educator John Dewey, became influential in the union. The first presidents of the AFT were high school and elementary schoolteachers, but in the 1930s, college teachers came to the fore. In 1933, Jerome Davis, a Yale University professor of theology, became the sixth AFT president, and in 1939, George Counts, a professor at the Teachers' College in New York, became the seventh president.

If the AFT gained new members in the 1930s, it also faced major ideological conflicts between Communists and their opponents. With the apparent failings of capitalism in the depression, and the Communist party willing to forge alliances with liberals during its Popular Front period, Communist influence increased in some locals and in the national organization. Whereas the CTU included few Communist members and remained the center of anti-Communist activity in the AFT, the 4,000-strong New York teachers' union probably had close to 1,000 Communist party activists in its ranks. One of the major conflicts centered on the Communist attempt to affiliate the AFT with the newly formed Committee (later Congress) of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The CIO, formed in November 1935 by John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, and other AFL union leaders, sought to organize across industrial lines all the unorganized, including those the AFL had been reluctant to organize:

The unskilled, blacks, and women. Because the AFL remained politically powerful in most cities, the AFT voted against affiliation with the CIO. Finally three Communist-controlled locals, one in Philadelphia and two in New York, with a combined membership of over 8,000, were ejected from the federation in 1941.

The post-World War II years saw the largest teachers' strike wave yet seen in U.S. history and another surge in AFT membership. As price controls were lifted in 1946, and inflation cut into teachers' already low salaries, teachers turned to the AFT and to militant action to gain improved pay. The AFT leadership reasserted the no-strike policy in 1947, but many AFT locals ignored the pledge. The first official strike by an AFT local occurred in St. Paul, Minnesota, in November 1946, when public schoolteachers demanded higher salaries. Altogether some 57 teacher strikes took place from 1946–1949, while only 12 had occurred from 1940–1945. The AFT membership rose from 22,000 in 1941 to 42,000 in 1947, or 4.5% of the workforce. The militancy of the AFT declined as states outlawed teacher strikes and the Red Scare of the 1950s penetrated deep into the classroom and frightened teachers away from political and union action. The AFT continued to campaign for more spending on public education and teachers' salaries by demanding federal aid for education, but a conservative-dominated Congress refused all appeals.

The AFT achieved little at the national level in the 1950s, but at the local level female elementary teachers in the AFT and the NEA successfully campaigned for the introduction of single, or equal, salary schedules for both elementary and high school teachers. The first single salary schedule for teachers was developed in the Denver, Colorado, school system in 1920. By 1931, 22% of school systems used the single-salary schedule, and in 1941, it was 31%. In larger cities where separate salary schedules had long been in operation, there was resistance from administrators to any change that would increase costs and from male high school teachers who saw their higher status threatened. Only in 1943 did the first city out of the 14 with a population over 500,000—Detroit—adopt the single-salary scale. The living costs of elementary schoolteachers rose during the war as greater opportunities opened up for women outside the teaching profession, which dramatically altered the expectations of female teachers and the concerns of administrators. By 1947, 64% of school districts used the single-salary schedule, and in 1951 it was 97%. By 1952, Chicago and Boston remained the only two cities out of 17 with a population over 500,000 that had not adopted a full single-salary schedule in terms of equal pay and equal hours of work.

During the presidency of Chicago high school teacher Carl Megel (1952–1964), the issue of civil rights for African-Americans became a dominant one for the organization. In the early 1950s, the AFT made a concerted effort to integrate its racially segregated southern locals. After its southern affiliates showed little progress in integration, in 1957, the AFT expelled the segregated locals and lost 7,000 members in the process. Although the support for civil rights varied from local to local, the national organization continued to back the rights of African-Americans. The AFT filed an amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs in the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision of 1954, which desegregated the public schools and appeared on civil rights platforms throughout the country.

The attainment of collective-bargaining rights for teachers also became a major AFT aim during the presidency of Megel. Although some AFT locals bargained with their boards of education, the overwhelming majority of public schoolteachers had not established bargaining rights. As teachers saw the salaries and working conditions of unionized workers in private industry improve dramatically in the 1950s, AFT teachers turned to collective bargaining to improve their own position. Many AFT locals lobbied state legislators to pass legislation to allow collective bargaining between public-sector workers and local authorities. By 1959, however, Wisconsin was the only state with collective-bargaining legislation. Consequently teachers began to campaign for local boards of education unilaterally to grant collective bargaining without state legislation to sanction it.

The most dramatic breakthrough in collective bargaining came in New York in 1960. Under the leadership of David Selden and Albert Shanker, a number of AFT locals merged to form the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and campaigned for collective-bargaining rights. In November 1960, 5,000 of New York City's 50,000 teachers staged a 1-day strike, and in June 1961, New York teachers overwhelmingly voted for collective bargaining in a ballot. In December 1961, in another ballot, the teachers voted for the UFT as their sole bargaining agent, and in June the following year, the UFT negotiated the first comprehensive collective-bargaining agreement in a major city. In 1963, the AFT repealed its no-strike pledge. In the following years teachers all across the country, encouraged by the New York teachers, turned to collective bargaining and strikes to win their demands. Between July 1960 and June 1974, the country experienced over 1,000 teacher strikes involving more than 823,000 teachers. By the end of the 1970s, collective-bargaining agreements covered 72% of public schoolteachers. The AFT membership grew from 59,000 in

1960 to over 200,000 in 1970 and 550,000 in 1980. After the dramatic success of the UFT, the numerical and ideological strength of the AFT shifted decisively from Chicago to New York City. From the mid-1960s to the end of the century, every AFT president came from the New York local.

In the late 1960s, when AFT locals attained collective-bargaining rights and became a junior partner in determining school policy and the civil rights movement became more militant, some union locals clashed with the black community. While the newly empowered teachers wanted to prioritize pay in negotiations with school boards, black parents and students in the inner cities wanted them to join in their campaigns for educational improvements. They wanted increased funding for the schools, more say in school policy, more black teachers, and a black studies curriculum. The attainment of collective-bargaining rights also brought increased demands on the union from the black teachers, who faced discriminatory teacher certification exams, were excluded from leadership positions in the union and the schools, and often taught in the most overcrowded and underfunded schools. Because of the inability of the union to address issues connected with the black community, many black teachers chose to support the parents and students rather than the union during disputes.

This conflict between unionized teachers and the black community gained national headlines in the fall of 1968, when Shanker and the UFT called a citywide strike in a conflict with the African-American and Puerto Rican community-controlled schools in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, New York City. The predominantly white schoolteachers wanted to protect teachers' seniority rights and job security, whereas the community of Ocean Hill-Brownsville sought to replace white teachers with black ones. In other districts, AFT locals faced less conflict as they incorporated the black community's demands into their negotiations with school boards and helped to produce major changes in the union and the public school system. The growth in the number of black school administrators, the establishment of a multicultural curriculum, and the introduction of more African-Americans into leadership positions in teacher unions remains a legacy of this turbulent era.

After the dramatic upsurge of the 1960s and early 1970s, the AFT grew in national significance. In 1968, the AFT moved its headquarters from Chicago to its present location in Washington, D.C., to be nearer the seat of political power. The AFT was now one of the largest affiliates of the AFL and a major influence in national politics. Shanker, elected AFT president in 1974, became one of the most recognizable union leaders in the country. With national newspaper

columns and the respect of politicians, Shanker used his position to oppose merit pay for teachers, campaign for more federal funding for education, and promote educational innovations. After his death in 1997, another New York teacher, Sandra Feldman, was elected AFT president.

In the last three decades, the AFT has grown into a trade union representing workers in public schools, higher education, health care, and public service. Approximately 60% of its membership works directly in education. Since the late 1960s, the NEA, who shifted its position on collective bargaining and strikes, and the AFT have been involved in merger talks. In 1998, the membership of the NEA rejected a proposed unification with the AFT. With over 900,000 members organized in 2,500 locals, predominantly in the urban school districts, the AFT's membership is half that of the NEA's. The AFT offers its members such benefits as liability insurance and group, health, life, and accident insurance. Its legal defense fund upholds academic freedom and protects teachers from arbitrary dismissal. The AFT publishes a number of important research reports and periodicals, including *American Educator* and *American Teacher*, and takes an active interest in legislative matters.

Along with the labor movement as a whole, the AFT declined in influence, if not in numbers, since the 1980s. Republican Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. Bush sought cuts in public expenditure and attacked the liberal and labor influence in public education. Criticized by commentators for their self-interest and opposition to charter schools and unable to convince politicians to reform the unequal distribution of school funding, the AFT remains on the defensive. Nevertheless since it grew in influence in the 1960s, public schoolteachers' working conditions, salaries, and benefits have improved enormously, and the AFT has established itself as a major influence in both the labor movement and the public education system.

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See also **Ocean Hill-Brownsville Strikes (1968)**

AMERICAN LABOR PARTY

New York labor leaders formed the American Labor Party (ALP) in 1936 as part of a national plan to create labor parties in states across the country. Although labor parties in other states failed to take hold, the ALP became a crucial third party in New York State politics for the next decade. The party was initially intended only to help re-elect President Franklin Roosevelt and congressional supporters of his New Deal program in 1936 and then disband. Many ALP leaders however wanted a permanent option for New York voters who desired to elect New Deal Democrats without having to support the whole Democratic line of candidates. Several successes followed over the next decade, but by 1944, a split occurred within the party over Communist influence among the leadership, and many of the conservative socialists within the ALP broke ranks to form the Liberal Party of New York. This left the ALP, under significant Communist control, leading the party to support the Progressive party's candidate, Henry Wallace, in the 1948 presidential campaign instead of President Truman. By the early 1950s, the ALP weakened in the anti-Communist climate of the era and ended its own existence by 1956.

The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) leaders Sidney Hillman and John L. Lewis joined forces to form the Labor Non-Partisan League (LNPL) to play a role in the 1936 presidential election. President Roosevelt's campaign appointed the AFL's Dan Tobin to lead the Democratic party's labor committee, and this left the newly formed CIO without a role in the campaign. The CIO leadership believed it crucial that Roosevelt be reelected, especially after the Supreme Court had ruled in 1935 that many key components of the New Deal were unconstitutional. Individual chapters of the LNPL formed in various states, and in New York, such notable labor leaders as Hillman, David Dubinsky, and Max Zaritsky established a LNPL chapter that became known as the ALP. In New York, this party would prove crucial in offering thousands of trade unionists and liberals a voice in New York politics.

Hillman and other CIO officials viewed the LNPL and ALP as one-time affairs meant solely to secure labor votes for Roosevelt in the 1936 presidential election. They wanted to ensure the continuation of New Deal policies, which benefited U.S. labor unions greatly during the decade. To Hillman's surprise, many ALP leaders dismissed the disbanding of the party after the 1936 presidential election and enthusiastically called for the permanent status of the party. They designed the ALP to provide an alternative for New York liberals who could vote for President Roosevelt without supporting the entire Democratic ticket, which typically included Democrats perceived by labor officials as corrupt Tammany Hall politicians. Since Tammany Hall dominated New York State's Democratic party, labor leaders sought this alternative so they could vote for Roosevelt while also endorsing candidates for lower offices who voted for New Deal legislation. These could be Democrats, Republicans, or ALP candidates.

With the major garment unions behind the ALP, the party developed into an important player in presidential elections as well as New York mayoralty, senatorial, and gubernatorial races. From 1936–1946, the ALP provided crucial support in the elections of Mayors Fiorella LaGuardia and William O'Dwyer, Senators Robert Wagner and James Meade, Governor Herbert Lehman, and District Attorney Thomas Dewey. In 1938, the ALP elected its own candidate, former Republican Vito Marcantonio, to the House of Representatives.

In 1939, with the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, Communists within the ALP turned against Roosevelt. This infuriated most of the non-Communists within the party, who feared the Communists would try to prevent the ALP endorsement of Roosevelt's 1940 election campaign. After a bitter battle, the non-Communists put Roosevelt on its ballot, but the friction caused by the episode led to a final break 4 years later. In 1944, most non-Communists bolted from the ALP after Communists gained control of the party apparatus, leading such ALP anti-Communists as Dubinsky and Rose to view the party as a Communist front. Of the founding ALP leadership, only Hillman believed he could work with (and control) the Communists, and he opted to stay in the party. Despite Hillman's pleading with Dubinsky and Rose to remain, the two influential union leaders formed the rival Liberal party of New York, which would eventually succeed the ALP as the leading third party of New York State.

With Hillman's sudden death in 1946, there were no more barriers to complete Communist control of the ALP. Accordingly in 1948, the ALP rejected Harry Truman's presidential candidacy in favor of

former vice-president and commerce secretary, Henry Wallace. In February, the ALP demonstrated to New York Democrats its strength with a special election victory of its candidate Leo Issacson over the Democratic candidate Karl Propper as well as the Liberal party candidate Dean Alfange. This special election victory galvanized the party and deeply concerned the Truman administration. The ALP victory also led New York Democrats to distance themselves from Truman's campaign and focus their resources on local candidates.

Ultimately Truman's victory in November precipitated the demise of the ALP. The party's support of Wallace, who had been associated with Communists and criticized for his conciliatory attitude towards the Soviet Union, alienated many in the Democratic and Republican parties, which had been willing to work with the ALP previously. The intense anti-Communist environment of the 1950s made matters worse for the ALP. In 1952, the ALP attempted to rally support for Vincent Hallinan, the Progressive party's candidate for president, but Hallinan failed to make any headway in the election. With the ALP's 1954 failure to garner 50,000 votes for the New York governor's race, the ALP lost its place on the state ballot. By 1956, this led the party's committee to vote itself out of existence.

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AMERICAN LABOR UNION

The American Labor Union (1898–1905), originally called the Western Labor Union, was a short-lived but significant effort of mainly western workers to build an alternative to the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The organization grew out of the rapid industrialization and growing social inequality that transformed the American West in the late nineteenth century. These changes led to a great deal of labor

conflict, especially in the hard-rock mining industry, which was rocked by a series of strikes in such states as Idaho and Colorado that led to the 1893 birth and subsequent growth of the Western Federation of Miners (WFM). Though the WFM affiliated with the AFL in 1896, the metal miners' organization increasingly embraced industrial unionism and independent political action, opposing the craft and pure-and-simple union models favored by the AFL. Many western workers also felt that the AFL's domination by eastern trade unionists made it unresponsive to their needs, especially after the WFM's bitter defeat in the Leadville, Colorado, strike of 1896–1897, which its leaders partly blamed on lack of financial support from the AFL. At its May 1897 convention, the WFM decided to withdraw from the AFL.

In November 1897, the Montana State Trade and Labor Council adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a western federation of labor. The WFM's executive board expressed support for this in December and shortly afterward issued an invitation to all western unions to send representatives to a meeting at Salt Lake City, May 10–12, 1898. With 119 delegates from a number of western states and British Columbia in attendance (77 of them WFM members), the meeting founded the Western Labor Union (WLU) and elected Daniel McDonald, leader of the Butte, Montana, Iron Molders Union, as its president. Though never an actual officer, WFM President Edward Boyce exerted great influence at this meeting and on the organization as a whole until his retirement in 1902. The new organization endorsed industrial unionism, independent political action and the goal of uniting all labor unions west of the Mississippi.

The WLU grew steadily over the next few years. In October 1899, it claimed 65 affiliated unions in Montana, Colorado, and Idaho, along with one in Rossland, British Columbia. Local unions of clerks, laundry workers, cooks and waiters, butchers, lumber workers, bricklayers and stonemasons, and musicians affiliated with the WLU, though its core constituency remained hard-rock miners. Unlike the AFL, the WLU advocated fundamental social and economic change. In 1899, it called for government ownership of all "natural monopolies," and in 1901, it endorsed the Socialist party. Most importantly it stood for organizing the unorganized—especially unskilled workers—in industrial unions. But it was less the WLU's positions than the fact that it threatened to become a rival labor center in the West that led to tension with the AFL. Fearing that large industrial unions like the United Mine Workers and the Brewery Workers might leave the federation, AFL leaders decided to try to destroy the WLU.

After 1900, AFL organizers began to appear in the western states they had previously neglected, engaging in controversial practices like creating competing unions in trades organized by the WLU and encouraging strike breaking during WLU strikes. In Denver, which became a major center of the WLU, conflict between the two federations was extremely bitter, and in March 1902, the Denver Trades Assembly returned its charter to the AFL and affiliated with the WLU. At the WLU's third convention, held in Denver in June 1902, the conflict came to a head. Frank Morrison, secretary-treasurer of the AFL, addressed the delegates, calling on the WLU to disband or face opposition from AFL unions all over the West.

Rejecting these threats and responding positively to a powerful speech by the socialist leader Eugene V. Debs, who was present, the delegates voted to change their name to the American Labor Union (ALU) and to challenge the AFL throughout the nation. They re-elected McDonald as president of the renamed organization, along with D. F. O'Shea of Cripple Creek, Colorado, as vice-president and Clarence Smith of Butte as secretary-treasurer. McDonald would serve as president of the ALU until replaced by the Colorado labor leader, David C. Coates, in 1905. Despite this continuity of leadership however, the ALU differed from the WLU by claiming a national rather than regional jurisdiction and by encouraging unions already affiliated with the AFL to affiliate instead with the ALU. The ALU also endorsed the platform of the American Socialist party in its entirety.

The AFL now began a major organizing drive in the West, but since its goal seemed simply to destroy the ALU, it ended up hurting the AFL's cause. The ALU grew rapidly for a time, claiming 276 local unions in 24 different states, territories, or Canadian provinces and a membership of 100,000 by its 1903 convention, though these figures were surely exaggerated. Two international unions, the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the United Association of Hotel and Restaurant Employees, affiliated with the ALU, and it grew especially rapidly in Colorado, Montana, Idaho, Washington, California, and British Columbia. Western locals of the Brewery Workers (dominated by German Americans) affiliated with the ALU, and the Brewery Workers' Union as a whole for a time considered affiliation. In early 1903, McDonald established six ALU locals of shoe workers in St. Louis, and ALU locals of shoe workers appeared in Chicago and Lynn, Massachusetts, as well.

Nonetheless western metal miners remained the most important group within the ALU, and as a result, males dominated its ranks as they had that of the WLU. In Cripple Creek, Colorado, for example, just 65 out of more than four thousand WLU

members were women in 1901. And although the ALU formally called for the organization of female workers on an equal basis, not all of its leaders agreed. R. E. Croskey, the national president of the ALU's Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union, for example, strongly opposed the employment of women as cooks in restaurants or hotels.

Although it reached out to unskilled European immigrants, the organization's stance towards Asian immigrants, who faced intense white working-class opposition throughout the West, was mixed. At the 1900 WLU convention, McDonald expressed alarm at the growing numbers of Japanese laborers in the United States and recommended that the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act be extended to all Asians. But by January 1903, ALU members were debating the issue, with one British Columbia activist criticizing the focus on Asian exclusion as antithetical to the ALU's belief that "all men and women are sisters and brothers." In May 1903, the WFM announced that it would begin organizing Chinese and Japanese laborers, and the ALU, though divided, followed suit in June, amending its constitution to read "no working man or woman shall be excluded from membership in local unions because of creed or color." Although such formal positions did not overcome the racism of large numbers of white rank-and-file ALU members, they represented a new development in the western labor movement and pointed toward the more sweeping racial inclusiveness of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, 1905–).

The ALU hit its peak membership in fall 1903 and for a number of reasons, began to decline thereafter. Despite the ALU's commitment to socialism and the support from left-wing socialists like Debs, the main body of the American Socialist party, seeking to work for socialism within the AFL, opposed the ALU as an unacceptable example of dual unionism. The ALU was also hurt by its low-dues structure, which limited it financially. Most harmful of all was the national open-shop drive, which hit the ALU in the so-called Colorado labor wars of 1903–1904. Backed by local employer groups and Colorado's anti-union governor, mine owners engaged in a concerted effort to destroy the WFM and the ALU. Bloody battles, mass arrests, and deportations of miners in communities like Cripple Creek and Telluride brought the ALU to near extinction. Moving its headquarters from Butte to Chicago and turning its weekly publication, the *American Labor Union Journal*, into a monthly in 1904 did nothing to stop the decline. In June 1905, after its representatives played a central role in founding the IWW, the ALU disbanded.

Though short-lived, the ALU occupies an important place in U.S. labor history. It drew attention to

the AFL's neglect of western workers and forced it to pay more attention to their needs. Its call for organizing the unskilled in industrial unions was later taken up by the IWW and the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the 1930s. And its racial inclusiveness, while limited, pointed toward the more sweeping egalitarianism of later radical labor organizations.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Debs, Eugene V.; Dual Unionism; Hardrock Mining; Morrison, Frank

AMERICAN NEGRO LABOR CONGRESS

During the spring of 1925, the American Communist party, under the guidance of the Communist International, prepared the way for the formation of the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC), which was conceived as a forum for addressing racism in labor unions and the workplace.

The first meeting of the ANLC, held on October 25 in Chicago and headed by Lovett Fort-Whiteman, received much attention from both national and international sources. The ANLC was inspired, in part, by the frustration the black and white left felt toward the American Federation of Labor, whose official bureaucracy failed to address the needs of black workers and in part by the desire to use the ANLC to organize the black working class outside the influence of mainstream black institutions. Great hopes were placed on the ability of the ANLC to alter the racial landscape in the United States. Although few of those hopes were realized, the organization raised issues of race and class within the trade union

movement even as it highlighted the politics of white chauvinism within the Communist party.

In May the Communist party held mass meetings in black communities on Chicago's South Side to broadcast its message of support for the forthcoming labor congress devoted to issues of importance to African-Americans. The Communists, promoting themselves as the champions of the oppressed of the world, had a lot to say about the class struggle but were brief on the topic of race and self-determination for African-Americans. The ANLC organizers had hoped that union and nonunion black workers, farmers, intellectuals, and radicals from all backgrounds would attend the founding convention. Despite much advance work preparing the way, only 33 accredited delegates were seated at the October convention, hardly an auspicious beginning for an organization some hoped would usher in a new day in race relations. Black Communists Otto Huiswoud and Richard B. Moore, who had warned the party of the danger of placing issues germane to white Communists in the forefront of advanced publicity about the ANLC, were not surprised. Huiswoud and Moore suggested that all publicity should resonate with working-class blacks, and a black presence should be evident at all levels.

The opening convention foreshadowed challenges the ANLC was never able to resolve, challenges that ultimately contributed to its short duration. On opening night Lovett Fort-Whiteman, a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, drama critic for the *Messenger* and the *Crusader*, and member of the American Communist party, addressed a relatively large group of black and white workers from the Chicago area. Moore, a gifted speaker, also delivered an impassioned plea for all enlightened and radical African-Americans to unite under the ANLC banner to abolish all manner of social and political discrimination, which ended with his reading from Claude McKay's "If We Must Die."

However after the invocations from Fort-Whiteman and Moore, the following days of the convention were poorly attended. Only official delegates, already members of the American Communist party, remained for the business meetings. They had scant success recruiting outside the ranks of the party's membership, and there were very few new black recruits. While the convention did not represent a broad cross-section of the black community, its working-class presence was unmistakable in the credentials of cooks, plumbers, laborers, janitors, and hod carriers. Finally there were no black artists on the convention's program, which featured performances by Russian ballet and theater groups.

Black leaders and the black press gave the gathering mixed reviews. The *Baltimore Afro-American* welcomed the congress; *Opportunity*, the voice of

the National Urban League, rejected the Communist agenda but agreed with the list of grievances outlined by the ANLC. W. E. B. Du Bois and Abram L. Harris, a professor of economics at Howard University, thought it was important to explore the Communist-led challenge to racism on the industrial front. A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, editors of the *Messenger*, were the most vocal critics of the ANLC, using the pages of the magazine to argue for organizing black workers by cooperating with the existing labor movement. Randolph was also in Chicago during October 1925, testing his approach. As the president of the recently formed Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), Randolph hoped to organize Pullman sleeping car porters and maids in the BSCP and gain a place as a full member for the BSCP in the American Federation of Labor.

The *Negro Champion*, a product of the advanced publicity, became the voice of the ANLC when it could find the means to publish. Immediately following the founding convention, Fort-Whiteman went on a cross-country speaking tour to garner support for the congress. He was not entirely successful. The organization was forever underfunded, and memberships remained low, but the congress created more than 45 local chapters by 1927. The Chicago local remained the largest, with approximately 70 members; the rest were half that size.

With the organization in trouble, the Communist party called for a reorganization of ANLC. Fort-Whiteman was replaced by Richard Moore, assuming leadership in 1927 soon after he drafted the "Common Resolution on the Negro Question," as the ANLC's representative, in February at the Brussels International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism. His colleague, Huiswoud, expanded ANLC activities in the Caribbean by using it as a means to help form the Jamaican Trades' and Labor Union. Moore focused on turning the ANLC around. He moved the headquarters to New York City in 1928, hoping to organize the community by building networks around issues that appealed to black workers. He started the Harlem Tenants League that year and found that interest was higher for housing issues than equality in the trade union movement. Hermina Huiswoud and Grace Campbell, two important female voices from the black left, rose to prominence as leaders in the tenants' rights network.

The ANLC never did gain its footing within the black community and was, throughout its short duration, considered suspect in the eyes of many African-Americans. Above all, while white Communists had hoped the organization would serve to pull the black working class into the party, black Communists and other black activists hoped the ANLC would pay

close attention to the interests and issues that resonated in the work and lives of African-Americans. One emphasized class, the other race. The ANLC held its last convention in the summer of 1930, after which it ceased to exist.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters**

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS' UNION

The postal service is among the longest running enterprises in the history of the United States, originated by the Second Continental Congress in July 1775, a year before the Declaration of Independence. For more than two centuries, postal workers have been a microcosm of the U.S. working class. They have been the country's most widespread group of workers—town and city, rural and urban, North and South, East and West—sharing a single employer. They have also been among the most diverse workforces, including African-Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanos, European immigrants and their descendants, and women as well as men. Their jobs have ranged from manufacturing (bags, locks, shipping equipment, and so forth) and trucking to sorting and delivery to window clerks serving the public to accountants and bookkeepers handling payroll and finances.

Despite their remarkable everyman status, many postal workers toiled under onerous conditions for meager compensation. Conditions in sorting facilities were unhealthy, dangerous, and dismal. Buildings were dank, poorly lit, crowded, and unventilated. Wages were low. Postal employees were required to work long hours of overtime without additional pay. Until 1883, when Congress passed a civil service law, many postal jobs were handed out as political patronage or as rewards for bribes and favoritism.

In the late nineteenth century, in the era of the Knights of Labor and the emergence of the American

Federation of Labor, postal workers began to organize. Local unions appeared in different cities, offering their members mutual benefit and insurance features and sought to lobby the government for improvements. There were also a variety of national efforts. As early as 1874, railroad mail clerks joined together to create the Railway Mail Mutual Benefit Association, and in 1891, they expanded into the National Association of Railway Postal Clerks. In the 1880s and 1890s, meetings of delegates from a number of local unions created the United National Association of Post Office Clerks, and in 1906, delegates from seven cities, reaching from Nashville to San Francisco, received an American Federation of Labor (AFL) charter for the National Federation of Post Office Clerks. All of these efforts faced determined resistance. President Theodore Roosevelt issued an executive order denying all federal employees their right to participate collectively in political action or to solicit members of Congress, which President Taft later extended. Still postal workers of all sorts continued to organize local unions, building a base of mutual benefits and seeking the help of the AFL in improving their conditions.

The employment conditions of postal workers remained in the hands of Congress and the executive branch of the federal government. Their situation improved somewhat in the Progressive Era. The 1912 Lloyd-LaFollette Act rescinded the previous gag rules and established the right of federal and postal employees to organize unions. Congress adopted a Federal Employees' Compensation Act for workers injured on the job, voted for the first Civil Service Retirement Act, and provided a 10% nighttime differential. But the Great Depression saw such gains rolled back, as wages were cut 15% and workers faced temporary furloughs. And then Congress specifically excluded them (and all federal employees) from the collective-bargaining rights established by the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. They remained caught between the powers of different branches of government as wage increases voted for by Congress were vetoed by the president, which happened several times during the Eisenhower administration.

Still postal workers sought to organize to gain some power over their situation. Motor vehicle employees, maintenance workers, and special delivery messengers organized in the 1920s and 1930s, joining the letter carriers and the clerks as unionized workers. All formed separate craft organizations however, with little collaborative action. Those who wanted to build a unitary national organization faced not only craft divisions but also racial divides (frustrated by the particular problems they experienced, African-American postal workers had organized themselves into the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees),

tensions between large urban and small town locals as to the voice they might have in a national organization, and disagreements about union strategy. Meanwhile the federal government withheld formal recognition from all the organizations while postal workers' wages fell behind those of other workers and their working conditions deteriorated.

In the 1960s, as public-sector workers at the federal, state, and local levels began to organize themselves and demand legislation that would provide recognition and sanction collective bargaining over wages as well as the conditions of employment, postal worker union activists increased their discussions of mergers and organizational development. In 1966, Roy Hallbeck, president of the United Federation of Postal Clerks (UFPC) and an advocate of United Federation of Postal Clerks—National Postal Union (UFPC-NPU) merger, note, "We have paid a frightful price for disunity." But efforts to bring postal worker unions together failed several times.

The national postal wildcat strike of March 1970 brought the organizations together. More than 200,000 postal workers in more than 30 cities struck out of frustration with the government's inaction on wages and working conditions. Not only did this strike bring the rank-and-file workers and their local union leaders together in joint action (militant, illegal action, at that), but it also prompted the passage of the Postal Reorganization Act, which granted unions recognition and the right to negotiate with management over wages, benefits, and working conditions. Five unions—the two largest unions, the UFPC and the NPU, which represented the men and women who worked the windows and sorted and processed the mail behind the scenes; the National Association of Post Office and General Service Maintenance Employees, which represented those who serviced and repaired the motor vehicles used by the postal service and cleaned and serviced the facilities; the National Federation of Motor Vehicle Employees, whose members drove, repaired, and serviced motor vehicles; and the National Association of Special Delivery Messengers—merged on July 1, 1971, to become the American Postal Workers' Union (APWU). Members of the National Alliance of Postal Employees, the African-American organization, joined the APWU as individuals over the next months and years, but many also maintained locals of their own organization, albeit without recognition or bargaining rights. The National Association of Letter Carriers refused to join in the merger process, and the National Postal Mailhandlers' Union, which was long part of the Laborers' International Union, chose to remain in its own organization.

For the next decade, the major postal worker unions bargained jointly with the U.S. Postal Service,

and wages, benefits, economic security, and working conditions of postal workers improved significantly. The APWU distinguished itself for its racial diversity, its national presence, its existence in smaller towns as well as larger cities, its progressive political stances, and its support of local union newsletters and internal education. By the mid-1980s and on, the APWU, the other postal unions, and postal workers suffered a fate similar to that of other unions in the era of economic neoliberalism. Technological change, the reorganization of mail processing, privatization, deregulation, globalization, and hostility to unions have undermined the accomplishments of the 1970s. Sadly interunion solidarity and collaboration have also suffered despite energetic internal rank-and-file movements for "One Postal Union" and "Organizing the Private Sector," leaving postal workers less able to defend their achievements. As we enter the twenty-first century, postal workers are no longer confident of their job security or that their compensation and working conditions will continue to improve.

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See also **Postal Strike (1970)**

AMERICAN RAILWAY UNION

During the nineteenth century, the American Railway Union (ARU) was the largest and for a brief time most influential union in the United States organized along industrial lines. Although most commonly identified with the Pullman strike and boycott of 1894, the ARU grew out of railroad workers' organizational experimentation under the Knights of Labor (KOL) and a number of efforts to federate railroad brotherhoods. Despite a massive effort by employers after the Pullman strike to blacklist railroad workers associated with the ARU, remnants of the union survived in western states and in the early twentieth century, formed the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees (UBRE).

The railway strikes of 1877 ignited renewed organization among railroad workers. The brotherhoods

of the operating trades were among the initial beneficiaries of this new organizational enthusiasm. With the vast majority of railroad workers outside the existing craft jurisdictions, the rapidly growing KOL moved into the breach in many localities by organizing mixed assemblies of railroad workers, trade assemblies of various shop crafts, and in some cases District Assemblies (DA) of all railroad trades on whole rail systems. The most notable of these were DA 101, which led the Great Southwest Strike of 1886 on the Gould lines, and DA 82, covering the Union Pacific Railroad.

As railway strikes grew in number and scale during the 1880s, many members of the brotherhoods associated themselves with local or district assemblies of the KOL. Such dual unionism was evident on many divisions of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy railroads, whose enginemen struck in 1888, supported by sympathetic shop men, trackmen, and switchmen associated with the KOL.

The Burlington strike defeat led midwestern and western railroad workers more actively to search for a new type of organization that would unite their efforts to resist the corporate rationalization and cost-cutting on highly competitive transcontinental railroads. During the later stages of the strike, an alternative grievance committee formed to widen the boycott of CB&Q cars and form a more durable federation of railroad organizations. Three of the four major brotherhoods formed the Supreme Council of the United Orders of Railway Employees, a federation of national officers "from the top" that gave them control over calling strikes by their respective unions. The KOL on the Union Pacific and the Burlington workers' grievance committee promoted a very different model of federation "from below." Formed in late 1889, the Supreme Council lasted into 1892 when it collapsed after brakemen scabbed against switchmen on the Chicago & Northwestern and switchmen in Buffalo lost a bitter strike. By this time, J. N. Corbin and the KOL on the Union Pacific had been joined by railroad workers across the West in a renewed effort to unite from below. In July 1890, dissatisfied delegates from brotherhood locals and KOL men had held an exploratory conference in Denver signaling their intention to organize a general union of railroad workers. Brotherhood officials Eugene V. Debs and G. W. Howard attended the meeting. Within the year Debs resigned his position as secretary-treasurer of the BLF, and Howard begun actively to organize a new general union of railway men.

Specific steps toward the organization of a general union of railroad workers began in the early spring of 1893 when Debs, Howard, Rogers, and other former

brotherhood men drafted a "Declaration of Principles." They criticized the brotherhoods for failing to protect their members and called not for federation but a unified organization embracing "all classes, one roof to shelter all." Warning that the current methods of organization had "filled the land with scabs," they promised to reach out to the unemployed and former railway men. The American Railway Union was officially launched in Chicago at a June 1893 meeting of 50 men from diverse trades and locales. The initial constitution declared "all classes of railway employees...of good character" eligible for membership, but at the first convention the following year, delegates voted by a close margin to admit only members "born of white parents."

Organizers fanned out across the country and met an immediate and enthusiastic response on western roads. By November, 96 lodges had organized, and before the year's end, the organization was virtually complete on a number of key systems, among them the Union Pacific, the Denver & Rio Grande, the Northern Pacific, and the Southern Pacific. Members flocked from the brotherhoods, leaving their ranks depleted in many localities. But on railroads in the East and South, the ARU had a negligible presence.

Even as the ARU grew in the early months of 1894, two strikes foreshadowed troubles on the horizon. The first in early April involved James J. Hill's Great Northern, running west from St. Paul. Hill's men, newly organized in the ARU, demanded a rescission of wage cuts imposed earlier in the year. Hill's refusal precipitated a strike of virtually all employees on the road, and within a few weeks, through the mediation of Twin Cities businessmen, the strike was settled in the union's favor. The victory ignited a renewed wave of organizing in the West. By June 1894, 456 lodges and some 150,000 men had joined the ARU.

A second strike of recently organized ARU members at the Pullman Palace Car Works in Pullman, Illinois, stemmed from depression-induced wage cuts, lay offs, and high rents for company housing. Although discouraged from striking by ARU vice-president, George Howard, the Pullman workers walked out on May 11 after the company discharged three members of the grievance committee. Despite moral support from ARU leaders and lodges and mediation by Chicago's Civic Federation, the Pullman Company refused to negotiate.

On June 12, 1894, more than four hundred ARU delegates gathered in Chicago for the organization's first national convention. Testimony from a committee of Pullman strikers deeply stirred the sympathy of the delegates. Despite cautioning words from Debs and Howard, the delegates, following constitutionally prescribed procedures, solicited guidance from local

lodges for a referendum calling for a national boycott of all Pullman sleeping cars. The locals wired back overwhelming support, and a boycott commenced on June 26.

The ARU entered the strike buoyed by its dramatic growth, reminiscent of the KOL in 1885–1886, and by the victory over James J. Hill. But it faced a determined foe well-prepared for a showdown with this upstart union. The General Managers' Association (GMA) had collaborated to meet previous strike threats, most notably the general strike for the 8-hour day on May 1, 1886. Its subcommittees went into action recruiting scab workers, facilitating the movement of freight, seeking court injunctions, and mobilizing private guards and local and state law enforcement personnel to prevent strikers' interference with railroad operations. Most importantly, it actively campaigned for federal government intervention, which materialized after Attorney General Richard Olney appointed former railroad attorney Edwin Walker as special prosecutor.

The first few days of the strike appeared to confirm the power of the ARU. Rail traffic in and out of Chicago came to a virtual standstill as strikers refused to handle trains with Pullman cars and then struck railroads that dismissed employees for such refusals. The strike spread rapidly in the West. On the Northern Pacific for instance, traffic west of the Twin Cities ceased on June 28 and did not resume until July 13. General management lost all contact for more than a week with a number of western divisions. Similar patterns played out on many but not all western roads. The CB&Q had seen only limited recovery of union activity since the bitter 1888 enginemen's strike. Most of the members of the largely secret ARU locals on that road were discharged with the onset of strike activity.

Beginning on July 2, the special prosecutor issued a series of blanket injunctions that prohibited strikers from interfering with the movement of trains. Following the deployment of federal troops on July 4 to enforce the injunctions, the ARU faced a formidable challenge. Violence erupted on a scale not seen during the early days of the strike. In Chicago alone, 13 people were killed and 53 seriously wounded before the strike was declared over. Strike leaders, including Debs, Howard, Keliher, and Rogers, were indicted by a grand jury on July 10 for conspiracy to interfere with interstate commerce and the mails and promptly arrested. At meetings in Briggs House, ARU leaders had tried unsuccessfully to enlist leaders of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and their members in a general strike to pressure Pullman and the GMA to settle.

Although ARU members had disrupted rail traffic throughout the West and enjoyed broad-based community support in localities as far flung as Raton, New Mexico, Sacramento, California, Ogden, Utah, and Glendive, Montana, the combination of federal injunctions and aggressive actions by federal troops gradually restored rail service to even the most remote divisions. The arrest of strike leaders interrupted ARU communications and left many locals isolated. By the last week in July, strike activity had largely ceased and on August 2, ARU delegates hastily gathered in Chicago to call off the strike.

In September, Debs and his fellow ARU directors were tried on contempt of court charges for violating injunctions based on the Sherman Anti-trust Act's prohibition of "combinations or conspiracies in restraint of trade." On December 14, Judge William A. Woods announced their conviction. The defendants would serve terms ranging from 3–6 months in the Woodstock, Illinois, jail, commencing January 8, 1895.

The *Railway Times* reported some renewal of ARU organizing activity in the West during 1895. But the incarceration of the union's leaders and the impact of the blacklist on ARU activists took a serious toll. On July 15, 1897, two-dozen ARU delegates gathered in Chicago and at Debs' urging, voted to dissolve the union and create a new political organization—the Social Democracy of America. The controversial decision left some western railroad men frustrated and others divided over whether to pursue the new organization's goals through founding western cooperative colonies for blacklisted workers or more conventional political action.

Some former ARU members formed the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees in 1901. By 1903, its official organ, the *Railway Employees' Journal* listed 56 lodges active in the Far West and Texas. Denied affiliation with the AFL, the UBRE eventually joined the American Labor Union and in 1905, the Industrial Workers of the World.

SHELTON STROMQUIST

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See also **Knights of Labor; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)**

AMERICAN STANDARD OF LIVING

The “American standard of living” has been a keyword of the labor movement in the United States since shortly after the Civil War. Although they rarely defined the American standard of living, workers and their allies generally invoked the term to refer to the dignity of the U.S. laborer in a time of transition. As the reality for U.S. workers shifted from independent proprietorship to wage-labor employment, the American standard, like the parallel concept of the living wage, provided a means for workers to link economic demands to political rights. Proponents of the American standard did this by claiming that a high level of consumption was necessary for working-class Americans to experience full citizenship in the republic.

A parallel discourse about the American standard of living was carried out in the late nineteenth century by the first generation of labor statisticians, notably Carroll Wright, the longtime head of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor (1873–1888) and the United States Bureau and Department of Labor (1885–1905). For these statisticians, the American standard of living was something quantifiable; a scientific measure of how U.S. workers lived, based on survey, wage, budget, and interview data. These statistical measures contributed to the Progressive Era attempt in many states to set a minimum wage for workers.

According to its advocates in the labor movement, the American standard should have been a reflection of the dignity of U.S. laborers, who in the “producerist” thinking shared by most Americans in the nineteenth century, lay at the heart of the republic. Workers understood the American standard as the just reward of their labor. They did not shy away from specifying what this meant in material terms, holding up contemporary standards of luxury as properly within the purview of U.S. producers. The American mechanic, according to George McNeill, the New England trade union leader and writer, should have “a parlor with a carpet on it, a mantelpiece with ornaments on it, pictures on the wall, books on the tables, kitchens with facilities” (Lawrence

Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). Similarly the mine workers’ leader John Mitchell wrote in 1898 that American workers should be able to purchase “a comfortable house of at least six rooms,” which contained a bathroom, good sanitary plumbing, parlor, dining room, kitchen, sleeping rooms, carpets, pictures, books and furniture (quoted in Alice Kessler-Harris, *A Woman’s Wage: Historical Meanings and Social Consequences*, 1990). Other labor leaders incorporated symbols of modern consumerism—recreational opportunities, home ownership—into their definitions of the American standard.

Proponents of the American standard posited a correlation between character and desires. They defined the American standard as the quality of having many wants as well as the means to fulfill them. The worker who possessed the American standard could actually help to set the wage rate by consenting only to high-paying jobs. The activist and one-time Massachusetts gubernatorial candidate Edwin Chamberlin, like many other labor reformers, concluded that “the greater the wants, the higher the wages” (quoted in Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). In making this claim, they reversed the view that income determined one’s proper level of consumption. Instead they posited that wants were a good in and of themselves; a reflection of a proud workforce and a spur to demands for higher wages.

According to its champions, U.S. workers were characterized by a high level of consumption and an ever-increasing desire for, in the famous words of Samuel Gompers, the American Federation of Labor leader, more. “The American Standard of Living in the year 1903 is a different, a better and higher standard than the American Standard of Living in the year 1803,” claimed John Mitchell (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). Just as living wage advocates were leery of setting an absolute measurement of what this entailed for fear that “the minimum would become the maximum,” proponents of the American standard of living understood it as a level of consumption that would continually increase.

High standards redounded to the benefit of the entire working class and the nation as a whole. This meant, according to proponents, that old ideas that equated thrift with virtue would need to be updated. In the new era of wage labor, high standards of living and high levels of consumption were better indicators of virtue and solidarity than excessive economy. The American standard of living would ensure that the nation’s workers were comfortable, politically active, and through their power as consumers, willing and able to assist their fellow workers. Rather than peons to thrift, promoters of the American standard saw it as their duty to highlight the social benefits of

consumption. As the worker A. S. Leitch wrote in 1887, “The wage workers’ extravagance is the wage-workers’ salvation....Suppose all workingmen of the United States...at a certain time conclude to squander no more of their earnings in the purchase of tobacco—thousands of tobacco workers would soon go hungry. Or beer: the brewers would be ruined. To shut down on ‘superfluous luxuries’ of books and papers, the printers would get a tough deal.” Leitch concluded with a defense of working-class extravagance, which gives employment to thousands of our brother wage slaves by means of which they gain a livelihood and provide the comfort that workers needed to exercise virtue and citizenship (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997).

From the beginning, national identity was critical to the meaning of the American standard. Proponents of the American standard held that as the labor intellectual Ira Steward said in the 1870s, low wages were “eminently un-American” and conversely, good wages were as integral to the success of American democracy as the “frequency and freedom of elections.” (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). Connecting consumption to patriotism, American workers argued that a high standard of living was necessary in a country newly dominated by wage earners rather than farmers and small producers. “In a political sense, the high standard of living is a chief requirement for the preservation of republican institutions,” as one working-class group claimed in 1888. “And it is a public duty of the most sacred kind to protect the workingmen of the country . . . to secure a high standard of living.” “The safeguarding of liberty and virtue” was not merely a political matter; workers could not ensure these without an expansive level of consumption (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). In order to maintain a “self-governing Republic,” the Anthracite Coal Commission declared several decades later, “all American wage earners have a fundamental economic right to at least a living wage, or an American standard of living” (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). Typically this justification for a high standard of living was political as much as economic: Without it “there could not be an intelligent and sound citizenship.”

The language of the American standard served a function analogous to the earlier republican language of virtue. Possessing the American standard would allow wage workers to fight injustice in the form of low wages and long hours, just as virtue enabled antebellum artisans to fight it in other forms, such as the concentration of political power. An unjust economy however would ensure that the American standard could not be perpetuated. Like virtue, it was a quality reciprocally linked to economic and political life. Its presence was a symbol of a healthy republic, its

absence a telltale sign of danger. As the labor leaders who contributed to the *Voice of Labor* noted, “The wage earners’ standard of living, which rests so largely upon the wages received and upon the hours of labor, determines the physical, mental and moral foundations of the masses upon which the structure of American institutions must rest” (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997).

Another political aspect of the American standard was the connection it drew between high wages and national identity. Whereas previously labor had argued that the United States was distinct from other countries because of the sovereignty of its large class of small producers, in the late nineteenth century, it began to argue that America’s high standards set it apart. This led to a new category of American exceptionalism: The need for high wages and the ability to consume properly distinguished Americans from others. The patriotism of the American standard discourse sometimes shaded into jingoism and even beyond that into xenophobia and racism. While some proponents of the American standard understood it as a quality that all workers could aspire to, others understood it as being possessed exclusively by white, male American-born workers. The claims of the Texas labor reformer and minister B. W. Williams in 1887 were typical: “The American laborer should not be expected to live like the Irish tenant farmer or the Russian serf. His earning ought to be sufficient to enable him to live as a respectable American citizen” (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). In this view, American workers had more wants and desires than other workers and therefore were willing to insist on higher wages. The labor intellectual and pamphleteer George Gunton contrasted “stupefied peasants who have no new wants” with “the multiplication of wants and tastes” in the American worker (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). Gunton and others described the American standard as a quality rather than a quantity, one seemingly possessed more naturally by native-born, white, American workers than by suspect immigrants.

The flipside of this nationalist interpretation of the American standard was a fear of those perceived as having lower standards of living. This fear often took on a hateful tone, revealing deeply ingrained racist and sexist assumptions imbedded in labor’s political economy. Proponents declared that an American standard stood for national health; a low standard represented a grave danger to the country. If the “standard of living is the measure of civilization,” as Boston labor leader Frank Foster wrote in 1900, low standards threatened civilization. “The low standard of living has produced the degradation of labor witnessed among the Orientals,” noted the *Voice of*

Labor, selecting the group most frequently denounced for threatening the American standard and replacing the American worker with brutes. By equating brutishness and despotism with the low standard of living, American standard proponents highlighted the danger to the republic. "If this standard is lowered," they concluded, "American citizenship would be debased" (quotations from Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997).

By defining the American standard as a quality ingrained in white male wage earners, through years of cultural habit, it became easy for these workers to declare that others lacked the acculturation and genetic make-up necessary to maintain such standards. Not only was the American standard used to separate the United States from other countries, it also promoted a hierarchy within the country. Organized workers wielded the American standard against immigrants, blacks, and women as often as they deployed it against stingy employers.

Being an American wage earner in this view implied a particular standard of living *vis-a-vis* other less civilized groups: "An American will starve or strike rather than accept Chinese wages," wrote Gunton, "because the American standard of living demands higher wages." According to the same logic, those with few wants (paradigmatically, the Chinese) would necessarily receive low wages (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). In keeping with their new political economy, workers ground their critique of groups that threatened American standards in the realm of leisure rather than productive labor. White workers routinely conceded that the Chinese worked hard and competently; it was in the area of leisure that they found the Chinese to be deficient. "While the Chinaman works industriously enough, he consumes very little, either of his own production or of ours," declared Samuel Gompers and a union colleague in a 1906 anti-Chinese pamphlet tellingly titled, *Meat vs. Rice: American Manhood against Asiatic Coolieism. Which Shall Survive?* As a result, they noted, "The white laboring man . . . is injured in his comfort, reduced in his scale of life and standard of living, necessarily carrying down with it his moral and physical stamina." The title of one section of the pamphlet, "Asiatic Labor Degrades as Slave Labor Did," suggests that trade unionists treated the subversion of American standards as the moral equivalent of slavery. While granting that the Chinese were tireless workers, a San Francisco newspaper criticized them in 1901 for their "mean-living": They present the American workingman with the alternative of committing suicide or coming down to John Chinaman's standard of wages and living" (quotations from Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997). In this scenario,

maintaining the American standard was literally a matter of life or death for white workers.

American standard proponents argued that they could not compete with groups that possessed lower standards without threatening the foundation of the republic. They often framed this argument in racial terms. "It is an insult to the respectability and manhood of an American to expect him to compete in the labor market with the heathen of Asia," declared two members of the Knights of Labor. "Such competition is an utter impossibility," since no "American can offer to work for wages so low that the Chinese will not bid lower." Caucasians, Samuel Gompers bluntly wrote in 1905, "are not going to let their standard of living be destroyed by negroes, Chinaman, Japs, or any others." In 1885, an article in *John Swinton's Paper* declared that Chinese standards imposed impossible burdens on American workers struggling to maintain their standards: "Does any one class imagine it can compete with men who live like vermin, whose families cost nothing, and whose food and clothing are but nominal in cost?" In contrast, American workers defined themselves by their elegant lifestyle and expansive purchasing habits (Lawrence Glickman, *Living Wage*, 1997).

In the twentieth century, American workers continued to promote the idea of the American standard, but they sought to make it more inclusive. Rather than using the term as a club against immigrants, by the 1930s, the American standard came to be a battle cry of an increasingly multi-ethnic and racially diverse working class, one aspect of the great upsurge in union participation during the middle decades of the century. As the idea became less associated with labor's particularism and racism, other groups began to invoke the term as a symbol of American exceptionalism. As the historian Marina Moscowitz has noted, the idea became central to middle-class Americans, who sought to define (and partake in) common standards of etiquette, design, home furnishings, and other aspects of daily life. Politicians with no loyalties to the labor movement, picked up the idea, and especially during the Cold War, when the concept metamorphosed into the American way of life, the high standard of living of American workers was taken as proof of the superiority of capitalist democracy. In the early twenty-first century concerns about outsourcing and global competition have led many pundits to voice concern that the era of the American standard of living may be coming to an end. But the idea that American workers deserve a decent and ever-growing standard of living continues to motivate many members of the American working class.

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ANARCHISM

Since its emergence in the nineteenth century, anarchism in the United States has been characterized by the coexistence of two distinct strands of thought—a native tradition that was largely individualist and an immigrant tradition heavily based on collectivism. Deriving inspiration from the writings of Thomas Paine, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau, individual anarchism supported the existence of a stateless social order characterized by voluntary social interactions among the citizenry, the maintenance of private property, and a market economy with wages paid in accordance with the labor theory of value. Based on these principles, Josiah Warren, a gifted musician and inventor who had left Robert Owen's colony of New Harmony in 1827, established the Village of Equity with six families in Ohio in 1834. Considered the first individual anarchist settlement in the United States, the community's collapse resulted not from economic breakdown but from the spread of malaria and influenza. In 1846, Warren founded Utopia, which survived as an individual anarchist community for nearly two decades with approximately 100 residents before evolving into a more traditional village with cooperative leanings.

The primary advocate of this philosophy in the latter half of the nineteenth century was Benjamin R. Tucker, a publisher by trade and the translator who first brought the writings of two prominent anarchists, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Mikhail Bakunin, to the American public's attention. An effective polemicist who maintained an extreme individualist anarchism throughout his life, he vehemently opposed collectivist anarchism, arguing that freedom was irreconcilable with any form of communism and believed that collectivist anarchism's support of the

"propaganda of the deed" (see the following section) was basically morally wrong. From 1881–1908, Tucker published the foremost individual anarchist newspaper, *Liberty: Not the Daughter but the Mother of Order*, which drew acclaim from H. L. Mencken, George Bernard Shaw, and Walt Whitman. When the publication of *Liberty* ceased, not only did a primary forum of indigenous American radicalism disappear but so, for the most part, did the individualist anarchist tradition in the United States.

Collectivist Anarchism in the United States

The collectivist form of anarchism, also known as anarchocommunism, inspired the majority of anarchists in the United States. Promoted primarily by immigrants who advocated the overthrow of capitalism, these anarcho-Communists favored an egalitarian society that contained neither markets nor wages but was guided by the Marxist principle of "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need." Without the existence of the state to administer economic and political affairs, self-managing worker councils and assemblies would be established, with direct worker control of the means of production. All production decisions would be made by these worker organs; community institutions would also be self-managed by its members. Substituting for the role of the state, federations and networks established by free association would link workplaces and communities together.

The roots of this immigrant anarchism in the United States can be traced to the 1880 split in the German immigrant-dominated Socialist Labor party. Although still viewing themselves as Marxists, the dissidents established Socialist Revolutionary Clubs in New York, Chicago, and other large cities as a precursor to the development of anarchism. With the formation of the International Working People's Association, also known as the Black International, in London in 1881, in order to revitalize the previous left-wing internationalism of the First International, the Socialist Revolutionary Clubs, with its strongest base in Chicago, formally supported and affiliated with this new International. At the same time, a grouping of native-born Americans from San Francisco, led by Burnette G. Haskell, an affluent lawyer, formed the International Workingmen's Association, or Red International, and joined the Black International. Finally a third group of anarchists derived their inspiration from Johann Most, a charismatic lecturer and journalist, who re-established *Die Freiheit* on his arrival in New York in 1882. Most of these

anarchists advocated the “propaganda of the deed,” or the use of violence in promoting social change, and refused to work within labor unions.

By the time of the International’s second Congress in Pittsburgh in 1883, Chicago had become the national center of anarchist activity. The conference resulted in a dramatic increase in both membership and activity in the city. Of the International’s 6,000 members in the United States, half were in Chicago groups, with the majority being either German or Czechs. However the Chicago anarchists’ influence was certainly broader and deeper than its membership figures indicated. A Central Labor Union, guided by the International, was established in 1883, and by the start of 1886, the bulk of the city’s unions supported the anarchists. Finally from 1883–1886, the International published five newspapers in the city with a circulation exceeding 30,000.

The events of 4 May 1886, often referred to as the Haymarket incident or affair, where a bomb exploded killing police after they attacked the anarchist-led Haymarket Square demonstration, eventually led to the decimation of the anarchist movement. The aftermath of the demonstration, which was held as a memorial to the two McCormick Works employees killed by police on 3 May when striking for the 8-hour work day, resulted in severe repression against 8-hour strikers, anarchists, and labor leaders not only in Chicago but to some degree throughout the nation. Culminating in the trial of eight anarchists who were found guilty in August 1886 of conspiracy to murder a policeman killed at Haymarket, four were hanged in November 1887, one took his own life in prison while three remained in jail until 1893 when Illinois’ Governor Altgeld pardoned them, conceding the inherent unfairness of the trial.

The Birth of U.S. Jewish Anarchism

Shortly after Haymarket, anarchism’s limited mass following in the United States melted away. The Chicago events also led to the Black International’s collapse and with it, the cessation of most of its publications. Thus by 1887, anarchism in this country had become largely a movement only among Jewish, German, Italian, and Spanish immigrants and their children. The largest and most active of these immigrant groups were the Yiddish-speaking Jewish anarchists, who did not begin to register a major impact on anarchism in this country until after the first massive wave of immigration from Tsarist Russia in the 1880s.

The Haymarket trial led a handful of young rank-and-file workers from New York’s Lower East Side to

form the first U.S. Jewish anarchist group, the Pioneers of Liberty (*Pionire der Frayhayt*), on 9 October 1886, the day that the eight Chicago anarchists were sentenced for their alleged crime. Immediately affiliating with the Black International, this tiny group threw themselves into the campaign to save the Chicago anarchists from execution by conducting meetings, holding rallies, and raising funds for their legal appeals. In addition, from their Orchard Street headquarters in the center of the Lower East Side, the Pioneers churned out Yiddish language literature, including a pamphlet discussing the Haymarket affair, and organized weekly lectures that drew an enthusiastic throng of participants.

Knowledge of the Pioneers’ activities spread to other eastern cities with large concentrations of Yiddish-speaking immigrants. Under the group’s sponsorship, workers’ educational clubs sprouted in Baltimore, Boston, and Providence, while groupings containing both socialists and anarchists began to emerge, the most significant being the Knights of Liberty (*Riter der Frayhayt*) founded in Philadelphia in 1889. Composed of anarchists who had resided in London prior to arriving in the United States, the Knights organized anarchist lectures that attracted workers by the hundreds each Sunday afternoon.

With the continued growth of the Jewish anarchist movement in the United States, the Pioneers of Liberty proclaimed in January 1889 that it would begin to publish a weekly paper in New York, to be named the *Varhayt* (Truth). The inaugural issue, which rolled off the presses on 15 February 1889, was the first Yiddish (purely) anarchist journal not only to appear in the United States but throughout the world. Lasting only 5 months due to a lack of funds, during its short existence, the paper published articles authored by Johann Most and Peter Kropotkin, a summary of Marxist economics, and essays on political and labor events. A whole issue was even devoted to memorializing the Paris Commune’s eighteenth anniversary. However a little over a year later, the Pioneers of Liberty, the Knights of Liberty, and other groups launched the anarchist *Fraye Arbeter Shtime* (Free Voice of Labor) on 4 July 1890, which became the longest running Yiddish newspaper in the world when it ended publication in December 1977. Throughout the paper’s nearly 90 years of existence, it exerted a major influence on the Jewish labor movement in the United States while publishing some of the most trenchant analysis of distinguished writers and poets in the Yiddish language.

After the promising 1880s and 1890s, the Jewish anarchists realized by the turn of the twentieth century that social revolution was no longer on the horizon. Moving to a more pragmatic perspective in fighting for social reform, the Jewish anarchists threw

themselves into establishing libertarian schools and cooperative organizations while becoming increasingly active in the labor movement. By the early twentieth century, they were organizing unions in all trades and industries in which Jewish workers were found, including bookbinding, cigar making, and house painting, becoming particularly active in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). In these two heavily Jewish garment unions, the anarchists took part in strikes, fighting both corruption and bureaucracy.

Consistent with the anarchists' new practical positions, they helped to organize the Workmen's Circle, the socialist-leaning Jewish fraternal order, which provided an array of benefits, including life insurance, in addition to offering various educational and cultural programs throughout the United States and Canada. They also participated in the ILGWU's and the ACWA's housing cooperatives in New York City.

When the Communists appeared on the verge of obtaining control of the ILGWU and the ACWA, the anarchists successfully united with their former socialist adversaries from 1923–1927 in beating back this challenge. However during this faction fight, the anarchists became entangled in the union officialdom, with Morris Sigman elected to the ILGWU presidency and Rose Pesotta and Anna Sosnovsky obtaining union vice-presidencies.

Well-known figures in the history of U.S. anarchism that emerged from the Jewish anarchist movement were Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman. Berkman is best known for his failed assassination attempt of Henry Clay Frick, the plant manager of the Homestead (Pennsylvania) steel mill, in 1892 after Frick's hiring of Pinkerton guards led to the shooting of strikers. Goldman, a lifelong friend of Berkman, sought to Americanize anarchism through her writing and by conducting lectures directed to English-speaking readers and audiences. To this end, and in an attempt to revitalize an anarchist movement flagging since the early twentieth century, she published an anarchist monthly journal, *Mother Earth*, from 1906–1917, when the federal government quashed it. Although the journal's circulation was only 3,000–5,000 copies an issue, it achieved prominence for connecting European anarchist philosophy with indigenous traditions of American radicalism.

Anarchism's Decline in the United States

A deathblow to anarchism in the United States came with government repression during World War I,

which led to the deportation of foreign-born activists, the closing of newspapers, and the targeting of specific anarchist groups. In addition although many anarchists enthusiastically supported the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik government, only later to turn against it, the formation and growth of the U.S. Communist party usurped the terrain to the left of the Socialist party of America, a space that the anarchist movement had claimed as its own since the turn of the twentieth century. Even the publicity surrounding the Sacco and Vanzetti trial and the subsequent execution of these two anarchists during the 1920s failed to revive a fading movement. The annihilation of a once vibrant anarchism in Spain in the aftermath of the country's civil war reduced the U.S. anarchists' role on the eve of World War II to publishing literature and to providing relief for their surviving Spanish comrades.

Postwar Developments in U.S. Anarchism

In the post-World War II period, the ideology of anarchism continued to have a marginal influence on American society. The intermingling of anarchist ideas with pacifism resulted in the creation of Pacifica Radio in the San Francisco Bay area and later influenced Beat Generation writers. In the next decade, *Liberation*, a more or less anarchopacifist magazine, prepared the way for the New Left's arrival in the 1960s. With the growth of the largest of the New Left organizations, the Students for a Democratic Society, its major principle of "participatory democracy," the idea that people should run the institutions that affect their everyday lives, was inspired by anarchism. With the New Left's disintegration, anarchist ideas became associated with the ecology movement; particularly its confrontational direct-action branch represented by such groups as Friends of the Earth. The emergence of punk rock in the 1970s exposed a younger generation to anarchist ideas, although they were often expressed in an openly nihilistic manner. A generation later, beginning in the late 1990s, various anarchist groups became major participants in the antiglobalization movement, helping to mobilize the successful protest against the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle in 1999. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, these anarchists continue to organize demonstrations against state cartels, including the WTO, the World Bank, the Group of Eight, and the World Economic Forum.

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- See also Berkman, Alexander; Goldman, Emma; Haymarket Affair (1886)*

ANDERSON, MARY (AUGUST 27, 1872–JANUARY 29, 1964)

Women's Bureau, Department of Labor

Mary Anderson ascended from her immigrant roots through the ranks of trade unionism to become a union president and eventually head of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. Devoted to achieving improved conditions for female workers, Anderson was the first working-class woman to achieve such a prominent position in a federal agency.

Mary Anderson was the youngest of seven children born to Mangus and Matilda (Johnson) Anderson near Lidköping, Sweden, on August 27, 1872. Anderson attended a Lutheran elementary school before her family fell on hard economic times and lost their farm. In 1889, at the age of 16 Mary and her sister, Hilda, immigrated to the United States to work with their older sister Anna in a rural Michigan lumber camp. Within three years, Mary Anderson tired of her dishwashing job and relocated to Chicago where,

due to the economic decline of 1893, she weathered a number of slack periods to become a skilled boot and shoe worker. Within a year after she secured a job at Schwab's shoe factory, her coworkers elected the 22-year-old Anderson to the presidency of the all-women Boot Stitchers' Local 94.

Comfortable in the working-class environs, Anderson expanded her connections in the labor arena, serving as the union representative at the citywide Chicago Federation of Labor meetings. Her work also exposed her to the vibrant women's political culture centered around Chicago's Hull-House settlement. Anderson credited Hull-House founder Jane Addams with "open[ing] a door to a larger life." Addams introduced Anderson to others working to alleviate the plight of workers, including National Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) President Margaret Dreier Robins, who became a lifelong mentor to the young Anderson. Mary McDowell, the "angel of the stockyards," along with Hull-House resident, Chief Factory Inspector of Illinois, and founder of the National Consumers' League Florence Kelley would also become good friends of Anderson. The ties between Anderson and the middle-class social reformers and their affiliated organizations encouraged Anderson's advocacy on behalf of protective legislation for female workers throughout her life.

Through her membership in the WTUL, Anderson participated in the 1910 Chicago Men's Garment Workers' Strike. During the strike she befriended strike leaders Bessie Abramowitz and her future husband, Sidney Hillman. Anderson helped them to organize and sustain the strikers over the brutal winter of 1910–1911. Although the strike ended with mixed results, Anderson helped to negotiate the collective-bargaining agreement between the city's largest garment firm, Hart, Schaffner, and Marx (HSM), and its more than 8,000 employees. Following the strike, Anderson worked full-time for the WTUL helping to ensure that the workers' grievances were properly channeled through the arbitration system established after the strike.

With suffrage for women on the horizon, Anderson became an American citizen in 1915. She continued to advance the WTUL's goal of bringing women into trade unions by expanding her organizational activities to workers in department stores, stockyards, and candy factories. Anderson and her middle-class allies, including Robins and the director of industrial studies for the Russell Sage Foundation, Mary Van Kleeck, viewed the U.S. entry into World War I as an opportunity to advance the cause of better wages and working conditions for female workers in the defense industries. Van Kleeck became the director of

Woodrow Wilson's new Women in Industry Service, and Anderson served as her assistant.

In 1920, when Congress transformed the Women in Industry Service into a permanent Women's Bureau within the United States Department of Labor, Anderson became its first director. During her almost 25-year tenure, she berated all forms of discrimination against women. As a single, self-supporting woman, Anderson fought to counter the widespread belief that women worked for pin money rather than out of economic necessity. She criticized Depression Era discrimination against married women, calling it "unjust and unsound." A close friend of the Roosevelts during the New Deal years, Anderson found fault with the National Recovery Administration's wage and hour industrial codes, many of which discriminated against workers on the basis of race and gender. Relying on one of the many Women's Bureau investigations she initiated, she found the problems facing black female industrial workers, particularly their working conditions and wages appalling. Due to the prevailing public sentiments, which endorsed racism and sexism, these prejudices were virtually impossible to overcome. She established a special committee to abolish industrial homework that proved much more successful. A long-time advocate of minimum wages, maximum hours, and regulation of child labor at the federal level, Anderson considered the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938 a victory for workers.

In 1940, even before the United States became officially involved in World War II, the Women's Bureau issued guidelines for employing women in defense industries. With the outbreak of the war, Anderson directed the effort to employ women in nontraditional jobs and to monitor their standards of employment, including safety provisions for hazardous occupations. She fought a futile battle to have a woman appointed to the War Manpower Commission. Instead a separate Women's Advisory Committee was established. However women on the committee acted in a solely advisory capacity rather than influencing policy formulation. The Women's Bureau revealed union contracts allowed discrimination against women in the areas of wage and seniority rights. Women's wartime gains were inadequate—they were paid less than men for performing the same jobs, and they were continually denied equal employment opportunities.

Anderson felt that the Women's Bureau's most important accomplishment under her administration were the reports published regarding the conditions of women's employment, including wages and hours in 32 states. Anderson proved adept at circumventing the government bureaucracy to, in Assistant Secretary of Labor Esther Peterson's words, "give working

women a voice in government." Anderson's greatest desire was to achieve equal pay for equal work for women. Anderson retired from her official position "tired and discouraged," when Roosevelt's Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins, failed to support the Bureau's programs financially and refused to cooperate with Anderson. After her retirement in 1944, she devoted much of her time to writing her memoirs and occasionally guest speaking at various labor-related functions. Anderson died in 1964 at the age of 92, one year after the Equal Pay Act passed into law.

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See also **Department of Labor; Women's Bureau**

ANTEBELLUM ERA

The labor movement in the antebellum United States unfolded in a broader economic, political, and demographic context that at once encouraged and discouraged trade unionism. Such contradictory tendencies gave the early labor movement its peculiar shape. This essay will sketch out that context before moving on to the labor movement itself.

Industrial transformation, bolstered by the Embargo of European imports in the War of 1828, developed its own momentum in the 1820s. It gave rise to two distinctive workplaces, the factory and the outworking system. The modernized factory had a limited compass that embraced a few pursuits, namely the production of cotton and woolen cloth and the making of iron and iron implements. Iron mills scattered in the Northeast through the countryside in small, remote towns near iron deposits; textile factories in New England bunched on inland streams, notably in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, as well as Waltham and Lowell, Massachusetts. Textiles proved to be the most advanced industry in the nation, marked as it was by relatively large factories with up to 50 workers, powered by water wheels, and equipped with the latest machines. The firms tended to be incorporated businesses with managerial hierarchies that included foremen and supervisors who directed a unique work force consisting of families, as in Rhode

Island, or single women in their late teens to early twenties, as in Massachusetts, recruited from hard-scrabble farms nestled in the New England countryside. The women were subjected to a paternalistic order, living two or three to a room in dormitories managed by matronly women who encouraged church attendance and enforced nightly curfews. Such control was supposed to shield the women in Lowell and other such places from gritty industrialism, popularly associated with the degraded labor in the “dark and satanic mills” in England. Lowell’s workforce would be different. The women were not only protected; they were also expected to be temporary workers who would leave the mills after earning enough money to help parents pay off mortgages, send brothers to college, or accumulate dowries in order to improve their own marriage prospects. And for a time it worked. The women earned relatively high wages and benefited from the relatively light hand of paternalistic management, which not only saw to it that they were housed and fed but also allowed episodic trips home to care for ailing parents or do their part for the spring planting or fall harvest. It also helped that most had abbreviated careers in the mills, working two or three years before trading wage labor for marriage and child rearing.

Many more women and most men did not work in factories before the 1850s. They either toiled at home as outworkers in various trades under the putting-out system; men worked in smallish shops. Historians used to believe that the transformation of craftwork into specialized tasks coincided with the advent of Jacksonian Democracy. More recent work indicates specialization, the solvent of craft work before the application of machine technology, began around the time of the Revolution; it accelerated substantially however in the 1820s with the onset of the Transportation revolution, which pried open new markets throughout the North and West. Employers out to tap such markets increased production by reorganizing labor and introducing hand tools, not by using machines or herding workers into factories. Shoemaking for instance was transformed from three basic tasks—cutting leather into tops and bottoms, sewing the tops, and affixing the tops to bottoms—into 40 or so different steps before the sewing machine was adapted to leather in the mid-1840s. It was only in the early 1850s that factories appeared in shoemaking and other trades. For the greater part of the antebellum period, shoemakers and other tradesmen worked in shops with under a dozen workers in which labor relations were intensely personal and equally supple.

Small shops cleaved neatly into two groups depending largely on the trade. In the luxury trades of jewelry making or the higher end of crafts otherwise

in decline, workers carried on pretty much as they had in the past, learning their trades through apprentice training, or on-the-job instruction, and deliberately making custom goods on relatively casual work schedules. Relations between employer and employee at this level of production remained comparatively harmonious. Other workplaces degenerated into early-day sweatshops in which workers churned out standard items, doing specialized tasks under the strict supervision of foremen or employers. Some historians characterize this as “the drive system,” a regime featuring strict control from above.

The harsh social relations of the sweatshop made fertile ground for unionization. Such workplaces after all prevailed in trades with long conventions of labor relations in which journeymen, as early employers were called, plied craft skills and had enjoyed some autonomy. At the same time however, deteriorating conditions were mitigated some by the fluidity of the social order of the handicrafts. Journeymen still aspired to setting up on their own across a wide spectrum of crafts, and relatively low start-up costs made for easy entry to ownership. The line between master and journeyman, employer and employee, remained porous through this period. The old adage of “today’s journeyman, tomorrow’s master,” still applied, softening labor relations in the crafts.

A form of ambiguity also characterized the early workforce itself. What the historian Herbert Gutman once called “the first American working class” was ethnically and racially homogenous. The vast majority were native-born Americans of American or English stock before the great influx of Irish and German immigrants after the turn of the 1840s. Thus in the 1820s, under 10,000 immigrants arrived from Europe, and only 143,000 came a decade later when the labor movement thrived; the total soared to 600,000 in the 1840s and leapt upward again to 1.7 million in the 1850s due to the Irish famine and political turmoil in Germany. Though we are accustomed to associating the great influx from 1845–1855 with the famine generation, the fact is that nearly as many Germans arrived as Irish. Irish immigrants, impoverished former peasants and land laborers, entered the workforce at the bottom, forming the vast army of unskilled labor on construction sites, canal diggings, and wharves and docks. Some would find work at semiskilled tasks in the lower end of tailoring and shoemaking. The Germans by contrast carried craft skills with them and were found in a broad array of trades in their new home. For their part African-Americans were few in number—Philadelphia’s black population of 20,000 in 1850 being the largest in the North—and most of them concentrated in unskilled labor in and around waterfronts in eastern port cities. As a result the ethnic

tensions that would divide group against group were largely absent before the 1850s when Irish and German immigrants all but took over the bastardized crafts in New York and Philadelphia and to a lesser extent in Boston. If ethnic uniformity eased the task of labor organization, geographic mobility complicated it. Study after study of cities and towns in this period demonstrates that working people were footloose, moving from place to place at a dizzying pace. The majority of workers at the start of a decade in one place simply up and left by the start of the next one. No one believes that such sojourners sought fortunes or the fabled opportunities on the frontier; instead most left one city or town for another. Such geographic volatility thwarted labor organization, making it extremely difficult for workers to maintain their organizations over time. Very few nations, the evidence suggests, had such a mobile working class.

Nor did many industrializing nations develop along the same political lines as the United States. In Europe, and more particularly in England, the working class developed in a context of political repression in which workers were barred from voting. English workers who unionized could be prosecuted under the Combination Acts in the 1820s, and the suffrage reform of a decade later offered no relief, enfranchising the middle class and not the working class. Such conditions necessarily intensified class consciousness in England and on the Continent. Not so in the United States. Though American unionists were sometimes subjected to hostile court decisions, they were not barred from collective action by statute law. Indeed in the United States, the national government was weak to begin with and weaker still as industrialism spread and deepened; state government, though stronger and growing more active, did not inhibit labor organization. As if that were not enough of a complication, nearly every state in the North extended the franchise to ordinary white men coincident with the rise of mills and factories. American workers were not alienated from their government as individuals or as a class. They instead thought of government as *their* government. This posed an opportunity and a challenge—an opportunity because it opened up politics as an avenue of organization and amelioration, and a challenge because workers had the chance to organize as a class when they were still a minority and in a political system whose parties cut across class lines and did not easily admit to the politics of class.

It was out of these contradictory forces that the first American labor movement was born in the late 1820s. Craftsmen in eastern cities had organized trade societies as early as the 1780s, usually to fight for wage increases. Their organizations were fleeting and confined to single trades, with printers, carpenters, and

shoemakers in the vanguard of self-organization. The intensification of craft transformation in the 1820s however set off an upsurge in protest as groups of construction workers in 1827 in Boston and Philadelphia went on strike for a 10-hour day, signaling broader and deeper disquiet. The unrest spread outward and quickly spilled into the political arena across the North and into the Middle West. Political insurgencies under the banners of Working Men's parties, Working Men's Republican parties, People's parties, and so on, shot up in 15 states and scores of cities and towns from New York to Carlisle, Pennsylvania and beyond. Some were factions of dissidents with no political affiliations, others were "outs" disaffected with the newly formed Democrats or National Republicans and unaffiliated with unions or working-class organizations of any sort. Weaker and ephemeral parties in the towns of the countryside campaigned on populist platforms. Working men's organizations in the major cities honed a sharper class edge.

The Working Men's parties in New York and Philadelphia were founded by labor radicals determined to find an alternative to market capitalism that would restore personal independence. The leaders were heavily influenced by the work of the classical economists and primitive socialists in England informed by the value of labor, the simple but powerful axiom that identified manual labor, not capital investment, as the mainstay of wealth. Workers created wealth by fashioning products from raw materials. In New York the key figures were the English immigrant Robert Dale Owen, who championed a radical system of boarding schools for all children, along with Thomas Skidmore, the one-time teacher cum machinist, who proposed an ambitious plan to confiscate all personal and private property for redistribution in equal parts to all male family heads. Their counterpart in Philadelphia was William Heighton, an English immigrant who arrived with his family around the War of 1812 and in the mid-1820s studied the work of John Gray, the English radical who had assailed competition and argued for cooperative production in his *Lecture on Human Happiness* (1825). In two addresses delivered in April and November 1827, Heighton gave formal expression to the labor theory of value and laid out a plan for an umbrella union, which became the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations (MUTA), the nation's first organization of craft unions. He also encouraged what a modern historian of the Populist party in the 1890s called a "movement culture," that is, a complex of didactic and self-help organizations designed to nurture class consciousness, a task he thought to be well beyond the scope of trade unions. He thus organized the *Mechanics' Free Press*, the nation's first trade union paper, as well as a

library that doubled as a reading room and debating club for discussion of such issues as the evils of banks and corporations as well as the desirability of cooperative production. He also encouraged several consumer cooperatives plus a barter store styled “labour for labour,” which reckoned labor time as the medium of exchange. His counterparts in New York and Boston followed suit, organizing their own presses, libraries, and debating societies.

Heighon endorsed trade unionism for its capacity to raise wages and improve conditions. He argued however that workers needed stronger medicine if they were to raise their horizons and transform the economy. He envisioned the unions in his adoptive city not as instruments of struggle but as the base of an independent political organization that would give expression to the peculiar class interests of labor. Several months after the formation of the MUTA, he and his fellows in early 1828 persuaded the union to form an independent party. The Working Men’s party, the first labor party in the land, became his consuming passion, so much so that the MUTA went into eclipse and soon passed from the scene. The new party itself adopted a platform that closely followed the reforms of its counterparts elsewhere, stressing the importance of free public education in place of humiliating pauper schools for children of the poor and working poor; endorsing tax reform; and railing against banks, corporations, and other institutions of emergent capitalism. After a rough inaugural in 1828, the Philadelphia Working Men polled nearly a third of the vote in 1829, the same proportion as their New York comrades, only to fall victim to factionalism and apathy. In addition, in New York and Philadelphia, if not in Boston, a wing of the Democratic party adopted the more moderate plans in the Working Men’s platform and opened space for Working Men’s politicians. Other labor parties cropped up in the early 1830s here and there, but the Working Men’ insurgency was a spent force. The disappointing foray into the political arena poisoned the well of third partyism for labor activists, who well into the antebellum bent energies toward unionism. Very few of them however thought of unionism or indeed the larger project of self-organization as ends in themselves. They would routinely be drawn to labor reform—notably programs for access to land and cooperative production—that promised to reduce competition and restore personal independence.

Starting in the early 1830s with the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Working Men (1831) and New York and Baltimore (1833), the labor movement re-emerged in the form of revitalized trade unions, which came together in bodies called general trades’ unions. With the notable

exception of the New England Association, which included factory hands and mill workers, city central unions represented craftsmen and skilled workmen, overlooking the great numbers of unskilled workers on docks and at construction sites. This unionist phase of the labor movement had a more limited geographic orbit than the political phase, embracing about 15 cities, and initially focused on more immediate demands. The 10-hour day galvanized the New England Association as well as scores of unions in several larger cities. Boston workers struck unsuccessfully for 10 hours in 1832 and 1835 but helped arouse the movement in Philadelphia in June 1835 by distributing the so-called “Ten-Hour Circular,” a manifesto for a shorter workday penned by Seth Luther and his associates. Its effect, said the Philadelphia handloom weaver John Ferral was electric, sparking the first general strike in the nation and one of the more successful work stoppages of the decade. Quaker City unionists and others also struggled to improve their wages and strengthen apprentice training in order to freeze out cheaper labor, but unionists in this period scarcely lost sight of the reform spirit. They continued to experiment with cooperative production and discuss schemes for land reform short of Sidmore’s radical scheme. Indeed their National Trades’ Union (NTU), a national body of delegates representing urban unions that met from 1834–1836, recommended cooperation again and again in several committee reports. An 1836 report on education concluded that by organizing into cooperatives, workers would be able to sell directly to consumers, eliminating speculative middle men and thereby realizing “a full reward for their labor.” Another committee the same year issued a preliminary report that concluded if tradesmen invested their funds in cooperatives instead of unions, “a much more permanent benefit would be rendered” (Commons et al., *Documentary History*, 1957).

The labor movement was already in trouble when the NTU met for the last time in 1836. Employers had launched robust counteroffensives to defeat strikes and collapse unions, and city centrals slipped into division and acrimony over jurisdiction and access to strike funds. Already weakened, the labor movement suffered a deathblow from the panic of 1837 and devastating 7-year depression, which effectively wiped the field of unions.

The ensuing two decades saw both continuities and discontinuities with the past. The trickle of foreign immigration swelled into a torrent by the end of the 1840s, flooding the sweated trades with new arrivals from Ireland and Germany, disrupting old solidarities within trades, and frustrating efforts to rebuild labor organization. Some unionists and labor radicals in New York and those who had pioneered the

movement a decade earlier continued the struggle. Many more dropped from view. The most troublesome continuity was the volatile economy, the boom-and-bust cycle that encouraged unions in good times and killed them in bad times.

Several general patterns of labor agitation gradually took shape. Urban workingmen tried to regroup, typically in spurts in 1843–1844, and at the turn of the 1840s, at first as single unions unaffiliated with larger bodies but then increasingly as components of city central-styled industrial congresses that mimicked the general trades' unions of a decade before. The unionist upsurge of the late 1840s showed a new militancy, nowhere more obvious than in New York where a general strike of American and German tailors, along with some Irish, brought in the police. Two strikers were shot dead, many more were injured, and at least 40 arrested, marking the first time urban workers ran afoul of official violence.

On the other hand, some veterans of the 1830s, along with such new figures as Albert Brisbane, developed utopian schemes premised on cooperative labor and retreated to the countryside. Brisbane's phalanxes or rural utopias had some appeal to wage earners, as if the advance of industrialism evoked renewed interest in alternatives to it. George Henry Evans, the former leader of the New York Working Men, who had retreated to the New Jersey countryside for a decade, reappeared in the mid-1840s in New York to champion a program he called National Reform, which envisioned dividing the national domain into communities with 360-acre homesteads, a watered down and appealing alternative to Skidmorean radicalism. Armed with his *Young America* and a small but enthusiastic band of followers who added cooperative production to his program, Evans worked tirelessly to enlist unionists in his crusade for land reform, showing up at labor conclaves throughout the Northeast.

Modern historians no longer argue, as their forebears once did, that labor reform reflected a class chasm that cast reformers as middle-class utopians meddling in the labor movement and leading hard-headed working people astray. Brisbane's phalanxes, recent evidence shows, were heavily populated by workers, not middle-class dreamers. Workers who rejected utopianism moreover proved receptive to both land reform and cooperation. Perhaps the best such example was the New England Workingmen's Association (NEWA), a regionwide organization that brought together unions and labor reform groups organized in cities and towns. The NEWA, inspired mainly by renewed 10-hour sentiment in the region, not only endorsed land reform and cooperation; it also came out against slavery from an abolitionist perspective.

The most intriguing affiliate of the NEWA was the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association (LFLRA). Organized by women led by Sarah G. Bagley and Huldah Stone in the nation's showcase industrial city, the LFLRA reflected the withering of Lowell's signature paternalism. Lenient foremen from the old regime were replaced with tougher managers who extracted more work for less pay and extended the workday into early evening. The women responded with petition drives in 1845 and 1846 aimed at convincing lawmakers to make 10 hours a legal day's work. Bagley and her friends however were as enthusiastic about labor reform as their male colleagues, supporting antislavery as well as temperance and other features of moral reform. When their 10-hour campaign faltered after 1846, the Lowell women embraced Protective Unionism, a movement of consumer cooperatives popular in their region after 1845. The "Spindle City" boasted no fewer than eight such stores by midcentury.

Labor's durable fascination with land reform could not help but have larger political ramifications in an era of growing concern in the North over the issue of slavery. In 1848, the Second Party System reeled from disaffection by abolitionists and antislavery activists who launched the Free Soil party, the most successful third-party insurgency of its time. The new party ran particularly well in New York and Massachusetts, polling no less than a third of the vote in the Bay State in the 1848 election. Free Soilism appealed to workers in part by campaigning against the expansion of slavery and by endorsing the 10-hour day, the issue of the hour for workers in the region. In Massachusetts, where Free Soilism had more staying power, Free Soilers formed a coalition with antislavery Democrats to put a 10-hour statute on the books. Though they failed by a few votes, they proved threatening enough to convince mill owners to cut the workday by an hour. Their colleagues in Pennsylvania and New Hampshire did push through such laws but defeated their purpose by attaching provisions allowing workers to contract for as many hours as they saw fit.

The question is whether Free Soilism also reflected working-class racism, or what some modern historians call "whiteness." There is no doubt that a good segment of the working class in the North was racist and that such workers saw Free Soilism as an instrument that would not only open a portal from the factory to farm; it would also keep Western lands lily white, a refuge from blacks. Not a few Free Soil politicians after all campaigned on a platform of excluding blacks from the territories. And they were not alone. Populist Democrats in eastern cities also raged against African-Americans, none more flamboyantly than

Mike Walsh, the Irish immigrant who arrived in New York in 1839 brimming with political ambition. Sporting a diamond ring and silver-tipped cane, the Irish demagogue drew together a boisterous band of loyalists organized into a political club cum gang styled the Spartan Band as well as his own newspaper, the *Subterranean*, which played to the masses with a blend of cooperation, land reform, and white supremacy. Walsh was of a kind in a stylistic sense but had plenty of political sympathizers in other cities, notably Philadelphia, where Irish and probably some American workers staged bloody race riots through the 1840s under the approving eye of Democratic politicians. It is pointless to deny the racism of white workers.

It is misleading however to tar all workers with the racist brush or to assume that northern workers were preoccupied with their racial identity. In Massachusetts and elsewhere, good numbers of workers who supported Free Soilism and later Republicanism were abolitionists not unsympathetic to blacks. If not egalitarians, they were not fire-breathing racists and were tolerant of blacks as long as they stayed in their place. More to the point, such workers were less concerned with race than with religious and regional identities. They were Yankees and nativists first and foremost by this time, less concerned about blacks and race than about the "Slave Power" and about the Irish who were flooding into Boston and the major industrial centers. The Free Soil party was arguably more nativistic than racist in state politics, supporting anti-Catholic policies that included deporting the most impoverished of the Irish to their homeland.

The nativism that commingled with antislavery in Free Soilism received fuller expression in the American party, more popularly called Know-Nothings, which burst on the northern scene in the elections of 1854. The Know-Nothings swept the Massachusetts elections and rose to power in other industrial states in the East (they were somewhat weaker in the West) in alliance with blocs of political regulars. In the Bay State and presumably in neighboring states as well, a faction of Know Nothings supported laborist issues, including a mechanics' lien law, broader and better public schools, and legal limitations on the length of the workday. The new party was an effervescent force, giving way nearly everywhere with a year or so to the surging Republicans. Nonetheless, nativism lingered longest in Lowell and strongly influenced Republican organizations throughout the industrial Northeast, testifying to the durability of working-class xenophobia.

Nativism affected working-class organizations, as well. Petty bourgeois politicians and civic leaders tried to steer American workmen away from labor

organizations by integrating them into nativistic lodges and fraternities. Anti-Catholics spawned in the initial nativist outburst in the 1840s grew and proliferated in the early 1850s. The Order of United American Mechanics offered social benefits together with rites and rituals that smacked of patriotism and religious parochialism. The closest it came to addressing the labor question boiled down to boycotting Irish businesses and blacklisting Irish workers.

Such measures did not suit more militant workmen in the major cities, who in 1853 and 1854 formed a spate of trade unions that launched a rash of strikes, chiefly in trades heavy with American and German workers. An early labor historian counted some 400 strikes in 1853–1854, a presumed high for the era, adding that union sentiment eventually reached an unprecedented numbers of trades, far more than in the 1830s when labor organization reached its peak. Some workers tried to emulate the spirit of the printers who formed the National Typographical Union. Efforts to form city centrals however generally failed, and most unions collapsed in the abrupt downturn in winter 1854. Some revived over the next few years only to fall apart in the economic slide of 1857. Despite this pattern of volatile organization with trades and the fitful outbursts of multi-union groups, the decade of the 1850s stands out for recrudescing union organization and robust class strife. It deserves more attention from students of labor.

Irish workers, who had born the brunt of nativist animus through the politically raucous 1850s, also began to stir. Though some of them may well have taken part in the labor unrest of the 1850s, they sometimes found themselves on the wrong side of labor militancy. That was surely the case in 1852 when mill hands in Amesbury and Salisbury, Massachusetts, went on strike for a 10-hour day, encouraged, interestingly enough, by Free Soil politicians working for a legislative solution. Angered by the intransigence of their employers, the Yankee workers vented frustrations on Irish immigrants brought in to break the strike. Such scabbing was the act of desperate people eager to curry favor with employers offering work at any price and willing to bear the censure of fellow workers who had no use for them in any circumstances. The tables were turned by the end of the decade however when the Irish learned the new rules of the industrial game. Irish women were in the forefront of an obscure but clearly important strike in Lowell in February 1859, a strike that appears to have been thwarted by Yankee strikebreakers. The episode nonetheless marked an important step for the Irish, and Irish women especially, who would feature prominently in labor leadership by the Gilded Age.

The shoemakers of Lynn also anticipated the future, if in a different way. Few workers exemplified more emphatically the confluence of trade unionism and labor radicalism. Their town was a center of early unionism, Free Soilism, and antislavery, with more than a hint of support for cooperative production. Free Soilers garnered nearly half the vote in 1848, far surpassing the statewide average of 30%. Several unions and labor organs had come and gone since the early 1830s when the town labor movement was born. By the early 1850s, Lynn workingmen and women were at it again, this time in response to being forced into factories with tighter and more demanding work regimes. They were thrown back on their heels by layoffs and wage cuts in the panic of 1857, which stifled organizing but produced widespread need and want. Protest meetings in winter 1857–1858 laid the groundwork in spring 1859 for the Lynn Mechanics' Association and a new organ, the *New England Mechanic*; a year later the association announced a strike to reverse the recent rate reductions.

The strike brought the busy shoe town to a halt. Some 20,000 workers came out in support, about half the employees in the region, and stayed out for 6 long weeks. Some owners, by no means all, conceded, but most did not, and the strike was counted as a failure. It was also a taste of what lay ahead in the Gilded Age. Like most strikes in single-industry towns, this one threw local organizations and businesses to the side of labor. Town fire companies and militia units marched in the parades and processions that clogged Lynn streets in the first weeks of the strike. Grocers and other suppliers of necessities offered credit and support for the beleaguered strikers. Large rallies—including a separate one organized by women—heard labor militants denounce the regime of the factory as slavery and vow never to be slaves, the metaphors of the age for degraded labor as well as the language of men and women who moved effortlessly from labor rallies to antislavery meetings.

Impressive though it was, the ardor was not enough. Jostling between police and workers as the strike began turned more ominous when the authorities arrested five men for trying to intercept shipments of leather destined for strikebreakers out of town. A day or so later, just as the strike began, a contingent of police arrived from Boston bolstered by a company of militia. The police and soldiers provoked scuffles and harsh words, if not injuries or fatalities, and withdrew after a few days. The show of force, coupled with the ability of the employers to wait out the workers, was quite enough.

Lynn's workers trekked back to work as the Republican party geared up for the nation's most momentous election. They would support the party of

Lincoln and antislavery in overwhelming numbers. But neither their prosaic Republicanism nor the sectional strife could mask the fact that labor organization, however fragile and feeble, reflected the aspirations of workers for a more equitable share of the products of their labor. One of their number put it in verse: "You will live by your honest toil/ But never consent to be slaves." Thus did the working people in Lynn carry on the struggle inaugurated by the workers in Philadelphia 30 years earlier, a struggle that would be pursued with more vigor by the Knights of Labor when they returned from the battlefields of civil war.

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ANTHRACITE COAL STRIKE (1902)

From May 12 to October 23, 1902, 150,000 coal miners in the anthracite coal region of Eastern Pennsylvania

struck for higher wages, better working conditions, and the right to negotiate such issues through the United Mine Workers of America (UMW). By the strike's end, they had gained national attention, intervention from the White House, and a role in jump starting the Progressive movement, as well as a 10% raise in wages and a shorter workday. They failed to gain formal recognition of their union. In his memoirs, labor leader Samuel Gompers named this strike the single most important incident in the history of the American labor movement: "from then on the miners were not merely human machines to produce coal," he wrote, "but men and citizens."

As the summer months of 1902 dragged on, the coal needed to heat urban households throughout the nation grew scarce and expensive. (Eastern cities required that residents use anthracite, available only from this small region, for heating purposes. Other types of coal, while far cheaper, were also far sootier.) Republican leaders, such as Senator Marcus Hanna



Strike Arbitration Commission appointed by President Roosevelt. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-95897].

ANTHRACITE COAL STRIKE (1902)

of Ohio and President Theodore Roosevelt, became increasingly concerned that the crisis would be laid at their door. Roosevelt wrote friends and colleagues that he feared riots in the streets if there were no coal. Newspapers predicted a coal famine.

While the UMW offered to accept arbitration, the coal railroad executives who controlled this little corner of American industry refused to negotiate as a matter of right. Wrote George Baer, one of their leaders to Father John J. Curran of the anthracite region, let the strike “cripple industry, stagnate business or tie up the commerce of the world, and we will not surrender.” The UMW, coal operators insisted, represented only competing coal regions and terrorism. This strike and unionism itself attacked their most sacred, constitutionally guaranteed property rights, as well as the right of individuals to work as individuals for any wages they desired. But more, it attacked their god-given American way of life. Baer’s letter to Father Curran continued, “The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for, not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God in his infinite wisdom has given control of the property interests of the country.”

Nevertheless in early October, the coal operators agreed to participate in the deliberations of a federal commission named by Roosevelt and to accept its recommendations. It had been a long road to the table. In June Roosevelt’s Commissioner of Labor Carroll D. Wright investigated the situation and issued a report. Building on Wright’s efforts, the Chicago-based National Civic Federation (NCF) of business and labor leaders pressed operators to negotiate. In August the NCF suggested that a presidential commission be named, with the miners to go back to work during deliberations. The UMW President John Mitchell refused to send the men back without a guarantee that the coal operators would accept the commission’s final award. Pressing the coal operators through the offices of banker J. P. Morgan, Theodore Roosevelt invited both sides to the White House to discuss the matter in early October. Mitchell again offered to accept arbitration from a presidential tribunal if the coal operators would agree to it. The coal operators refused the notion, denounced the coal miners as criminals, and demanded that the president order in federal troops. After the meeting Mitchell again refused to ask the coal miners to return to work, pending a presidential investigation, pointing out that the coal operators had shown no willingness to accept any such arrangements. On October 6, the Pennsylvania Militia deployed nearly 9,000 men to the region to protect any coal miners who wished to go to work. Nevertheless two days later, mass

meetings of coal miners throughout the region renewed their commitment to the strike.

After heavy pressure from Roosevelt and J. P. Morgan, the operators agreed to accept the decision of a presidential commission. The miners went back to work on October 23. The operators had one main condition: The commission was not to acknowledge the union. Their second condition focused on the composition of the commission. It was to include an officer from the engineering corps of the military, a mining engineer, a federal judge from eastern Pennsylvania, a man who had been active in mining and selling anthracite coal, and “a man of prominence, eminent as a sociologist.” Roosevelt also added a Catholic priest. When Mitchell asked that a union man be added as such, the coal operators refused. Roosevelt reported that their reaction verged on the hysterical. But when the president offered instead to appoint a labor leader as the eminent sociologist, the operators accepted him with relief. Roosevelt mocked them for accepting a labor leader as long as he was called something else. Yet for the railroad men, negotiations had always turned on such nice ideological considerations. The commission saw hundreds of witnesses and investigated every aspect of life in the coalfields. Lead attorney for the UMW was Clarence Darrow, assisted from Boston by future Supreme Court justice Louis D. Brandeis, and in person by activist author Henry Demarest Lloyd. In addition to John Mitchell, the commission’s star witnesses were breaker boys, men, and women from the mines who spoke of the realities of living in the coal regions. The commission eventually granted the coal miners a 10% raise and a shorter workday.

The anthracite strike of 1902 marked the first time that the United States government put its full weight behind labor negotiations. It is in part this intervention that gives the 1902 anthracite strike its importance in U.S. history. It served as an early victory for Progressives and a triumph for Roosevelt’s vision of an active presidency. The miners won a small but significant improvement in wages and conditions. They failed to gain recognition of their right to be represented collectively through their union. Nevertheless their victory came in an era still dominated by *laissez faire* economic assumptions that left no room whatsoever for governmental intervention on behalf of labor. If the anthracite strike helped to define such a role for the national government, it also suggested the limitations of this approach. Nevertheless a six-man arbitration commission split between union and management representatives continued to meet over the next several years, granting additional raises and changes in work conditions from time to time. The union gained de facto union recognition and a

steady membership in the anthracite region only after 1912, when the arbitration commission established formal pit committees in each mine to negotiate local conditions.

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ANTICOMMUNISM

Anticommunism is the opposition to radical leftist political ideologies that emphasize equal wealth, worker control of industry, and atheism. While American anticommunism is often associated with the Cold War, it in fact has a much longer history. Anticommunism, or more correctly, antiradicalism developed in the United States during the late nineteenth century as the nation industrialized. While manufacturing boomed during this period, immigrants flooded into American cities to fill industry’s need for cheap labor. This unprecedented immigration and urbanization led many Americans to worry that alien radicals threatened the nation. Recurring economic depressions and often-violent strikes confirmed this fear for many native-born citizens. Some workers, in response to low wages, long hours, and poor working conditions, did embrace radical doctrines, such as anarchism, socialism, and communism. Opponents of radicalism argued that these ideologies violated American ideals of private property rights.

As Americans struggled to maintain control over burgeoning industries and cities, many feared that radicals would spread their dangerous ideas to other workers and spark a radical uprising similar to those that were occurring in Europe. When Parisian workers established their own government in March 1871, some American newspapers speculated that the United States might not be resistant to such a revolution. European immigrants were instrumental in bringing

radical beliefs to the United States, although not all radicals were immigrants. Many refugees fled from the failed European uprisings of the midnineteenth century and came to the United States to work. As a result native-born Americans often viewed communism, socialism, and anarchism as alien ideologies. This equation held particularly true during the 1886 Haymarket affair, the first major red scare in the United States. Haymarket occurred in Chicago, a booming industrial metropolis where labor activists found a sympathetic audience for their ideas. On May 1, 1886, Chicago was roiled by a general strike in support of an 8-hour workday. Three days later, Chicago police shot picketing workers who were fighting with strike breakers. In response anarchists organized a protest meeting for the following night at Haymarket Square. Although the demonstration was small and nonviolent, Chicago police broke up the crowd. In response someone threw a bomb at the charging policemen, who then began firing on the crowd. By the end of the evening, one policeman was dead, six were injured, and dozens of protesters were wounded. Panicked city business and political leaders immediately demanded justice. Although no one knew who actually threw the bomb, the city’s anarchist leaders were targeted for creating an environment conducive to violence. Chicago’s anarchists had a reputation for belligerence, largely because they often lauded dynamite as a great social leveler in their writings. Eight local anarchists, six of whom were German immigrants, were tried for murder. The subsequent trial was a travesty of justice. Some of the accused had not even been at Haymarket the night of the bombing. Nevertheless all eight defendants were found guilty, and four were subsequently hanged.

The crushing of Chicago’s anarchists not only weakened the city’s radical movement but also undermined moderate labor’s demands for the 8-hour day. The city’s business leaders and newspapers equated the labor movement with anarchism. Chicago’s elites ensured that the local government and court system were fully mobilized against the city’s labor activists. Not surprisingly when the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was formed later in 1886, its leaders emphasized “pure and simple” unionism and rejected radical doctrines in an attempt to distance themselves from Haymarket and anarchism.

At the start of the twentieth century, antiradicalism shifted from cities to rural areas, especially western lumber and mining regions. In response to the poor working conditions in these industries, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) developed. The Wobblies, as the IWW was popularly called, sought worker control, rejected capitalism, and organized workers by industry rather than craft until workers

were joined in “one big union.” However the aspect of the IWW ideology that most scared management was their embrace of general strikes and often-violent industrial sabotage. In response managers often used vigilante action against the Wobblies. The most famous of these occurred in the copper-mining town of Bisbee, Arizona, in July 1917. Local businessmen and mine officials seized over one thousand Wobblies, forced them into boxcars, shipped them to the desert, and abandoned them.

World War I and the Great Red Scare

Antiradicalism increased once the United States entered World War I, largely because socialists and anarchists opposed the war. Eugene Debs, leader of the Socialist party, argued that the conflict was between capitalist nations who employed workers to do the actual fighting. Since the war did not serve workers’ interests, Debs urged the working class to sit out the fight. The IWW argued a similar position and thus refused to stop striking throughout the conflict. This opposition to the war convinced many antiradicals that the left was not only a danger to private property and American businesses but also to the nation. The Russian Revolution of November 1917 further confirmed this view. When Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized control of Russia in the midst of World War I, they declared that the war was a conspiracy by the international ruling class against the workers of the world. The Bolsheviks called for an end to the fighting and urged soldiers on both sides to revolt. As a result, the Bolsheviks negotiated a separate peace treaty with the Germans and pulled Russian troops off the front. Pro-war Americans felt betrayed and worried that the Bolsheviks had handed the Germans a potentially crucial victory. They responded angrily when American radicals, like Eugene Debs, Big Bill Haywood of the IWW, and anarchist Emma Goldman, celebrated the Bolsheviks’ victory. Radicals thus solidified their reputation for disloyalty to American interests and became firmly associated with the Soviet Union in the minds of many Americans.

World War I marked the first time that the federal government used its powers against radicals. In response to antiwar opposition, Congress passed laws to silence opponents. The Espionage Act made obstructing military enlistment or interfering with either military operations or industrial production illegal. Debs was arrested and imprisoned under this legislation after he gave a speech in which he encouraged soldiers to refuse to join the military. The IWW

leaders, such as Big Bill Haywood, were punished, since their wartime strikes interfered with industrial production. In 1918, Congress passed the Sedition Act, which made it a crime to speak language disloyal to the American government or Constitution. Ultimately over 1,500 people were arrested for violating these two laws. The federal government also targeted Wobblies by passing the Literacy Test Act of 1917, which allowed the government to deport any aliens who advocated anarchism, the unlawful destruction of property, or the violent overthrow of the government. Since much of this legislation was designed to expire at the end of the war, Congress also passed laws that targeted radicals after the war. The Immigration Act of 1918 allowed the United States to deport any alien who supported the violent overthrow of the government. The federal government used this law extensively against pro-Communist immigrants.

Once the war ended, the United States experienced a strike wave that led to what became known as the Great Red Scare. This anti-Communist campaign grew out of World War I and the Bolshevik revolution. In 1918, Soviet Communists sought to extend their revolution by urging workers throughout the world to revolt. This call appeared successful—Bolshevik uprisings occurred in Germany, Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria. In the United States, a series of strikes broke out once the wartime prohibition against labor stoppages ended. Although most of these developed in reaction to postwar pay cuts and rising inflation, the strikers appeared to many Americans to be responding to the clarion call of Bolshevik revolution. Management in response to some of these work stoppages used anticommunism to break the strikes. In the steel industry, for instance, corporate executives successfully split striking workers along nativist lines by portraying nonnative strikers as Communists and urging skilled American workers to cross the picket lines. In the midst of this labor unrest, the leftwing of the Socialist party broke away and two competing American Communist parties were formed—one constituted of foreign language groups and one of English speakers—that advocated the violent overthrow of the American government in their party platforms. When a series of mail bombs were sent to the attorney general, the mayor of Seattle, and prominent businessmen, like John D. Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan, it appeared to many Americans that the revolution had begun.

In response the federal government began a major crackdown. Attorney General J. Mitchell Palmer, only recently spared from the bomb sent to his home, created the General Intelligence Division of the Bureau of Investigation and placed young J. Edgar Hoover in charge. The division investigated

radical organizations, raided their headquarters, arrested their leaders, and then deported any aliens. These so-called Palmer raids led to over six thousand arrests and hundreds of deportations. The division, which later became the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), played a central role in the campaign against Communists for the next 50 years.

The Great Red Scare of 1918–1919 ended rather quickly as some Americans criticized the gross violations of civil liberties that occurred in the Justice Department's round-ups. Nevertheless the scare had tremendous implications for both American Communists and organized labor. The raids weakened the American Communist party and confirmed it as an alien organization in many Americans' minds. Organized labor also found its power attenuated, even though mainstream labor leaders like the AFL's Samuel Gompers argued that the federation, not the radicals, authentically represented the interests of American workers. Nevertheless management easily linked labor and communism during the great strike wave, and the failure of key strikes in the post-war period proved devastating for the AFL. While the federal government backed away from the worst abuses of the Palmer era, it continued to fight against radicalism by restricting immigration. The Immigration Acts of both 1921 and 1924 limited the number of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, two areas that were perceived as radical hotbeds. By the mid-1920s, the federal government, in conjunction with the nation's major industrialists, appeared to have finally defeated communism and ended any threat subversives posed to the nation's economic order.

The New Deal and World War II

The Great Depression of the 1930s resurrected labor's vitality and led ultimately to a resurgence in both communism and anticommunism. Unemployment rates for male industrial workers as high as 50% led some Americans to turn to communism to explain capitalism's collapse and to ameliorate the terrible poverty they saw. The Soviets helped the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) and Communist parties around the world when it changed the party line in 1935. Communists were to stop working for revolution and were instead supposed to join with liberal democrats in a popular front against fascism, which was on the rise in Europe. American Communists as a result emphasized such issues as helping the unemployed, organizing workers, ending legalized segregation, supporting the New Deal, and fighting

against fascism at home and abroad. Party members thus worked closely with labor organizers in the newly formed Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and with liberal Democrats who worked for the New Deal. Because of this alliance, AFL leaders bitterly attacked the CIO for being Communist-led and argued that Communists would betray American workers if labor's interest conflicted with that of the Soviet Union. In response to this Communist resurgence, the Catholic church became more vocal in its opposition. The Vatican had long criticized communism for denying the spiritual nature of man. However the Spanish Civil War of the late 1930s convinced the Vatican that increased Communist power would lead to the church's destruction. In the United States, Catholic anticommunism appeared among both leftist Catholics, as labor priests and the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU) appealed to workers to organize and rid their unions of Communist influence, and among more conservative Catholics, who rallied behind Father Charles Coughlin.

The Popular Front came to a sudden halt in September 1939 when the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a peace pact. This shocking agreement alienated American liberals and marginalized the CPUSA. Party members, who had been prominent opponents of fascism, now found themselves defending Stalin's alliance with the Nazis and criticizing American war efforts as imperialistic. Anti-communism in the United States reached a new peak, as non-Communists on the left joined with traditional anti-Communists and lashed out angrily against the party for privileging Soviet needs over those of Americans.

This brief red scare ended when the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. Communist parties around the world revived the Popular Front for the duration of the war. Communists now threw their whole-hearted support behind Roosevelt's efforts to help the British defeat the Nazis and after Pearl Harbor, behind the American war effort. As a result of the American alliance with the Soviet Union, domestic anticommunism waned during the war.

The Cold War

American anticommunism reached perhaps its greatest strength during the Cold War. A number of factors led to this increase. On the one hand, big business was emboldened by its success during World War II and sought to roll back the gains made by both labor and the New Deal state. In addition Soviet actions in

Eastern Europe at the end of the war infuriated Catholics, who complained bitterly that the Red Army was destroying churches and arresting prominent Catholics in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Most importantly tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union increased as these new superpowers recognized that their strategic interests now conflicted. As a result, containing the spread of communism abroad became a major American foreign policy concern for the first time. Thus at home Communists were viewed as *saboteurs* working in the interests of a foreign enemy. This view of Communists as saboteurs was a real if exaggerated, fear. During World War II, the Soviets, in response to the secret Manhattan project, developed an espionage program to gain information about this atomic research. The American government knew about the Soviet spy network because it had broken the Soviet code. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the United States prosecuted atomic spies like Julius Rosenberg, although it did not make public the classified information that incriminated these secret agents. Republicans, who had been out of power for most of the previous two decades, exploited public fears of espionage and argued that the Roosevelt and Truman administrations were filled with Communists. This charge had tremendous resonance after both the Communist victory in the Chinese Revolution and the successful Soviet atomic bomb test in 1949. Senator Joseph McCarthy in particular greatly exaggerated the existence of internal subversion and used this charge to return a Republican to the White House in 1952.

American Communists were also attacked by their former popular-front allies, who again accused the CPUSA of privileging Soviet needs over those of American workers. Labor liberals turned against them and expelled Communist-led unions from the CIO in 1949 and 1950. Civil rights organizations like the NAACP purged Communists, including founding member W. E. B. DuBois, from their ranks. The Truman administration systematically investigated all federal employees and fired hundreds who had ties to Communist or popular-front groups, even though there was no evidence of subversion. Harassed from all sides, the CPUSA virtually disappeared.

While domestic anticommunism dissipated after the 1950s with the near destruction of the CPUSA, anticommunism continued to guide American labor leaders' policies overseas until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The AFL-CIO aided the CIA's attempts to thwart Communist labor movements in Europe and Latin America during the 1950s, and the federation supported the Vietnam War. In addition Lane Kirkland, the head of the AFL-CIO, actively backed

the anti-Communist Solidarity movement in Poland during the 1980s.

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ANTI-RENT WARS (NEW YORK)

The anti-rent wars took place on the great estates (or manors) of eastern New York from 1839 to approximately 1850 and were the most dramatic of a series of tenant insurgencies in the state from 1750–1880. The anti-rent movement began in 1839, when Steven Van Rensselaer III passed away, leaving his heirs to collect thousands of dollars of back rents that he had allowed to accumulate on Rensselaerwyck—a massive estate encompassing much of Albany and Rensselaer counties. His heirs demanded immediate repayment of all arrears and threatened to evict delinquents. Tenants in Albany County immediately organized a committee to request leniency. Many owed years of back rent and had no hope of repaying the landlord, especially those living on hill farms.

The new landlords refused to negotiate, prompting farmers to issue a “Declaration of Independence” that stated that tenant labor, in the form of improvements, had given the manor lands value; therefore tenants had earned title to the land. In addition they charged that manor leases were feudal. Manor leases transferred title in fee to tenants in perpetuity, yet any failure to pay rent, or the violation of attendant clauses, empowered the landlord to evict the tenant. As well, the landlord retained all mineral, water, and timber rights. Also deemed degrading were clauses requiring labor service to the landlord. Last, the landlord levied a fee, or “quarter sale,” on every transfer of the lease (usually one-quarter of the sale price). Such terms, tenants charged, placed them in a dependent relationship on the landlord that was out of step with republican values. Tenants resolved to pay no more rents until the landlords agreed to sell the land to them at a fair price.

Rioting broke out when Albany County lawmen attempted to evict delinquents, serve process, or

conduct sheriff's sales to liquidate tenant debts. They were greeted by "calico Indians"—disguised, armed insurgents—who prevented the enforcement of the law and tarred and feathered their more persistent adversaries. Anti-rent associations soon formed throughout the region. Associations performed a number of functions: They negotiated with landlords; petitioned the legislature; mounted title suits; corresponded with other committees; taxed members to fund activities; conducted rent strikes and boycotts; and secretly organized calico Indian tribes to intimidate enemies and battle state and local authorities. Extralegal activity—riots, anonymous threats, arson, tarring and feathering—also erupted, creating deep community rifts between "down" and "up-renters." By 1844, the insurgency spread to Rensselaer, Schoharie, Columbia, Greene, Ulster, Delaware, Dutchess, Montgomery, Sullivan, and Otsego counties—virtually the entire Catskill-Hudson region. Many estates in these areas were let on life leases. When the lives named in the contract (usually three) expired or a farmer was evicted for not paying rent, the landlord re-entered the property. The value of improvements made to the plot was thus lost. Anti-rent demands for title based on a labor theory of value appealed to these tenants.

The primary focus of anti-rent associations was to pressure the state legislature to promote land reform. They first attempted to find a legal means to challenge landlords' titles, which tenant rioters as early as the 1750s had charged were faulty or fraudulent. However both political parties—Democrats and Whigs—had factions favorable to the landlords, and tenant petitions requesting legislative action repeatedly failed. The movement radicalized quickly in the face of this inaction. In 1843, Dr. Smith A. Boughton of Rensselaer County (the calico Indian orator Big Thunder) rose to leadership and helped bring anti-rent into alliance with national reformers, radical free-soil advocates, and labor reformers. Thomas A. Devyr, Alvan Bovay, and George Henry Evans stumped eastern New York calling for a rural-urban workingmen's alliance to end the manor system as the first in a series of democratic reforms to benefit labor. The two groups united to form the Anti-Rent Equal Rights party in 1844, a nonpartisan political organization that would throw its votes behind candidates from either party who supported an anti-rent agenda. The party proved very successful at electing sympathetic candidates to the state legislature in 1844, and anti-rent appeared destined to achieve its goals.

However the new Democratic governor, Silas Wright, did not support anti-rent and especially deplored the disorderly activities of the calico Indians. Wright took office at the height of Indian violence in

January 1845 and demanded and received a law making it a felony to appear in disguise. Law-and-order posses stepped up efforts to root out Indian cells, and anti-rent strongholds descended into civil war as posses and Indians engaged in pitched battles; Indians tarred and feathered deputies; and shootings, arson, and other lawless acts increased.

New Yorkers responded with mixed feelings. Most believed the manor leases oppressive, yet they deplored Indian vigilantism. Many therefore supported calls for a plebiscite on the ballot in 1845 to hold a constitutional convention in 1846 that promised to address land and other reforms. That effort nearly was shattered by the murder of Delaware County Deputy Osman Steele in August by Indians gathered to prevent a sale at the farm of Moses Earle in Andes. Governor Wright and Delaware County officials declared a state of insurrection in the county and sent the militia to help the sheriff crush the rebellion. Law-and-order tactics proved so brutal and the trial of the insurgents so staged however that voters statewide rallied to the anti-rent cause, overwhelmingly approving the measure for a constitutional convention.

The 1846 constitution effectively ended the anti-rent movement. Tenants won a number of important concessions. The document outlawed perpetual leases, though old leases remained in force. As well, democratic reforms promised to undercut the power of the well to do. More county and state offices were made elective, especially in the judiciary. Tenants believed that they had substantially eroded landlord power even though systematic land reform eluded them. Thereafter the movement rapidly dissolved.

With land reform only partially achieved, the most enduring legacy of the movement was in politics, where anti-rent splintered the Democratic and Whig parties. Many tenants gravitated toward Free Soil in 1848; others subsequently joined nativist, temperance, or abolitionist parties. By and large anti-rent counties moved toward the newly formed Republican party and its free-soil message in 1856. In the end anti-renters succeeded in partly dismantling the manor system and helped transform the political system of the state.

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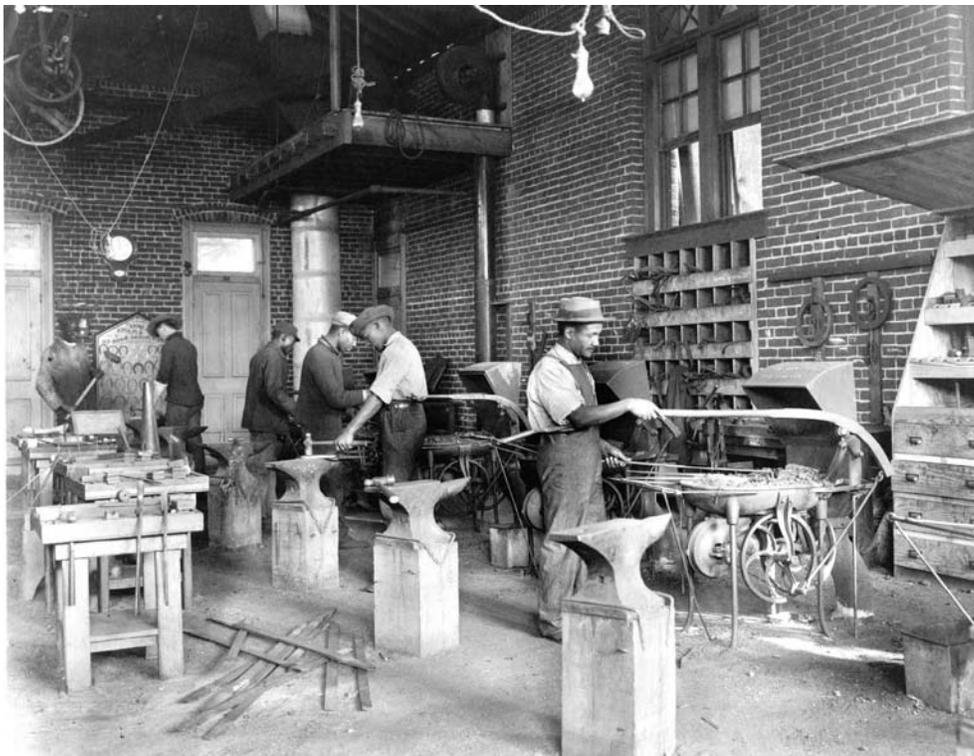
APPRENTICESHIP

The origins of American apprenticeship can be found in medieval England, notably the Statute of Artificers (1563), under which parents, unless they possessed the means to educate their sons privately, had to apprentice them in either a craft or in farm labor. Within a craft, the terms were longer, until either age 21 or 24. Children without means were bound to the local parish. Entry into the crafts (and thus apprenticeship) in England was controlled by guilds to ensure that there was not an oversupply in their crafts, thus lowering the prices of their goods.

In the United States guilds never took hold, and there was no control on the number of apprentices given indentures in any single trade. This meant that while masters might employ a larger number of

apprentices, thus avoiding the need of hiring journeymen (wage laborers), the apprentices would eventually become journeymen and often masters, particularly in trades involving little capital, such as tailoring and shoemaking. This oversupply would inevitably lower the living standards of artisans in these trades. To enter such a low-paying, low-prestige, and numerous trade, no premium was required. To enter a more lucrative trade, such as goldsmithing, silversmithing, and watch making, the father of the apprentice often had to pay a fee.

Apprenticeships were drawn up between the parents and the master craftsman. These were legal documents, enforceable in court. In return for room, board, clothing, and a minimal education, the apprentice was placed under the master *in loco parentis*. “The apprentice was to faithfully serve [his master], his secrets keep, his lawful commands readily obey.” The apprentice was subject to the master’s discipline, including corporal punishment, but was to be taught the “trade or mystery” of the craft and to receive a basic education as well as clothing on his completion of indenture. If he ran away, the master could legally advertise for his capture and return, and many colonial and early national newspapers contained ads with descriptions of the runaway and rewards for his safe return.



Young men training in blacksmithing at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-119867].

Within a craft there were traditional duties performed by the apprentice. In the printing business, made famous by the Boston apprenticeship of Benjamin Franklin to his demanding brother James, an apprentice was in charge of inking the press, feeding and removing the sheets of paper in the press, cleaning the type, preparing the balls of ink, and overseeing the ink vat after the master had prepared it. Occasionally as his indenture matured, the apprentice might be allowed to set type or operate the press, provided he was physically able to do so.

The advent of American independence brought significant changes to the status of apprenticeship. The American economy grew at a rapid pace in the 1790s and into the early nineteenth century, but it was also subject to serious downturns during the Embargo, 1807–1808, and the War of 1812. Masters saw new economic horizons after the Revolution, but the new economy also demanded higher capital investments to begin a business, especially in printing and other elite crafts. Too, the pressures on the crafts for mass production (orders of chairs or shoes numbering in the thousands for shipment to the West Indies) often called more for speed than skill. In jobs often simplified by a marked division of labor, the master often needed less a highly trained apprentice than a moderately skilled journeyman who might work for lower wages than a highly skilled craftsman who required years of training. Many apprentices were lured away at an early age by the prospect of earning cash wages and of being liberated from the control of a paternalistic master. Moreover the publication of trade secrets in the form of new guidebooks to the crafts also eroded the power of the masters, since apprentices could learn the mystery for themselves with the use of these publications.

There were also noneconomic reasons for the decline of apprenticeships. The evangelical Christianity of the 1790s that emphasized family love rather than hierarchy often created resentment among apprentices against the master's authority. Most significantly the Jeffersonian movement, emphasizing egalitarianism and the concept of personal liberty and opposed to traditional modes of deference, led many apprentices to resent the authority of their masters and to leave their indentures early. Masters complained constantly of saucy apprentices who talked back to them, who left work without permission, who frequented grog shops or horse races, and who refused to learn the required skills. However courts after 1790 began siding with apprentices, finding the masters guilty of assault, for example, for corporal punishment. At times municipalities showed concern over delinquent apprentices in the streets, but the trend was clearly to undermine the master's authority, so much so that

often no indentures were even signed after 1800; in its place informal agreements were arranged between a youth and a master.

By the 1830s, a number of large local firms emerged, most notably the textile mills of New England and government armories that demanded a large number of highly trained machinists who learned these skills from traveling from machine shop to machine shop throughout the country. However they also needed a continuous supply of relatively unskilled labor and paid an immediate cash wage to those who applied (when business was brisk). Apprenticeship was not an option at these operations. There was no place and no need to train workers over a long period of years. The cash wage was replacing apprenticeship in more and more situations. Even in the small craft enterprises, it would not be unlikely to see the apprentice receive a wage and be living outside the home of the owner of the shop. This made the apprentices even more independent, aware of their hours and conditions. After the Panic of 1837 and into the 1840s, economic conditions were difficult and advancement slow. This only exacerbated the plight of apprenticeship.

Mechanization before the Civil War spelled the death knell for traditional apprenticeship. To take printing as an example, the development of the steam press revolutionized the industry in the 1830s. It allowed the production of large, inexpensive newspapers, leading to a much wider reading public and the penny press, as well as greater production of inexpensive books and magazines. However traditional presswork disappeared, replaced by pressmen and roller boys seeking work as typesetters. The master printers hired many more apprentices to do simplified and narrow jobs than they did skilled journeymen. The same thing happened in other crafts, particularly those dealing with expensive machinery. Masters became more and more distant from their employees, and the working classes needed less and less technical knowledge. Given this depersonalization, the personal relationship between master and apprentice, already severely strained, disappeared. By the 1850s, in many crafts apprentices were low-paid industrial workers.

There were efforts at reform. Many of the traditional masters formed institutes in an attempt to maintain the original system. These often had extensive libraries and lecture programs that lasted beyond the Civil War, especially in the trades that were less likely to be affected by industrialization and high capital costs. The New York Mechanics Society is an excellent example. It had long had a school for its members' children and others who paid tuition, but with the advent of the public school movement,

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it closed down in 1858 in favor of an evening school for apprentices. The school, which is still in operation, only enrolled a few hundred apprentices in traditional crafts. The society also opened a library for apprentices, with the majority of its books on science and geography. By the 1840s, there were over 9,000 books and 2,000 readers, but this still represented a small number of apprentices. In reality the various mechanic societies were able to assist masters in traditional trades but were unable to halt the decline of the apprenticeship.

The decline of apprenticeship can be in part seen as a cause of the rise of gangs and urban crime and violence in the antebellum period as well as of nativist parties, which owed their strength to adolescents who were unable to find an easy entry into the marketplace and who deeply resented the large numbers of immigrants challenging them for the semiskilled jobs that were replacing the highly skilled crafts of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the apprenticeship has never completely disappeared, and a number of crafts still maintain limited entry systems within a unionized framework, and while mechanics societies still offer courses, for most adolescents the entry to the workplace is through a vocational school or community college into a wage earning position. The paternalism of the traditional apprenticeship system, one that lasted over four hundred years, was a victim of modern capitalism.

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See also **Antebellum Era; Artisans; Civil War and Reconstruction; Revolution and Early National Period**

ARBITRATION

Arbitration of industrial relations disputes in the United States gained wide acceptance and legitimacy only in the last half of the twentieth century. Labor-management arbitration, a quasi-judicial process, is of two types, interest, and rights. Interest arbitration defines a compulsory obligation of the parties to submit to an umpire when they reach an impasse in contract negotiations. It is more common in the public sector, where employees do not have the right to strike. In the private sector, interest arbitration remains relatively

rare. Rights, or grievance arbitration, on the other hand, exists in an estimated 98% of collective-bargaining agreements in both the public and private sector. Here disputes over interpretation or application of the parties existing collective-bargaining agreement is voluntarily resolved when an arbitrator, chosen by the parties, makes a final and binding enforcement decision based on the merit of evidence and arguments submitted by both parties during a formal hearing.

Interest arbitration has a longer history in the United States, first recorded in the 1829 Constitution of the Journeyman Cabinetmakers of Philadelphia. The Knights of Labor in 1869 recommended interest and rights arbitration to prevent strikes, an economic and political weapon they opposed. During the 1870s and 1880s, a period of extraordinary labor strife, the Knights chief rival, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), opposed compulsory arbitration. The United Mine Workers (UMW) in 1890 included an arbitration provision in their constitution. The U.S. government in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tentatively encouraged voluntary interest-arbitration clauses in the railroad industry, first with the passage of the Interstate Commerce Act in 1887. After 1910, the piece-rate clothing shops in New York City endorsed a proposal by future Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis of permanent arbitration to prevent strikes. In 1913, the Department of Labor established the U.S. Conciliation Service primarily to mediate labor disputes, but the service also had the authority to recommend arbitration. Little evidence exists however of employer willingness to accede to arbitration during this era. Further expansion of arbitration would require intervention by the federal government.

The Federal Transportation Act of 1920 defined for the first time in the railroad industry a distinction between interest and rights disputes, recognizing separate resolution procedures. Six years later, the Railway Labor Act (and as amended in 1934) went one step further when it created the National Railroad Adjustment Board (NRAB). Grievances between employees and a carrier over application and interpretation of agreements when handled in the “usual manner up to and including the chief operating officer,” yet not resolved, became the jurisdiction of the NRAB. If the parties were unable to resolve, or refused to participate in a NRAB conference, a separate agency, the National Mediation Board (NMB) intervened, first to help mediate or failing that to encourage the parties to submit their dispute to arbitration. Outside of the railroad industry, The U.S. Arbitration Act (1925) created a legal basis for employment arbitration by individuals, stating that arbitration agreements “shall be valid, irrevocable and enforceable.” Following this emerging

trend the American Arbitration Association formed the next year and within two decades became the chief nonpublic organization providing arbitrators to settle labor-management disputes. Significant expansion of arbitration however came with the advance of collective-bargaining rights with the passage of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (NLRA) and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), which interpreted and enforced the act.

A labor union, once certified by the NLRB, became under the act the sole representative of all employees within a bargaining unit “for the purposes of collective bargaining in respect to rates of pay, wages, hours of employment, or other conditions of employment.” Labor-management disputes under the NLRA, while not specifically mentioning or endorsing arbitration, gave “any individual employee or group of employees . . . the right at any time to present grievances to their employers.” The NLRA, through a series of contradictory decisions by the federal courts and NLRB, left a legal construction that on the one hand gave employees the right to present grievances but the certified union the exclusive right to settle grievances.

While confusion remained on the role arbitration would play in American industry, the organizing successes by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in primary industries, for example, steel, rubber, and autos during the 1930s, increasingly saw the inclusion of negotiated provisions to arbitrate rights cases. The 1937 collective-bargaining agreement between General Motors (GM) and the United Auto Workers (UAW) included an arbitration clause where both parties had to agree to submit a dispute. The 1940 agreement amended this earlier clause providing for voluntary arbitration where either party could request arbitration. Every agreement since has contained this clause. Nonetheless prior to World War II, grievance arbitration clauses existed in less than 10% of contracts. World War II changed that.

Several events during the war made grievance arbitration a permanent feature of U.S. industrial relations. During the war labor organizations voluntarily forfeited the right to strike in order to sustain American production. The loss of labor’s principal economic weapon required the development of some mechanism to resolve inevitable disputes. Prior to 1940, arbitration, although not prevalent, had proven successful in preventing strikes over grievances. President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942, in an effort to further stabilize industrial relations, established the War Labor Board (WLB) with jurisdiction over labor disputes. The tripartite board (with four labor representatives, four management and four public representatives) in a series of decisions settled on arbitration as the preferred means to resolve grievances once negotiations reached

an impasse. The WLB was not neutral and actively promoted the inclusion of arbitration clauses, supporting the enforcement of an arbitrator’s decision as final and binding on both parties. By the end of the war, 73% of collective-bargaining agreements had voluntary arbitration clauses, similar in content to what GM and the UAW negotiated in 1940.

After the war a conservative U.S. Congress through the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (LMRA), focused in Sections 201 and 203(d) on workplace disputes and explicitly favored that the final resolution of grievances be done through procedures agreed on by the parties. In Section 30, Congress created a substantive means to enforce collective-bargaining agreements through suits brought in federal district court. This section, in the view of the U.S. Congress, would give rise to labor-management stability in industrial relations. The LMRA expanded significantly the scope and jurisdiction of the federal judiciary in labor-management relations.

A series of four decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court interpreting Section 301 upheld not just the federal courts right to enforce contracts but the legitimacy of arbitration and the role of the arbitrator in resolving disputes. In *Textile Workers v. Lincoln Mills* (1957), the union appealed to the court to enforce the parties’ agreement to arbitrate. Justice William O. Douglas, writing for the majority, ruled for enforcement, noting that an agreement to arbitrate was the *quid pro quo* for a union no-strike pledge. Section 301 expressed a government policy, Douglas wrote, “[that] courts should enforce these agreements . . . and that industrial peace can best be obtained only in this way.”

Three cases decided in 1960, *American Manufacturing, Warrior & Gulf*, and *Enterprise Wheel* (popularly termed the *Steelworkers Trilogy*) put, as Charles J. Morris wrote in the *Developing Labor Law*, grievance or rights arbitration in the center of the common law of the collective bargaining agreement. Two of the three cases dealt specifically with arbitrability. Employers after the passage of the LMRA increasingly refused union demands to arbitrate, arguing in federal courts that the issue in dispute was not arbitrable. The *Warrior & Gulf* decision agreed that the federal courts alone determined whether an issue were arbitrable, adding with emphasis, however, that doubts to coverage should favor the use of arbitration, not the federal courts. In *American Manufacturing*, the employer challenged the arbitrator’s prerogative to decide a case by claiming the case itself lacked merit. The U.S. Supreme Court disagreed and ruled that decisions on merit were at the discretion of the arbitrator. The final piece was *Enterprise Wheel*, which protected the integrity of the arbitration process through limiting the ability of either party to appeal an arbitrator’s

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opinion to the federal courts. The *Trilogy* effectively deferred to the arbitrator's judgment, with the judiciary giving the process of arbitration a legitimacy it had lacked. Arbitration had value, according to the *Trilogy*, over court intervention in that it voluntarily bound the parties, it was cheaper, faster and less formal, and created a stabilizing extension of collective bargaining.

Grievance arbitration, whether it takes place in the public or private sector, is for all practical purposes the same. Generally after the parties in a systematic process are unable to resolve a grievance through negotiation, either party can then demand arbitration, and the other must comply. There are industry and union differences in the arbitration process. Most common is the selection of one *ad hoc* arbitrator that the parties agree on, or if they are unable to agree, select through the agency of the American Arbitration Association or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. Less frequently the parties use a three-person panel with management and labor each appointing a member, with the third appointment an impartial arbitrator. In a large majority of arbitration agreements, the cost of the arbitration hearing is divided evenly between the parties. In a minority the losing party pays all costs.

Disputes in grievance arbitration are of two types: contract interpretation or discipline and discharge. Contract interpretation grievances usually are over issues of job assignments, overtime distribution, lay-off procedures, subcontracting, and the like. Procedurally the moving party in interpretation cases is the union, and the presumption favors the status quo or management. In discipline cases, the moving party is management, where it has the burden to prove its action was for a "just cause." The arbitration hearing, while less formal, resembles a court proceeding. Each party submits evidence through witnesses and exhibits subject to rules of discovery, objection, and cross-examination. In a majority of cases, a court stenographer prepares a record of the hearing. Both parties generally prepare written posthearing briefs, restating their evidence and arguments and rebutting the arguments of the other side. The arbitrator then issues a written decision that is final and binding.

Grievance arbitration is the norm in labor-management relations in unionized workplaces in the United States and increasingly is found in nonunion settings when enforced by state statute. Union employees, when surveyed, generally support grievance procedures that include arbitration as the final step. Its advantage is the stability and predictability it brings to industrial relations while at the same time giving employees an instrumental voice in their working conditions.

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ARTISANS

Skilled craftsmen played a critical role in the early United States. Though found throughout the colonies, they were most heavily concentrated in towns and cities, especially the major seaports, where they were constituted the largest sector of the population. They worked in a panoply of trades ranging from goldsmithing, silversmithing, and cabinetmaking at the top to baking, butchering, and carpentry in the middle to tailoring and shoemaking at the bottom. The most populous trades were the building crafts, particularly carpentry and masonry, which might employ 40% of craftsmen during construction season. Tailoring and shoemaking followed in size.

Mid-eighteenth-century artisans could be classified as either wage earners (the beginning of a working class) or master craftsmen (incipient bourgeois entrepreneurs) because in the course of a colonial career, they were often both. Normally a lad of 13 or 14 would contract with a master craftsman to learn a trade. He boarded with his master, who was responsible for his rudimentary education and clothing as well as teaching the art of the trade. Learning the mysteries of the most demanding trades, such as



Cabinet work. Pauls Valley Training School. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, National Child Labor Committee Collection [LC-DIG-nclc-05249].

cabinetmaking or watch making, took many hours at the hands of the ablest craftsmen, who passed down knowledge gained from centuries of craftsmanship. The more rudimentary trades, such as shoemaking, with awl and hammer skills, took less time to master.

Following release from indentures at 21, the apprenticed boy would be a wage earner or journeyman, often working in various cities for master craftsmen. If competent and savvy, he would then open his own business. A master's dwelling commonly included a lower story shop, with his family living above. Mobility to master craftsman standing was common except for the poorest trades. Artisans in those trades, even those owning small shoemaker or tailoring shops, often earned only a subsistence living, with little sense of social security in event of personal crisis or economic recession. Shoemaker George Robert Twelves Hewes, the last survivor of the Boston Tea party, was imprisoned early in his career for small debts; such were the perils of his trade. Too, artisans were prey to the scourge of epidemics, especially smallpox and yellow fever that ravaged the nation's seaports. Still artisans were clearly a rank above unskilled laborers and indentured servants and immeasurably distant from slaves, who made up close to 10% or more of New York's and Philadelphia's population and close to half of Charleston's.

Upward mobility beyond craftsman standing was possible among the colonial craftsmen, particularly among the more elite artisans who managed at times

to nearly co-equal status with merchants. Some artisans, such as cabinetmakers, participated directly in colonial trade, shipping thousands of Windsor chairs, while others worked closely with merchants in a nascent capitalist economy operating under the rules of British mercantilism. The vast majority of artisans in colonial United States remained at that level throughout their lives, and most could be said to be in the middling or lower middling ranks of society. This was the case in the major seaports with the exception of Boston, a city ravaged by wars and the need for poor relief, where some craftsmen sank below subsistence levels.

Skilled craftsmen possessed a venerable heritage. They were products in part of English guild traditions that supervised their trades, limiting admission, controlling prices, and setting rules of their trade. The privileged members of these guilds built elegant headquarters and occupied a notable place in their city's life. While a few trades established benevolent societies and tradition of apprenticeship indentures and workshop practices crossed the Atlantic, colonial United States had no guild tradition, nor did it develop one. On the one hand this meant that it was a more open society, and many craftsmen in major seaports often gained freemanship. Also artisans were generally literate and politically aware and proud of their craft skills even if they lacked the legal imprimatur of a guild. On the other hand, they were unable to gain

guild privileges with regard to price control, limitation of craft membership, or status. Moreover while men who possessed demanding skills and well-fashioned tools were clearly above the level of laborers who worked on the docks, they were subject to a tradition that classified anyone who performed manual labor, however refined, as well beneath the rank of gentlemen. Lacking breeding, wealth, and education, they were expected to defer willingly to their mercantile and professional betters, who regarded mechanics (as they were commonly known) with a measure of condescension. There was no guild membership to mediate that standing.

Skilled craftsmen had a strong social identity. With their noted leather aprons, they dressed similarly, kept common hours, and shared social traditions that separated them from the elite as well as unskilled laborers. As independent entrepreneurs who owned their own shops, they were freemen entitled to vote, part of the political mix in the eighteenth-century urban politics. If they seldom attained significant political positions, their voices were considered by elite factions seeking office. They could easily make the difference in such factional struggles as that between the Delanceys and Livingstons in New York. They developed, if not a class consciousness, a sense of their own interests and a willingness to ensure that their concerns were addressed. Their outlooks were also influenced by their ethnic and religious backgrounds.

There were skilled craftsmen in the rural communities as well. They were most likely to be more of the jack-of-all-trades variety, in which a joiner could fix a wheel, mend a coach, or build a chair. There were only a few craftsmen for each farming community, though occasional such villages as that of other Moravians in Rowan County, North Carolina, were known for their craftsmanship, male and female, in leather and textile.

During the Revolutionary Era, skilled craftsmen became central players in the movement toward independence. Not that there were no loyalist artisans; those with strong Anglican roots or allegiance as well as Scottish or recent immigrants (except for Irish) often inclined to the British position. However compared to the other sectors of the population, artisans tended to be more radical in opposition to British measures. In Boston, New York, and especially in Philadelphia, artisans formed their own committees and took on part of the *ad hoc* governing committees that emerged in New York and Philadelphia. While New York soon fell under British occupation, in Philadelphia artisans and radical small merchants came into control of the political process for much of the revolution, producing the era's most radical state constitution, a unicameral body calling for free public

education and eliminating the property requirement for voting. In the battle over ratification of the Constitution, most urban artisans supported the new federal charter in hopes of gaining protective tariffs for their crafts and due to their patriotic allegiance to the new nation.

The period from 1790–1830 was the golden age of the U.S. craftsman. The era left a great legacy in craftsmanship, as federal furniture remains the greatest craft work produced in the American tradition; artisan crafts gave birth to the American labor movement and to manufacturing and entrepreneurship innovation; and artisans emerged as a major player in American politics.

The craftwork produced by such cabinetmakers as Duncan Phyfe and Charles-Lonore Lannuier, to name but a few, is almost priceless in the antique market today. Replacing the Chippendale style that dominated the eighteenth century, a style that combined Chinese, rococo, and pseudo-Gothic styles in heavily and ornately carved furniture, was a new style emphasizing grace, linearity, proportion, artful display of color, including inlays and painted designs. Based on neoclassical design, it became popular in England beginning in the 1770s. American furniture and craftsmanship drew on the English, Greek, and Roman models but with subtle differences in proportions. Given the spirit of republicanism that pervaded the era, it is not surprising that much of the furniture and silver and grandfather clocks and other fine works displayed the American eagles and other symbols of the new American nation blended with the classical republican symbols.

The business of a craft in the early national period was far more extensive than in the Colonial Era. First the economic ambitions and horizons of craftsmen were enhanced by the revolution. Independence meant more than political rights; it meant the opportunity to enter the marketplace and prosper to the limitations only of one's abilities in craft and business skills. Craftsmen were deft users of advertisement, credit, and banking. In 1810, New York incorporated the Mechanics Bank, the highest capitalized bank (\$1.5 million) that specified that \$600,000 be devoted to the state's mechanics. Successful artisan entrepreneurs used division of labor and hired many employees; Duncan Phyfe employed over one hundred journeymen, with sections of turners, upholsterers and carvers, and gilders. His quarters included a workshop, a warehouse, and display rooms. Large numbers of furniture were built and stocked in the city, ranging in quality, for sale to the mercantile elite in the city and to brokers in the West Indies and other American cities.

Many crafts prospered with the strong economic growth of the Napoleonic Wars. Shipbuilding

contractors employed large numbers of craftsmen in production of clipper and naval vessels. In construction master builders would contract to construct a home and then hire carpenters, masons, and stonecutters. A number of crafts remained small businesses, but many bakers, butchers, and watchmakers still had their own shops. The city's largest crafts, notably printing, cabinetmaking, construction, shoemaking, and tailoring, became large-scale enterprises requiring considerable capital investment; type and printing presses were for example well beyond the means of an aspiring journeyman. In these trades masters tended to become cost-conscious employers rather than the paternal master craftsman who nurtured journeymen and apprentices on their way to master standing. Journeymen as well had to accept that fact that they were unlikely to become master craftsmen. In so doing journeymen printers, shoemakers, cabinetmakers, carpenters, and masons in American seaports formed their own benevolent associations. These provided benefits in case of illness or death, but also negotiated conditions of employment with employers. More and more journeymen lived in boardinghouses rather than with masters, and more and more apprentices left their indentures early for wages in crafts that demanded less skill.

As masters sought to maintain lower prices for labor, journeymen responded by demanding negotiated wages either by the hour (construction) or by piecework (tailoring and shoemaking). When the two sides could not agree, the journeymen were not unwilling to walk out of either a single master, stage a city-wide walk out, or even to open their own store. They demanded that masters hire only those who belonged to their journeymen societies. It was this demand and the walkouts that ensued when violations occurred that led to major labor conspiracy trials against shoemakers in both New York and Philadelphia. Journeymen were charged with conspiring under English Common Law against the rights of other journeymen who wanted to work. The trials ended in convictions, and though the fines assessed were not severe, they limited the ability of journeymen to establish a powerful countervailing force in the marketplace.

Politically artisans became the pivotal voting bloc in the nation's seaports. Supporters of the Constitution, they saw the new charter as offering trade protection and a more advantageous market position and so were originally strong followers of the Federalist party. However the Jeffersonian appeal of egalitarianism made headway, especially against the expected deference and arrogance of Federalist leaders. The Jeffersonian appeal to the artisans was not that of the agrarianism espoused by John Taylor of Caroline. Rather in such pivotal states as Pennsylvania and

New York, it was a sense of equality in the marketplace and of attack against enhanced economic privilege. Artisan masters ought to be allowed to exploit the new economy. Artisan journeymen had the right to fight for their rights and not to be intimidated by Federalist employers who expected them to vote as instructed. Republicans exploited incidents of such coercion through an active press. Too, many artisans joined the Democratic-Republican Societies in support of the French Revolution, in stark opposition to the Federalists. A number of artisans followed Paineite deism, and these were welcome into Republican ranks (though others formed the backbone of new Baptist and Methodist congregations). Enough artisans shifted their votes in Philadelphia and New York City by 1800 to give Jefferson the presidency and maintain Jeffersonian political dominance even into the hard years of the War of 1812; at such a moment many craftsmen were willing to sacrifice their economic welfare temporarily for the greater good espoused by Madison. Federalism retreated to a New England fortress.

In the age of Jackson, the artisan experience was marked by what one historian has termed metropolitan industrialization and the bastardization of craft. Once again the division between the more- and less-respectable crafts came to the front, as the more populous but less-refined crafts, such as tailoring and shoemaking, were most deeply affected. However this tension also affected a number of respectable trades, including some of the furniture-making crafts as well as building and printing. In these trades the labor supply was greatly increased by the influx of millions of Irish and German immigrants into the major American cities. In addition workers now focused on the ready-made rather than on custom orders. Masters became foremen who were pressured by intense competition to lower wages in order to manufacture large and inexpensive supplies of shoes and garments. A few highly skilled cutters might do well, as would a number of industrialists, but the average wage for an artisan slipped well below the subsistence level, and all family members had to work to stay afloat. Not surprisingly artisans resented the loss of their income and standing and in 1829 organized a Workingman's party influenced by such radical thinkers as Thomas Skidmore, who called for the equalization of property; and George Henry Evans, who demanded free land distribution. This party lasted only a couple of years and was beset by divisions, but the new economy pushed artisans to form stronger unions, such as, in New York, the General Trades' Union that called 40 strikes and included 50 separate unions in the early 1930s. The union movement was hurt by the Panic of 1837 but reemerged in the 1850s.

Artisans became the core of the emerging U.S. working class, forming organizations that would lead to the modern labor unions and third parties that would offer ideas that would influence major party politics in years to come.

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See also **Apprenticeship; Revolution, and Early National Period**

ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT

The Arts and Crafts movement emerged in the 1870s in response to the dramatic social and economic changes that transformed Europe and the United States over the course of the nineteenth century. Arts and Crafts reformers lamented the degradation of labor, despoliation of nature, and decline in aesthetic sensibilities that they believed were brought about by industrialization. They believed that the employment of large numbers of once-independent craftspeople in large factories and the growing emphasis on the mass production of machine-made goods had radically altered both the character of work itself and the aesthetic quality of the products that work yielded. Labor that had once been creative and meaningful had become repetitive, dull, and meaningless. Objects

that had once expressed the artistic imagination and skills of their human creators now reflected only the productive capacities of disembodied machines and corporations.

Arts and Crafts reformers, who never formed a cohesive group in Europe or the United States, sought in various ways to combat these nefarious developments. While some sought to reorganize production around a mythologized version of the medieval craft guild, others advocated the establishment of self-sufficient utopian handicraft communities apart from modern society. Still others were more modest in their ambitions, aiming to reform existing industrial practices; establish new design schools; or organize craft unions, shows, and philanthropies. Some reformers, especially the British Arts and Crafts leaders of the 1870s and 1880s, imbued their aesthetic and labor initiatives with a radical, sometimes socialist, political agenda, but many in Europe and the United States either confined their radicalism to the realm of aesthetics or embraced a conservative nationalism that celebrated the authenticity of folk culture and art. Whatever their political inclinations, all Arts and Crafts reformers believed in the need to reform industrial society through the reunification of art and labor.

The Arts and Crafts movement had its roots in England, where it also took its most radical political form. As the world’s first and—still by the mid-nineteenth century—most highly industrialized urbanized nation, England also produced the century’s first critics of the aesthetic and social effects of the development of factories and mass production. The renowned art historian John Ruskin (1819–1900) voiced already at midcentury his conviction that factory work degraded labor, drained the creativity out of workers, and turned them into mere appendages of machines. Only the elimination of machine production and a return to handicraft could restore dignity and meaning to labor and thereby restore joy and meaning to workers’ lives. Ruskin abhorred uniformity, symmetry, and regularity, whether in machine-produced objects or in classical art and architecture. Instead he championed a more natural aesthetic of irregularity and asymmetry that he maintained was a truer embodiment of human creativity.

The most influential and well-known leader of the English Arts and Crafts movement was William Morris (1834–1896). Although Morris did not follow Ruskin in the latter’s wholesale rejection of machinery, like Ruskin he believed above all in the socially and morally regenerative capacity of craft. In 1861, Morris, along with a group of prominent artists and artisans, established the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner, and Company (later Morris and Co.) with the aim of producing high-quality handmade home furnishings and

decorative arts for the general populace. Morris himself designed wallpaper patterns, tapestries, and carpets, while his colleagues produced furniture, tiles, embroidery, and stained glass, among other things. Morris soon found that the company could not realize in practice the ideals of its founders: In order to sustain themselves, the producers had to price their handcrafted items beyond the means of all but the wealthy. To cut costs, Morris was compelled to break down the production process into simpler tasks that could be performed quickly and repetitively, thereby replicating the very pattern of labor organization that he found so troubling in industrialized England. Frustrated by these economic constraints, Morris turned in the 1880s to socialism as a political solution to the problem of reforming work. Morris had numerous admirers and followers in England and elsewhere, including C. R. Ashbee (1863–1942), who made numerous trips to the United States and whose Guild of Handicraft served as a model for handicraft societies in America. Although nearly all of Morris's followers shared his passion for craft, design, and their capacity to re-invest labor with meaning, few shared his radical political vision.

The American Arts and Crafts movement peaked during the two decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century. As in England, the broadly defined movement in the United States was the product of growing middle-class anxiety about the effects of a rapidly changing society and culture. While some focused primarily on the loss of beauty and taste brought on by industrial manufacturing, others worried more about the growing immiseration and unhappiness of the working class and its implications for social and political stability. All agreed however that these two alarming trends were fundamentally linked. By reforming design principles along simpler, more utilitarian, and more naturalistic lines and by reorganizing labor to make it more co-operative, creative, enriching, and more spiritually (as well as economically) rewarding, Arts and Crafts leaders saw themselves as responding to a looming social crisis.

Although a common social vision of the unity of art and labor underlay the many initiatives that fell under the broad umbrella of the Arts and Crafts movement, those efforts took a wide variety of forms, including the establishment of small utopian craft-agricultural communities, the foundation of co-operative design and production workshops, the organization of craft exhibition societies, and the publication of journals promoting the ideals and practices of craftsmanship.

Arts and Crafts reformers also represented a range of political perspectives. Mary Ware Dennett (1872–1947), a leader of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, stressed the need for industrial democracy as a prerequisite for achieving the independence of craft

workers and criticized the society for privileging the production of objects over the amelioration of working conditions. By contrast the architect Ralph Adams Cram (1863–1942) extolled the Middle Ages as the embodiment of the spirit of social fellowship and co-operation. That spirit, he argued, was later destroyed by the Renaissance, with its emphasis on individualism, materialism, and democracy from which modern society still suffered. Cram became a leader of a Gothic Revival movement steeped not only in medieval architectural style but in an enthusiasm for monarchy, premodern Christianity, and precapitalist economic forms. At the same time, Cram's contemporary, the architect and designer Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959), celebrated the liberating potential of the machine, as long as machines remained under the control of the artist. Wright's commitment to the unity of structure and aesthetics and his belief that style must reflect the materials and uses of a building or object were as much an expression of Arts and Crafts ideals as were Cram's nostalgia for a premodern era and Dennett's vision of industrial reform.

Among the most prominent proponents of the American Arts and Crafts movement were the furniture-maker and publisher Gustav Stickley (1858–1942) and the businessman and printer Elbert Hubbard (1856–1915). Both Stickley and Hubbard built successful commercial enterprises by promoting the craftsmanship ideal to the burgeoning middle-class market. Stickley opened a furniture-making workshop in Syracuse, New York, which produced clean, simple, designs—later called mission style—the majority by machine. His journal, the *Craftsman*, promoted Stickley's products and aesthetic by printing ruggedly simple designs for houses, furniture, and various crafts. Though a consistent critic of commercialism and factory production, Stickley was no political radical. He revered the simplicity and naturalness that he ascribed to premodern and native Indian cultures and remained committed above all to the independence of the individual craft worker.

Unlike Stickley, Elbert Hubbard saw no contradiction between his craftsman ideals and commercialism. He established the Roycroft workshops in 1896 as a commercial enterprise that would produce and market a wide variety of handcrafted goods. The elaborate Roycroft catalog, first issued in 1901, marketed home furnishings and other items to middle-class consumers. Ostensibly predicated on Arts and Crafts labor reform principles, Roycroft evolved into an efficient manufacturing enterprise that embraced more conventional ideas of paternalism and welfare capitalism. Hubbard's emphasis on good working conditions, training opportunities, and leisure time and space for workers was balanced by his practice of

ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT

maintaining low wages and retaining complete control of the enterprise.

Although inspired and influenced by the idealism of Ruskin and the radicalism of Morris, the American Arts and Crafts movement was more heterogeneous and less clearly tied to a particular political agenda than its English counterpart. At its core the movement was an expression of middle-class unease about modern society fueled by worries about the effects of commercialization, competition, mass production, and greed on American society. In the end the Arts and Crafts movement had little lasting impact on the organization of labor or industrial production, since one after another, the various short-lived experiments in alternative, craft-based production failed. But the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement on American style was profound throughout the twentieth century and remains evident into the twenty-first in the perennial popularity of rustic, mission-style furniture; in the middle-class fascination with home decorating and interior design; and in the proliferation of pottery and woodworking classes for hobbyists. The Arts and Crafts movement failed to bring about the social revolution that Morris dreamed of. It did however foster a revolution in style, albeit a style that is now fully compatible with commercialization and mass production.

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ASSEMBLY LINE PRODUCTION

Henry Ford, one of the numerous fathers of American history, bears the title of father of the assembly line. On one hand, father is a misattribution, since the creation of modern mass production was the evolution of trends in American industry since the mid-nineteenth century and the collective effort of many people in the Ford Highland Park plant—Ford, his

plant superintendents and managers, industrial engineers, foremen, and ordinary workmen. On the other hand, the term assembly line is a misnomer for what this collective effort tried to accomplish in the Ford Highland Park factory from 1910–1914, since it hoped to create what it labeled a system of “progressive production” to manufacture and to assemble the enormously popular “motorcar for the great multitude”—the Model-T Ford.

Once Ford and others decided to manufacture this inexpensive and well-built automobile for the ordinary person, they inaugurated a technical and industrial process that gradually but thoroughly transformed industrial production in the United States and in the world. The huge and increasing popular demand for the Model-T Ford led to a continuous effort to refashion and to reshape the means and methods for the efficient production of the automobile. At the time Ford managers, engineers, technicians, and skilled workers were quite aware of the recent ideas and innovations in scientific management and the latest developments in machine tool technology that were in the collective industrial consciousness.

The crucial decision was the one to manufacture a standardized and uniform product—the Model-T Ford. As Ford later noted, he wanted to manufacture an automobile that was as standardized and as unvarying as a match or pin, a product so standardized that the customer could have any color so long as it was black. Once a standardized product was decided, the next phase was to use Frederick W. Taylor’s principles of the division and subdivision of labor to standardize and to simplify all work tasks and work routines throughout the Highland Park factory. Combined with the high-volume production that the immense popular demand generated, the standardized work allowed for the investment in single-purpose machine tools to produce the same part over and over again in the Ford machine shops. Instead of resting on the multiple skills of an all-round machinist, the Ford machine operator became an unskilled worker whose major attributes were the speed to load and unload the machine and the ability to endure repetitive and monotonous work.

The next phase involved the conception of all machine and assembly operations as a completely integrated and interconnected system. The notion and method of progressive or line production began in the Highland Park machine shops. At the time machines were traditionally organized according to the class or type of machine tool. Under the traditional arrangement, Ford managers and engineers noticed the huge number of workers required to move or to truck parts back and forth from one type of machine operation to another. They determined that the arrangement of

machines in the sequence of machining operation on a casting would result in a large labor savings through the elimination of truckers needed to move the parts back and forth from shop to shop. They also recognized production efficiencies in the sequential arrangement of machine operations. The use of a fast and adept worker, or a pace setter, at the beginning of a series of machine operations established the pace of the rest of the workers down the line of machines. Additionally shop supervisors and foremen could readily detect the underperforming workers by the piles of unprocessed materials next to them.

The final stage in the development of progressive production was the actual development of what we now know as the assembly line. Technical folklore holds that Ford conceived of the assembly line as an inversion of ideas used in midwestern meat-packing plants, which meant in effect disassembled animals. After the realization of the efficiencies of progressive production with machine tools, Ford managers, engineers, and skilled workers next moved on to apply similar progressive or line principles to the assembly of automobile parts and components and ultimately to the assembly of the entire automobile. They began with the hand assembly of small components, such as magnetos and pistons, which were passed by hand from worker to worker. Then gravity slides, overhead chains, and conveyor belts moved the work from assembly station to assembly station. As in the classic Charlie Chaplin film, *Modern Times*, the mechanical movement of conveyor belts had the added advantage of pacing Ford automobile workers. After the successful development of line assembly of smaller parts and components, Ford officials moved to larger and more complex automobile components, such as the transmissions and engines.

By the end of 1913, the creation of the final assembly line represented a culmination of four years of technical innovation in the Ford shops and ultimately of the evolution of the modern manufacture at home and abroad. Ford officials, engineers, and workers initially attempted to use a windlass to pull a wheeled chassis down a long shop room. Groups of workers followed the chassis and attached parts and components stationed along the way for the final assembly of the Model-T Ford. Eventually Ford workers positioned themselves with the stacked parts and components and attached them as the chassis moved down the line on a conveyor belt. The modern assembly line was born.

All in all progressive production envisioned the Ford Highland Park factory as a systematically integrated system of automobile production. Work-in-progress flowed through the factory from raw materials into the plant to the foundry to the machine

production lines to the subassembly lines and to the final assembly line. The principles of line production and line assembly established new forms of control, organizational and technical, over automobile workers. The organizational control of work tasks was a consequence of arranging work in a line so that each worker paced the other. The technical control involved how the cycle of the single-purpose machine and how the conveyor belt paced automobile workers.

The application of specialized machine tools and of line production and assembly methods greatly enhanced the worker effort and factory output in the Ford Highland Park plant. In the late 1910s and early 1920s, other automobile firms and other industries adopted and adapted Ford mass-production principles and methods. Through the 1920s, Fordism, called Fordismus in Germany and Fordizatsiia in the Soviet Union, quickly and globally became synonymous with modern industrial practices and set the pattern for twentieth-century industrialization. As the film *Modern Times* suggested, the assembly line was a central metaphor for the “machine civilization” debate of the 1920s.

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ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TRADE UNIONISTS

The Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU) was in existence from 1937 to the early 1970s. Comprising of Catholic union members, its dual aim was to promote the goals of organized labor and to push labor in directions consistent with Catholicism, in particular by stemming Communist influences.

The ACTU's original organizers were a group of Catholic Workers and union members, including John Cort, Edward Squitieri, Edward Scully, George Donahue, William Callahan, Michael Gunn, Joseph Hughes, and Martin Wersing. Labor priest John Monaghan joined the group as chaplain. Cort was a

leader in Dorothy Day's New York Catholic Worker chapter and became the organization's president. Wersing was the president of the Edison Electric Workers' Union.

The first meeting of the ACTU occurred at the headquarters of the Catholic Worker in New York in February of 1937. Cort and the other Workers present believed that the Worker movement was too far removed from labor struggles. They were displeased as well that Day and her followers seemed insufficiently concerned about the influence of Communists in organized labor.

In March 1938, the ACTU acquired its own office in New York, located above a local Communist party headquarters. The organization's management had established two requirements for membership: Membership in a labor union and good standing in the Catholic church. Concerning its relationship to the church, the ACTU would be lay and autonomous; that is, its leadership and direction would come from Catholics who were not priests or bishops. In Cort's words, "The intention was not to create Catholic unions, but to provide a religious and educational organization for the Catholic members of existing organizations" (John C. Cort, *Making of a Catholic Socialist*, 2003). Catholic clergy nonetheless exerted significant influence through their positions as chaplains.

The ACTU organized a legal team, the Catholic Labor Defense league, and established labor schools for the training of workers and union leaders. The league's activities included representing workers who were prevented by management from organizing; representing workers who were fired for organizing; assisting new or unaffiliated unions in contract negotiations; and representing individual workers in disputes with their own unions. The labor schools, which spread rapidly and engaged thousands of students, were often affiliated with a Catholic educational institution—the first was attached to Fordham University.

Initially dominated by American Federation of Labor (AFL) members, the ACTU quickly attracted participation from Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unionists as well. By 1940, there were seven chapters besides New York, including Chicago, Boston, Detroit, and San Francisco. Though there was a national council, the ACTU remained largely a local affair, with individual chapters displaying various ideological emphases. The relatively powerful Detroit local promoted the re-organization of economic life along the lines suggested by papal social encyclicals, such as Pope Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). It pushed for the creation of joint boards made up equally of representatives from worker associations and employer associations. These boards

would control every aspect of their respective industries, including wages, prices, and production.

Notwithstanding such sweeping goals, most ACTU activity focused on the immediate needs of its members. In its support of union activity, the ACTU lent organizational aid to strikes and demonstrations. In the late 1930s, local chapters supported in their respective skirmishes with management the Amalgamated Utility Workers in New York; the Newspaper Guild in Chicago; and the United Auto Workers (UAW) in Detroit. In the 1939 UAW Chrysler strike, the ACTU was credited with bringing Detroit Archbishop Edward Mooney and the diocesan newspaper into alliance with the union, thereby turning the tide of the conflict in the UAW's favor.

In many chapters, anti-Communist programs soon became the chief activity. The ACTU undermined Communist influence through its labor schools and attacked it directly through its organizational apparatus and legal arm. Actists (as members called themselves) led and cooperated in campaigns to defeat Communists in union elections and supported dismemberment, through the tactics of raids and splits, of unions that did not reject Communist leadership. One long-term struggle occurred between the ACTU and the Transport Workers' Union (TWU). Beginning in 1939, when the ACTU urged transportation workers to join the United Mine Workers instead of the TWU, the ACTU's fight against Communist leadership within the TWU continued through the 1940s.

Within the context of the Catholic church nonetheless, the ACTU occupied a position on the political left. It countered claims from conservatives that for example the CIO was dominated by Communists.

Except for a slower period caused by the war from 1942–1945, the ACTU was active and influential from its founding to the end of the 1940s. At its height, the ACTU's membership numbered approximately 10,000 workers in 24 local chapters. Many Actists gained lofty union posts. Detroit ACTU vice-president Paul Saint-Marie was in 1941 elected the top official in UAW Local 600, the largest local in the world.

Given the ACTU's shift to focus on anticommunism in the 1940s, the comprehensive expulsion of radicals from American unions accomplished by the end of the decade removed much of the organization's purpose. In the 1950s, its clout and activity declined rapidly. The last surviving chapter, in New York, ceased publication of its newsletter, the *Labor Leader*, in 1959, though the group existed into the 1970s.

That the ACTU exerted a conservative influence on American labor is not in dispute, though scholars disagree as to the extent of that influence. Some believe the ACTU was the decisive force in preventing more radical union action, while others argue that

organized labor in the United States would have rejected Communist tendencies in any case; in the latter view, the ACTU was simply one factor among many. From another perspective, the ACTU smoothed relations between the Catholic church and organized labor. By providing institutional support for Catholic union members and by defending unions in general against the charge of communism, it was instrumental in building a mostly positive relationship between unions and American Catholics.

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See also **Catholic Church; Day, Dorothy**

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

As larger aircraft and regulation encouraged the expansion of passenger business in the fledgling airline industry, airline companies modeled customer service after the purser or Pullman porter models and hired young white or African-American males to help with passenger boarding and in-flight services. In 1930, Ellen Church, a registered nurse who had learned to fly an airplane, approached Boeing Air Transport seeking employment as a pilot. Management instead hired her and seven other nurses to work in the aircraft cabin on a trial basis. Ellen Church and her colleagues became the first female crew members in U.S. commercial aviation. The presence of young women trained to aid and comfort the queasy or nervous passengers was immediately popular with the flying public, and the career of "stewardess" was born.

Despite the attention and the glamour, the cold unpressurized aircraft cabin, grueling schedules, and low pay made stewardessing (and stewarding) a difficult job. In 1936, the DC-3 aircraft made flying passengers profitable for the airlines. With up to 21 passengers onboard, and a coast-to-coast range including five stops, flight attendants faced dramatically increased workloads. World War II both heightened the glamorous image of flight work and exacerbated already difficult working conditions. Because of wartime military

contracts, the airline industry operated only half its aircraft for commercial service, although passenger demand actually increased. Because of wartime nursing shortages, stewardesses were no longer required to have medical training, although weight, height, pregnancy, and marital status restrictions remained.

While airline pilots organized in the 1930s, flight attendants and airline workers on the ground participated in organizing drives during and immediately after World War II. Considered the low-paid temporary work for middle-class young women, much of organized labor doubted stewardesses' interest in organizing. In 1944, Ada J. Brown, Sally Thometz, and Frances Hall, stewardesses at United Air Lines, founded the Air Line Stewardesses Association (ALSA). With some guidance from the Air Line Pilots' Association (ALPA), Brown and the others filed for certification under the Railway Labor Act and began negotiations with United in December 1945. The ALSA's first contract included an 85-hour limit on monthly flight hours, the first increase in the base wage since 1930, and a grievance process. In 1949, ALSA merged with the Air Line Steward and Stewardesses' Association (ALSSA), an affiliate of ALPA formed in 1946.

In the 1950s, changes to the Railway Labor Act allowing the union shop and changes to civil aeronautics law requiring in-flight personnel for safety strengthened the position of flight attendant unions. By their first convention in 1951, ALSSA held contracts with 18 airlines. In 1953, ALSSA members elected Rowland K. Quinn, Jr., a steward from Eastern Airlines, as president. While ALSSA continued to call on ALPA for guidance and legal resources, conflict between ALSSA and ALPA developed over ALSSA's repeated applications for a separate charter from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) (and AFL-CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations]).

The introduction of jet aircraft, the Landrum-Griffin Act, and pressure from competing unions further complicated relations between ALSSA and ALPA. Conflicts over flight hour limits and pay differentials on the new larger and faster aircraft and honoring picket lines tested the affiliation. In 1960, ALSSA's leadership removed its records and furniture from the ALPA building and set up new offices in downtown Chicago. In response ALPA crafted a new Stewards and Stewardesses Division and worked with AFL-CIO leadership to bring the ALSSA dissidents back into ALPA. At the same time, the Transport Workers' Union (TWU), which represented flight attendants at Pan American Airways, offered affiliation to ALSSA. Elections for ALSSA members resulted in an even split between ALPA and TWU affiliation. Raiding between TWU

and ALPA-affiliated locals and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters followed.

By the late 1960s, the women's liberation movement and jumbo jet aircraft spurred on important changes in flight attendant unionism. Because jumbo jet aircraft required increased cabin staffing, flight attendant membership in ALPA began to outpace that of pilots. Fearing a "stewardess problem," pilot leadership in ALPA agreed to a gradual transition of the Stewards and Stewardesses Division of the Air Line Pilots' Association (S & S Division) to independence as the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) in 1973.

The glamorous image, airline regulations regarding age, appearance, and marital status worked against building solidarity among flight attendants. According to AFA historian Georgia Panter Nielsen, the marriage rule and low pay ensured that the average flight attendant career lasted less than two years. Prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ALSSA and the TWU attempted to end marital restrictions through negotiations. The TWU grievances at Pan American Airways on this matter were denied at arbitration through the Railway Labor Act's (RLA's) System Board of Adjustment. The ALSSA brought similar cases to arbitration on behalf of flight attendants at Trans World Airlines (TWA) and Braniff Airlines.

Using Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, flight attendants began to challenge the physical and marital status regulations for female flight attendants. Within a decade, over a dozen cases had been filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on the issue of weight standards alone, S & S Division vice-president Kelly Rueck (later AFA president) spearheaded these efforts. A class action lawsuit over marriage restrictions at United Airlines resulted in 10 years of litigation over seniority, reinstatement, and remedies (*United Airlines, Inc. v. McDonald*, 432 U.S. 385 [1977]). During the 1970s, flight attendants also challenged the airlines' increasingly provocative advertising campaigns. The AFA leadership joined members of the activist group Stewardesses for Women's Rights in protesting "Fly Me" campaigns and threatened slowdowns marked by a "spontaneous loss of enthusiasm" and filed lawsuits alleging hostile working conditions. Rank-and-file flight attendants invigorated by feminism and collective activism also expressed their frustration with union leadership and disaffiliated from the AFA and the TWU, forming independent unions at Continental, American, TWA, and Pan Am.

In 1984, the AFA received its charter from the AFL-CIO, making it the first union to be chartered with all women leaders. The AFA activism in the 1980s served to counter some of the downsizing and streamlining challenges presented in the postderegulation era.

The AFA safety campaigns countered efforts to reduce FAA standards for cabin crew size and pushed for improved exit lighting, carry-on limits, smoking regulations, and material flammability standards.

In 1994, AFA members at Alaska Airways instituted CHAOS (Create Havoc Around Our System), a successful strategy of surprise intermittent local strike actions that disrupted flights and made it nearly impossible to replace strikers. Flight attendant activism has increased in the post-9/11 era with lobbying for airline and airport security regulations. The AFA continued to use CHAOS through the 1990s, and in the post-9/11 airline industry, the AFA has used this strategy at the threat of contract nullification at airlines under bankruptcy protection. In 2002, AFA membership reached 50,000 members. In 2004, AFA members voted to merge with the Communication Workers of America.

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ATLANTA WASHERWOMEN'S STRIKE (1881)

In the summer of 1881, African-American washerwomen defied all expectations by organizing the largest strike at that point in the city's history. Given the broad support and participation within the black community and the wide range of white households that relied on their labor, the entire city was impacted. Organized protests by domestic workers were not new in this era: There were strikes in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1866, and Galveston, Texas, in 1877, but neither of them surpassed the Atlantans' scale and scope.

The washerwomen drew on the leadership and political skills developed during Reconstruction in Republican party activities, labor associations, churches, secret societies, and informal neighborhood networks. In 1877, they first mobilized to address pay issues. In 1879 and 1880, they coalesced into a protective association. And in July 1881, they created the Washing Society.

At the inaugural meeting held at a local black church, the members elected officers, appointed committees, designated subsidiary societies in each of the city's five wards, and established a uniform rate for their labor. Within a few weeks, the "washing Amazons," as they were christened by opponents, called a citywide strike. Unlike other domestic workers who toiled away in the homes of employers, laundresses brought bundles of dirty clothing home and often cleaned them at communal wash sites, which enabled their mobilization. "Visiting committees" built from this existing base by canvassing from door-to-door throughout black neighborhoods to urge nonaffiliated women to join the organization and honor the strike. The effectiveness of this strategy, along with regular decentralized ward meetings, was visibly demonstrated in the swelling of their ranks from 20 to 3,000 strikers and sympathizers within 3 weeks.

At least a minority of washerwomen resisted joining the strike, which prompted confrontations. The police also accused the visiting committee of threatening to use violence against resisters. Several strikers and at least one of their husbands was arrested for disorderly conduct and quarreling, fined, and in some cases, jailed. Relatively little information is known about the leaders other than what is available on those who were arrested. They were mostly older, married women with children, and some had unemployed husbands. Their willingness to jeopardize even the sole family income shows their determination despite their precarious circumstances.

Whites in Atlanta, as represented in the *Atlanta Constitution*, the leading voice of the opposition, begrudgingly acknowledged the magnitude of the strike and were forced to take it more seriously than anticipated. But they also had difficulty imagining that the women were capable of independent thought and action. One source claimed that an unnamed white man headed the organization, without producing evidence to substantiate it. While some employers waited for an impending doom, others searched for methods to bring the strike to a halt. Consistent with the ambitions of the city's elite, leading capitalists raised funds for an industrial steam laundry and offered to employ "smart Yankee girls" who would presumably make manual workers obsolete. Municipal authorities undertook the most direct action not

only by arrests and fines, but also by proposing that each member of any washerwomen's organization pay a business tax of \$25. Not coincidentally the City Council introduced this resolution on the same day the backers of the industrial laundry sought a tax exemption status. Another group of businessmen invoked welfare payments as a form of social control by threatening to deny winter aid to strikers, and the *Constitution* warned of the corresponding dangers of provoking landlords to raise the costs of rent if the strikers persisted with "exorbitant demands."

The washerwomen responded to these measures in early August by calling a meeting attended by five hundred women and men at the Wheat Street Baptist Church. They wrote a letter to Mayor Jim English that denounced the council's actions and defiantly suggested that they would pay the taxes and turn them into protective fees. In reality the women could not afford the equivalent of several months in wages, but they articulated an important principle of self-regulation. This letter is a rare extant document of ordinary black women of this era speaking in their own voices to protest their work conditions. It shows that although the stakes weighed heavily against them, they refused to be disarmed.

The laundry workers' actions also inspired other black workers: Cooks, maids, and children's nurses demanded higher wages, too. Black waiters at the National Hotel refused to work until their employers agreed to increase their monthly wages. The atmosphere of black labor unrest gave them new leverage and their employers conceded.

The conclusion of the strike is left open to interpretation. The newspaper's reports petered out without a clear explanation of how it was resolved. In at least some cases, employers relented to paying the women more money, but most did not, as indicated by the continuation of low wages as a central point of contention long after the strike ended. More important, the strike succeeded on the political level, as suggested by a tidbit of information that appeared in the newspaper in September. The washerwomen threatened to organize a general strike of all domestic workers at the October opening of the International Cotton Exposition, the first world's fair to be held in the South. The newspaper told white housewives to prepare for a massive walkout at a time of unparalleled need; a warning that would have been unnecessary had the first strike completely failed. There is no evidence that the second strike came to fruition, but the shrewd strategy that undergirded the mere threat of a general strike was symbolic. Atlanta was preparing to showcase its pre-eminence as a model city of the new South. Such dissension would have severely tarnished its image and reneged on the fulfillment of southern

hospitality promised to the multitude of expected guests. Though strikes, whether real or threatened, were rare, black working-class women would continue to channel their discontent in a variety of creative and often more surreptitious forms as the era of *de jure* segregation approached and hardened.

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AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

The United States is the only industrialized country that has continuously adhered to a rule that indefinite-term employment contracts should be construed as at-will. All others require either a notice before discharge, severance pay, just cause, or some combination.

The origin of the rule appears sometime in the 1870s. The usual rule looked to pay periods to resolve indefiniteness, but sometimes indefiniteness voided the contract. An Albany practitioner, H. G. Wood, first clearly stated the rule in a *Treatise on Master and Servant* in 1877. Although he acknowledged that employment contracts were capable of implied terms, he stated, "The one must be bound to employ, and the other to serve, for a certain definite time, or either is at liberty to put an end to the relation at any time, and there is no contract of hiring and service obligatory beyond the will of either party." The first case to adopt Wood's construction was actually a tortious interference-with-business case arising when a railroad prohibited its employees from trading with a general store. Because the employees were at-will, they could be fired for good reason, bad reason, or no reason at all. *Payne v. The Western & Atlantic Railroad Co.*, 81 Tenn. Rpts. 507 (1884).

Several causes of the rule have been suggested: The rise of liberty-of-contract legal theory, industrialization, a class-based attempt to limit the power of middle-class managers. None are completely satisfying. Neither a pure legal theory nor rapid economic change could be considered without the other, and in any event, the contract theory focused on a meeting of

the minds that allowed implied terms. While the early adoptions of the rule all involved middle-class employees, the rule was soon applied to all workers. However with reconstruction and the Thirteenth Amendment, it is true that all workers must be free to bind themselves only by voluntary contract. A principle of mutuality suggested that employers should have the same power to condition employment only by contract as free labor. Furthermore such employer power promoted mobility of capital, promoting *laissez faire* capitalism.

In fact in 1915, *Coppage v. Kansas*, 236 U.S. 1 (1915), codified the at-will rule against government in Constitutional law. The Supreme Court reasoned based on four mutually reinforcing premises, two pairs of economic and legal assumptions. At the micro-social level, it assumed first the economic principle of mobility: Every individual should be free to move themselves or their capital to its contractually valued highest use. Second this right should be legally mutual for the employer and employee. At the macrosocial level, the Court assumed first that society's wealth would be maximized by the aggregate of such free contracts. Second such rules as reinforce such a market are legally neutral between employer and employee.

After the recognition that unequal bargaining power justifies governmental regulation in virtually all other types of contracts, and the rejection of the *Coppage* theory in Constitutional law by 1937, what now explains the persistence of the at-will rule to the present? Some states, for example, Florida, cite certainty of business expectations or business promotion. What is clear is that maintaining the rule makes employers "the sovereign of the job." Coupled with the reserve of labor maintained by unemployment insurance, employers need not tie their hands against business cycles by definite-term employment for most employees and can always hold the disciplinary threat of discharge over at-will employees. The result is that over 60% of the U.S. labor force is employed at-will.

The first exception to the at-will rule occurred in 1959, in the California case, *Peterman v. International Brotherhood of Teamsters*, 174 Cal. App. 2d 184 (1959). An at-will employee refused to perjure himself for the benefit of the company and was discharged. The court held the discharge to be against public policy and void because suborning perjury undermined the integrity of the justice system. In another early development, an implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing prevented discharge of an employee who refused a supervisor's sexual advances, *Monge v. Beebe Rubber Co.*, 316 A. 2d 549 (N.H. 1974). Third employer assurances of just cause before discharge written into an employee

handbook were held binding on an employer, *Toussaint v. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan*, 292 N.W. 2d 880 (Mich. 1980). At present, only seven states have refused to modify their at-will rule by such judicially created exceptions.

The impact of these exceptions can be overstated. The most frequent exception holds a discharge void as against public policy only if the policy can be found in legislation or state constitution, with a handful of states allowing policy to be found in judicial pronouncements. Second public policy exceptions are usually restricted to attempted interference with judicial or administrative legal procedures. Only California has recognized an exception based on the economic waste of firing a worker with employment longevity, *Pugh v. See's Candies, Inc.*, 116 Cal. App. 3d 311 (1981). A minority of states, including California and other western states, sound the doctrine in tort rather than contract, providing for greater damages and thus realistic access to attorneys. Only a handful of states recognize an implied covenant of good faith. Finally the handbook exception really does not bind an unwilling employer, who never has to issue such a guarantee and can always retract any such promise prospectively.

The continued persistence of the at-will employment rule thus continues to mirror the weak status of labor regulation in the United States generally.

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See also American Exceptionalism

B

BACON'S REBELLION

Bacon's Rebellion, or the Virginia Rebellion of 1676, was a popular revolt in colonial Virginia named for its leader, Nathaniel Bacon. The Rebellion was both a struggle over Virginia's Indian policy and a revolt by disenfranchised colonists and their sympathizers against ruling government officials, such as Governor William Berkeley.

In the late 1600s high taxes, declining tobacco prices, commercial competition from Maryland and the Carolinas, frequent Indian attacks, lack of voting privileges for nonlandowners, and poor weather and crop yields all frustrated colonists, especially small planters in the backcountry. Many of the planters who pushed into western Indian lands were former indentured servants and dependents of the landholding gentry in Virginia. Since taking the office of Governor in 1641, Berkeley discouraged widespread education, stifled elections, granted the bulk of frontier lands and political offices to his supporters, and levied high taxes to support his regime. His policies, in addition to creating tensions with Indians, garnered resentment on the part of backcountry settlers and those opposed to Berkeley's faction.

In 1676, conflict between colonists and indigenous tribes escalated. Settlers in the Northern Neck of Virginia experienced an attack by the Doeg Indians. In retaliation, frontier militiamen wrongly killed members of the Susquhannock tribe and fanned the flames for additional native response. Backcountry settlers petitioned Governor William Berkeley to take action against the tribes, but he refused. While Berkeley was

not particularly sympathetic to Indians, he had lucrative trade interests with the natives to protect. The Governor did begin an investigation into the attacks and requested that settlers refrain from contact or further retaliation. Angered by this position, Nathaniel Bacon ignored the request and seized a number of Appomattox Indians on the charge of stealing corn. Berkeley reprimanded Bacon and called the "Long Assembly." At this meeting government officials declared war on enemy Indians and called for higher taxes to support an increased defensive guard around the colony.

Many small farmers and settlers resented additional tax increases and limited access to backcountry trade resulting from the government actions. Colonists desired protection from Indian attacks but also wanted to maintain access to valuable land and resources. In turn they rallied around Bacon as a representative of their rights. Bacon agreed to lead attacks against Indians and to cover the cost of the raids. Although Bacon and his followers were often successful at overcoming Indian tribes, Berkeley declared them rebels and traitors to the crown because of their extralegal actions.

Local landowners sympathetic to Bacon and his cause voted him into the Virginia House of Burgesses. Upon his arrival at the Legislative Assembly of June 1676, Bacon immediately apologized to Berkeley and the council. The Governor then issued a pardon, allowing Bacon to take his seat and argue for continued protection of the frontier. The meeting broke into arguments, however, and Bacon and his

men surrounded the statehouse at Jamestown and forced Berkeley to allow campaigns against the Indians without government interference. Berkeley broke this agreement and Bacon's men took over Jamestown from July to September of 1676. Bacon issued his "Declaration of the People," which stated that Berkeley was corrupt, played favorites, and protected the Indians for his own interests. During this time Berkeley fled first to his home at Green Spring and then to a plantation on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Eventually Berkeley returned to recapture Jamestown with the aid of the English militia. Bacon made last-ditch efforts to maintain control but eventually burned the capitol and fled. When Bacon abruptly died of the "Bloody Flux" and "Lousey Disease" on October 26, 1676, the Rebellion quickly ended. After regaining control of the government, Berkeley subdued the rebels, confiscated a number of estates, and hanged 23 men. This severe response caused the English crown to remove Berkeley from office and recall him to England. A royal commission was also sent to create treaties of pacification with the Indians and guaranteed them small land reserves.

Other than these land grants, Bacon's Rebellion did not create immediate changes in Indian policy or drastically upset the ruling gentry. At no point did white settlers stop the process of expansion into western lands or their attempts to control the backcountry. There was no real shift in power that occurred as a result of the Rebellion, since many of the same landholders continued to dominate the economics and politics of colonial Virginia. While Berkeley was ousted, the crown and English rule remained strong. The events did raise questions among leaders as to the threat to social order imposed by freed slaves, servants, and small planters and landowners. During the events of 1676 both Bacon and Berkeley offered freedom to servants and slaves, white and black, who joined their cause. But Bacon was clearly more successful in attracting support from these largely disenfranchised people. While there were many additional factors in the increased entrenchment of slave labor in the Chesapeake, the struggle heightened awareness of the gentry's vulnerability to usurpation by united forces of former indentured servants and poorer sorts. Some historians have argued that in order for the gentry to create an alliance between all whites, race-based slavery became more attractive as a method of control.

For many years, historians viewed the Rebellion as early stirrings of sentiment leading toward the American Revolution. Creating such a trajectory between the events of 1676 and 1776 is often

downplayed by current scholars. While there are similarities in the events, Bacon's force of "common men" reacting against abuses by an unjust government should not be equated with the revolutionary efforts of a century later.

Modern historians have used the Rebellion to examine ties between gender, race, and dominance that permeated society in seventeenth-century Virginia. Another current interpretation views the Rebellion as an expression of an ideological unity between colonists interested in seeking local autonomy over the interests of the state. Others view the Rebellion as merely a personal competition between the strong personalities of Bacon and Berkeley. The Rebellion is best remembered as an occasion where, if ever so briefly, former servants and other disenfranchised people were able to articulate their grievances against the established government and members of the ruling gentry.

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BAGLEY, SARAH GEORGE (APRIL 29, 1806–?) Women's Rights Labor Activist

Sarah Bagley was a pioneering female labor leader in the 1840s, one of the first to speak publicly for women's rights at work and the 10-hour day. Drawing on nearly a decade of labor in the textile mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, Bagley broke down barriers

based on stereotypes of female modesty and testified to the people, the press, and the politicians about harsh conditions of factory labor and the need to regulate hours of work. After her days as a crusading “Lowell Mill Girl” were over, she eventually became a homeopathic physician in New York.

Bagley was born in Candia, New Hampshire, where her parents—Nathan and Rhoda—farmed land inherited from Nathan’s father. The Bagley family’s hold on their farm, however, became increasingly tenuous in the early nineteenth century. As a child, the third of five, Bagley saw her family move to a new farmstead in Gilford, New Hampshire. When her father lost a lawsuit in 1822, the household moved again to what is now Laconia, New Hampshire. But Nathan Bagley never owned another home in his own name.

Like other young women from northern New England farming families facing hard times, Bagley looked to employment in the Lowell textile mills as a means for earning her own money, and thereby easing the economic burden on her parents. Yet Bagley’s story was also atypical in several ways. She was older than most of her coworkers and may have come to Lowell with previous mill experience. Bagley started work as a weaver for the Hamilton Company in 1837 at the age of 31, when most operatives would have been in their late teens or early 20s. Given her relatively advanced age, and the especially precarious economic status of her family, she also probably approached work not as a brief sojourn to earn a dowry for an expected marriage, but as a possible long-term employment option for a single woman seeking an independent living. Moreover, Bagley likely used some of her earnings to make a down payment in 1840 on a house her family had been renting back in New Hampshire. Thus she embodied, more than many of her fellow employees, the ideal of the selfless operative toiling to support her poverty-stricken family that factory defenders invoked to praise the Lowell mills; even as she also emerged as one of the corporation’s leading critics! Over time, Bagley proved to always be a hard worker—whatever the cause—but never a deferential one.

Though her first writings, in the procorporation *Lowell Offering*, praised the factory system, by the mid-1840s Bagley was a frequent contributor to the prolabor *Voice of Industry*. Being older and more attuned to the possibility that mill work might be her job for a long time, Bagley probably drew on her particular perspective to develop her arguments against long hours, declining wages, and increasing workloads. Having now worked in Lowell for nearly a decade, in both the weaving and dressing rooms of several companies, she scathingly dissected the system

she believed compromised her health and made women increasingly dependent on autocratic overseers and distant owners.

When the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association (LFLRA) was founded in the winter of 1845, Bagley became president and presided over its rapid growth during the following year. She encouraged the association to purchase the *Voice of Industry* and used that organ to promote not only the rights of Lowell mill girls but also women’s suffrage and legal equality, abolition of chattel slavery, pacifism, and even utopian socialism (Fourierism). Bagley also emerged as a champion of the 10-hour crusade: circulating political petitions, speaking at rallies and even workingmen’s conventions, not to mention testifying before the Massachusetts state legislature. She stressed that a shorter workday would protect women’s (indeed, all workers’) physical, mental, and spiritual health. Thus, she combined a bold sense of women’s political rights and public presence to defend female operatives not only as workers but as citizens and future mothers.

Bagley’s role as a public spokeswoman for labor rights and other social reforms came to an abrupt end in late 1846 under pressure, not from corporate officials, but from other editors at the *Voice of Industry*. Throughout her years of battle with the mill owners and managers, Bagley was never blacklisted and continued to live in corporate housing with her brother Henry, a skilled engraver at the printworks, and his family. Perhaps the companies did not want to make her a martyr for the cause of labor reform, or face even more of her tongue-lashings from outside the city. It is also possible that by mid-1845 Bagley had left mill work to try her hand at dressmaking—she may have been “encouraged” to leave the weave room, or she may have wanted more control over her time to continue working for the 10-hour day. Meanwhile, fellow labor journalists found Bagley’s political and social critiques too radical and undignified for a woman in their ranks. Seemingly fed up with both mill work and male labor activists who would no longer publish what she wrote, Bagley took a job at the telegraph office in Springfield, Massachusetts. She angrily quit one year later, when she discovered that the man who had previously held her position earned higher wages for the same job. Still feeling responsible for supporting her aging parents back in New Hampshire, she returned to Lowell for a final six-month stint of factory work in 1848; but now she was wary of expending precious time or money on more reform crusades.

By 1849, Bagley’s father had died, and the mortgage on the family farm was paid off. Bagley was now living in Philadelphia and working as the secretary for the Rosine Association—a Quaker organization dedicated to reforming prostitutes. Shortly thereafter,

she married a physician—James Durno—and moved to Albany, New York. Durno was a widower, 10 years older than Bagley, with at least one young child. Bagley, marrying for the first time at nearly 45 years of age, had no children of her own. For the next decade, the Durnos ran a patent medicine business. As James became increasingly involved in the finances, Sarah became the medical practitioner—still disregarding traditional expectations for a middle-aged married woman such as herself. She advertised in the city directory as a specialist in the diseases of women and children. By the early 1860s, the couple had moved to Brooklyn and their medical practice flourished. James died about a decade later, and Sarah stopped practicing medicine by 1875. She was last listed in the city directory of 1883 and may have died at that time—being close to 80 years old. But no death certificate or probate inventory has been found.

Yet, for that brief moment in the mid-1840s, Sarah Bagley emerged as one of the earliest public advocates for working women's rights in the emerging industrial economy of antebellum New England. She combined years of personal experience in the textile mills of Lowell with a deep sense of justice and equality to articulate a probing critique of the factory system and a vision of social reform to ensure the rights and freedom of all men and women.

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See also **Fourierism; Lowell Female Labor Reform Association (LFLRA); Textiles**

BAKERY AND CONFECTIONERY WORKERS UNION

The Journeymen Bakers Union, founded in 1880 by Bohemian journalist George Block, would eventually evolve into the Bakery and Confectionery Workers International Union (B&C), the largest bakers' union in the United States. Block's first attempt at organizing a bakers' union was short lived. In May of 1881, only a year after the union had been formed, the organized bakers of New York City led a premature strike, leading to the organization's collapse. The working conditions of nineteenth-century bakers, however, who frequently labored for 16 hours on weekdays and 23 hours on Saturdays, quickly led to further attempts at organization. Block himself went on to form the first journal devoted to union bakers in the United States, the *Deutsche-Amerikanische Baeckerzeitung*, in 1885 and to the creation of the first national bakers' union, the Journeymen Bakers National Union, in 1886.

These early organizations were composed almost entirely of Germans. The official journal of the bakers' union did not begin to publish articles in English until 1895. The German character of the union was reflected in the politics of its members, many of whom embraced the equally German Socialist Labor Party (SLP) of Daniel De Leon. The second secretary of the union, August Delabar (1888–1892), was also an active member of the SLP, running for the mayoralty of New York City on the party's ticket. Moreover, the union went so far as to endorse the SLP's platform in 1891. This close connection between the union and the SLP eventually led to Block's resignation as editor of the union's journal.

While the union maintained its socialist leadership well into the Great Depression of the 1930s, after 1892 the B&C leadership began a move away from political action and toward the model of business unionism. This move was strengthened early in the twentieth century when maximum hours legislation, which the union had helped pass, was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court as unconstitutional in its *Lochner v. New York* decision. The creation of a "business union" entailed both a centralization of authority in the union's national officers and the creation of a national strike fund, which the national officers could use to exert control over the decisions of locals. These moves created considerable resistance among some union locals, many of which were fiercely autonomous and jealous of their right to "home rule." This tension over centralization would generate conflict up through the postwar period. Some of the conflict's major results were repeated failure to create a compulsory sick and death benefit for union members, significant resistance

to regional and companywide negotiation strategies, and, in 1913, the expulsion of a number of New York locals, which would eventually become the Amalgamated Food Workers Union.

The B&C's organizing strategy in the nineteenth century had necessarily focused on small bakeries, as the majority of shops then had fewer than four workers. The second decade of the twentieth century, however, saw the rise of large bread trusts. These trusts quickly forced many small competitors out of business and hence put many union bakers out of work. The rise of the trusts led the B&C to move from its older strategy of boycotts to one of citywide union label campaigns. These campaigns, along with the relatively union-friendly environment of the war years, allowed the B&C to gain some ground even within the trusts. However, the open-shop drives in the immediate post-WWI period and the onset of the Depression prevented the B&C from fully capitalizing on its gains during the war. However, the union's out-of-work benefits system helped mitigate some of the effects of the Depression, and by lowering dues and encouraging the organization of new locals, the B&C managed to gain over 20,000 members between 1933 and 1936.

The B&C continued to grow in the 1940s and 1950s. The union further centralized its negotiations, focusing on regional and companywide contracts whenever possible. Under Curtis Sims, the leader of Local 25 in Chattanooga, the union began a concerted and successful effort to organize in the South. Helped by a companywide contract with the A&P, which gave the union a membership base across the region, the B&C went on to charter interracial locals throughout the South, bringing a large number of African-American members into the union. These successes, however, would be tempered by the selection of Jim Cross to succeed William Schnitzler as president of the union after Schnitzler ascended to become secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) under George Meany in 1952.

In 1956, Cross was accused by Curtis Sims of embezzling union funds. Although Cross denied the charges and managed to have Sims expelled from the union, an independent AFL investigation led to the B&C's expulsion from the labor federation in 1957. When the B&C was expelled, 95 locals broke with the union and affiliated with the newly created, AFL-chartered American Bakery and Confectionery Workers International Union (ABC). Meanwhile, B&C officials considered merging with the Teamsters, though the membership rejected attempts to unite with Jimmy Hoffa's union. Attempts to reunite the two unions were stymied by the personal animosities of Jim Cross and Curtis Sims, who became an officer

of the ABC. Convicted of another act of embezzlement in 1960, Cross was forced to resign as B&C president. When Curtis Sims resigned from the ABC in 1969, the two unions were able to reunite after 12 years of separation.

Later, the B&C merged with two other unions, leading to both an increase in size and a diversification of its membership. In 1978, the union merged with the Tobacco Workers International Union, and in 1999 with the American Federation of Grain Millers. These mergers led to an increase in membership in both Canada and the U.S. South, and it also dramatically increased the number of women in the union. Moreover, shifts in the baking industry over the latter half of the twentieth century have led to a dramatic increase in Latino and African-American members in the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union.

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BARBERS

The history of barbers illustrates how skilled workers experienced dramatic changes in the American service sector over more than two centuries. During the colonial period, the prevalence of slaves and indentured servants in the trade led to a popular association of barbering with servitude. White men shunned barbering following the American Revolution, creating a lucrative economic niche for African-American men. By transforming the mundane act of personal grooming into a luxurious ritual that conferred status, black barbers firmly established the barbershop as a central place in the lives of nineteenth-century American men. White, immigrant barbers further upgraded the trade in the Gilded Age by forming a national union that successfully lobbied for state regulation. During the early twentieth century, corporate marketing campaigns for personal care products, most notably razors, frustrated this drive for professionalization and eroded the strong ties between white men and their barbers. Barbers responded by catering to increasingly segmented markets that emerged from the identity politics of the 1960s and 1970s. The fact that a highly skilled trade drew practitioners overwhelmingly from marginalized groups and failed to gain recognition for its expertise highlights the disadvantages workers have encountered in the service sector, especially when they perform

BARBERS

personal services. At the same time, the ability of barbers to persist as independent businessmen in the face of corporate attempts to dominate the trade furnishes an insightful counterpoint to skilled workers in manufacturing.

Origins in Servitude

When the trade crossed the Atlantic with European colonists, barbers had a tradition of being liminal figures. Beaumarchis' satirical play, *The Marriage of Figaro*, illustrated this role. Although Figaro served as a custodian of gentility, helping aristocrats maintain the appearance expected of their rank, he was also the servant in the household of the Count, bound to serve his master even when he tried to woo Figaro's beloved. The appeal of colonial Americans' barbers had much to do with their origins in slavery and servitude, for customers could imagine they received the same services that gentlemen received from their valets on southern plantations and in imposing townhomes. Yet, as Americans became familiar with republican ideology during their struggle for independence, the cachet of being associated with genteel servants made barbers appear unfit for citizenship. Making a living in personal service fit the contemporary image of the dependent lackey. Consequently, native-born white men left the trade to a small number of French refugees and African-American slaves, who often used their skills as barbers to earn the goodwill or funds necessary to secure their freedom.

Nineteenth-Century Heyday

Black barbers went on to successfully compete for white customers throughout the nineteenth century. To secure the loyalty of white customers, black barbers adopted two strategies. A perceptive understanding of their customers allowed black barbers to capitalize on racial stereotypes. Because they understood how whites saw them, they were able to create rituals of deference that appealed to their customers. Black barbers reinforced the association of their services with distinction by locating their shops in shopping districts for the well-to-do and outfitting them with the trappings of a parlor in an aristocratic home. These innovations followed trends in hotels and other service establishments. However, black barbers maintained solidarity within their ranks by holding onto tradition. They maintained high levels of skill and reduced competition by preserving the artisan system.

While masters in other trades were becoming bosses, black barbers continued to take apprentices into their homes and helped promising journeymen open their own barbershops. The combination of entrepreneurial innovation and mutual aid formed the basis of an African-American tradition of enterprise that proved capable of being reworked to serve black customers in the twentieth century.

European immigrants worked for half a century in barbering to secure widespread public acceptance and decent working conditions. Between 1850 and 1860, immigrant barbers, mainly from Germany, surpassed their black counterparts in overall numbers, but they failed to win over affluent white customers. They worked, standing, 10- to 12-hour days, seven days a week, in so-called cheap shops that served working-class customers for as little as a nickel a shave and 15 cents for a haircut. By the 1880s, these barbers faced a crisis. Italian immigrants, more likely to know barbering when they arrived than any other trade, dramatically increased competition. In the next decade, the Panic of 1893 coincided with A. B. Moler establishing the first of a national chain of barber schools that undercut prices and produced minimally trained barbers who could compete only by offering lower prices. Barbers had organized local unions during the 1870s, but no national union existed until 1887, when barbers formed the Journeymen Barbers International Union of America (JBIUA). The JBIUA affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) the next year and expanded its membership from 50 in 1888 to 1,300 in 1891 and 11,600 in 1901. The JBIUA managed to limit competition and raise prices through a variety of measures, some undertaken within the trade union movement while others worked through state legislatures. By issuing union cards to barber shops with organized journeymen, the JBIUA found a way to pressure fellow trade unionists to pay higher prices and support union barbers. The JBIUA also developed the retiring card for paid-up members who decided to go into business for themselves. Since more than one half of those who retired later reverted to journeymen status, these aspiring businessmen had an incentive to keep a union shop and avoid price cutting. The blurred line between worker and employer, as well as the short life of most barbershops, made traditional collective bargaining agreements less relevant to the JBIUA. To deal with the problem of owner-operators vulnerable to competitive pressures, the JBIUA sought to create a legal framework that regulated hours and days of operation, minimum prices, and admission to the trade. The last issue, license laws, proved most controversial, prompting charges of discrimination from black barbers and lawsuits from barbershop owners.

Under license laws, a state board typically composed of JBIUA members decided who could enter and practice the trade. Union spokesmen argued that licensing would safeguard public health by ensuring hygienic barbershops. According to the JBIUA, union barbers possessed expertise in sanitation, which also validated a drive to have barbering recognized as a profession equivalent to dentistry. Licensing laws proliferated, with 20 states enacting licensing laws by 1914. By succeeding at convincing white Americans that hygiene, instead of the genteel deference for which black barbers were known, represented the most important qualification of a barber, union barbers finally won affluent white customers away from black barbers.

Challenges and Opportunities in the Twentieth Century

At the start of the twentieth century, barbers were at the apex of their trade. The majority of men relied on their barbers to treat their dandruff and baldness as well as trim their beards and cut their hair. King C. Gillette irrevocably altered the relationship between American men and their barbers with his successful campaign to sell disposable razors. Undercutting the barbers' claims to expertise in sanitation, company advertising emphasized its high-grade materials and sophisticated manufacturing process to imbue the Gillette razor with the mystique of high technology. The scientific design, Gillette claimed, made the product inherently sanitary and eliminated the need for skill in shaving. In addition, Gillette subtly appealed to class prejudice, reminding middle-class customers of how unpleasant it was to wait long hours while subjected to loquacious barbers. The U.S. military helped the Gillette Company during the First World War by purchasing 3.5 million razors for servicemen. When the Gillette company lowered the price of its original razor to one dollar in 1921, its product became affordable to working-class men, and the overwhelming majority broke their habit of visiting their barber two or three times a week for a shave.

From the 1920s onward, new sources of competition shrank the domain of barbers while expanding the market for personal grooming services and products. The JBIUA was ill-prepared for the 1960s revolution in hairstyles. Although the union offered training in styling longer hair and sponsored national competitions for barber stylists, rank-and-file barbers failed to keep up with the times. The union declined along with traditional barbers, finally merging with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

BARRY-LAKE, LEONORA MARIE (KEARNEY)

Within the African-American community, the popularity of new hairstyles demonstrated how identity politics splintered the traditional market of barbers. The Afro put many black barbers out of work until some developed methods of styling it, often in unisex shops. Hair-care manufacturers subsequently introduced products such as Afro Sheen. When braiding became popular in the 1970s, immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean offered the service in Afro-centric shops and fought attempts to make them get licensed as barbers or beauticians. Barbers also faced competition from national chains such as Fantastic Sams. As lifestyle became an increasingly key factor that determined where people sought hair care, the traditions of barbering had less and less relevance to the marketplace.

DOUGLAS BRISTOL

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BARRY-LAKE, LEONORA MARIE (KEARNEY) (AUGUST 13, 1849–JULY 15, 1930)

Leonora M. Barry was a pioneer organizer of women's assemblies for the Knights of Labor and a tireless advocate for women's suffrage and temperance. She was born in County Cork, Ireland, the daughter of John and Honor (Brown) Kearney. The Kearneys, like nearly two million others, left Ireland at the height of the Irish potato famine. They arrived in the United States in 1852 and settled on a small farm near the upstate New York village of Pierrepont. Leonora and a younger brother, Henry, grew up isolated from their native-born Protestant neighbors, and Leonora assumed many of the roles of a farm wife when her mother died in 1864. When John Kearney remarried a woman just five years older than Leonora with whom she clashed, Leonora left the farm, studied for six weeks, and secured a state teaching certificate.

At the age of 16, Leonora embarked on a teaching career, the aftermath of the Civil War occasioning a teacher shortage of which she took advantage. In 1871, she married William E. Barry, a Potsdam, New York, musician and painter. In accordance with state law, the now-married Leonora Kearney-Barry quit her teaching post. The Barrys had a daughter and two sons over the next nine years and moved their family several times among New York and western Massachusetts textile towns until settling in Amsterdam, New York, around 1880. More than 30 mills lined the Mohawk River, providing jobs in carpet weaving, knit goods, and other enterprises for the many Irish, Italians, and eastern Europeans who made their way there. Millwork was soon to be Leonora's fate; in 1881, her husband and her daughter, Marion, died of lung disease, leaving her the sole provider for sons William and Charles, aged eight and one. Barry secured a seamstress's position with the Pioneer Knitting Mill, where she toiled up to 70 hours per week in an industry ruled by a self-imposed speed-up, since most of the line workers were paid piece-rate.

Barry's entry into the mills coincided with the rise of the Knights of Labor (KOL), which had formed a local assembly in Amsterdam in 1882. In 1884, Barry joined newly formed Victory Assembly, which contained around 1,500 female mill operatives, dress-makers, and musicians. Barry became the Master Workman (president) of Victory Assembly in just one year. Long hours, low pay, and oppressive working conditions made Amsterdam's mills prime targets for KOL organization, and Barry immersed herself in said activity. By 1886, the year that Barry headed a successful Victory Assembly strike, 19 other KOL locals operated in and around Amsterdam.

Barry's zeal soon attracted the attention of KOL superiors. She was a delegate to New York's state KOL convention, and Terence V. Powderly, the KOL's national leader, asked her to mediate a dispute involving Philadelphia retail magnate John Wanamaker. The Knights saw strikes as a losing proposition for both labor and management; whenever possible, the KOL advocated arbitration, and it preferred to launch boycotts rather than sanction strikes if arbitration failed. Barry attracted more notice as one of only 16 women among the 658 delegates at the KOL's 1886 General Assembly. At that convention, Powderly personally endorsed Barry to fill the newly created post of General Investigator for Women's Work.

Barry's elevation to this post reflected the KOL's explosive growth after 1885 and its ongoing foray into the organization of women. The KOL, founded in 1869, experienced only modest growth into the 1880s, but its membership skyrocketed from 111,395

members in June 1885 to an official total of 729,677 one year later, a tally that was understated because members poured into the KOL faster than it could process applications. Many joined after an unexpected 1885 strike victory over railroad and telegraph baron Jay Gould, a hated figure among late nineteenth-century workers. However, growth also occurred because of the KOL's ongoing commitment to organizing immigrants, African-Americans, and women. Women were first admitted into the KOL in 1880, and by the early 1890s, more than 70,000 passed through the organization's ranks. Barry's position was created to investigate women's employment conditions, build new assemblies, agitate for the KOL's principle of equal pay for equal work, and integrate women into the Knights.

Barry soon found her role amorphous, hardly surprising given that the 1886 spike in membership proved an anomaly. During the heady days of 1886, the KOL created a bureaucratic infrastructure designed for a larger organization than it was destined to become. Barry served simultaneously as an organizer, researcher, lobbyist, executive board member, and lecturer, but greatly preferred the speaker's podium to her other duties. She won fame as a fiery and engaging lecturer, but earned the ire of General Secretary Treasurer John Hayes, who openly questioned why Barry assumed that role when the KOL already employed paid lecturers. This became problematic after 1887, when employer crackdowns in the wake of the Great Upheaval saw the KOL hemorrhage members and money.

Barry was ordered to redirect her energy to investigating women's work conditions and organizing women's assemblies. In 1886 and 1887, Barry traveled along the Eastern seaboard and filed detailed reports on the shocking abuses she witnessed. But those same reports often berated the sexism of male Knights, a complaint that did not sit well with Hayes. She was among the first labor leaders to insist that women's organizing models ought to be different from those of men, another idea to which Hayes took umbrage. It did not help Barry that Hayes originally came to power at the behest of the anti-Powderly Home Club; Powderly often enlisted Barry as a spy to feed him information on his enemies, further alienating Hayes.

In 1888, Barry visited a hundred cities, distributed nearly two thousand leaflets, organized scores of local assemblies, and delivered over a hundred lectures, only to see her Women's Department placed under Hayes's supervision. Hayes belittled and slandered Barry in a systematic manner that would today be labeled sexual harassment. In 1889, he dispatched her to the South, where she witnessed Dickensian conditions that shocked even a hardened veteran

like herself. To make matters worse, she contracted malaria. Her pessimistic 1889 General Assembly report declared the Women's Department a failure, recommended its dissolution, and proffered her resignation. Delegates compelled her to stay on, but Barry's effectiveness within the KOL was over.

In April 1890, Barry delivered a bombshell by marrying St. Louis printer Obadiah Reed Lake, resigning her KOL post, and declaring that a woman's proper place was in the home. Barry-Lake maintained her KOL membership, did some work for the Knights, and continued to write positively of it. Her resignation and defense of domesticity were assuredly gestures designed to save face and avoid embarrassing the Knights, as Barry-Lake did not pursue a life of domestic bliss. She was an in-demand lecturer on both the lyceum and Chautauqua circuits, joined a successful 1893 Colorado women's suffrage campaign, and was active in both the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Catholic Total Abstinence Society. She eventually retired to Minooka, Illinois, where she died of throat cancer in 1930.

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BEAUTICIANS

Beauty work emerged as a significant skilled occupation for American women at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was part of the development of a commercialized beauty industry that accompanied the growth of mass consumer culture in the United States. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the majority of women took care of their own hair. If she was wealthy or worked in the theater, a woman might have had a personal servant to do the job or she might have hired a professional hairdresser to wash, brush, and arrange her hair, but hairdressing was a rare occupation for women. Kathy Peiss notes that, as increasing numbers of women entered the work force toward the end of the nineteenth century, beauty culture emerged as one of a few occupations (along with millinery and dressmaking) that offered women the chance to become entrepreneurs and get paid for doing creative work. As it grew, the beauty industry

was shaped by racial and class divisions, changing ideas about women's work, and tensions over professionalization and regulation of the industry.

Race and Beauty Work

African-American and white beauty culture developed more or less separately in the twentieth century. Some of the most prominent early professional hairdressers of the late nineteenth century were, in fact, black women, but they served wealthy white clients. Marjorie Joyner, a prominent twentieth-century beautician, was one of a few black women who went to a white beauty school and served both white and black women in her Chicago shop for a short time. Nevertheless, by 1916, Joyner, who became the leading hairstyling educator for the Madame C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company for over 50 years, primarily trained black women, a shift that reflected hardening lines of segregation in the beauty industry. This separation reflected segregation in American life, as well as differing beauty practices. White women began to patronize beauticians in significant numbers around World War I. In her history of beauty shops, Julie Willett attributes this to the emergence of bobbed hair and the development of the permanent wave machine. When long, more or less unprocessed hair was the fashion, the average white woman could care for her hair without professional help. Cutting hair, however, did require some expertise. Initially, the young women who bobbed their hair went to male barbers, but as the style became more fashionable, men began to resent female intrusion of their spaces and many women shied away from the less-than-genteel atmosphere they often found at barbershops. Beauty shops offered women an enjoyable experience as well as a commercial service by creating more feminine spaces for their clients and featuring a range of beauty services from hair coloring and permanent waving to facials, manicures, and make-up consultations.

Professional hairdressing had an earlier start for African-American women. By the turn of the century, certainly well before 1910, black women could choose from a number of commercial methods of hair care. Many needed to straighten their hair to achieve the long, flowing look still fashionable then. While home methods to do this had existed since before the Civil War, the recently invented technique that used oils and a heated steel comb to straighten hair was best performed by a professional hand. The wavy, bobbed styles popular by the 1920s continued to begin, for a lot of black women, with straightening.

Racial prejudice further widened the gap between white and black beauty culture. Segregation in white beauty schools and beauticians' organizations prompted African-American women to build their own professional associations, start their own beauty colleges, and hold their own trade conferences. Early on at least, African-American women (most notably Madam C. J. Walker, Annie Turnbo Malone, and Sara Washington) dominated the black beauty industry leadership. While many prominent white entrepreneurs also emerged during the early years of the beauty shop (Elizabeth Arden and Helena Rubinstein, for example), men, who had for decades run beauty product companies catering to white women, continued to wield considerable power in the established beauty trade organizations.

Beauty Culture as an Occupational Choice for Working Women

The appeal of beauty work for women in the first half of the twentieth century crossed racial and class lines even as class and race shaped the occupational identities of beauticians. Gender discrimination in employment left women who needed or wanted to work with limited options. Women who had higher education, both black and white, sometimes found in beauty culture opportunities to use their skills to run their own businesses, which was often a desirable alternative to the handful of "female" professions college-educated women could choose from. Working-class women who faced waged labor in low-paying services and industries could also find beauty work an attractive choice, even if their wages and hours did not improve. Willett observes that, in fact, the average beauty shop worker faced long hours standing on her feet and made little more money than she would in other semi-skilled jobs. A significant portion of beauticians did not work for wages at all, but rather rented booths from salon owners or worked out of their homes, essentially becoming independent businesswomen in their own right. While this did not often improve beauticians' incomes, it did allow them a great deal of flexibility in their work schedules, and allowed many working-class women to feel that they were independent businesswomen rather than waged employees. For working-class African-American women, who faced even fewer occupational choices and frequently ended up working for white employers in domestic service jobs, this independence, and the chance to earn a living working for other black women, held tremendous appeal, even though African-American beauticians faced even lower wages and longer, more erratic hours than whites did.

Professionalization, Regulation, and the Occupational Identities of Beauticians

Beauticians saw themselves as professionals, and this had a significant effect on the work culture and organization of beauty shops. Most beauty culturists resented any suggestion that theirs was a service occupation. Paradoxically, this too had racial implications. White beauticians were fiercely protective of their perceived professional status and resisted being put in the same occupational category (as they were by the National Recovery Administration during the Depression, for example) with the domestic service jobs they associated with racial minorities. At the same time, African-American beauticians also claimed professional status, often promoting their occupation as a route to escaping the drudgery and exploitation of domestic service.

Beauticians expressed their professional identities through education, trade associations, and work practices. Beauty schools often required academic courses in chemistry and anatomy, and frequently offered such collegiate amenities as dorms, extracurricular activities, and formal commencement exercises for graduates. Trade journals and conferences encouraged beauticians to equate themselves with other creative and scientific professionals and to keep up with current styles and new technologically sophisticated methods. In many salons beauticians dressed like nurses and maintained strict standards of cleanliness and decorum. These practices were widespread, but nevertheless, professionalization efforts could reflect class divisions within the industry, particularly when it came to the issue of regulation. Starting in the 1930s and well established by the 1960s, state cosmetology boards emerged to make rules for training and certifying beauticians and to set standards for wages, hours, and working conditions in shops. Owners of the more affluent shops as well as their employees (many of whom identified as middle class) often welcomed more stringent licensing policies as a way of raising the status of beauty culture. Laws increased the number of hours beauty school students had to spend in training and limited the number of on-the-job training hours one could count toward certification. But poorer women often found it difficult to fulfill these more expensive training requirements, and owners of less lucrative shops, who depended on booth renters and apprenticeships to keep their shops in business, chafed under cosmetology boards' attempts to curtail both practices. It was equally difficult to regulate wages and hours for waged beauty workers. Shop owners complained that booth renting and unregulated home salons led to price gouging,

which made it impossible for them to pay a fair wage, whereas the booth renters and home operators countered that there was no other way for them to make a decent living. It was in the beauty shops that catered to the poorest populations (particularly the African-American shops) and during the most economically stressful times (such as the Great Depression) that these sorts of economic divisions in the industry emerged most starkly.

According to Willett, the American beauty shop went through a “golden age” from the 1940s through most of the 1960s. It was a period marked by continuing racial and gender segregation in employment paired with increased spending power for American women, black and white. This combination allowed for significant growth and economic success for beauty shops and helped beauty work reach the apex of its prestige and compensatory appeal as a female occupation. By the 1970s and 1980s, the civil rights and women’s liberation movements opened up new educational and professional opportunities for women, and beauty salon chains emerged to challenge independently owned shops and further standardize beauty work. Today beauty culture remains a popular semi-skilled occupation for women interested in creative service-based work, but the overall appeal and significance of beauty work for women has nevertheless receded over the past several decades.

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BECK, DAVID (1894–1993) President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) from 1952 to 1957, David Beck helped transform that union by broadening its jurisdiction and centralizing its organization. He also drew controversy when he became the subject of a congressional committee investigation in 1956–1957. Faced with charges of misusing union funds, Beck chose not to

run for reelection and later served jail time for charges that stemmed from his handling of union funds.

Beck was born in Stockton, California, in 1894, and grew up in Seattle, where as a young man he began driving a laundry delivery truck. He joined the Teamsters and by the age of 29 became the secretary-treasurer of his local union. Ambitious and smart, Beck soon led the Seattle Teamsters Joint Council. Under his leadership the Teamsters organized the local truck drivers by arranging a network of collusive agreements with local employers. Laundry owners, for instance, would agree to hire only Teamsters Union drivers, and in turn the union would help the owners enforce a cartel arrangement to control prices and competition. In this way employers accrued financial benefits from signing their employees up with the Teamsters Union.

While such collusive agreements were not new within the Teamsters, Beck did pioneer new regional strategies of organization that drew on the growth of inter-city trucking in the 1930s. He organized inter-city trucking firms by refusing to have Teamsters unload or exchange freight loads with nonunion firms. Then trucking terminals in other cities could be organized by refusing to have Teamsters deliver freight to nonunion destinations. To coordinate these efforts, he brought all of the locals in Washington State into the Seattle Teamsters Joint Council, thus breaking with a long tradition within the Teamsters that had limited Joint Councils to only a citywide jurisdiction. He used this same pattern of organization in Oregon and later throughout the western states, creating the first regionwide-level organization within the Teamsters, the Western Conference of Teamsters, in 1937.

Even as he built these new regional organizing strategies, Beck also worked to increase the size of the union by expanding its jurisdiction. Using a variety of pretexts, including a need to forestall organizing efforts by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), Beck pushed the Teamsters to lay claim to a wider range of occupations, including warehouse employees and cannery workers, among others.

In 1952, Beck won election to the union’s presidency and worked to spread the innovations he had developed in the Teamsters Western Conference to the rest of the union. Four years later, a Senate investigating committee called him in to testify at hearings on union corruption. Asked about evidence that he had used Teamsters Union funds for his own benefit, Beck invoked his constitutional privilege against self-incrimination. The revelations of the committee and his reaction to them undercut his position within the union, and he chose not to run for reelection. James R. Hoffa, who may have provided congressional

investigators with their initial leads on Beck, won the election to replace him.

DAVID WITWER

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See also **International Brotherhood of Teamsters; McClellan Committee Hearings**

BELLAMY, EDWARD (MARCH 26, 1850–MAY 22, 1898) Journalist

Edward Bellamy was a journalist whose 1888 utopian novel *Looking Backward* focused attention on social inequities in the late nineteenth century and inspired political reformers and visionaries.

Bellamy was born and lived most of his life in Chicopee Falls, a western Massachusetts town located along a cascade on the Connecticut River that provided power for local textile and paper mills. Both his father and grandfather were Baptist ministers and instilled in him a strong moral sense, though Bellamy did not fully grasp the magnitude of poverty's effects until he witnessed it firsthand as an 18-year-old studying in Germany. Bellamy graduated from Union College in 1867 and passed his bar exams in 1871, but never practiced law. Instead, he pursued a career in journalism, first with the *New York Evening Post*. In 1872, he returned to Chicopee Falls to become associate editor of the nearby *Springfield Union* newspaper. He also published short stories in *Scribner's* and other magazines, and his first novel, *Six to One: A Nantucket Idyl* [sic], appeared in 1878. He married Emma Sanderson in 1883, a union that produced two children, Paul and Marion.

Bellamy wrote several more novels, scores of short stories, and lectured on social topics on the lyceum circuit, but enjoyed only minor success until the publication of *Looking Backward*, which was an instant success and sold more than a million copies in his lifetime. Bellamy struck resonant chords with the book. First, he employed a time travel plot device, which was popular in Victorian fiction. Second, the novel featured a romance between two of its major characters, which pleased members of the middle class, who made up the bulk of its readership. Its main appeal, however, lay in its optimistic prediction

for a prosperous and peaceful future. Although *Looking Backward* was set in the year 2000, it also excoriated the violent, strike-prone, poverty-ridden world of the late-nineteenth-century United States.

Bellamy's novel opens amidst social turmoil and tension so severe as to lead the book's protagonist, the well-heeled but insomniac Julian West, to employ a mesmerist to induce sleep. West left instructions with his servant to wake him the next morning, but an evening fire destroyed his Boston home and, presumably, West himself. West remained in his trance until builders unearthed his subterranean lair and he was revived by Dr. Leete. West awakens in the year 2000 to find that all traces of his troubled world have disappeared. In its place stands a modern socialist utopia in which the State is the sole employer, producer, retailer, and arbiter of disputes. Poverty and inequality have been vanquished by a system that requires all citizens to work in the Industrial Army until the mandatory retirement age of 45, yet allows one to pursue whatever occupation one wishes, and remunerates each equally irrespective of position. Gone were corruption, money, lawyers, taxes, banks, middlemen, war, servants, social class, and customary gender relations.

The book's structure is essentially a series of questions posed by West followed by lectures delivered by Leete, punctuated only by occasional remarks from Leete's daughter, Edith, with whom West eventually falls in love. By modern standards, *Looking Backward* is problematic. Although Bellamy anticipated innovations like radio and credit cards, his views of gender, though advanced on some levels, remain mired in Victorian sentimentality, and many aspects of his utopia betray middle-class naiveté. But despite the book's clunky narrative and didactic tone, the nineteenth-century public was fascinated by both the futuristic world Bellamy constructed and the rational and peaceful path by which it occurred. His evolutionary socialism seemed a perfect antidote to Victorians conditioned by the depression of the early 1880s and such violent upheavals as railroad strikes and the 1886 Haymarket riot.

Although the middle class devoured Bellamy's book more than any other group of readers, the book proved an inspiration for progressive reformers around the world. A term coined in the novel, "Nationalism," sparked an eponymous movement of reform-minded citizens devoted to making Bellamy's utopia a reality. Bellamy's fame spread overseas, where he was hailed as a modern prophet. His ideas were especially popular in Australia, Canada, The Netherlands, and New Zealand, and each had strong Bellamyite movements. Bellamy edited *The Nationalist*, the movement's official journal, from 1889 until 1891, as well as its successor,

New Nation, which was published from 1891 to 1894. In all, about 165 Nationalist and Bellamy clubs formed within 10 years of the novel's publication.

Although Bellamy's utopia remained elusive, his writings were widely discussed by People's Party (Populists) supporters, who in 1892 consolidated local efforts to form a national third party. Several of Bellamy's ideas made their way into the Populists' platform. Bellamy's ideas were embraced by such influential progressives as Oscar Ameringer, Clarence Darrow, Eugene Debs, Daniel De Leon, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Charlotte Perkins-Gilman, Henry Demarest Lloyd, Scott Nearing, and Upton Sinclair. They were also endorsed by both the Knights of Labor (KOL) and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in Bellamy's lifetime, and posthumously by some members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). *Looking Backward* was also widely read among socialists in the United States and abroad, and Russian translations were popular with revolution-minded Petrograd workers during their abortive 1905 upheaval.

The mass appeal across ideological lines points to a problem inherent with Bellamyite Nationalism: ambiguity. Critics charged that Bellamy's utopia was imprecise, impractical, and impossible to achieve. Bellamy tried to address many of their charges in Nationalist journals and in his 1897 sequel novel, *Equality*. The latter, stripped of its Victorian romance, was a commercial and critical flop. By the time of his death in 1898, whatever overarching vision Bellamy may have possessed disappeared amidst what his many admirers wanted it to mean.

Of Bellamy's six novels, only *Looking Backward* enjoyed success, though Charles Kerr spun off a chapter of *Equality*, "The Parable of the Water-Tank," as a moderately successful pamphlet. The Nationalist movement was in deep decline by Bellamy's passing, one of many Great Upheaval movements whose early promise ended in disappointment. As a thinker, Bellamy was more of a visionary than an ideologue, his version of socialism being too malleable to sustain an organized movement. However, aspects of his utopianism made their way into movements as diverse as Populism, the Socialist Party, Progressivism, and the New Deal. Bellamy deserves credit for the inspiration he induced.

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BENNETT, HARRY (1893–1979) Ford Motor Company's Service Department

Harry Bennett, ex-navy boxer and head of the Ford Motor Company's Service Department, assembled what became during the 1930s the world's largest private army, whose purpose was to disrupt union organizing efforts using espionage, physical intimidation, and violence. Bennett's spies maintained tight surveillance over workers in plants and neighborhoods. From 1932 until 1941, the Ford Service Department, with Henry Ford's strong encouragement, considered itself at war against unionism and frequently initiated bloody assaults on union organizers. Although all the auto companies and their parts suppliers vigorously opposed unionism, none fought it as long and as tenaciously as Ford. Bennett was centrally involved in two of the most dramatic episodes of anti-union violence in American labor history, the Ford Hunger March of 1932, when his Servicemen participated in the killings of men demonstrating against unemployment, and the Battle of the Overpass in 1937, in which they seriously injured union leafleters. Bennett, although he knew little about business or production, wielded more power in the company than anyone besides Henry Ford during the last years of the "Old Man."

Ford was impressed by Bennett's swagger and fighting prowess, and in the early 1920s made him head of plant police at the company's River Rouge plant, soon to be the flagship, in Dearborn, Michigan. To Ford, Bennett became not only a trusted advisor, but a surrogate son, whom he favored over his own son, Edsel. Bennett's rise to the pinnacle of power at Ford owed much to his influence with organized crime. Henry Ford feared that his grandchildren would be kidnapped and believed that Bennett's friendships with gangsters offered them protection. Alarmed by the threat of unionization during the 1930s, Ford encouraged Bennett to build the Service Department into a large-scale mercenary army to keep the company nonunion.

Many members of Detroit's criminal gangs joined Bennett's Service Department. Appointed to Michigan's Parole Board, he had men who had been convicted of violent crimes released so they could enter his service. To strengthen the Service Department, Bennett gave mobsters Ford dealerships and concessions at company plants.

In May 1937, Bennett unleashed massive violence to derail the United Auto Workers (UAW) union's first major drive to organize Ford. In the Battle of the Overpass outside the River Rouge plant, his Servicemen badly mauled unionists attempting to

distribute handbills, including the leaders of the UAW Ford campaign, Walter Reuther and Richard Frankenstein. Servicemen inflicted savage beatings and whippings on unionists in Dallas and Memphis. The UAW compared Ford's repressive methods to those of European fascism, and branded the Service Department "Ford's Gestapo."

When the UAW launched a strike at the River Rouge plant in 1941, Bennett's use of violence, which Henry Ford backed, provoked a split in company management. Bennett sought to undermine the union by inciting racial violence, which he hoped would precipitate state intervention against the strike. Bennett armed black strikebreakers, some of them recently recruited Southern migrants, with knives and crowbars, and ordered them to assault white pickets. Public support for the strike and a divided management allowed the UAW to win a favorable settlement, and Ford became the first of the Big Three auto manufacturers to grant a union shop.

In 1945, Edsel Ford's widow and son, Henry Ford II, took control of the company away from the aged Henry Ford. Henry Ford II, who favored collective bargaining, assumed the Ford presidency and immediately discharged Bennett, sweeping his supporters out of the company. Although he lived over three more decades, Bennett never returned to company management. He devoted some of his time to organized crime activity, and died in obscurity.

STEPHEN H. NORWOOD

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BERGER, VICTOR (FEBRUARY 28, 1860–AUGUST 7, 1929) Socialist Party of America

An activist and a newspaper editor, Victor Berger was one of the founders of the Socialist Party of America in 1901, a tireless advocate for the workingperson and the first Socialist Party (SP) member elected to the United States Congress, in 1910. Berger was considered one of the leaders of the SP's "right wing." As a congressman he championed the cause of organized

labor, although he believed that union organization was ultimately secondary to the triumph of democratic socialism.

Berger was born in Austria-Hungary on 28 February 1860 and came to the United States in 1878. He settled in Milwaukee, which was the home to a large number of German-Americans and was the center of an active trade union movement. Berger joined Daniel De Leon's Socialist Labor Party (SLP), married Meta Schlichting, and became the editor of two influential Milwaukee newspapers, the *Social Democratic Herald* and the *Milwaukee Leader*. Berger disagreed with De Leon's insistence on setting up an alternative trade federation to the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and was an active participant at many AFL conventions. He later became disillusioned with the AFL, although he always remained hostile to more militant forms of unionism, such as the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

As an SP leader and a congressman, Berger supported nearly all the goals of AFL-style trade unionism, including the desire for better pay and a higher standard of living and the need for better working conditions. He introduced legislation advocating pensions for senior citizens, and won a major congressional victory in 1912—and was lauded by the IWW—when he sponsored hearings to investigate the great Lawrence (Massachusetts) strike of mill workers. Berger, Eugene Debs, and Adolph Germer also led an SP investigation into the conditions of miners in West Virginia in 1913.

Berger cautioned that the constant fight between labor and capital was an inevitable one, and that the structures of a capitalist political system—government, the military, and the courts—would necessarily favor the side of capital. Unions had some temporary importance, in Berger's view, in waging the daily battles against entrenched capital. It was inevitable, Berger believed, that members of trade unions, once aware of their options, would choose the socialist alternative. Berger did not believe that a true labor party was possible and essentially wanted labor and the SP to work along parallel lines. In addition, although he was a socialist, Berger had reactionary racial attitudes.

Berger was a gradualist. He was secure in his assumption that socialism would triumph in the United States, but he decried organizations like the IWW and events like the French Revolution of the 1780s. Although Berger thought that the Second Amendment protected the workingperson, he believed that ultimate change had to come through electoral politics and the ballot box. Berger did not believe in Communism. Berger's democratic socialism did



Victor Louis Berger, socialist, representative of Wisconsin, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing front. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-100903].

mean collective ownership of capital, but it allowed for private savings and did not advocate expropriation of all private property.

When war broke out in Europe, Berger eventually endorsed the SP's antiwar position. Berger's *Milwaukee Leader's* second-class postage status was revoked during the war, and Berger was indicted for conspiracy in 1918 under the Espionage Act and convicted—later overturned—in 1919. Nevertheless, Berger was elected to Congress in November 1918, only to be denied his seat.

Berger's political party and his newspaper survived the "red scare," but both suffered greatly. He was returned to Congress three more times in the 1920s, however, and remained involved with the *Leader* until his death in 1929.

GREGORY GEDDES

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BERKMAN, ALEXANDER (1870–1936) Anarchist

Alexander Berkman was a Russian-American anarchist, whose influence in the history of anarchism and labor transcends the United States. He was a lifelong friend of and companion to Emma Goldman, author and editor of numerous publications, including *Mother Earth*. Berkman is also known for the unsuccessful assassination attempt on the chairman of the Carnegie Steel Company in 1892.

Alexander Berkman was born in 1870 to Jewish parents in Vilna, Russia. During his childhood and adolescence, Russia went through one of the most turbulent and violent periods of its history, with news of violence from radical movements circulating daily, culminating in the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881. When Berkman migrated to the United States in 1888 as an orphan, he already had a past accentuated with confrontations against authority, including the school he attended, where he experienced trouble because of an essay denouncing the existence of God.

Once in the United States, Berkman was surrounded by the rich cultural and political environment of immigrant life in New York, with Russian, Jewish, and German anarchist circles, among others, providing the background for his dedication to anarchism. The political atmosphere of the 1880s in the United States was hardly less turbulent than Berkman's native Russia, as the recent Haymarket bombing and the execution of anarchists allegedly involved in the bombing still stirred debate and anger among the politically active immigrant communities. His association with Emma Goldman as well as Johann Most, one of the most significant figures of the time among anarchist groups in the United States, began during this period.



Anarchist Alexander Berkman speaking in Union Square, NYC, May 1, 1914. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-33541].

In 1892, when the news of the violence at Homestead reached Berkman and Goldman, Berkman decided to act on his beliefs. In what was clearly an act of “propaganda by the deed,” Berkman obtained a pistol and a dagger and targeted Henry Clay Frick, the chairman of the Carnegie Steel Company who had hired the Pinkerton detective agency in order to crush the strike at the steel mills, with disastrous results. Berkman had hoped that the killing of Frick, more than an act of simple revenge, would serve as a catalyst to incite the people against the oppressive elite. The assassination attempt, despite the use of both the pistol and the dagger, proved unsuccessful, as Frick recovered from his wounds. The act cost Berkman 14 years of his life, spent in the Western Penitentiary of Pennsylvania.

By the time Berkman was released in 1906, Johann Most was dead, which left Berkman and Goldman among the foremost anarchists in the United States. He edited Goldman’s highly influential and relatively long-lived *Mother Earth* magazine, as well as writing his experiences and thoughts during his imprisonment (*Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*). Amidst all the activity, Berkman worked on promoting the Ferrer School in New York, a testing ground for new and anarchism-inspired ideas for education, while trying to raise support for events such as the Lawrence strike of 1912. The duration of World War I, especially after the entry of the United States to the war in 1917,

witnessed Berkman’s agitation against the war and conscription. During the years of the “Red Scare” at the end of the war, Berkman was targeted along with Goldman and many other prominent anarchists, which resulted in another term in prison followed by his deportation to Russia in 1919.

Berkman and Goldman both toured Russia, participating in several cultural activities for a short period of time, before their observation of the Bolshevik Revolution and its brutal suppression of anarchists in the Ukraine and during the Kronstadt uprising of 1921 led them, disillusioned, to a life of exile in various European countries. Berkman’s communist anarchism, wary of a “new tyranny,” emphasized the elements of popular initiative, spontaneous self-organization, and cooperation against the rational planning and centralized organization he witnessed in the new Soviet republic. In 1936, Berkman, suffering from several operations, chronic health problems, and continuous poverty, committed suicide in his Nice (France) apartment, three weeks before the start of the Spanish Civil War.

AXEL B. CORLU

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See also Anarchism; Goldman, Emma; Haymarket Affair (1886); Homestead Strike (1892); Lawrence Strike (1912); Ludlow Massacre (1914)

BISBEE DEPORTATION/COPPER STRIKE (1917)

On July 12, 1917, Sheriff Harry Wheeler, aided by deputies and vigilantes, rounded up 1,185 union members and sympathizers and marched them two miles from Bisbee to a baseball park in Warren, Arizona. After passing through a gauntlet of armed men, the strikers and their supporters boarded box cars on a train that would carry them out into the New Mexican desert and abandon them there. Known as the “Bisbee Deportation,” this event proved to be devastating for the future of organized labor in Arizona.

This incident brought an end to a 15-day-old strike organized by members of the Metal Mine Workers Industrial Union (MMWIU), an affiliate of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The strike itself was not particularly violent, well organized, or militant. In fact, workers in the mining district were deeply divided over the role of the IWW in the struggle. A rival union, the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (Mine-Mill), condemned the IWW’s efforts and encouraged its members to cross the picket line. It had been trying to organize the miners since 1906, but had been unsuccessful in securing a union contract. To make matters worse, the International had revoked Mine-Mill’s local charter due to growing support for the IWW within its ranks. But the Wobblies (as IWW activists were called) were running out of strike funds, and American Federation of Labor (AFL) unions had barred them from participating in the district trades council.

In light of these conditions, the response from the company-backed deputies and vigilantes might seem like a profound overreaction. But from the mining company’s perspective, the IWW was a serious threat and was gaining increasing support from workers in Arizona’s mining districts. The Phelps Dodge Corporation was beginning to develop its open-pit operation in Bisbee, a move that would employ a majority of surface workers rather than the more highly skilled underground miners, a category it defined in racialized terms.

Part of the IWW’s strike demands included a significant dismantling of the wage differentials between surface workers and underground miners. It called for a raise in pay from \$4.00 to \$6.00 a day for underground work and \$2.50 to \$5.50 a day for surface

labor. In addition to wage increases, IWW appealed for improved working conditions, reducing the work day to six hours, requiring two men to a drilling machine and eliminating blasting underground during shifts. Since the majority of surface workers were Mexican, the IWW’s efforts to narrow the wage gap threatened to blur the color line that had been so characteristic of Bisbee’s labor market.

Bisbee’s history of racial segmentation included an unwritten law that prohibited Chinese people from staying in town overnight. Chinese truck farmers could come to Bisbee to sell their produce, but they would have to leave before the sun went down. Town promoters and AFL leaders made great efforts to distinguish the district from Clifton and Morenci and other mining areas, boasting that Bisbee was a “white man’s camp.” Miners there earned a white man’s wage, a distinction that excluded Mexicans, who were not allowed to work in the better-paying underground jobs. By 1917, thousands of Italians and Slavs made up a kind of “in-between” race, neither clearly white nor Mexican. While the rhetoric surrounding the deportation was filled with anti-Mexican references, most of the deportees were Euro-American and European immigrants.

Immediately after the deportation, federal troops rescued the men stranded in the desert and housed them in a makeshift camp near Columbus, New Mexico. Rifle-wielding guards posted at the town’s entrance prohibited the miners from going back to Bisbee. Husbands, sons, and brothers were cut off from their wives, sisters, and mothers. The women of Bisbee organized relief committees, gave depositions, and attempted to attract public attention to the injustices they faced on a day-to-day basis. Rosa McKay, who had been elected to the state legislature before women had the vote nationwide, led the women’s efforts, gathering food and clothing and coordinating covert trips to Columbus to deliver supplies to the men. The wife of an AFL member and mother of three, McKay wired President Wilson, asking him for protection, “before we are burned up like the women and children were in Ludlow.” William B. Cleary, a famous civil rights lawyer, pressed the deportees’ legal claims. Despite a presidential investigation and criminal and civil trials, the vigilante action remained unchecked.

One historian has characterized the deportation as an outgrowth of World War I nativism, a community’s act of self-defense against “foreign” influences. Indeed, many IWW leaders were outspoken critics of the war, characterizing it as a capitalist conflict they could best oppose by organizing workers worldwide. Detractors accused union members of disloyalty and circulated rumors that the IWW harbored German

spies. George Hunt, a populist Democrat who had served as Arizona's first governor from 1912 to 1917, came to the aid of the deported men and disputed such claims in communication with President Woodrow Wilson. His census of the deportees showed that most were not even IWW members. Many of the men were registered for the draft and had even purchased war bonds.

Another historian has interpreted the event more broadly and argues that the Bisbee deportation was just one of the many draconian labor practices, including similar incidents in other mining districts, that helped to undermine the influence of organized labor in Arizona politics in the early twentieth century. Others have framed the incident in racial and gendered terms, connecting the struggle to white racial fears of Mexican labor militancy and Bisbee's proximity to the revolutionary violence that raged in nearby border towns.

The long-term effects are difficult to gauge. While the deportation undermined the influence of the IWW in the region, Mine-Mill eventually established a foothold in the district. However, it would not be until after World War II that Bisbee's dual wage system would begin to fade as Mexican-Americans gained access to higher skilled jobs.

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See also **Industrial Workers of the World; Mexican and Mexican-American Workers; World War I**

BISNO, ABRAHAM (1866–1929) International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

Abraham Bisno, an early leader of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), was the best-known trade unionist among the Jewish garment workers in Chicago and New York in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Bisno was born in Russia in 1866 as the son and grandson of tailors. According to family custom, he became a tailor's apprentice. When his poverty-stricken family migrated to the United States in 1881 to escape a Russian pogrom, he went to work at once. Though not equipped by nature to become a skilled hand tailor, Bisno proved to be a skilled sewing-machine operator. He worked as a tailor in Atlanta, where the family first lived, and served as the family spokesman because of his quickness at picking up both English and American business customs. He then worked in Chattanooga and Chicago, where the Bisno family finally settled. By the age of 16, Bisno had become a successful contractor who obtained work for his family, consulted with designers, bought sewing machines, hired additional workers, and organized the work process.

In Chicago, Bisno became interested in improving conditions for workers. The women's garment industry in the last third of the nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century was notorious for cutthroat competition that drove down both prices and wages. The workers, chiefly Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, labored for excessively long hours, in unsanitary and dangerous conditions, for relatively little money. In 1888, Bisno helped organize the Workingman's Educational Society, which sponsored lectures by trade unionists, socialists, and anarchists. Shortly afterward, in 1890, the society formed the Chicago Cloak Makers' Union, with Bisno as president. The union was one of the forerunners of the ILGWU. Bisno served as chief clerk of the Joint Board of the ILGWU in New York City for a year in 1911. Upon leaving as chief clerk, he continued briefly as general manager of the Joint Board.

One of the early participants in the activities at Jane Addams' Hull-House, he joined these progressive reformers in campaigning for legislation to abolish sweatshops in Illinois. The agitation led the state legislature to appoint an investigating commission, for which Bisno and Florence Kelley collected information. When Kelley received an appointment as chief factory inspector, Bisno became one of her deputy inspectors for four years.

Bisno focused on providing security for union workers. He was a socialist, though political concerns were always secondary in importance in his mind to trade unionism. Like other unionists, Bisno suffered periods of unemployment and blacklisting when strikes were lost and the union was too weak to support its leader. At these times, he worked at heavy, unskilled factory labor or collected tickets on the elevated railroad lines.

Not known for his tact or patience, Bisno struggled to keep the loyalty of radical workers, win the support of more conservative national union officers, and obtain cooperation from the manufacturers. Once the garment trade was organized, it did not need a man as combative as Bisno. He left the union in 1917. Bisno devoted most of the remainder of his life to his real estate business. He died in Chicago in 1929.

CARYN E. NEUMANN

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See also Addams, Jane; *International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995)*

BLACK LUNG ASSOCIATIONS

The Black Lung Associations were first organized in the Appalachian coal fields at the end of the 1960s. The associations have been the main organizational vehicles for a rank-and-file movement demanding compensation, prevention, and treatment of black lung disease (coal workers' pneumoconiosis).

Historical Roots: Neglect and Denial; Ferment and Insurgency

In both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, autopsy evidence, as well as disease and disability rates among coal miners, led a number of observers to identify long-term coal dust exposure as a source of chronic shortness of breath and coughing that was progressive, debilitating, and in many cases, ultimately fatal. Given the massive numbers of U.S. coal miners, especially throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the human toll was considerable. New technologies, such as cutting machines, loading machines, and "continuous miners," were progressively introduced

over many decades, and each innovation multiplied the number of tiny airborne dust particles that became lodged in coal miners' lungs. Yet, the coal industry and its allies within the medical profession, the insurance industry, and government agencies promoted the notion that only silicosis, caused by sand and certain rock dusts, could cause disabling occupational lung disease. Coal dust was even said to be beneficial to miners' health. The result was a failure to carry out dust control, and an ineffectual state workers' compensation system excluded most disabled miners through "Catch-22"-type time limits on the filing of claims and through the refusal to recognize specifically coal dust-caused disease as compensable.

The 1960s rank-and-file rebellion among coal miners, from which the Black Lung Associations emerged, was not only directed at coal mine operators. It also sought, successfully, to reclaim the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) from the criminal and corrupt post-John L. Lewis leadership of Tony Boyle. During that era, two physicians in West Virginia, Drs. I. E. Buff and Donald Rasmussen, grew frustrated with the longstanding black lung cover-up. They began bringing the medical facts about coal dust disease directly to the miners and their families in the hollows where they lived. In doing so, they validated what the miners had long believed about the effects of coal dust. Their actions catalyzed a movement.

The "Heroic Period" (1968–1970)

The history and character of the Black Lung Associations can be understood in the context of three periods. The first began in late 1968, with the death of 78 miners in the Farmington mine explosion that focused national attention on the tragic neglect of mine safety. In its wake, a few local UMWA presidents and disabled miners in the Kanawha Valley area formed the West Virginia Black Lung Association. The initial core included African-American miner Charles Brooks and Arnold Miller. Pooling their own resources, they developed a model state black lung compensation bill. The association spread to other southern West Virginia counties and mobilized 3,000 miners to rally in Charleston. The Boyle UMWA leadership responded with a combination of hostility and co-optation, charging the association with "dual unionism," while putting forth its own weaker bill. The black lung movement then became increasingly bound up with the growing insurgency against Boyle. In February 1969, a wildcat strike started over a local dispute near Beckley, West Virginia. In the context of the

evolving black lung movement, the walkout became infused with the demand for a black lung bill and soon spread, closing down virtually all the coal mines in West Virginia.

This rarity in the United States, a strike making political demands upon the state, produced historic results when West Virginia passed a strong black lung law. The reverberations extended further, however, and by the end of 1969, under the threat of another walkout, President Nixon reluctantly signed the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act. The groundbreaking legislation took federal responsibility for workplace health and safety beyond anything that would have been dreamed possible a decade before. Among its provisions were a federal black lung compensation program (initially seen as temporary) for miners disabled by black lung and for widows, and a federally mandated limit on respirable dust in the mines, with mechanisms for enforcement.

The Fight for Implementation; Failed Bid for a Broad Coalition (1971–1988)

The ferment of the late 1960s produced both the federal black lung program and the end of the Boyle era. Arnold Miller, an association founder, won the presidency of the UMWA in 1972. Concomitantly, Black Lung Associations formed in several Appalachian states, and in 1976, displaced disabled miners organized a chapter in the Chicago area. A loose coordinating structure, soon known as the National Black Lung Association (NBLA), emerged under Bill Worthington, an African-American disabled miner from Harlan County.

The emergence of new associations was, in considerable part, a response to widespread grassroots disappointment with the fledgling federal compensation program, and the associations became largely defined by that response. Restrictive rules and bureaucratic abuse led to numerous denials and endless delay of claims. Association leaders organized militant confrontations and meetings with federal officials and lobbying trips to Washington, and also functioned as “lay” (nonattorney) representatives in individual claims. They played important roles in winning favorable congressional amendments in 1972 and 1978 which, among other things, made the federal compensation program permanent and created clinics for diagnosis and treatment. The associations were able also to impose particularly effective “interim regulations” for the backlogs of cases reopened and reviewed under both sets of amendments, resulting in the payment of several hundred thousand claims.

However, by 1978, the UMWA’s legislative staff was in control of the lobbying effort, and most coal-field associations were not growing in strength. Then, the juggernaut of “Reaganomics” in 1981 brought about amendments that made the compensation program more restrictive. Although a UMWA-sponsored one-day “moratorium” on work, early in 1981, brought thousands of working miners to Washington in a rally to defend the compensation program (and possibly rescued it from abolition), tensions between the UMWA and the associations, which had existed beneath the surface, were evident. The associations were further harmed by indictments that charged a few lay representatives with taking illegal fees from miners for assistance on claims.

NBLA President Worthington placed his hopes in a nationwide organization that would unite all people exposed to workplace hazards. The black lung movement had indeed inspired Brown and White Lung Associations among textile and asbestos workers, respectively. The three associations’ efforts sparked the Breath of Life Organizing Campaign, which led actions against President Reagan’s attacks on Social Security Disability and developed a proposal for a comprehensive federal compensation program. However, by 1988, the coalition had withered in the face of growing conservatism, perhaps falling victim to its very reliance upon demands for comprehensive federal action.

Partial Revival; Limited Victories (1989–2001)

The UMWA’s militant Pittston strike to rescue endangered pensions, a scandal around widespread coal industry fraud in the federal coal dust sampling program, and then the emergence of Cecil Roberts as UMWA president and Mike South as NBLA president revitalized the historic ties of working miners with disabled miners and widows. As associations revived in several states, the two organizations put aside old tensions and moved to an unprecedented degree of working unity. Facing an uncertain future with a dramatic decline in the number of union miners, they accepted the political impossibility of winning new federal legislation on black lung. They instead waged a victorious campaign around the more limited, but still substantial, goal of revising the Department of Labor’s regulations for the federal black lung benefits program. As in times past, the associations and the UMWA enlisted the support of doctors (including the venerable Rasmussen) and health workers, as well as lawyers and legal workers. The death of South, who had worked tirelessly in the face of severe lung disease, was a

setback. But the Black Lung Associations' demise has been prematurely announced in the past, and they have proved too feisty to oblige. That may yet be the case.

The associations have always been characterized by a periodically declining and reviving leadership core of militant disabled miners. African-Americans have notably served as key leaders, especially in the earlier period, despite their steep decline relative to the work force. The core has organized ad hoc support from health and legal workers, usually with no paid staff. Perhaps reflecting an ambiguous relationship with the UMWA, the associations have been loosely structured and only a few chapters, at various times, have had substantial numbers of formally enrolled rank-and-file members and a well-defined organizational life. It also is likely that the magnitude of the 1969 victory focused the movement's attention so heavily upon implementing and protecting the federal law that it limited the associations' organizational development.

Yet, the associations have succeeded in tapping the deepest emotional wellsprings in the coalfields, sustaining a kind of social contract between generations—the working miners and those who have been “used up” into disability. The creative energies that the Black Lung Associations unleashed, and the movement they represent, have helped to shape the late-twentieth-century history of American coal miners and their relationship to the American political economy.

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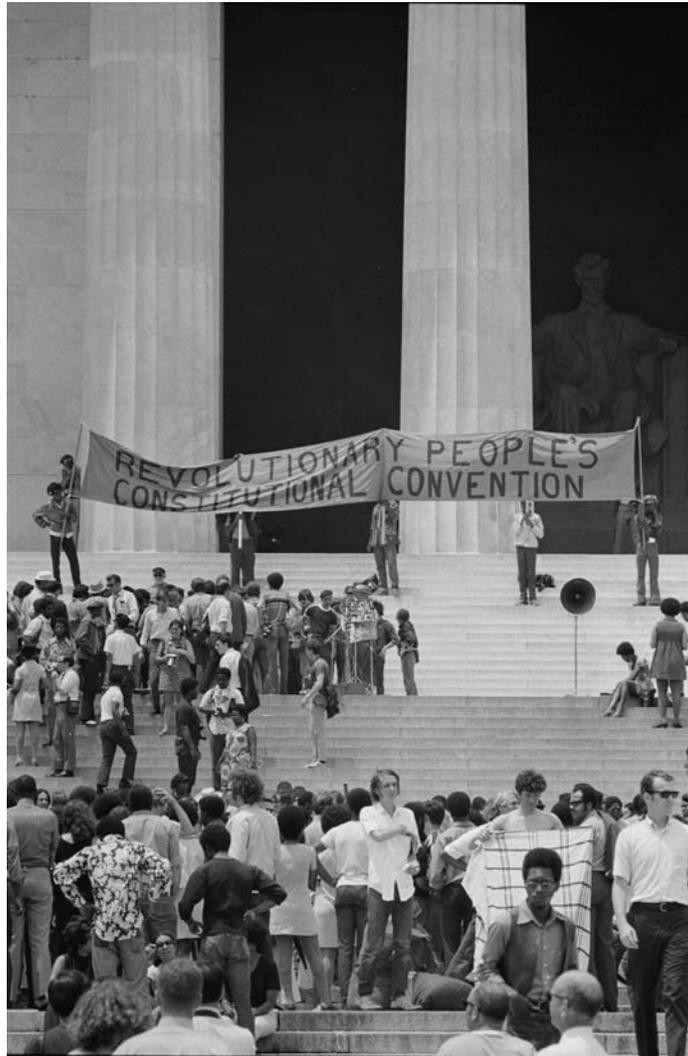
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See also **Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act; Miller, Arnold; Miners for Democracy; United Mine Workers of America**

BLACK PANTHER PARTY

The Black Panther Party (BPP), founded by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland, California, in 1966, was one of the leading organizations of the modern black freedom movement. Newton and Seale met as students at Oakland's Merritt College in September 1962. Their friendship was cemented by their desire to address the racism, police brutality, housing discrimination, and inferior education they'd experienced growing up in working-class Oakland. Critical of their experiences as activists in local black nationalist organizations, Newton and Seale turned to Malcolm X, a vocal critic of nonviolent resistance and one of the most forceful advocates for black self-determination and self-defense, and international revolutionary theorists such as Amilcar Cabral, Kwame Nkrumah, Fidel Castro, Franz Fanon, and Mao Tse-tung for ideological inspiration. On October 15, 1966, they founded the BPP and drafted a mission statement, called the “10-Point Program and Platform,” demanding freedom, self-determination, full employment, reparations from the federal government, decent housing, education representative of the black experience, freedom for black prisoners, an end to police brutality, exemption of all black men from military service, and land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace. The BPP defined itself as a vanguard organization critical of both class and racial inequities and espoused a revolutionary nationalist ideology that advocated the socialist transformation of the United States.

The BPP's initial activities—patrolling the Oakland police armed with law books, tape recorders, and legally carried weapons, and marching on the



Black Panther Convention, Lincoln Memorial. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-U9-22860-27].

state legislature to protest the passage of a law banning openly carried weapons—earned it national and international publicity. Within one year of its creation, the BPP had approximately 75 members, an office, a newspaper, and a growing core of supporters. Newton’s arrest in October 1967 for killing a police officer further thrust the BPP into the spotlight; “Free Huey” became a rallying cry for supporters who believed that Newton was a political prisoner being persecuted for his beliefs. Although the Free Huey movement broadened the Panthers’ base of support to several hundred members, it was the murder of Martin Luther King in 1968 and the murder of the Panthers’ first recruit, Bobby Hutton, by local police a few days later that fueled the Panthers’ nationwide expansion. By 1969, Panther chapters had formed in dozens of cities around the country, including Los Angeles, Seattle, and Chicago. The Panthers launched

community programs such as free food distribution, sickle-cell anemia testing, free health clinics, and free breakfast for school children to highlight the government’s failure to address poverty. By providing free social services for thousands of poor people all around the country, the Panthers hoped to demonstrate the viability of socialist principles.

As the BPP grew in numbers and influence, it became the major target of COINTELPRO, an FBI program to “expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters and to contain their propensity for violence and civil disorder,” launched in 1967. The FBI, in concert with local police departments and the CIA, used tactics ranging from wiretaps and false letters to spies and agents provocateurs in an attempt to destroy the BPP.

COINTELPRO created a climate of suspicion and paranoia among BPP members, undermined personal relationships and political alliances, isolated the organization from sources of support, shaped the public perception of the Panthers, and resulted in violence. In one of the most well-known incidents, the FBI and Chicago police killed Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark during a raid of Hampton's apartment in 1969. COINTELPRO helped fuel internal debates about the role of armed struggle in the BPP's political program, the centralization of power in the Oakland national headquarters, and the lack of internal democracy. After a public dispute between Newton and Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver in 1971, the BPP splintered under the weight of mass resignations, expulsions, and violent fratricide. The largest group of dissenters formed the Black Liberation Army, an armed underground organization, to carry on their vision of social change.

Although many observers believed that the BPP had died, Oakland leaders sought to restructure the organization by dismantling many remaining chapters around the country and centralizing the BPP's membership base, skills, and resources in Oakland. Under Newton's leadership, they shifted from fighting for the systemic transformation of the U.S. socioeconomic system to seeking reform within that system. The Panthers expanded the range of their community programs and founded the Oakland Community School (OCS), which grew to serve approximately 150 students and earned a nationwide reputation for excellence in community-based education. Tactically, they turned to electoral politics to mobilize and organize the black community and gain a legitimate voice in the local political scene. They marshaled the votes of a multiracial coalition of supporters to become a formidable local political machine that was able to place Panther candidates on school boards, neighborhood councils, and antipoverty boards. In 1972, Elaine Brown ran for a city council seat and Seale ran for mayor on a progressive political platform that emphasized social programs such as housing, preventative medical health care, childcare, educational improvement, and environmental protection. Although both Brown and Seale's candidacies were unsuccessful, Seale garnered over 40% of the vote, forcing a runoff election with the incumbent mayor, and the Panthers successfully registered close to 15,000 new voters. This newly revitalized electorate would be pivotal in the election of Oakland's first black mayor and Panther ally, Lionel Wilson, in 1977. Despite local political visibility, the organization was weakened by its increasingly corrupt leadership strata—Newton, in particular, faced criminal charges ranging from murder to embezzlement in the 1970s—declining membership, and

financial problems. By 1982, the OCS closed its doors and the organization officially came to an end.

In the early 1990s, popular and scholarly interest in the BPP reemerged. Newton's murder by an Oakland drug dealer in 1989 thrust the Panthers into the national spotlight and launched a public dialogue about the legacy of the organization and its relevance to contemporary urban socioeconomic conditions. Former Panthers joined younger activists to create Panther-influenced organizations in communities of color around the nation, such as the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party in Oakland, the New African Vanguard Movement in Los Angeles, and the Black Panther Collective in New York. The Panthers' legacy of working-class progressive political action continues to inform the black freedom movement.

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BLACK WORKERS CONGRESS

Formed in 1971, the Black Workers Congress (BWC) was the product of the heightened racial consciousness of black working-class youth who came of age after World War II in northern and western cities and the by-product of the success of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which was formed in Detroit in 1969. The new outlook among black youth, in conjunction with the experience of urban uprisings of the late 1960s, the rise of black power, and the increasingly black work force in the automobile industry, raised the question of what role black workers could play at the national level in a revolutionary union movement. When the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW) addressed that question through its multipronged challenges to racism within the

automobile companies and the United Auto Workers (UAW) union, black auto workers responded enthusiastically. The LRBW was credited with significant improvements in the quality of life on the line for black workers. Since the long-term objective of the League was to develop the radical potential of black workers in order to bring about a socialist America, the question of nationalizing the LRBW model rose to the fore, which, in turn, led to a manifesto calling for the formation of a Black Workers Congress.

The BWC's manifesto cited over 30 objectives for the organization, which included gaining more control over production, ending racism, leading the way toward women's liberation, and educating workers about foreign policy issues. Actual construction of BWC units would grow out of alliances already in place around the country. Since the BWC was to be the vehicle for "franchising" the LRBW model, the original plan was that the League would be one of the principal building blocks of the nationwide congress. Instead, the process of trying to create the BWC contributed to the decline of the League.

Although the manifesto was well received at first, tensions within the leadership of the League soon erupted, creating a split in June 1971. General G. Baker Jr. and Chuck Wooten believed more time needed to be spent on the ground in Detroit to nurture continued success within the automobile plants. They were concerned that concentrating the League's efforts on the creation of organizational ties with revolutionaries throughout the country would dilute its resources and threaten its success on the shop floor. A key issue was whether the BWC would be serving black workers or black intellectuals, what became known within the BWC as the struggle between the masses and the cadre.

Internal dissension continued over the issue of the BWC for over a year, ending when Ken Cockrel, Mike Hamlin, and John Watson formally resigned from the LRBW on June 12, 1971. Cockrel, Hamlin, and Watson vowed to build a BWC that was totally independent of the League. Moreover, they hoped the BWC, which had been actively forming units across the nation during this time, would emerge as a mass revolutionary movement in the cities by the end of 1971. Instead, the BWC fell victim to the internal ideological dispute that continued in various forms for the next several years, and the League morphed into the Communist League.

Nevertheless, hopes were high when the first national convention was held in Gary, Indiana, in September 1971 and attended by more than 400 delegates from all regions of the country. The BWC connected the interests of African-Americans to the larger world shaped by the toil of third-world workers and overlapping

interests of American capitalism. In a conscious attempt to build a revolutionary movement on a wider base than the League, the BWC tailored its opening address to the concerns of third-world people and the interests of working women. John Watson's keynote address stressed the need to view all workers as brothers and sisters, reminding his audience that the industrial giants—such as General Motors, IBM, and U.S. Steel—gained their power and prominence by exploiting black as well as brown workers. The BWC took great care to appeal to women, committing the congress to the establishment of day care centers and equal pay for equal work; approximately one third of the delegates were women. Although the BWC's goals were lofty, most of its ideas were never put into practice as the organization got bogged down in bureaucratic and strategic questions related to how to proceed.

Under the tutelage of James Forman, an SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) leader in the early 1960s who by the late 1960s had gained national prestige as a leading black revolutionary theorist and organizer, the BWC was dominated by theory and ideological pronouncements, with little attention given to practice. As a result it never developed a broad mass base, substituted mountains of paper—proposals and manuals—for organization, and even, according to its own accounts, never had more than approximately 500 members. Eventually, Forman's leadership was questioned, and he was attacked from within. Forman was officially expelled from the BWC in April 1973, accused of destroying the League and contributing to weakening the BWC. Mike Hamlin was chairman of the BWC until another split divided the organization in 1975.

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See also **League of Revolutionary Black Workers**

BLACKLISTS

Blacklists usually refer to efforts by business owners to prevent the employment of those they deem undesirable, although in some cases the word "blacklist"

has been used to refer to unions' refusal to allow their members to work for "unfair" employers. Since at least the late 1800s, blacklisting has served as a tool of management to discipline the work force and to combat union organizing. In consequence, workers and supporters of organized labor have sought laws to forbid the practice.

Origins and Attempts at Anti-Blacklisting Legislation through the Early 1900s

In order to be effective, blacklists require an efficient mechanism for sharing information about the labor force. It comes as no surprise, then, that the Burlington Railroad Company made one of the first systematic efforts in the United States to blacklist employees. With over 20,000 laborers, the company felt the need to make sure that a worker fired for incompetence at one of its divisions could not gain employment at another. From 1877 until 1892, the Burlington maintained a centralized clearinghouse of records that stated the cause for the discharge of each employee. The discharge records made special note of workers whom the business fired for offenses that it considered particularly egregious, such as alcohol abuse or stealing, and placed these employees on a blacklist to militate against their rehiring. Almost 5% of names on the blacklist had been discharged for pro-union activity or strike agitation.

Punishing pro-union workers was, in fact, the best-known, if not most common, use of blacklists, and employers used a variety of means to guard themselves against new hires with ties to organized labor. The most brazen was firing outright workers known to be union members or refusing to rehire union leaders after failed strike attempts. Other approaches were subtler. Some managers required all new employees to sign "iron-clad agreements" or "yellow dog contracts." Under these agreements, which courts usually enforced before 1935, new workers promised not to join unions. Other bosses might devise a system of work tickets, or employment certificates. Under such a system, employers would agree to hire workers only if they possessed a card issued by an employers association, and workers could obtain such cards only by renouncing any plans to join a labor organization.

Union supporters saw blacklists as threats to their right to work and endeavored to pass laws banning the practice. Several states passed laws prohibiting blacklisting. The Illinois legislature, for example, passed the Cole Anti-Boycott Law in 1887 that banned both union boycotts and employer blacklisting, and in

1893 it enacted a statute that outlawed iron-clad agreements. At the national level, opponents of blacklisting tried unsuccessfully in 1897 to secure passage of House Bill 9490, which would have made the practice a violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. A year later, however, they succeeded in passing the Erdman Act, which forbade yellow dog contracts.

Employers defended themselves against such laws by arguing that blacklists were both a necessity and a constitutional right. Many business owners, with the support of such organizations as the National Association of Manufacturers and the various Citizens Alliances across the country, claimed that they were simply protecting their enterprises from radical, potentially violent agitators intent on destroying their property. Management also believed that blacklists were simply a counterpoint to boycotts, or efforts by unionists to dissuade consumers from patronizing businesses deemed unfair to its workers. The Constitution, employers contended, guaranteed their right to hire whomever they pleased.

The courts usually sided with employers' cases designed to test the constitutionality of these laws. In the 1900 case *Gillespie v. People*, the Illinois Supreme Court voided the state's law against iron-clad agreements. Four years later, an Indiana court struck down an anti-blacklisting law. In the 1908 case of *Adair v. United States*, the federal Supreme Court nullified the Erdman Act. In declaring such laws unconstitutional, the courts accepted the argument of managers and business owners that these measures impaired their constitutional right to negotiate the best possible terms when hiring employees.

Anti-Blacklisting Components of the Wagner Act and Landrum-Griffin Act

In the 1930s, opponents of blacklisting had more success in passing legislation to ban the practice under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal reforms that were enacted to pull the country out of the Great Depression. In 1935, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act, also known as the Wagner Act. As part of its aim to provide government protection of unions, section 8 of the new law forbade what it called "unfair labor practices" by employers. One of these practices referred to blacklisting, making illegal "discrimination in regard to hire or tenure of employment or any term or condition of employment to encourage or discourage membership in any labor organization." In the landmark 1937 case *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin Steel*

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Corp., the United States Supreme Court affirmed the constitutionality of the prohibition against these employer practices.

As the historian Robert Michael Smith has pointed out, some employers tried to get around the Wagner Act's proscriptions by contracting anti-union consulting firms that engaged in tactics reminiscent of blacklisting. One of the largest of such firms was the Labor Relations Associates, founded by Nathan W. Shefferman. The Associates administered employment tests that nominally examined applicants' psychological stability but in practice were designed to screen against union sympathizers. The agency also set up sham grievance committees and employee front groups for the purpose of identifying pro-union workers and exposing them to summary discharge. Section 203 of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, also known as the Landrum-Griffin Act, sought to limit management's ability to use third-party agencies. The law required employers to disclose to the Secretary of Labor any use of funds to engage a consulting firm for the purpose of reporting on employees' union proclivities.

The Wagner Act and Landrum-Griffin Act fared better in the courts than the anti-blacklist legislation earlier in the century. However, their enforcement was often weak or sporadic. The Department of Labor, for example, seldom pressed businesses to observe the reporting requirement concerning labor consulting firms, and employers continued to use them with little fear of punishment.

Political Blacklisting in the Age of McCarthyism

What is known as the age of McCarthyism produced one of the most famous eras of blacklisting. In the late 1940s and 1950s, the commencement of the Cold War, which pitted the United States and the Soviet Union in a struggle for world domination, fueled an anticommunist "red scare" at all levels of government and in the private sector. Wishing to protect the country against what they believed to be the communist threat to national security, Congress, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, various cabinet-level agencies, and various other public and private entities conducted investigations into the loyalty of employees. Investigations often resulted in the summary dismissal of employees deemed a threat to national security because of their alleged political sympathies. Particularly suspect were those individuals who refused to participate in the investigations by asserting their Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

According to the historian Ellen Schrecker, more than 10,000 people lost their jobs as a result of the hysteria, including civil servants, members of left-wing unions, and high school and university teachers.

Some of the most visible victims of McCarthyism were the actors, directors, and screenwriters whom the movie, television, and radio industries blacklisted for their left-wing political views or for declining to name colleagues alleged to have communist sympathies. In 1947, the House Un-American Activities Committee cited 10 members of the movie industry for contempt because they refused to cooperate with a congressional investigation of communists in the movie industry. The Association of Motion Picture Producers fired the "Hollywood 10" promptly, and its members declared that they would refuse to employ any suspected communists. In 1950, a publication entitled *Red Channels* listed actors and screenwriters who had pursued allegedly procommunist activities. For the next decade, those tainted with the blacklist found it difficult or impossible to find work. Many who did find work, like writer Dalton Trumbo, had to use pseudonyms to keep their jobs.

Blacklists during the McCarthy Era differed from anti-union blacklists because the former relied on ascertaining a person's alleged political affiliation. Employers refused to hire suspected communists as much out of fear of public censure as out of concern about labor militancy. Nevertheless, management used the anticommunist hysteria to serve anti-union ends as well. A provision of the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, also known as the Taft-Hartley Act, removed unions from government protection if their officers refused to take noncommunist oaths. Business owners in some cases could use the refusal of a union's officers to sign such an oath as a reason to decertify it, that is, remove its status as the recognized representative of the workers.

By the 1990s, the anticommunist hysteria had subsided and laws against blacklisting against union supporters had survived. But enforcement of these laws remained difficult because employers continued to rely on labor consultants and in most states were not legally obligated to show cause when they discharged employees. At the same time, these laws did compel management to be at least circumspect if it decided to take a job applicant's views on labor organizations into consideration.

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See also Adair v. United States (1908); At-Will Employment; Boycotts; Erdman Act; Landrum-Griffin Act (1959); Law and Labor; National Labor Relations Board v. Jones-Laughlin Steel Corporation (1937); Taft-Hartley Act

BLOOR, ELLA REEVE (JULY 8, 1862– AUGUST 10, 1951)

American Communist Party

Ella Reeve Bloor, lifelong labor leader, organizer, and agitator, is typically remembered as the most prominent woman leader of the American Communist Party during the 1930s and 1940s. Bloor’s political career, however, traversed a broad spectrum of the American Left; beginning in the 1890s, Bloor spent over 50 years participating in the temperance, women’s suffrage, socialist, antiwar, and communist movements.

Bloor was born in 1862 to a middle-class family in Staten Island, New York. Her parents, Charles Reeve and Harriet Amanda Disbrow, raised her along with 11 siblings in a relatively affluent neighborhood in New Jersey. Charles Reeve ran his own drugstore in Bridgeton, New Jersey, and when Harriet died in 1879, the children and household were put under Ella’s charge. After marrying and having children of

her own, Bloor found her domestic life lackluster and she began actively campaigning for both the temperance and suffrage movements.

A combination of influences initiated Bloor’s urge to become politically active. Her great uncle Dan Ware, a freethinker and abolitionist, introduced her to the works of philosophers and scientists early on. This led her to pursue a degree from the University of Pennsylvania, where Bloor was introduced to the works of Marx and Engels. During this time period she learned firsthand of the struggles of women weavers in Philadelphia and joined the Workers Textile Union in their support. From this time forward, Bloor maintained active involvement in reform movements.

Bloor belonged to Eugene Debs’s Social Democracy of America and Daniel De Leon’s Socialist Labor Party, before finding political accord with the Socialist Party in 1902. During her 16-year tenure with the Socialist Party, Bloor served as a party state organizer in Delaware, Connecticut, Ohio, and New York. Over time she worked on strike support, child labor investigations, raising money for worker relief, recruitment efforts, lecturing, and writing for the Socialist press. In 1906, Bloor and fellow Socialist party member Richard Bloor traveled to Chicago to investigate labor conditions in the meatpacking industry for Upton Sinclair. Although she never married Bloor, Ella took his name as her own and was known as Ella Reeve Bloor from that time forward.

From the earliest days of her reform efforts, Bloor showed a commitment to women, both those in the paid and unpaid labor forces. This commitment informed her organizing strategies and approach throughout her political career. As an advocate for women’s suffrage, Bloor sought to integrate her advocacy of women with her Socialist Party work. In 1910, Bloor introduced an amendment to the Socialist Party Congress that would commit the party to continued cooperation with the woman’s suffrage movement. Bloor also worked for both the National American Woman Suffrage Association and the National Woman’s Party in Connecticut.

During the 1910s, Bloor expanded her agenda. She came to be known as “Mother Bloor,” a name she retained for the remainder of her political career. Bloor constantly traveled the country to support and organize striking workers. She struggled alongside textile workers, steel workers, and miners. In 1911, she joined striking miners in West Virginia. Two years later, Bloor visited Calumet, Michigan, to aid the area’s striking copper miners. She worked closely with the women’s auxiliaries while in Calumet. In 1914, she aligned with the United Mine Workers of America in Ludlow, Colorado, who were striking

against Rockefeller's Colorado Fuel and Iron Company mines. This was one of many occasions where Bloor confronted the darker sides of the labor struggle. The Colorado state militia made a surprise attack on the strikers the night of April 20, 1914, murdering miners and their families. This incident spoke to Bloor's conviction that labor and family issues should not be separated. Over the next 40 years, she fought to reconcile unionism with the family and community.

With the onset of World War I, Bloor began agitating against the war. She was actively involved in antiwar groups, including the People's Council of America for Democracy and Peace and the Liberty Defense Union. She also helped to organize the Workers' Defense Union, precursor to the International Labor Defense. As the war continued, Bloor became increasingly disappointed with the Socialist Party's lack of a firm antiwar stance. In 1919, she separated from the party and, enthralled with the Bolshevik message, Bloor became a founding member of the American Communist Party.

Bloor spent the next 23 years of her life as a national organizer and agitator for the Communist Party. By the 1930s, she was a national spokeswoman for the party and a contributor to the Communist journal *Working Woman*. She advocated for the organization and political education of women as well as the full integration of women into all aspects of party life. Regarding the centrality of women as a necessity for a strong labor movement, Bloor rejected the masculinization of the Communist Party and promoted women workers as symbols for the movement. She stood as a key figure in the transformation of Communist Party politics during the 1930s to a grassroots community-based approach.

During the early 1930s, Bloor began actively organizing for the United Farmers' League. She helped to organize the First Farmers' National Conference in Washington, D.C., in 1932. Throughout the 1930s she continued to travel nationally, organizing farmers in Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, and the Dakotas.

Bloor maintained her militant antiwar stance during the interwar period. She traveled to Paris in 1934 as a delegate to the Women's International Congress Against War and Fascism. Here she was elected to serve on the World Committee Against War and Fascism. During the late 1930s, as a member of the National Executive Committee of the American League Against War and Fascism, she worked to fuse the labor and peace movements.

By the late 1930s, Bloor was recognized as the most prominent woman leader and public symbol of the American Communist Party. Her presence shaped grassroots campaigns as she organized from state

to state and agitated with miners, farmers, steel workers, machinists, and needle trade workers. In Ann Barton's 1937 tribute to Mother Bloor, fellow Communist Party member Elizabeth Gurley Flynn wrote of her, "We love and honor this extraordinary American woman as a symbol of the militant American farmer and working class, of the forward sweep of women in the class struggle and in our Party, as an example to young and old of what an American Bolshevik should be." Jailed over 30 times as a result of her various reform movement activities and with a lifetime of commitment to reform movements, Ella Reeve Bloor made significant contributions to the strategies and successes of the American Left.

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See also **International Labor Defense**

BOGALUSA LABOR CONFLICT OF 1919

The Bogalusa, Louisiana, labor conflict of 1919 produced the most dramatic display of interracial labor solidarity in the Deep South in the first half of the twentieth century. The Great Southern Lumber (GSL) Company's systematic use of violence to disrupt the organizing of loggers and sawmill workers caused the Louisiana State Federation of Labor at the time to denounce its anti-union campaign as among the most brutal in American history. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (UBCJ) and

the International Brotherhood of Timber Workers (IBTW), both American Federation of Labor (AFL) affiliates, welcomed Bogalusa's blacks into their ranks early in the organizing drive because they feared the company could mobilize them as strikebreakers. Blacks made up a significant proportion of the lumber industry's labor force.

Bogalusa's white and black workers drew much closer together as the organizing campaign proceeded, in part because company gunmen and pro-employer vigilantes violently assaulted unionists of both races. In addition, several factors peculiar to the lumber industry made white loggers and sawmill workers more receptive to including blacks in their unions. The dangerous and physically demanding nature of work in the forests and sawmills caused whites and blacks to respect each other's courage, strength, and endurance, qualities they considered central in defining masculinity. In the lumber industry, where tasks were relatively homogeneous, blacks and whites often worked closely together. Blacks were therefore less likely to be stigmatized in the least desirable jobs.

GSL's violent campaign of intimidation against the union effort revealed the limits of company paternalism. Entrepreneurs from Buffalo, New York, had established Bogalusa as a model town in 1906, intended as an alternative to the dilapidated shack settlements surrounding most southern lumber mills. GSL touted Bogalusa as a "New South City of Destiny" centered around the world's largest lumber mill. The company deliberately dispersed housing to avoid congestion and boasted that it provided modern recreational facilities and schools for each race. But it also tightly controlled town government and maintained its own heavily armed police force. While fiercely anti-union, GSL denounced the organizing of blacks in particularly venomous terms, charging that the unions threatened the racial hierarchy on which social order depended.

The unions never explicitly challenged Louisiana's Jim Crow system, organizing racially separate locals. Yet in the process of organizing, black and white lumber workers mixed together at meetings, causing the company to accuse the unions of showing contempt for southern custom by failing to properly segregate the races.

The enthusiasm for the union campaign in Bogalusa's black community reflected an increasing African-American determination to confront discrimination in the immediate postwar period. This was illustrated by the assertiveness of returning black World War veterans and the appearance of militant publications challenging Jim Crow, like A. Philip Randolph's *The Messenger*, developments that alarmed white supremacists.

Aware of the threat company gunmen posed to pro-union African-Americans, in June 1919 white lumber workers, in an action probably unprecedented in the Deep South, marched into Bogalusa's black section openly displaying guns, to protect the black workers' union meeting. The company waged a persistent terror campaign against the unions through the fall, as its gunmen beat and arrested many of their white and black supporters.

GSL sought to delegitimize the UBCJ-IBTW campaign by comparing its organizers to Reconstruction "carpetbaggers," suggesting that unionism was alien to the South and that violence was justified in combating it. Ironically, GSL was owned and largely managed by northern transplants, while southerners directed the union drive. With GSL's assistance, merchants and professional men in Bogalusa established the Self-Preservation and Loyalty League (SPLL), modeled on the Reconstruction Ku Klux Klan. Its purpose was to intimidate unionists, whom it accused of championing "social equality." By including the word "Loyalty" in its name, the SPLL also exploited the postwar fear of Bolshevism to portray the union as subversive.

In October–November 1919, GSL prepared to totally eliminate unionism in Bogalusa by discharging union activists of both races and evicting them from company housing, and escalated its violence. A mob of company gunmen and SPLL members fired into the home of Sol Dacus, leader of Bogalusa's African-American union of sawmill workers and loggers, nearly hitting his wife and two children. Fearing lynching, Dacus fled into a swamp as the mob ransacked his house.

The next day Dacus met two white unionists, J. P. Bouchillon and Stanley O'Rourke, who volunteered to escort him to union headquarters in Bogalusa. The white men carried shotguns, and proceeding down Bogalusa's main avenue, they announced that they would protect Dacus. Several white Bogalusans summoned city authorities, who had arrest warrants issued, charging the three union men with disturbing the peace. To carry out the arrests, the authorities assembled a posse of company gunmen and SPLL members, which surrounded union headquarters, heavily outnumbering the men inside.

Accounts of who fired first conflict, but within minutes the posse had shot dead Lem Williams, president of Bogalusa's Central Trades and Labor Council; Bouchillon; and another white union carpenter, Thomas Gaines; and mortally wounded O'Rourke. However, Dacus, the posse's main target, escaped once again. One SPLL member was wounded.

The killings of the four white union men and the near-lynching of Dacus put a permanent end to the

union campaign in Bogalusa. Workers were so intimidated they would not talk to newspaper reporters.

Backed by the Louisiana State Federation of Labor, Dacus sued GSL for damages stemming from loss of all his property in the mob attack on his home. Lena Williams, Lem Williams's widow, in a striking display of interracial solidarity, testified for Dacus, claiming that the mob had intended to murder him. But a New Orleans jury ruled in the company's favor.

A suit that Lena Williams filed against GSL, charging it had had her husband murdered, reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which unanimously ruled against her in 1928. It declared that Bouchillon and O'Rourke had committed a "breach of the peace" because they intended to prevent Dacus's arrest by force. At its 2005 national convention, the UBCJ rejected a motion to build a memorial to the slain UBCJ members Williams, Bouchillon, O'Rourke, and Gaines.

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BORDERS: MEXICO/U.S.

The U.S.-Mexico border runs for more than two thousand miles from the twin cities of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, to the twin cities of San Diego, California, and Tijuana, Baja California Norte. The international boundary runs through four states of the United States (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California) and six Mexican states (Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora, and Baja California Norte). While the location of the border dividing these two nations has not changed location since 1853, this region has undergone severe upheaval and change from its earliest European settlement to the present day.

The border region has been sparsely populated for most of its history, and has in fact only been a border region since the wars of 1836 and 1846–1848 separated the present-day U.S. Southwest from Mexico. Prior to Spanish colonization of Mexico and the Southwest, this region was populated by Native Americans, who were then displaced by small groups of settlers sent to the frontier region by the Spanish. By the time of Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, the only large settlement concentration in the present-day border region was in the mountains of northern New Mexico. Northern Mexico, Texas, and California remained largely empty.

This began to change shortly after Mexico's independence, when settlers from the United States began to flow into Texas. By the 1830s the Anglo settlers greatly outnumbered Mexicans in Texas, alarming the far-away government in Mexico City, which hoped to use Texas as a buffer zone against encroachments from the United States, not as its leading edge. The independence of Texas was achieved in 1836 through a combination of a liberal revolt against the conservative government of Santa Anna, a slaveholders' uprising against abolition, and a conspiracy by Anglo landowners to bring Texas into the United States. Texas independence was followed 10 years later by the U.S. Army's invasion of Mexico and eventual defeat of the Mexican military in 1848. The resultant Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo gave the present-day Southwest to the United States and created the U.S.-Mexico border. The Gadsden Purchase of 1853, acquired in order to build a rail link to the West Coast, produced the present shape of the border.

The Early Development of the Border: 1848–1910

From its first days as an international boundary, the border region behaved more as a unified whole than a divided frontier. Mexicans and Americans crossed the boundary line freely, as commerce and culture ignored the solely legalistic distinction of an international boundary. In fact, for much of the nineteenth century neither Mexico nor the United States was able to integrate the U.S.-Mexico border region into the larger national polity in any but the most cursory ways because it was so far distant from the seats of national power. Lacking the consolidation of centralized power from Mexico City and Washington, D.C., the border region evolved differently from the rest of each respective nation, remaining economically, culturally, and politically peripheral.

Despite this cross-border cultural unity, the border region was not peaceful or particularly stable during the second half of the nineteenth century. The most important conflicts that took place in the border region in the years after the U.S.-Mexico War involved landholding. According to the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, all Mexican land titles would be honored by the United States, but such was not the case. Many factors combined to create this situation, from unclear Mexican titles and land grants to conflicting national and state regulations regarding land ownership, but in the end the Mexican landholders,

both individual landowners and communal village holdings, lost most of their property to a combination of long-lasting litigation, rising property values, and outright thievery by Anglo newcomers. The federal government did little to stop the dispossession of Mexican landholders, especially after the California Gold Rush and the development of railroad networks into the West sent real estate values skyrocketing.

Still, the border region continued to languish under the benign neglect of each country into the 1870s. This disregard was especially apparent during the 1860s, when the U.S. Civil War and the French Intervention in Mexico kept each nation from integrating the border region more fully into its centralized state. Things began to change in the following decade when Reconstruction in the United States and the rise of Porfirio Diaz in Mexico brought strong centralist tendencies to both national governments. Massive changes in the border region followed over the next few decades as technological and economic advancement began to push these areas out of their peripheral status. Most important was the entry of railroads into both the U.S. Southwest and Northern Mexico by the 1880s. This allowed the traditional basic extractive economy of the border region to diversify and expand, as transportation costs fell and new markets opened up. On both sides of the boundary, mining, commercial agriculture (especially cotton), and livestock increased in importance. This economic growth helped bring both investment money and workers into the area, creating all at once a more dynamic but also more dependent border region, which was now reliant on centralized governmental structures.

Economic growth was far from painless, however. Political consolidation and economic centralization created a new elite at the top of border society (such as the Terrazas-Creel family in Chihuahua and the King-Kleberg clan in Texas), but it also bred anger among many borderlanders. While many gained from the changes occurring in the Southwest and northern Mexico, there were many others who fought to keep these changes from destroying their way of life. In several instances this led to outright rebellion. The *Gorras Blancas* in New Mexico; the Juan Cortina, Catarino Garza, and Plan de San Diego rebellions in Texas; the Tomochic rebellion in Chihuahua; and the Cananea labor rebellion in Sonora are just a few of the bloody rebellions that convulsed the border region in the last decades of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century. Indeed, the border region would play a primary role in the next major turning point in Mexican and U.S. history: the Mexican Revolution.

The Mexican Revolution and the Further Evolution of the Border: 1910–1940

The border region had long served as a refuge for political dissidents from both nations. In the early years of the twentieth century, Mexican dissidents, forced to leave the increasingly repressive Mexico of Porfirio Diaz, settled in the U.S. Southwest in large numbers while working to undermine the decades-long dictatorship in their homeland. San Antonio, Texas, and Los Angeles, California, became the headquarters for dissidents such as Francisco Madero and Ricardo Flores Magon, who would play major roles in the coming revolution. In addition, many workers in the North traveled to the United States regularly to work, giving them firsthand knowledge of the nature of change occurring on both sides of the border. These transnational workers were also the ones with the greatest consciousness of the continued dispossession that accompanied capital expansion and political centralization. In fact, much of the early fighting that drove Diaz from power in 1911 began in the northern Mexican border region. Thus, while much of the North had benefited from the economic modernization and forced centralization of the Diaz years, it was northerners who began the fight against the Diaz dictatorship.

The years 1910–1930 witnessed a fierce civil war within Mexico, which quieted down after 1920 but continued to simmer for another decade as a series of regional rebellions threatened the fragile postrevolutionary peace. Large portions of northern Mexico were destroyed during the intense fighting, forcing hundreds of thousands to cross the border into the southwestern United States in the first two decades of military chaos. Thus, a huge population of largely working-class Mexicans entered the U.S. border region in the decades after 1910. This demographic change caused by the Mexican Revolution would have consequences for the United States that were every bit as important as for Mexico. The border states, especially Texas and California, now had the labor supply necessary to cut costs and compete for ever larger markets for their products. Irrigation increased as capitalist agriculture spread into regions where ranching and other activities had previously been dominant. Thus, the U.S. Southwest capitalized on the devastation of Mexico's North by developing on the backs of these new Mexican emigrants. Combined with the economic boom of the World War I years in the United States, the Southwest grew rapidly while northern Mexico continued to languish through war and uneasy peace.

The period from the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution to the outbreak of World War II also saw the

first systematic codification of U.S. immigration laws. The first U.S. border posts were created in 1891, but only six officials staffed these outposts by the turn of the century. Beginning in 1917 and continuing in 1921 and 1924, the federal government put restrictions on who could enter the United States, though each time legislation was passed, Mexicans were exempted from the new quota systems under pressure from agricultural interests which opposed any legislation that reduced the flow of Mexicans into the United States. Mexicans were now expected to pass through an inspection station on the border, but otherwise they were able to pass freely across the border. A Border Patrol was formed in 1924, but it aimed primarily to make sure that Chinese and European immigrants, excluded by restrictive immigration legislation, did not use Mexico as a "back door" into the United States. It was not until 1965 that immigration quotas were applied to Mexicans. Still, the pressures exerted by the economic collapse and social dislocation of the Great Depression led to the massive forced repatriation of over a million Mexicans during the 1930s. As with any boom economy, the economic collapse of the 1930s hit the U.S. Southwest especially hard. The disintegration of migrant labor streams that employed hundreds of thousands of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, combined with the fears of repatriation, made the Depression years extremely difficult for Latinos in the Southwest.

World War II and State-Sponsored Immigration

The outbreak of World War II began a new era in the history of the U.S.-Mexico border. With the economic collapse of the 1930s gone and the end of the forced repatriation of Mexicans, a new wave of immigrants crossed the border into the United States seeking employment in the rapidly growing war economy. Additionally, with large numbers of American laborers entering the armed forces, many employers complained that they faced a labor shortage. Responding to the anguished cries of agricultural interests, the U.S. government set out to make an agreement with the Mexican government to import workers through the official sponsorship of the two nations. Under this plan, known as the Bracero Program, hundreds of thousands of Mexican workers came to the United States under the nominal protection of the federal government during the war. Hoping to protect its citizens, the Mexican government was able to extract guarantees of safe passage and good treatment for the braceros. While the official prohibition of Texas was maintained

throughout the war, illegal immigration flourished along the Texas-Mexico border.

The Bracero Program did not end in 1945, however. Instead, agricultural interests in the Southwest and Midwest were able to pressure the government to continue extending the program until it was finally killed in 1964. The continued extension of the program required consent from Mexico, but in many instances the Mexican government was coerced into continuing the Bracero Program. The primary example of this was the massive forced repatriation drive launched in 1953 and 1954 under the name "Operation Wetback." While negotiators from the United States and Mexico stalemated in their attempts to extend the program, the U.S. government used the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to force Mexico's hand. With millions of Mexicans repatriated to Mexico, remittance payments to Mexico would cease and social problems were sure to result from the reintroduction of such a large population. The only way to keep this from happening was to extend the Bracero Program according to the terms dictated by the United States.

World War II and the Cold War years also witnessed a dramatic increase in federal spending along the border. Texas and California were flooded with billions of dollars in defense spending. This increased expenditure allowed the U.S. border states to move beyond their reliance on primary-sector economic activity and into more diversified industrial and commercial ventures. The same occurred in northern Mexico, as the Mexican government began to promote manufacturing in the border region, primarily in the maquilas, which were supposed to substitute Mexican manufactured goods for imports as well as boost export revenues. One example of this development was the industrial and commercial complex that grew between San Antonio, Texas, and Monterrey, Nuevo Leon. Monterrey developed into a manufacturing center, while San Antonio became the distribution center for Mexican products entering the United States. Thus, the changes of World War II and the Cold War extended to both sides of the border.

The Modern Border: 1965 to Today

The exclusion of Mexico from immigration quota systems ended in 1965 with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act. This law limited the number of legal immigrants from all Western Hemisphere nations to 170,000 a year. Yet large numbers of immigrants continued to flow across the border in spite of the new regulations. It is impossible to say

how many illegal immigrants crossed the border in the year after 1965, but the number of apprehensions of illegal immigrants in the United States, the vast majority of whom came across the U.S.-Mexico border, was continually higher than the number of legally admitted immigrants. At the very least there were hundreds of thousands of illegal crossings each year, with many repeat crossings. Additionally, as the nations of Central America were caught up in a series of bloody civil wars from the late 1950s until the late 1980s, many began to escape through Mexico and across the border into the United States. This additional immigrant source served to heighten tensions along the U.S.-Mexico border as the INS and the U.S. military scrambled to slow down illegal immigration at the same time that public fears of a drug epidemic in the United States enflamed the border region. These same concerns and fears would continue to plague the border region into the 21st century.

The years after the 1960s also saw the explosive growth of Mexican maquila production along the border, especially after the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. In the late twentieth century and early 21st century, these factories were primarily foreign-owned and received massive tax breaks from the Mexican government. When they first appeared, it was hoped that they would create related economic linkages, meaning that they would spawn new Mexican-owned companies that would provide supplies and services for the maquilas. For the most part, however, these linkages and new companies were not created. Instead, the maquilas remained largely detached from the larger Mexican economy, sending their products to foreign markets and their profits to foreign owners.

At the beginning of the 21st century, as it always has, the U.S.-Mexico border served to both unite and divide the two countries. While it divided the border region into two different legal states, the international boundary also united the border region into one cultural space united by migration and commerce. Further, with advances in transportation and communication, the border continued to expand further into both the United States and Mexico as people and products circulated between the two nations.

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See also Alien Contract Labor Law; Bisbee Deportation/Copper Strike (1917); California; Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union; Capital Flight; Central Americans; Chavez, César Estrada; Corona, Burt; Delano Grape Strike (1965–1970); Globalization; Gold Rush; Great Depression: 1930s; Guatemalans; H-2 Program; Huerta, Dolores C.; Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965; Immigration Restriction; McCarran-Walter Act (1952); Mexican and Mexican-American Workers; Migrant Farmworkers; North American Free Trade Agreement; Pueblo Revolt (1680); San Joaquin Valley Cotton Strike (1933); Southwest; United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America; United Farm Workers of America; World War I; Zoot Suit Riots

BOYCOTTS

A boycott is a refusal to conduct business—whether buy, sell, or trade—with a particular person or company believed to be engaged in unfair practices. Sometimes a boycott is not necessarily meant to cause economic damage. Boycotts could also involve the refusal to promote a business, such as not watching a particular news program because the television station advocated a controversial view or did not hire enough reporters of a certain gender or racial/ethnic group. Therefore, a boycott may be conducted as a way to cause embarrassment to a person or company by drawing attention to alleged bad practices.

For organized labor, a boycott is a powerful weapon against an employer thought to be unfair toward

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its workers. There are both *primary* and *secondary* boycotts. In primary boycotts, the actions are those described above; that is, refusing to conduct business with a specific person or company. In secondary boycotts, the economic pressure is put upon those who conduct business with the individual or company being complained about.

The word “boycott” comes from Ireland. Captain Charles Cunningham Boycott was an agent of Lord Erne, managing the lands for the absentee British landlord. Boycott refused a request by the tenants for a rent reduction. In their protest, the tenants refused to perform any work, especially harvesting, and also used the power of word of mouth to berate and tarnish Boycott’s image throughout the community. Faced with no workers, and in need of some protection, Boycott received help when volunteers from Irish Unionists and the British army stepped in. Later on, the Irish Land League, among others, then used the term around the year 1880 to signify a refusal to patronize an enemy.

In the United States, boycotting itself was not an established word at first, but the practice was well known. One of the first known boycotts in the United States came in 1830. The National Negro Convention, a group dedicated to improving the condition of blacks, including a mass migration to Canada, advocated a boycott of slave-made products as a way to protest the abomination of slavery by cutting into any potential profits made by such labor. But as a viable economic weapon, the use of the boycott would need a few more years to develop.

For the U.S. labor movement, the use of the boycott became a major form of protest in the post-Civil War era as the movement gained momentum. Many believed that boycotting was a more sensible alternative to striking. One reasoning for this belief is that in a strike the workers suffered a usually temporary loss of wages (although in some instances the striking workers were never rehired, forcing them to try to find new employment). Through a boycott, only the employer would suffer monetary loss, although, as sometimes happens with a strike, a big enough loss of income could prompt an employer to close its doors, thus throwing all of its employees out of work.

With the formation of the Knights of Labor (KOL), the use of boycotts was considered to be a much more powerful tool than that of a strike. As a way to settle grievances, or gain bargaining power, the KOL believed the boycott to be a much more efficient, and peaceful, form of protest. Not only did the KOL call for numerous boycotts, but the actions were publicized. However, while there were a few successes in using this method, by and large the potential of using a boycott was never realized by the KOL.

The boycott became quite well known during the infamous Pullman Strike of 1894. In protesting wage cuts instituted by the Pullman Company against its workers, the American Railway Union (ARU), which was under the direction of Eugene V. Debs, called for a boycott of Pullman railroad cars to accompany the strike. Railroad workers across the country heeded the call for this secondary boycott, and within two weeks the Middle Western railroad system was shut down as workers refused to handle any Pullman cars.

The Pullman Company turned to President Grover Cleveland for assistance. Under the guise of protecting the mails, Cleveland sent in federal troops to both maintain order and protect the mails and interstate commerce. This action was taken over the protest of Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld, and also since the Chicago police, who sympathized with the strikers, would not take action. Upon the arrival of troops, violence broke out, complete with gunfire and the burning of railroad cars. A federal court issued an injunction forbidding any interference with the mails or commerce, an action that Debs and the ARU ignored. Debs was jailed for contempt of court, and the strike eventually failed.

As a means of protest, the boycott is a powerful, yet nonviolent, means of protest. Yet, many states cracked down on its use. Organized labor conducted numerous boycotts during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Many of these were protests against the use of products made by prison labor. As with curbing strikes, employers looked for ways to battle the use of the boycott. In Illinois, for example, the passage of the Cole Anti-Boycott law in 1887 sought to curb its use. According to this law, “if two or more persons conspired together or the officers or executive committee of any society or organization uttered or issued any circular or edict instructing its members to institute a boycott or blacklist, they shall be deemed guilty of a conspiracy.” A fine of up to two thousand dollars and a possible prison sentence of up to five years were the penalties assigned. The one interesting aspect of this law was that employers were banned from creating a blacklist, a practice against which labor frequently fought. The Cole Anti-Boycott law survived well into the twentieth century, although subsequent amendments and court decisions altered its impact.

The idea of conducting boycotts, whether direct or secondary, became a legal question for a number of years. In a statement to Congress in 1908, Henry Kraus wrote, “Now, what do workmen do when they boycott? They tell their friends, they tell their neighbors, they tell their fellow citizens of the hard or degrading terms imposed by the boycotted person or firm; and they ask these friends, neighbors, and fellow

citizens, to assist in ameliorating these hard or degrading terms of employment imposed by the boycotted persons.”

The federal government would become involved in the boycott issue, especially during the twentieth century. In 1890, Congress passed the Sherman Antitrust Act, a law designed to curb corrupt business practices, especially those involved in the restraint of trade. While meant to restrict the owners of industry, the law was soon turned around and used against organized labor. One of the first instances of the Sherman Act being used as such was in the 1909 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Loewe v. Lawlor*, also known as the *Danbury Hatters* case. This case involved the actions of the United Hatters of North America, which was failing in its attempt to organize the workers of D. E. Loewe in Danbury, Connecticut. The union called for a nationwide boycott of the company’s products. In response, the company brought suit against the union under the Sherman Act, arguing that the boycott was in restraint of trade. The Supreme Court agreed with the company, ruled that the union was subject to an injunction, and assessed it treble damages.

The Sherman Act was not intended to be used against organized labor. Keeping this in mind, Congress passed the 1914 Clayton Antitrust Act, called the “Magna Carta of Labor.” This act sought to protect many of the rights to which labor felt it was due and that were supposedly protected under the Sherman Act. Among these rights were the strike, boycott, and peaceful picketing. Injunctions were not to be issued against labor for participating in these activities, unless there would be irreparable harm to property.

The U.S. Supreme Court weighed in on the boycott issue with the 1921 decision *Duplex Printing Press v. Deering*. The case involved a secondary boycott, which was being defined as “economic pressure by a union upon an employer with whom the union has no dispute.” In order to achieve this, the union would apply the boycott against one company as a way to dissuade it from doing business with the company with whom it had the dispute.

The *Duplex* case involved the International Association of Machinists, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The union was trying to organize workers at the Duplex Printing Press Company, located in Battle Creek, Michigan. The company had no intentions of allowing the unions in. Furthermore, the standards used by the company were considerably lower than those the union negotiated with other businesses. To the union, this gave Duplex an unfair economic advantage and could also affect the contracts signed with the unionized companies. With New York being Duplex’s best market, the union sought to stop the sales in that region. In addition to the boycott, the

union also employed strikes, and even threats, toward those transporting Duplex machines.

When the Supreme Court heard the case, it ruled on behalf of the company. The Court held that the secondary boycott was enjoined under the Clayton Act, citing the union was acting within the term “restraint of trade.” To the Court, the union was not acting within its lawful and legitimate purpose. Labor organizations across the country protested the Court’s decision and then turned to their own state legislatures to pass acts that would hopefully further protect labor’s right to use activities such as boycotts.

The New Deal years were certainly kinder to labor than any previous time. In his efforts to revive the slumping economy, President Franklin D. Roosevelt thought that granting some concessions to labor would prevent conflicts and thus bring stability to industry. In the post-World War II years, though, any gains labor made were slowly stripped away or watered down. In 1947, over the veto of President Harry S. Truman, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Labor Act, officially known as the Labor-Management Relations Act. Truman referred to the law as a “slave labor bill.” Taft-Hartley amended the 1935 Wagner Act, also known as the National Labor Relations Act, which permitted labor several long-sought-after benefits, such as the right to collective bargaining. Among the list of prohibited actions and practices included jurisdictional strikes, secondary boycotts, and “common-situs picketing,” which is similar to a secondary boycott whereby unions picket, strike, or refuse to do business with a company with whom they have no grievance but that conducts business with one they do. In 1959, the restrictions against secondary boycotts were strengthened with the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act.

Probably one of the most famous boycotts in U.S. history was the one led by the United Farm Workers (UFW) from 1965 to 1970. Farmers suffered a loss of workers during World War II due to the flocks of workers taking on positions in the factories. As a result, farmers were allowed to hire Mexican workers on a temporary basis, who were called braceros. The stipulation was that no bracero could replace an American worker, if one was to be found. Well after the war, wage disputes concerning the braceros and domestic workers came to the forefront. Many Filipino workers, who were organized under the AFL’s Agricultural Workers’ Organizing Committee, objected to a lower pay rate than the braceros, although federal rules prohibited domestics receiving a lower rate. Other grievances addressed were the deplorable living conditions, along with the lack of water and bathroom services. The Filipinos, joined by Mexican-Americans, walked off the job.

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The key figure in the boycott was César Chávez. Although an agreement was struck not to pay Mexican immigrant workers more, compliance was ignored by many. Furthermore, the workers wanted unionization. Thousands of workers went on strike. Chávez pleaded with the American people not to buy grapes without the union label. Some wine growers signed agreements with the striking workers. The strike was successful, and as a result the farm workers received higher wages and better benefits.

Later, the boycott took on different proportions. Not just a tool of the labor movement to strike at allegedly unfair businesses, the boycott was adopted by many to achieve a specific goal. The term “girlcott” was used by the African-American track star Lacey O’Neal during the 1968 Olympics, urging others not to avoid the games and instead gain recognition. The tennis star Billy Jean King used the same word to protest against the unequal pay for women in the Wimbledon tournament. Probably the most famous noneconomic boycott was when President Jimmy Carter refused to allow the country to participate in the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow in protest of the Soviet Union’s activities in Afghanistan, a move that drew much criticism.

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See also **Knights of Labor; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)**

BOYLE, W. A. (TONY) (1904–1985) President, United Mine Workers of America

William Anthony “Tony” Boyle became president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in 1963, three years after the retirement of John L.

Lewis, who led America’s unionized coal miners for 40 years. Lewis had handpicked the aging, ill Thomas Kennedy as president, while designating Boyle as vice president and heir apparent. Boyle’s decade-long tenure and fall from power over America’s oldest industrial union was dominated by the challenge of an insurgent movement against entrenched corruption, violence, and ultimately murder within the UMWA.

Boyle, from a family of Scottish immigrant miners, became Lewis’s administrative assistant in 1947, after seven years as a UMWA district president in Montana. His move into Lewis’s inner circle coincided with a gradually growing corruption within the UMWA national leadership. Lewis’s vision of a dynamic industrial union increasingly hardened into the protection of his own power in the context of the coal industry’s post-World War II retrenchment and economic crisis. Boyle fit in well. He engaged in nepotism that extended to opposing proposed state safety laws in Montana on behalf of one sibling, a coal mine owner, and to conferring the District 27 UMWA presidency on another sibling, who had never worked in a mine.

During that era, Boyle was a key player in Lewis’s largely unsuccessful attempts to “bring around” the UMWA’s nemesis—the recalcitrant, difficult-to-organize small mines, especially in parts of Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. On the one hand, violence and intimidation were employed on both sides, with little involvement of rank-and-file miners in organizing. On the other hand, there were sweetheart deals with nominally union operators. From that milieu, specifically District 19 in Tennessee, Boyle would eventually select a pliant union official to recruit hired assassins.

As UMWA president, Boyle consolidated power, in part from a base of locals made up entirely of retired miners susceptible to influence and control. The Boyle machine manipulated the *United Mine Workers’ Journal* to endlessly promote Boyle’s name and to denigrate any opposition. Boyle also continued Lewis’s destruction of district autonomy. Despite his self-promotion, Boyle enjoyed little or none of Lewis’s immense personal prestige among miners. The growing problems of job loss, lagging wages, black lung disease, and unsafe mines produced a rank-and-file coal miners’ movement. Boyle responded with inconsistent endorsements of change, alongside increasing hostility to the dissenters, employing violence to enforce uniformity at the 1964 UMWA convention.

Boyle’s isolation from the growing rank-and-file anger was illustrated and exacerbated when the Mannington mine exploded in 1968, killing 78 miners. Despite a history of safety violations at the mine, he declared fatalistically that such disasters were inherent

in the industry, and he vouched for the good intentions of Consolidation Coal, owners of the mine. This stood in stark contrast to collective memories of John L. Lewis visiting the sites of disasters and eloquently denouncing the operators. Added to Boyle's isolation from the lives of the members was the increasingly evident corruption, over which he presided.

When veteran Pennsylvania district leader Joseph "Jock" Yablonski broke with Boyle and ran for UMWA president in 1969, massive fraud tainted the election, which Boyle won. As the movement looked forward to Yablonski's continuing challenge, Boyle engineered the reform leader's assassination on December 31, 1969. Yablonski's wife and daughter were also killed. The shocking carnage and the militant miners' movement woke up the previously complacent U.S. Justice Department, leading to a 1972 court order that overturned the election and to a criminal indictment of Boyle for illegal use of union funds. Campaigning while free on bail, and still operating from a formidable political and financial base, Boyle lost the federally supervised new election to Miners for Democracy candidate Arnold Miller. By 1974, the trail of evidence had worked its way up, and Boyle was indicted for the murder of Yablonski. Sentenced to life, he later died in prison.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Boyle's career was the veneer of legitimacy he achieved, including a 1968 tribute from Hubert Humphrey, and even a folk song about him by Joe Glazer. It stemmed from past UMWA successes and from Boyle's control of institutionalized bureaucratic structures, such as collective bargaining and administration of the Health and Retirement Funds. While his methods were venal and undemocratic, those structures functioned in ways that maintained a degree of stability between the UMWA leadership and the industry. The veneer and the stability were ended by the combination of Boyle's overreaching into cold-blooded murder and the persistence of the rank-and-file movement, which included growing wildcat strikes. The insurgent UMWA miners won an end to federal complacency and rescued their union.

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See also Black Lung Associations; Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act; Miller, Arnold; United Mine Workers of America; Yablonski, Joseph A. "Jock"

BRANDEIS BRIEF

The Brandeis Brief is today widely known as the first influential legal brief to rely on social scientific data to prove its case before the Supreme Court. Yet the Brandeis Brief grew out of a crucial episode in American labor history, *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), and the brief's successful argument portended much of the justification for government regulation on behalf of twentieth-century workers.

In 1905, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the case of *Lochner v. New York*, striking down a New York law limiting baker hours to 10 per day and 60 per week as a violation of workers' rights to liberty of contract. The case seemed to prohibit all government regulation of workers' wages, hours, and employment conditions. Soon after the *Lochner* decision, however, Oregon courts began passing judgment on a 1903 statute preventing women from working more than 10-hour days. Portland laundry owner Curt Muller gave his name to the case when he required his foreman to force ardent unionist Emma Gotcher to work more than 10 hours on Labor Day, 1905.

Advocates of government protection of workers and regulation of the economy looked to this new case as a possible crack in the seemingly all-encompassing capitalist conservatism of *Lochner*. While certain groups such as the American Association of Labor Legislation still hoped to press the case of laws that would protect all workers, the female-dominated National Consumers' League (NCL) realized that such an approach was doomed to fail. In the social Darwinist legal and intellectual environment of the early twentieth century, the only likely hope for protection of any workers was to begin by supporting the protection of women alone. General laws might then proceed from this "entering wedge."

In 1907, the Oregon Consumers' League notified national headquarters that it should begin to defend the Oregon 10-hour law. Florence Kelley, the dynamic and socialist general secretary of the NCL, and Josephine Goldmark, the head of the League's

committee on labor law, first solicited the prominent but conservative New York lawyer Joseph Choate. When he turned down the case, Kelley and Goldmark gladly turned to Louis Brandeis—conveniently the latter’s brother-in-law. Brandeis agreed to serve as long as the Oregon attorney general made him the state’s official attorney in the case.

Brandeis was one of the shining stars of the Progressive legal firmament. A wealthy attorney from Louisville and an active Zionist, Brandeis, despite his privilege, turned against the era’s dominant laissez-faire philosophy. He crusaded in the political arena against monopolies, earning the undying hatred of many corporate elites. Yet Brandeis’s defense of the rights of small business earned him the respect of Woodrow Wilson, who would go on to appoint him to the Supreme Court in 1916—making him the first Jew to hold that post.

In the legal arena, Brandeis was convinced that courts had not only the ability but the obligation to aid those who were too weak to help themselves. Yet given the hostile judicial environment, and the decision not to launch a full-scale assault on *Lochner*, Brandeis had to resort not to moral suasion but to one of the favorite entities of Progressive Era reformers: “the facts.” Brandeis believed that the collection and deployment of supposedly neutral data, uncovered by experts, would allow for the proper sorting out of good and evil. And in this case, the evil was long hours for women.

Brandeis set Goldmark to work on researching the voluminous facts that would become the heart, and indeed almost the entire body, of the Brandeis Brief. Goldmark in turn worked with 10 other researchers (including her sister Pauline and Florence Kelley) to uncover data on the physical, moral, and social impact of women’s hours of wage labor. Based in the New York Public Library and the Columbia University libraries, Goldmark and her comrades dug through reports of medical and labor commissions, finding particularly invaluable information in British government publications. The result was a 113-page report—only the first two pages of which laid out a traditional legal argument based on previous cases. The rest, titled, “The World’s Experience,” was largely a series of quotations and often-undigested information from decidedly nonjudicial authorities, ranging from physicians to factory inspectors.

The brief used such social science to argue, above all, that long work hours were “disastrous” to the well-being of women and their offspring. Nature had made women weaker than men, the brief contended, and overwork led to fatigue, headaches, anemia, and a variety of other ailments. Perhaps most critical, long hours interfered in women’s most important purpose:

the bearing and raising of children. Exploitative labor caused miscarriages, premature births, and infant mortality, and children who did survive were enfeebled and often immoral. It was this appeal on behalf of the health and well-being of the entire human race that the justices most likely found to be the brief’s most compelling argument; they ended up upholding the Oregon statute unanimously.

Americans initially greeted the decision in *Muller v. Oregon* with great enthusiasm. The claims of humanity finally seemed to have trumped the greed of rapacious employers. Yet even at the time, feminists were concerned about the gendered arguments on behalf of the Oregon statute, and on behalf of protective labor legislation for women more broadly, that portrayed women as victims. Feminist scholars have continued to hone this critique over the last century. By turning women into passive subjects who needed to be protected, Brandeis and Goldmark effectively disempowered them both at the workplace and before the judicial bench. This indefatigable duo did not even seek to interview contemporary female laundry (or other) workers; their mission was simply to protect, not to understand or interact with them—much less nurture their political activism.

Louis Brandeis later told his law clerk Dean Acheson that the proper title for the brief should have been “What Every Fool Knows.” Yet while we should honor the genuine generosity and the humanitarianism of the Brandeis Brief, we today generally think quite differently from Brandeis and his allies. Their brief has now become just as much a symbol of the inegalitarian politics of much twentieth-century welfare-state liberalism as a victory of pure enlightenment.

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**BRIDGES, HARRY RENTON (JULY 28,
1901–MARCH 30, 1990)
President, International Longshoremen’s and
Warehousemen’s Union**

For a generation of Americans, Harry Bridges personified militant, left-wing unionism. Born in a working-class suburb of Melbourne, Australia, Bridges derived his early political views from a favorite uncle who advocated trade unionism and served as an organizer for the Australian Labor Party. Later, working as a merchant seaman in the United States, he briefly joined the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and adopted many of their views on race and class, organizing, and union democracy. In 1922, he began working on the San Francisco docks. Longshore work was demanding and often dangerous. Hiring came through a daily shape-up when gang bosses (who acted as foremen for the longshoremen who worked a single hold of a ship) selected their work gang; there was no security of employment. In 1933, when the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) chartered Local 38-79 in San Francisco, Bridges quickly emerged to leadership. He served as chairman of the strike committee during the 1934 coastwise longshore strike and came out with a reputation as a forceful and radical leader. Afterward, he became president of his local, then of the Pacific Coast District of the ILA, and then of the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU, now the International Longshore and Warehouse Union), which was chartered by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1937.

Bridges and the ILWU

One of the most important objectives in the 1934 strike was a union-controlled hiring hall in each port, replacing the shape-up in some ports and employer-controlled hiring halls elsewhere. The strike settlement specified that the hiring halls were to be financed jointly by the union and the employers but that each dispatcher was to be elected by union members. Thereafter, for Bridges and the members of his union, the slogan became “the hiring hall is the union.” In 1935, while Bridges was president of Local 38-79, the local used the hiring hall to equalize earnings among longshoremen, to gain greater control over working conditions, and to ban racially segregated work gangs.

In the 1930s and 1940s, in California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Alaska, and Hawaii,

the ILWU forged a strong union among longshoremen and some warehouse workers. Expulsion from the CIO ended ILWU efforts—never very successful—to organize longshoremen and warehouse workers in eastern states. In Hawaii, after World War II, the ILWU became the largest union and a powerful political force, representing a highly racially diverse work force in the longshore, warehouse, sugar, pineapple, transportation, and hotel industries. By organizing sugar and pineapple field workers, the ILWU became the first union to achieve lasting success in bringing collective bargaining to agricultural workers.

Bridges consistently advocated “a lot of rank-and-file democracy and control.” Under his leadership, the ILWU institutionalized extensive member participation in union decision making, including a requirement in the San Francisco local that officers could not serve consecutive terms. Within the ILWU, major decisions have usually been made through a membership referendum, and officers have been elected by all union members. Bridges often reminded his members, especially his critics, that a petition by 15% of the membership could suspend him—or any international officer—and force a recall election. In the longshore caucus, delegates from all the waterfront locals meet regularly to decide contract issues. “On the Beam,” Bridges’s column in *The Dispatcher*, the ILWU newspaper launched in 1942, regularly presented his views on union and public issues.

Bridges understood the power of symbols for minimizing the distance between leaders and members. He argued that a union officer should not earn more than the highest paid member of that union, and he stuck to that commitment throughout his career. Of 36 union presidents listed in a news magazine salary survey in 1964, none received less than Bridges. Bridges’s personal lifestyle reflected the same values. When he and his wife bought a home, it was a modest row house in a middle-class neighborhood. Away from home, he often stayed in cheap hotels. Nothing earned his contempt faster than making a personal profit from the trust of union members.

Bridges consistently advocated the unity of labor. He helped to create and lead the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast, an ambitious effort to unite all West Coast maritime unions. Initially successful, the federation conducted a three-month strike in 1936–1937 that contributed to conflict between its two largest organizations, the ILA Pacific Coast District and the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific (SUP). In 1937, Bridges led the Pacific Coast District into the CIO as the ILWU and became its first president, but the SUP opted for the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and left the Maritime Federation in 1938. Later, in 1946, Bridges took the lead in organizing

the short-lived Committee for Maritime Unity, hoping to develop common bargaining among the six CIO maritime unions. By the late 1950s, the ILWU and Teamsters were working together to resolve jurisdictional disputes and eventually undertook some joint bargaining. As ILWU president, Bridges eventually sought a reconciliation with the ILA. One of his last public statements was to endorse affiliation with the AFL-CIO when ILWU members voted on that measure in 1988.

Bridges and the Communist Party

Bridges frequently described himself as a Marxist. His Marxism was never rigid, but he claimed that his class analysis kept him grounded in negotiations. No matter how well he got along with the men on the other side of the bargaining table, he claimed, he always knew that they represented the “class enemy.” He approached race relations from a class analysis, arguing consistently for full racial integration of the work force and the union, and he argued for class solidarity across the lines of race, ethnicity, gender, and craft. Similarly, he worked from his ideological perspective to define the role of union president, to foster rank-and-file democracy, to advocate for civil rights and civil liberties, and to take positions on foreign policy issues.

Bridges consistently supported and defended the Communist Party (CP) and the Soviet Union. For Bridges, the enemies of the CP and the Soviet Union were his enemies—including both red-baiters and Trotskyists. Though Bridges acknowledged that “all the evidence introduced against me in that fight with the government was 95% true,” he always denied that he had ever become a member of the CP.

The papers of the Communist Party of the United States at the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, Moscow, were opened to researchers after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Though fragmentary and largely limited to the period before 1937–1938, those files suggest that Bridges took part in CP discussions of strategy and tactics beginning in 1934 and was elected to the Central Committee of the CPUSA in 1936. Historians are likely never to know the precise relationship between Bridges and the CP, but the records in Moscow suggest that he sometimes took positions contrary to the party line and did not always carry out decisions made in party caucuses.

After Bridges emerged as a strike leader in 1934, some business leaders, public officials, and American

Legion officers claimed, on dubious evidence, that he was a Communist and should be deported to his native Australia. In 1939, bowing to political pressure, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins ordered the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to determine whether Bridges should be deported. When the hearing officer ruled in Bridges’s favor, the House of Representatives passed a bill to deport Bridges. Undoubtedly unconstitutional, the measure died in the Senate. However, partially in response to the uproar over the hearing decision, Congress moved INS from Labor to Justice and established new criteria for deportation. Attorney General Robert Jackson then ordered the FBI to investigate Bridges; by 1956, Bridges’s FBI file had grown to nearly 38,000 pages. In a second INS hearing, in 1941, the hearing officer found against Bridges. Upon appeal, the Supreme Court reversed that decision (*Bridges v. Wixon*, 1945), and Bridges completed his naturalization.

With the onset of the Cold War, left-wing unions came under pressure from CIO leadership to espouse anti-Communist views. In 1948, however, Bridges and the ILWU opposed CIO leaders by criticizing the Marshall Plan and supporting the presidential candidacy of Henry Wallace. The CIO subsequently expelled the ILWU on the grounds that it was communist-led. In 1949, with Bridges and the ILWU under attack within the CIO, federal authorities brought Bridges to trial, charging him and his two witnesses with lying at his naturalization when he swore he had never belonged to the Communist Party. In 1950, they were convicted of criminal conspiracy. In *Bridges v. U.S.* (1953), the Supreme Court overturned the conspiracy conviction on procedural grounds. In 1955, federal attorneys initiated yet a fourth trial, but the trial judge dismissed the charges.

Throughout his hearings and trials, Bridges’s defense committees attracted widespread support from labor, the left, liberals, and eventually even business leaders. Most ILWU members considered him a martyr, suffering repeated trials solely because he was a successful union leader, and many others saw him as the victim of federal harassment. At the same time, however, the attacks on Bridges and his union drained enormous amounts of time, energy, and resources just for defense. Bridges’s support for the CP—and similar support by other ILWU activists—led the CIO to expel the union, and led to the loss of the ILWU’s few eastern locals. The ILWU tried to take in the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union—also expelled from the CIO—but lost that jurisdiction, too. The ILWU did take in the West Coast locals of the Fishermen’s Union, another expelled

union, and added a few other locals from other unions that had been expelled and were being raided. Thus, despite Bridges's commitment to labor unity, for 38 years—27 of them under Bridges's leadership—the ILWU stood outside the mainstream of organized labor.

Bridges and Longshore Labor Relations

Bridges always led the ILWU negotiating committee during bargaining for the coastwise longshore contract. In 1948, representatives of waterfront employers refused to negotiate with him because of his political views. After a bitter three-month strike, several key companies bolted from the previous employers' association, formed the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), and hired new negotiators. This initiated a "New Look" in Pacific Coast longshore labor relations. Thereafter, Bridges and the ILWU built a stable—sometimes even comfortable—relationship with the PMA.

In the late 1950s, recognizing that technology could transform longshoring, Bridges argued that the ILWU should not fight change but instead try to benefit from it. After extensive discussion in the union newspaper and union meetings, and with endorsement by the membership, Bridges led negotiations through which the ILWU accepted full mechanization in return for generous retirement arrangements and a guarantee of full pay for those who did not retire. The ILWU-PMA Modernization and Mechanization Agreement (M&M) of 1960 led Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell to judge that "next only to John L. Lewis, Bridges has done the best job in American labor of coming to grips with the problems of automation." Shipping companies rapidly converted to containers, greatly reducing the cost of shipping, but arguments that Bridges settled too cheaply were largely from hindsight. Some ILWU members, however, criticized the M&M for undermining the hiring hall by permitting employers to choose "steady men" for certain jobs. The steady-man issue, especially, fueled a four-month strike in 1971–1972.

Conclusion

Despite his lifelong, outspoken admiration for the Soviet Union, Bridges after 1960 was often praised for his contributions to the maritime industry and even lauded as a "labor statesman." He disavowed such honorifics, claiming that he had not changed his

views. As early as the 1950s, Bridges had become a living legend—the militant, democratic leftist who repeatedly triumphed over federal persecution. Many ILWU members did not share Bridges's left-wing politics nor his admiration for the Soviet Union, but most nonetheless pledged him their respect, loyalty, and affection. In 1992, a group of ILWU pensioners in the Pacific Northwest demonstrated this by collecting a million dollars—mostly in small amounts from pensioners—to endow a Harry Bridges Chair in Labor Studies at the University of Washington.

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See also **International Longshoremen's Association; Maritime Labor**

BRISBANE, ALBERT (1809–1890) Social Theorist

The nineteenth-century social thinker Albert Brisbane almost single-handedly transformed the way that Americans thought about the prospects for communal living, by importing, popularizing, and adapting to the American environment the ideas of the French communitarian Charles Fourier. Brisbane's efforts, which illustrate the importance of the transatlantic transmission of radical ideas in the antebellum period, resulted in a wave of Fourierite experiments throughout the northern United States between 1845 and 1855.

Born in Batavia, New York, into a middle-class family, Brisbane claimed to have discovered and rebelled against social inequality in the United States from the time that he was 15 years old. However, it was not until he had the opportunity to study at the Sorbonne, and then embark on a tour of Europe, that he discovered, and became completely obsessed by, the philosophy of Charles Fourier. Brisbane presented himself at Fourier's office and offered him 5 francs an hour to tutor Brisbane in his theory.

An eccentric French philosopher, Fourier had proposed that industry could be made more attractive to people if their natural inclinations were followed in the choice of, and practice of, an occupation. In Fourier's view, with plenty of variety, compatible workmates, friendly competition, and the right modifications made to the workplace for fun and comfort, work could excite the mind and delight the soul. At the very moment that mechanization was beginning to alienate the European worker, and by extension to menace the American worker, these ideas were powerful.

With the fervor of the newly converted, Brisbane sought to convert Fourier's system into reality. He toned down elements of Fourier's program that would have alienated American audiences, including Fourier's notion that the planets of the solar system copulated and that monogamy was unnatural. The result was a template for communitarianism that preserved individual family units and cohered with reigning American moral codes.

Brisbane's skill lay in exploitation of modern technology to popularize Fourier's ideas. He gave lectures, organized societies, and wrote several books, including *Social Destiny of Man* (1840) and *A Concise Exposition of the Doctrine of Association* (1843), which became patterns for the 25 Associationist "phalanxes" or communities that were erected during the 1840s—including Brook Farm, in Massachusetts, and the North American Phalanx, in Red Bank, New Jersey. Brisbane also edited two Fourierite newspapers, *The Future* and *The*

Phalanx. By bringing the editor Horace Greeley into the Associationist fold early in the 1840s, Brisbane was able to use Greeley's *Tribune* to outline the ills of civilization and the Fourierite solution.

By the late 1840s, almost all of the Fourierite phalanxes had folded, falling prey to financial bad management and to individual disasters like the fire that consumed the major buildings at the North American Phalanx. Even successful communities, like the phalanx at Ceresco, Wisconsin, found it hard to repel the attractions of development and were folded into nearby towns. Nonetheless, Brisbane continued to try to keep Fourierism alive. In the 1850s, he worked with the French communitarian Victor Considerant to bankroll and plan a French colony based on Fourierite principles in La Réunion, Texas.

Brisbane continued to adapt Fourier's writings to changing times, proposing that phrenology be used to assign Fourierists to suitable work and suggesting that phalanxes could prosper if they adopted modern technology and used very large tracts of land. When not focusing on the social regeneration of mankind, he turned his mind to other, rather eccentric improvements, including a vacuum oven and a giant mausoleum that would be a monument to all of the nation's dead. Brisbane died in 1890, and was outlived by two years by the last Fourierite colony, the Kansas Cooperative Farm, which folded in 1892.

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See also **Fourierism**

BROOKWOOD LABOR COLLEGE

Established in 1921, Brookwood Labor College was the most influential worker education school of its generation, shaping the programs of hundreds of

similar institutions across the United States, and serving as an important training base for many of the labor activists of the 1930s. Situated on a 53-acre estate in Katonah, New York, about 40 miles from New York City, the school's central purpose was to provide a practical education for labor leaders, and it held the distinction of being the first full-time residential institution in the United States dedicated exclusively to workers' education.

Brookwood's early supporters were predominantly socialist, and the school maintained a reputation as being an institution of the labor movement's left wing. Despite this, no single political orthodoxy marked the college's faculty or student body throughout its 16 years of existence. As an institution that had many ties to organized labor, and which saw its central purpose as advancing its development, Brookwood managed to remain independent, supported through direct student contributions, which were often paid through union scholarship funds. While not the first labor college in the United States, Brookwood was unique as a model of progressive education methods, implemented by the school's earliest educational director, A. J. Muste, a former executive secretary of the Amalgamated Textile Workers Union and a personal friend of progressive educator John Dewey, who was also an early booster of the Brookwood experiment.

The standard program offered at Brookwood consisted of a two-year course load focused entirely in the humanities, including classes in labor history, contemporary politics, sociology, economics, world civilization, English literature, and language studies taught by activists and college teachers allied with the cause of labor. Seeking to merge intellectual development with practical leadership skills, Brookwood's curriculum developed strong public speaking skills among its students, with standard rhetoric courses, organizing debate panels, and inviting such influential figures such as Norman Thomas and Robert Lynd to campus. Brookwood was also known for the strength of its labor journalism courses, which oversaw the publication of an in-house journal, *The Brookwood Review*, training many who later became journalists and newspaper editors for local unions. Another innovative program initiated at Brookwood College was a student theater organization, the Brookwood Labor Players, which toured the United States in the mid 1930s to much critical acclaim. The educational program at Brookwood extended beyond the classroom into a communal setting where both faculty, students, and guests participated in daily housekeeping chores, as well as extracurricular activities such as hikes, dances, and athletic competitions.

Students, consisting of both men and women—most of whom did not complete high school—represented a wide array of occupations, with most students coming from the New York City area. Some of the more famous Brookwood students included Walter and Roy Ruether, who both later taught extension courses for the college, and Nat Weinberg and Brendan Sexton, the postwar directors of the United Auto Workers research and education departments. Brookwood also pioneered such adult education pedagogies as correspondence courses and extension classes for workers who could not attend classes on campus and in organizing special summer programs. By 1937, Brookwood's unique program was modeled by dozens of new labor schools across the United States, which ironically resulted in its demise. Still, Brookwood remains as one of the most successful experiments in worker education in U.S. labor history.

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See also Muste, A. J.; Ruether, Walter

BROPHY, JOHN (1883–1963) Congress of Industrial Organizations

Born in England and raised in the western Pennsylvania coalfields, John Brophy challenged President John L. Lewis for leadership of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in the 1920s and went on to play a key role in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s and 1940s.

Patrick and Mary Brophy moved their family from St. Helens, Lancashire, to Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1892, when John was nine. The family moved frequently to find work, and young Brophy had only a few years of schooling. He joined his father in the coal mines in Urey, Pennsylvania, in Indiana County, at the age of 11. At 15, he joined the South Fork UMWA local, in neighboring Cambria County. In 1906, Brophy participated in his first strike, as miners sought to restore wage cuts the UMWA had agreed to

in 1904. Due to blacklisting, Brophy and his father were forced to head west for work. After a brief stint in Illinois, they returned to Pennsylvania and found work in the Cambria County town of Nanty Glo, where John Brophy joined Local 1386 and soon was elected local president.

Over these years, Brophy established himself as an articulate, disciplined, and militant union leader. He supplemented his meager schooling with correspondence courses and read widely. Rejecting the idea that miners' and operators' interests could be harmonized, he was strongly influenced by the Socialist faction of the UMWA led by Frank Hayes and Adolph Germer of Illinois. Later, Brophy would also be influenced by the social teachings of the Catholic Church, exemplified by *Rerum Novarum* issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 and *Quadragesimo Anno* proclaimed by Pope Pius XI in 1931. In 1916, Brophy was elected president of District 2 of the UMWA, which included Indiana, Cambria, and 15 other counties east of Pittsburgh.

Brophy is best known for the challenge he mounted to the UMWA leadership of John L. Lewis in 1926, which originated with Brophy's call for nationalization of the mines. The UMWA had endorsed this idea in principle in 1919, influenced by the popular Plumb Plan, which proposed to nationalize the railroads. Brophy made a formal proposal at a regional UMWA convention in 1921 in Du Bois, Pennsylvania, and published it as *The Miners' Program*. To shore up his progressive credentials for his challenge to Samuel Gompers for the presidency of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) that year, Lewis appointed Brophy to the UMWA's Nationalization Research Committee. In District 2, Brophy led an effort to broaden the education of coal miners on this topic through scholarships to Brookwood Labor College in Katonah, New York. When it became clear that Brophy was taking the nationalization program too seriously, Lewis blocked promotion of it in the *United Mine Workers Journal* and red-baited Brophy. Lewis's conduct during the 1922 coal strike further convinced Brophy that the union leadership had to be changed. Nonunion miners in Somerset quickly joined the national strike, facing down evictions from company housing and private police violence. But as the strike dragged on, Lewis and the national UMWA leadership agreed to a settlement that did not include the previously nonunion Somerset fields.

Brophy's program to challenge Lewis for the presidency of the UMWA, called "Save the Union," had three primary planks: nationalization of the mines, organizing the nonunion fields, and a labor party. Brophy's strongest support came from the

Socialist-influenced Illinois miners, as well as Alexander Howat of Kansas. He also worked closely with activist Powers Hapgood and leaders of the Communist Party, such as William Z. Foster, whose Trade Union Educational League had been active in the UMWA. Lewis campaigned against Brophy by accusing him of organizing a "Bolshevik plot." In the 1926 UMWA election, marked by vote fraud, Lewis officially defeated Brophy 170,000 to 60,000. In the 1927 UMWA convention, Lewis loyalists physically attacked Brophy supporters, and in 1928, the Nanty Glo local complied with Lewis's orders to expel Brophy from the UMWA on the charge of dual-unionism. In light of his later anticommunism, Brophy's activity following the failed 1926 election attempt is notable: he traveled to the Soviet Union in 1927 as part of a labor delegation to gain U.S. diplomatic recognition of the new Soviet regime.

Expelled from the union, Brophy and his wife Anita (Anstead) Brophy, whom he married in 1918, had two small children, Philip and Jacqueline, to support. To make ends meet, Brophy took a job as a salesman at the Columbia Conserve Company, an experiment in cooperative capitalism run by Powers Hapgood's father, William, that began to dissolve as the Depression hit. In 1933, as prospects for rebuilding the UMWA brightened, Lewis asked Brophy back into the UMWA. Brophy served him as an ombudsman, keeping tabs on the Progressive Miners in Illinois and serving on an AFL committee to investigate A. Philip Randolph's charges of racism in the unions.

Their collaboration deepened in 1935 when Lewis formed the CIO and appointed Brophy as its executive director. Brophy assembled a team of talented staffers, including Len DeCaux and Katherine Ellickson, both of whom he knew from Brookwood. Brophy helped negotiate the agreement that ended the Flint sit-down strike and organized support for striking Akron rubber workers. After political differences led Lewis to leave the CIO in 1940, President Philip Murray appointed Brophy as national director of Industrial Union Councils. By fall 1944, Brophy oversaw 36 state and 232 local and area councils. During World War II, Brophy served as a member of the Fair Employment Practice Committee and allied with the two black members of the board to pressure Roosevelt to take racism more seriously. Brophy also served on the War Labor Board, resenting the Little Steel Decision but vigorously supporting the CIO's no-strike pledge.

Brophy completed his union career enforcing anti-Communist CIO discipline. He authored a CIO 1945 report that recommended against any third-party political efforts, and weighed in against local industrial

councils, such as in Los Angeles, where Communist Party members had substantial influence, to ensure support for the Marshall Plan and opposition to the 1948 presidential candidacy of Henry Wallace. Brophy was instrumental in forming the anticommunist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and traveled to southeast Asia in 1950 to promote anticommunist labor. Brophy also wrote in support of Catholic corporatist industrial council schemes. Until his retirement in 1961, Brophy served in the Community Relations department of the AFL-CIO.

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See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations; United Mine Workers of America**

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS

See **Railroad Brotherhoods**

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE FIREMEN AND ENGINEMEN

See **Railroad Brotherhoods**

BROTHERHOOD OF MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYEES

See **Railroad Brotherhoods**

BROTHERHOOD OF RAILWAY CLERKS

See **Railroad Brotherhoods**

BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) was the first national labor union of African-American workers awarded an international charter by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and recognized by the leaders of a major American corporation. Formation of the union, a 12-year-long struggle that began on August 25, 1925, and ended on that same date in 1937, helped transform the perspective held in the black community toward labor unions. Although success of the BSCP meant shorter working hours and increased wages for Pullman porters and maids, the larger legacy of the union lay with the preconditions it provided for widespread unionization of black workers throughout the United States and its example as a social movement.

To understand the significance of the BSCP, it is necessary to put Pullman porters in historical context. Pullman porters were men who worked exclusively on railroad cars called Pullman sleeping cars, the brainchild of George Mortimer Pullman and the major means used by the wealthy to travel long distance before the era of air travel. The Pullman Palace Sleeping Car Company, organized in 1867 under the direction of George Pullman, revolutionized long-distance rail travel when it manufactured its palace on wheels, train cars that featured brocaded fabrics, plush red carpets, gilt-edged mirrors, silver-trimmed coal-oil lamps, and door frames and window sashes constructed from the finest polished woods. To win acceptance of his sleeping car by the traveling elite, Pullman added distinctive service when he explicitly chose recently freed black men to be porters on his sleeping

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Ashley Totten, union official for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, an unidentified man, Asa Philip Randolph, and Maida Springer-Kemp, union official for International Packing House workers. / A. Hansen Studio, New York, N.Y. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-104209].

cars. The idea was to evoke the comfort and style slaves provided for the gentry in the antebellum South when he created the position of the Pullman sleeping car porter to serve his patrons in a princely manner. The job description for the position included preparing berths, cleaning the cars, and rendering whatever small services customers desired to make them comfortable while traveling. Pullman sleeping cars were also serviced by conductors, who sold and collected tickets. Only porters waited upon the clients. Conductors handled money and had supervisory authority over the behavior, actions, and work requirements of the porters. Until the 1960s, all conductors were white; porters were exclusively black except for a brief period in the late 1920s when the Pullman Company, in an effort to break the back of the fledgling BSCP, hired Filipino porters.

When discussing their work, Pullman porters often observed that “Lincoln freed the slaves, and the Pullman Company hired ’em.” If there is a measure of truth in this statement, it lies with the cloak of invisibility porters were advised to sustain while serving the white elite and the fact that porters were black. The cloak of invisibility, which included presenting the public with a smile and maintaining a fawning, submissive-looking stance, offered dual protection: it shielded porters from the charge of stepping out of

place—the place assigned by the white world—or “being uppity”; at the same time it protected the sleeping car clients from the discomfort of having a white worker wait on them in the intimate and limited space of a sleeping car. The social distance that societal caste distinctions had created made the servile Pullman porter seem less intrusive than a white worker.

The invisibility was reinforced by the fact that in order to make enough in tips to supplement meager wages, porters assumed degrading postures and contributed to the stereotype of the porter as a clown, scuffling for a handout. But to earn decent tips, porters also had to take mental notes of the likes and dislikes, interests, and habits of patrons as a way to anticipate their clients’ every need. All the while, they kept the mask glued to their faces, pretending not to understand or be privy to conversations they overheard. Such behavior led the patrons to regard porters as not fully formed, three-dimensional characters; to customers they were just “George”—property of the founder of the Pullman Company. Thus, the work culture of the job of Pullman porter, as much as issues of low wages and long hours, inspired the organization of the union.

Within the black community, the porter enjoyed prestige. Including in its ranks many of the best-educated black men in the country who could not

get jobs in their areas of expertise because of discrimination, Pullman porters, especially before World War I, were considered members of the black middle class and thought of as among a community's "leading men." They clearly were the aristocrats among black workers because they did not have to get their hands dirty, were always on the move, and looked up to because they were able to let the community know what was happening in other areas of the country.

By the 1920s, the Pullman porter was perhaps the most recognized African-American in the white United States, and the Pullman Company employed approximately 12,000 African-Americans to serve over 35 million passengers who slept on Pullman sleeping cars, making it the largest private employer of black men in the United States. However, the status of the Pullman porter declined as World War I and the Great Migration led to rising expectations among African-Americans. The mostly younger black southerners who migrated north to Chicago in the aftermath of the war to make the world safe for democracy carried aspirations for economic and political integration into American society that rose above the status of working as a servant for the Pullman Company. African-Americans talked about the post-World War I era as an era when the "yesterdays are gone forever." The call went out for New Negroes, those willing to make demands and fight for rights of American citizenship. The Old Negro or Old Guard was characterized as "bent and twisted" from too much "bowing and kowtowing" to the wishes of white Americans. In contrast, the New Crowd or New Negroes stood tall, looked white Americans in the eye, and assumed their rightful place as full citizens in the United States.

In August 1925, a group of five porters—steeped in the thinking of the New Crowd and fed up with long hours, low pay, and the servile demeanor demanded by the Pullman Company—formed the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in New York City. The founders wanted shorter work hours and higher pay. In the 1920s, porters worked 400 hours a month for a monthly wage of \$67.50. But they also wanted to rewrite the master-servant narrative that the Pullman Company's work culture had nurtured for so long. The organizers believed that until the myth connecting black people with the status of servants was destroyed, black Americans would never enjoy economic rights of citizenship. Ashley L. Totten, one of the five porters, asked A. Philip Randolph, editor of the *Messenger*, a progressive monthly magazine published in Harlem, to be head of the BSCP. Randolph was selected because he was an excellent public speaker, his magazine could serve as the voice of the new union, and he was beyond the reach of Pullman Company reprisals since he did

not work in the industry. The initial organizing campaign in New York was fairly successful.

But the BSCP's campaign came to a halt when it reached Chicago, headquarters of the powerful, anti-union Pullman Company and home to more than a third of Pullman porters. To gain success, the Brotherhood had to win recognition from the Pullman Company and the black community. Chicago highlighted the difficulty of the task that lay ahead. For the next decade the Pullman Company flatly refused to recognize the existence or legitimacy of the BSCP. The organizers gained recognition and support from substantial portions of the black community before the Stock Market Crash in 1929, but even in that arena the union faced an uphill battle.

Through the years Pullman executives had cultivated close relationships with black leaders by pouring money into institutions in black Chicago and promoting the image of Pullman as a friend not just of workers, but the entire community. As a result, the majority of black leaders opposed the BSCP. Randolph chose Milton Price Webster, an ex-porter who worked as a bailiff and had close connections with the black Republican machine in Chicago, to be his second-in-command and head the Chicago district of the BSCP. Webster approached 45 or 50 prominent citizens before the first organizing meeting in Chicago, soliciting support and speakers. Only five agreed to speak at the first meeting, and only one showed up. The one was Dr. William D. Cook, minister of the Metropolitan Community Church. Dr. Cook not only agreed to speak but donated his church for the October 17, 1925, meeting. But because porters in Chicago, unlike those in New York City, lived in the shadow of the giant Pullman Company, very few porters signed up. Pullman's benevolent treatment of the black community paid off initially in terms of keeping black leaders from upsetting the racial status quo. Among the significant organs disseminating anti-Brotherhood propaganda were the *Chicago Defender*, *Chicago Whip*, and the Associated Negro Press.

The BSCP cadre launched a two-front war. On the national front, they turned the *Messenger* into the union's trade journal, publishing articles designed to educate readers about the goals of the union. A major objective was to publicize the concept of manhood rights and the BSCP's hope to restore the porter's manhood rights. From the first, Randolph harbored a vision of the BSCP as a vehicle for social and economic change for all African-Americans. In the pages of the *Messenger* Randolph wrote that the Brotherhood's mission was to pursue economic freedom. To reach that goal, Randolph believed industrial slavery had to be destroyed. The Brotherhood's manhood rights campaign was the link connecting

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the struggle for a union and resistance to the Pullman Company's company union with the struggle for recognition of black humanity within larger society. The BSCP used the idiom of manhood rights to describe the servile relations that prevailed. Porters had no manhood in the eyes of the company, which was why they were dismissed like children instead of treated like adults, according to the publicity circulated by BSCP organizers. A porter could be addressed as "George" by a 16-year-old messenger boy even though the porter might be four times the boy's age. Finally, organizers linked manhood rights to the concept as it had developed in nineteenth-century conflicts over the meaning of suffrage and citizenship in African-American history.

On the local front, the BSCP, using a community-based strategy, set out to win the hearts and minds of ministers, the press, and politicians who did not appreciate the role labor unions could play in the larger black freedom struggle. Here again the issue of manhood rights, which appealed to a broad audience, helped galvanize the larger community. One of the BSCP's first successful alliances in Chicago was with clubwomen who were drawn to the Brotherhood because they, too, identified with the concept of manhood rights, which they defined in universal, humanistic terms. Ida B. Wells-Barnett, internationally renowned antilynching activist, was among them. Clubwomen who educated the community about the Brotherhood appreciated the fact that the BSCP aspired to be not just a labor organization but a social movement. The alliance with a group of clubwomen and Dr. Cook was the foundation for the BSCP's Citizens Committee, formed in 1927, and was instrumental in helping the BSCP project its voice throughout black Chicago.

Beginning in January 1928, the BSCP's Citizens Committee in Chicago gave the agenda of the Brotherhood greater exposure through a Negro Labor Conference, the first of several it sponsored over the next five years. The conference, challenging patronage politics and asserting the right of black people to choose their own leaders, broke down resistance within the community even as it expanded the civil rights component of the Brotherhood's agenda. In the process, labor conferences made a pioneering effort to connect issues of labor with those for basic citizenship rights, bringing together citizens from all walks of life around the basic right of all Americans to pick their leaders. The BSCP's effort to focus on standing tall as a group and claiming a first-class place in society through collective organization, beyond the pay of a white politician, turned the labor conferences into a protest network, challenging the political status quo and, by extension, any black leadership dependent on white patronage.

The union also struggled to establish itself as a labor union in the eyes of both the Pullman Company and the AFL. The BSCP's application for an international charter in 1928 from the AFL was rejected; the intransigence of Pullman officials made it hard to negotiate with the company. During the spring of 1928, the BSCP threatened to strike the Pullman Company as a way to force the company to recognize the union. But within hours of the scheduled strike, after the Mediation Board refused to certify that an emergency existed in the railroad industry, Randolph called off the strike following the advice of William Green, president of the AFL. Many porters were confused and disappointed with the cancellation of the strike.

By 1929, the BSCP was having success within the community as black leaders began supporting the BSCP and its organizing networks and a pro-labor perspective was taking shape. Shortly thereafter, fallout from the Depression, which included a severe decline in travelers, fewer jobs for porters, fewer tips for working porters, and fear associated with joining a union during hard times, contributed to a decline in BSCP membership (from a high of 7,300 in 1927, the BSCP dipped to 658 in 1933). While some observers decreed the BSCP had died, union porters simply refer to the period (1929–1933) as the "Dark Days."

The Brotherhood's fate changed through its relationship with the AFL, the coming of New Deal labor laws, and its relationship with black America. The AFL, which granted federal charters to 13 BSCP locals in 1929, provided very little financial assistance but gave the BSCP a platform from which to advance its call for greater economic opportunity for all black workers. In addition, favorable legislation promoted by the federal government also altered the union's destiny. The Amended Railway Labor Act of 1934 guaranteed railroad workers the legal right of collective bargaining, placing the National Mediation Board (NMB) at the service of the Brotherhood's union during elections. Finally, though the BSCP was reduced to a skeleton crew, the Brotherhood carried the gospel of unionism deep into the black community during the Dark Days by forging cross-class alliances with other groups challenging the racial status quo. Between 1930 and 1935, the Brotherhood helped forge alliances around issues related to the nomination of Judge Parker to the U.S. Supreme Court, the organization of black, female domestic and industrial workers, and the plight of Angelo Herndon. As activities of protest networks overlapped, a new crowd of leaders emerged, challenging the politics of civility that permeated old-guard relations in black Chicago. Protest networks active

during the early Depression years included the labor conferences of the BSCP, the Brotherhood's Citizens Committee, and the industrial committee of the YWCA, which worked closely with the BSCP. By the time A. Philip Randolph became head of the National Negro Congress (NNC) in 1936, the Brotherhood was the nationally acknowledged voice of black workers.

Simultaneously, the AFL continued to support racist unions while hundreds of thousands of black workers in steel, meatpacking, and autos were poised for organization. Questions related to organizing black industrial workers erupted at the 1935 AFL convention when its leadership, refusing to endorse industrial unionism, set the stage for the emergence of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Although the Brotherhood never did leave the AFL, the strength it had gained within the black community by 1935 pushed the AFL to grant the BSCP an international charter even as it voted to sustain union color bars against thousands of other black workers.

In 1937, the BSCP signed a historic labor contract with the giant Pullman Company, marking the first time representatives from a major American corporation negotiated a labor contract with a union of black workers. But the larger significance of the BSCP's community organizing during the Dark Days lay in popularizing unions and the labor movement, which played a significant role in the widespread unionization of black workers. The Brotherhood's manhood rights campaign, disseminated through its network of activists in labor conferences, the Citizens' Committee, clubwomen's networks, the YWCA, and other groups, prepared the way for the rise of trade unionism and a prolabor point of view within the black community. When the CIO began organizing black workers in mass-production industries in 1936, organizers relied on new-crowd networks formed during the previous decade to open doors in the black community. The new-crowd networks that overlapped with efforts of the BSCP's cadre of activists were not the only groups contributing to a new outlook toward labor, but the Brotherhood's struggle for manhood rights, aimed at gaining the confidence of middle-class leaders as well as workers, planted its labor rhetoric firmly in the soil of rights denied African-Americans as citizens. The collective organization of black workers was a means for African-Americans to gain greater control over the direction of their lives, for the process of labor organizing would be a tutorial for acquiring skills necessary to attain self-reliance and independence even as participants became more integrated within American society. Traditional labor unions, which in 1925 were judged on an individual

basis—sometimes favorably, often not favorably—were not generally thought of as institutions for breaking down barriers to black inclusion into American society. Yet, by the mid-1930s, unions were increasingly perceived as vehicles for the advancement of African-Americans.

In 1941, A. Philip Randolph utilized BSCP networks, shaped during the organizing days of the union, to launch a march on Washington, scheduled for July 1941, to demand an end to segregation in the armed forces and discrimination in the job market. When President Roosevelt agreed to issue Executive Order #8802, prohibiting discrimination in defense industries and agencies of the federal government, and formed the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) to carry out the order, the march was called off. Because the FEPC lacked enforcement power, Milton Webster got himself appointed to the FEPC, and the BSCP formed the March on Washington Movement (MOWM) to act as a watchdog over enactment of 8802. For the next couple of years, the MOWM, led by a cadre connected with units of the BSCP network and using the power of collective action, mobilized large numbers of African-Americans around the advancement of the economic and social rights of black Americans.

By the 1950s, it was increasingly clear that Pullman porters would soon be an anachronism. As the cost of air travel decreased and the construction of highways increased, railroad travel fell into hard times and with it the fate of the porter's job. The Pullman Company was abolished in 1968, the same year Randolph stepped down as president of the union. C. L. Dellums, who had been with the BSCP since its earliest days as leader of the Oakland, California, porters, took over the presidency of the BSCP as the union struggled to remain financially viable. In 1971, most of BSCP's members were employed by Amtrak, and in 1978, it joined forces with the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC).

But if the 1970s were truly the Dark Days for the Brotherhood, as the lights were turned out in BSCP headquarters across the country, its legacy shines bright in the example provided by such union stalwarts as A. Philip Randolph, C. L. Dellums, E. D. Nixon, and thousands more who were pioneers in mobilizing around a labor-oriented civil rights agenda.

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See also **Dellums, C. L.; Fair Employment Practice Committee; National Negro Congress; Randolph, A. Philip**

BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS

First organized in Carson, Louisiana, in December 1910, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers (BTW) recruited within six months some 25,000 black and white lumber workers and forest farmers of the pine forests of southeast Texas and western Louisiana. The BTW's meteoric rise surprised even the most committed labor activists in this region of large-scale lumbering where unionism had shallow roots. Over-expansion of this extractive industry in the first decade of the twentieth century weakened workers' leverage with lumber operators by creating an industrial environment of labor surpluses, repeated production curtailments, an 11-hour work day, wage reductions, and sporadic payment in scrip. The BTW tapped growing resentment at the power of lumber operators among the people of the piney woods to build an organization dedicated to securing relief from the worst abuses of the lumber industry. The union demanded land reform, the abolition of commissary checks, the implementation of biweekly pay days, a union-sanctioned wage scale, a reduction in the hours of the working day, and a revision of doctor and hospital fees. In the summer of 1912, the BTW voted to affiliate with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in a bid to strengthen its struggle against the lumber operators.

Despite its rapid rise, the union could not sustain its initial momentum. A vigorous employer counter-offensive of lockouts, blacklisting, espionage, violence, and the use of strikebreakers exposed the fragile foundations of the union's interracial alliance of farmers and industrial wage earners. Although organizational remnants of the BTW persisted until 1916, employers had broken the union by 1913. The union's failure to win recognition and concessions from the region's lumber operators notwithstanding, the BTW remains a significant episode in the history of interracial labor struggles in the Jim Crow South.

Origins and Membership

BTW activists envisioned a social transformation rooted nineteenth-century labor republicanism. In rhetoric reminiscent of the Knights of Labor (KOL), the BTW declared in its constitution that it aimed above all "to elevate those who labor—morally, socially, intellectually, and financially." Like the labor reformers who preceded them, BTW organizers did not imagine—at least in their constitution—an overthrow of capitalism but dreamed of a cooperative industrial future that honored and protected the toiler over the hoarder of wealth. The state, they argued, had the power and the moral responsibility to restore fairness and equality in economic relationships. To that end, the BTW worked to elect legislative candidates who pledged to protect the welfare of lumber workers and promised to break up the land trusts controlled by large-scale lumber operators.

Seeing the crucial division in society as one between those who worked and those who profited through idleness, the BTW built what it regarded as an alliance of the people against the Lumber Trust. Its expansive coalition of the working people of the piney woods included sawyers and other skilled lumber workers who were convinced that the gulf between skilled and common laborers paled in comparison with the social divide between all workers and lumber operators. Petty merchants, who resented company stores that controlled the region's retail trade, joined the ranks of the BTW. Even independent loggers and small sawmill operators, who had trouble competing for timber and securing fair shipping rates on piney-woods railroads owned and operated by subsidiaries of lumber companies, signed union cards and pledged to employ only union men.

The BTW also succeeded in uniting farmers and wage earners, something previous radical movements had accomplished with only limited success. A protracted struggle for control of the timberlands against outside lumber operators radicalized native farmers in the forest, making them ripe recruits for the BTW. Before lumber operators could expand their enterprises, they needed to clear title to the vast timberlands they claimed. When they did so, farmers of the woods cried foul, asserting that their squatter claims gave them superior legal title to the forest land. Litigating these claims in the district courts, forest farmers, black and white, fared well in defending their right to the land. Numerous examples of white juries finding for black claimants over lumber operators demonstrated how a growing anticorporate sentiment spawned racial cooperation in the piney woods. Many of these initial legal victories, however, were reversed

on appeal, empowering lumber operators to take possession of property long claimed by natives of the forest. Some of the BTW's most active recruits and locals, including a number of African-Americans, had direct experience in land litigation with lumber operators. Transformation of the countryside, as much as exploitation at the workplace, explains the widespread appeal of the BTW in this region.

The experience of biracial cooperation in land disputes provided one of the foundations for the BTW's interracialism. Although these workplaces were far from being free of racial conflict, black and white workers nevertheless shared common experiences that encouraged them to breach the color line. First, the labor force in these forest industries was biracial, so whites seldom viewed blacks as outsiders who threatened their job status. Second, because most work in these industries was unskilled, racial wage disparities were lower than in other southern industries. Because of the predominance of unskilled jobs, whites did not have a privileged job status to protect nor were blacks stigmatized for performing "nigger work," conditions that freed these work places of the racial distrust and conflict common to southern railroads, textiles, and building trades. Finally, a shared resentment of the company-town complex facilitated racial cooperation.

Like other biracial unions in the Jim Crow South, the BTW built its coalition on pragmatism. Activists tried to persuade white workers that it was in their own self-interest to join common cause with blacks, assuring them that joining a fight to achieve what they called "stomach equality" would not create social equality among the races. Unionists urged white workers to recognize the false promise of segregation, insisting that the color line, by artificially dividing workers, served only the interests of lumber operators. Although this raceless language of class avoided any recognition of the distinctive historical experiences of black workers, it is important to remember that thousands of African-Americans embraced stomach equality with their white counterparts. Although certainly well aware of the limitations of the union's ideas on race, African-Americans still endorsed the BTW's demands, both at the workplace and for land reform, which promised them tangible benefits. The BTW recognized the dignity of black workers, and the union claimed itself an active defender of their interests. Blacks assumed leadership positions, served as organizers, and challenged racial customs by speaking before mixed-race audiences with speeches that connected the black struggle for emancipation to the BTW's battle against the lumber trust.

Employer Counteroffensive

By the summer of 1911, the BTW had built an impressive, if fragile, interracial alliance of skilled and unskilled industrial workers, farmers, merchants, and independent loggers and mill operators. Large-scale lumbermen launched their own counteroffensive, seeking to exploit divisions within the tenuous alliances that sustained the union. First, they deployed a campaign to undermine public support for the BTW by portraying the union as a subversive organization led by a few dangerous outsiders who promoted their own self-interests by misappropriating union dues collected from poor mill workers. Lumber operators stoked the racist fears of whites in the region's newspapers, charging in a series of letters to the editor that the union's real objective was to impose social equality. To undermine black support for the BTW, employers hired black ministers and teachers who visited mill towns and preached the gospel of anti-unionism and schooled black workers in the merits of company loyalty. Employers also cast themselves as defenders of the family and of the general welfare of the region, who by providing steady industrial employment, elevated the standard of living in the piney woods and created vibrant, thriving communities in the woods. Joining the union, they warned, put those achievements, and family stability, at unnecessary risk.

Lumber operators also took more direct action to defeat the BTW. In July 1911, the Southern Lumber Operators' Association (SLOA), an organization of lumbermen dedicated to preventing the unionization of the industry, agreed to a plan to lock out the union. SLOA believed that member mills could afford to shut down plant operations indefinitely because most mills had substantial overstocks of lumber stored in their yards. Sawmill operators then agreed to determine the union status of their employees and reopen only after they could establish that they could do so with a nonunion labor force. But internal conflicts undermined SLOA's initial resolve. As one lumber operator remarked, he would rather donate his mills to charity than recognize the union. SLOA hired scores of labor spies to verify the union sympathies of the work force, allowing SLOA to compile an extensive blacklist that it shared with member mill operators. By the end of the summer, SLOA authorized the closing of 36 mills in what it called the "infected" areas of Louisiana and Texas, throwing some 10,000 men out of work.

Unionists adopted creative strategies to blunt this employer counteroffensive. In replying to employer accusations in the local press, activists did not take

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the race bait that employers dangled across the editorial page. Rather than deny that the union promoted social equality, activists simply kept silent on race. Instead, they refuted employer claims that mill hands prospered from large-scale lumbering and focused on wages, workplace safety, living conditions in mill towns, and land distribution. The BTW thus shifted public debate away from the explosive issue of social equality toward a conversation over the just distribution of the fruits of industrial expansion. The BTW was also well-positioned to weather the lockout as it came in the early autumn, just in time for that year's cotton harvest. Organizers secured cotton-picking contracts for sawmill hands displaced by the lockout and offered discharged unionists, especially African-Americans, cash assistance in relocating to the farms and cotton fields of the Southwest. Because of the extensive kinship links among sawmill workers and local farmers, many unionists relied on the mutual aid of family support networks that sustained them through the duration of the lockout.

Despite the BTW's ability to withstand the lockout, the operators' offensive sapped the BTW's strength by the end of 1911. Although unionists secured alternative employment and resources during the lockout, they had become so dispersed across the Southwest that the union lost its ability to collect dues with any consistency. By late autumn, the BTW's coffers were depleted. SLOA spies reported significant declines in membership and found that a number of locals had gone defunct. With its cadre of spies and a black list of 25,000 union members and sympathizers, SLOA established what it regarded as a centralized clearinghouse for labor that it urged member mills to use in reopening their plants. By late fall, operators pledged to restart their mills without union labor and began to recruit new workers from as far away as Georgia.

BTW unionists adopted new tactics to meet this next phase of the struggle against the lumber trust. First, they conducted a new but clandestine membership drive. As the cotton-picking season came to an end, BTW organizers urged returning members to return to work in the sawmills resuming production. To secure employment, the BTW advised unionists to change their names, take the employers' anti-union pledge, but continue paying dues to the BTW. Membership numbers rebounded throughout the spring of 1912, and at its second annual convention, held in Alexandria, Louisiana, the BTW voted to affiliate with the IWW, renaming itself the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, Southern District. The IWW provided critical resources that rejuvenated the BTW. The colorful Wobbly radical and Louisiana native Covington Hall started a union

newspaper, *The Lumberjack*, which provided the BTW with regional and national publicity and served as an important counterweight to the region's employer-dominated press. The IWW lent its experience in organizing, sustaining direct-action tactics, and maintaining the union's interracial membership. Backed by the IWW, the BTW mobilized this resurgent enthusiasm into a renewed campaign to organize the timberlands.

The lumber operators prepared to defeat the unionist challenge by whatever means necessary. Employers harassed stump speakers, deputized loyal workers, and infiltrated BTW locals with spies. They posted armed sentries outside their mills and company towns to prevent organizers from gaining access to non-union workers. In response, BTW activists held rallies outside the mills, making them family events that encouraged the participation of women and children as a strategy to protect themselves from violent attack. But mounting tensions eventually erupted into a massacre when company gunmen fired on some one hundred strikers and their families who had marched upon Grabow, Louisiana, home of the Galloway Lumber Company.

Armed unionists retaliated. Within 10 minutes, four men lay dead and 40 other people, including women and children, were wounded. Local authorities arrested more than 60 union activists and indicted them for the murder of an employed guard of the Galloway Lumber Company.

The riot at Grabow and the subsequent trial derailed the BTW's summer organizing campaign. The BTW redirected its energies into raising a legal defense fund and material support for the families of imprisoned unionists. Although the prisoners were eventually acquitted, the expense of the three-week trial exhausted union resources. The acquittal proved to be a Pyrrhic victory in other ways. The operators of the American Lumber Company in Merryville, Louisiana, the remaining stronghold of BTW activism, fired 15 of its employees who testified for the defense at the trial, goading the BTW's Local 218 to call a strike. Refusing to recognize the union, American Lumber closed the mill until it could reopen with nonunion labor. To defend the mill against unionists, American Lumber constructed a stockade around its property, intimidated strikers, and began to bring in replacement workers, principally African-Americans from other parts of Texas and Louisiana who were unfamiliar with the labor struggles of the preceding 16 months. Despite unionists' attempts to warn away strikebreakers, a sufficient number of them arrived under the protection of armed guards, allowing American Lumber to resume full operation. Most unionists saw defeat and left, but some three

hundred black and white stalwarts kept the cause alive. Company deputies became ever more violent, the harassment culminating in a three-day campaign in February 1913, in which they and supporters of the company stormed and burned the union's soup kitchen and ransacked its headquarters. Although the strike officially lasted until June, the violence of mid-February brought an end to the struggle to unionize Merryville and the final collapse of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers' challenge to both the color line and the land and lumber trusts of Texas and Louisiana.

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See also **Industrial Workers of the World**

BROWDER, EARL (MAY 20, 1891– JUNE 27, 1973)

American Communist Party

Earl Browder led the American Communist Party through the 1930s until his expulsion in 1946.

While loyal to the Soviet Union, Browder always remained very proud of being an American. Browder

was born in Wichita, Kansas, to a family that could trace its roots in the New World back to the years before the American Revolution. His Kansas birth forever blessed him with a distinctive flat accent that emphasized his all-American background. By the time of Browder's birth, his farmer parents had suffered through a drought that took their crops, the deaths of two children to disease, and the loss of their farm to foreclosure. They lived in grinding poverty in a rented home and had lost all faith in the American system. The Browders raised their son Earl to rebel against a system that they viewed as unjust. In 1900, William Browder became an invalid, possibly because of a nervous breakdown. The tragedy forced the Browder boys to leave school to support the family. Earl became a department store errand boy before he could complete third grade. Later, he delivered messages for Western Union. Losing the opportunity of an education greatly affected Browder. Along with an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, he displayed a lifelong hostility toward the economic injustice that had cut short his childhood. To work for the overthrow of capitalism, Browder joined the Socialist Party at the age of 15 in 1906.

As a Socialist, Browder rubbed shoulders with radical unionists such as those who belonged to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). In 1912, Browder left the party in protest after the IWW leader Bill Haywood was removed from its executive committee because he advocated sabotage to weaken capitalism and benefit workers. Browder joined William Z. Foster's Syndicalist League of North America. Browder, now working as a bookkeeper for John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil in Kansas City, served as the local head of the Bookkeepers, Stenographers, and Accountants, an American Federation of Labor (AFL)-affiliated organization. He resigned from Standard Oil in 1916 to manage a nearby farmer's co-op, sat on the Cooperative League of North America's national council, and wrote occasionally for the league's journal. In his spare time, he completed a college degree by taking correspondence courses.

American entry into World War I proved pivotal in Browder's life. In 1914, he had helped organize the League for Democratic Control, which sought to submit U.S. entry into the war to a popular vote. After the United States declared war, Browder was arrested for organizing protest meetings and evading the draft. He went to jail for three years, with two years of the sentence spent in Leavenworth Penitentiary with many of the IWW members including Haywood. While still jailed, Browder joined the newly formed American Communist Party. It had been formed by socialists who wanted a movement more to the

political left. Browder left prison on November 5, 1920, as a dedicated communist, intent on devoting all of his time to promoting Leninism.

Browder's new life did not include his family. After Browder's release from jail, he resumed his interest in political activism but without his wife and infant son. He went to Chicago and left his family in Kansas. Browder abandoned both wife and son. However, he never obtained a divorce and continued to pay alimony. (Browder was finally divorced in 1959 when his first wife filed for an annulment.)

A seemingly faceless organization man, Browder became ever more deeply involved with Communism. As a trade union Communist, Browder joined others of his ilk in attempting to liquidate the party's underground, a relic of the First Red Scare and the Palmer Raids. Rising steadily in the ranks of American Communism, he attended the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions Congresses in Moscow in 1921. Back in the United States, he worked to get Communists accepted into a broad-based, reform-oriented Farmer-Labor Party for the national elections of 1924. The Communists enjoyed greatest success in the AFL's Chicago Federation of Labor, where they gained one fifth of the seats. Unfortunately, an attempt by the Communists to take control of the Farmer-Labor Party's 1923 convention with disguised delegates from paper organizations backfired. Angered by the actions of the Communists, the AFL subsequently banned the Communist-led Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), Browder's group. TUEL's attempt to work within AFL unions to develop a class-struggle unionism approach came to an end.

In the heart of Communism in Moscow, Browder was highly regarded as a party worker throughout the 1920s and 1930s. A good listener and keen observer, he had excellent political skills and could anticipate changes in Soviet politics. From 1927 to 1929, Browder worked in China for the Soviet Union-supported Pan Pacific Trade Union Secretariat. Upon his return to the United States in 1930, Browder's Moscow connections helped him become administrative secretary of the American Communist Party. He advanced to general secretary in 1934. In that same year, Browder devised the slogan, "Communism is Twentieth-Century Americanism," in an effort to identify the party with American traditions and institutions.

A sharp-dressed man with remarked-upon good manners, he made the Communist Party look good in the eyes of many Americans. Unlike other Communist leaders, notably Foster, Browder never participated in street battles. He produced necessary calls

for revolt in future or conditional tenses. Publicly, he urged protestors not to demand seizures of city halls.

Under Browder's leadership, American Communists paid more attention to the concerns of women workers. When Congress passed the Economy Act of 1932, which permitted the dismissal of one spouse if a couple worked for the federal government, nearly 1,500 women lost their jobs. Private industry followed the government's lead and refused to hire married women. Browder spoke out against this discriminatory policy, denouncing it as a fascist effort to drive women from the labor market. The American Communists throughout the 1930s continued to advocate child care, birth control, and shared responsibility for housework. However, the party still saw women chiefly as wives and mothers instead of as workers. Women's issues played a subordinate role to industrial unionism, African-American rights, and the class struggle.

The Great Depression added to the appeal of Communism, since it appeared that capitalism had broken beyond repair. In May 1935, the Communists claimed about 35,000 members. Browder became the Communist Party presidential candidate in 1936. Running against Franklin D. Roosevelt, he polled 80,181 votes. No other Communist candidate has ever surpassed Browder's vote total. When Browder ran for a second time in 1940, while appealing a prison sentence, he garnered only 46,251 votes. Browder had been convicted and sentenced to four years' imprisonment for traveling on a false passport to Spain in support of anti-Franco Republicans. The jail sentence undoubtedly antagonized some voters, but disillusionment with the Communist support of the Hitler-Stalin nonaggression pact of 1939 cost Browder much support among an American public that did not turn out in large numbers for the election.

After Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, Browder's energetic support of the Allied war effort helped the Communist Party regain much of the support that it had lost. In *Victory—and After* (1942) and *Teheran: Our Path in Peace and War* (1944), Browder called for the postwar cooperation of labor and capital and the peaceful coexistence of Communism and capitalism.

However, after Cold War changes in Soviet policy, Browder lost the support of Moscow and was purged from the Communist ranks. He was criticized by the Communists for being right-wing, partly because he believed that his sons could achieve the American Dream through education. (Three of his four sons became college professors.) In 1945, Browder was replaced as the head of the American Communist Party by his hated rival, Foster. In 1946, Browder was expelled from the party. He subsequently made

a living by serving as the U.S. representative for Soviet publishing houses.

The Cold War brought other difficulties for Browder. He was indicted in 1950 for refusing to answer questions at a Senate investigation but was acquitted in 1951. In 1952, Browder and his Russian-born wife, Raissa Luganovskaya, were indicted for false statements in her 1949 application for U.S. citizenship. The indictment was dropped in 1959. Browder spent the last years of his life as a lecturer and historical researcher.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Anticommunism; Foster, William Z.; Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Industrial Workers of the World**

BRYN MAWR SUMMER SCHOOL FOR WOMEN WORKERS IN INDUSTRY

The Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry opened its doors in 1921, the first workers education program designed for women in the United States. This experimental school was the idea of M. Carey Thomas, educator, suffragist, and president of Bryn Mawr College, and the project of Hilda Worthington Smith, whose dedication and patience made the Summer School a reality. They envisioned nurturing a new generation of women who would "work together for common ends," humanizing industry, improving working conditions, and raising wages. Each summer for 17 years the Bryn Mawr Summer School brought together one hundred

women industrial workers from across the United States for a two-month term of study.

Summer School students came to Bryn Mawr from a variety of backgrounds, but all shared the effects of having entered factories between the ages of 10 and 14, working 12-hour shifts, and taking home wages to help support their families. A women's community that reached across class lines, racial barriers, and ethnic separations, the School admitted immigrant students, black women from the rural South, trade union activists, and workers from nonunion shops, who thrived in the school's nonhierarchical atmosphere. The decision was made in 1926 to racially integrate the Summer School, although Bryn Mawr College had yet to admit an African-American student. A total of 1,700 women came to Bryn Mawr between 1921 and 1938, from over 50 industrial communities; two thirds were from the Northeast, the remainder from across the country. The majority of these women workers were employed in the needle trades or in skilled craft industries. The School recruited organized workers from a range of unions, among them the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), the United Garment Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. Most nontrade unions came to the School through the YWCA Industrial Department. Each year half the student body belonged to trade unions. Many students gained leadership positions in their unions after attending Bryn Mawr, and a number held national office, including Elizabeth Nord, of the Textile Workers of America, and Carmen Lucia, of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers. Worker-students at Bryn Mawr put into immediate practice the organizing strategies they were taught at the school, demanding, for example, that workers represent 50% of the Summer School Board and insisting on better working conditions for the housekeeping staff at the College.

Faculty invited to teach at the Bryn Mawr Summer School included women and men, prominent academics and trade union leaders. Among the 90 faculty hired between 1921 and 1938 were Alice Hanson Cook, Paul Douglas, Lillian Herstein, Amy Hewes, Leo Huberman, Broadus Mitchell, Gladys Palmer, Esther Peterson, Mark Starr, Caroline Ware, Colston Warne, and Theresa Wolfson. Most felt strongly that, as Caroline Ware put it, "Everybody had the sense that we had as much to learn from the students as the students had to learn from us." Teachers at the School combined a commitment to the political left with labor movement activism. They endorsed the principles of workers' education, always beginning with what their students knew and understood. Faculty encouraged students to write about themselves, and the stories that came pouring out became the

basis for classes in economics and labor history. Students wrote plays and poetry, devised their own schema for economic recovery during the Depression, and shared stories and data about their jobs, wages, and communities. John Dewey visited the School and viewed it as a model of progressive education and experiential learning. Some described the School as a “salon” for the labor movement and the left, bringing together avant-garde women and men, including W. E. B. Du Bois, Norman Thomas, Margaret Sanger, Frances Perkins, and Eleanor Roosevelt, among others, who spoke to the students and joined in informal discussions with groups of faculty.

As the industrial reform movements of the 1920s gave way to heightened political and labor activism in the 1930s, conflicts between Bryn Mawr College and the Summer School flared almost annually. One College trustee asked the revealing question, “Why should we support your organizing workers to strike our husbands’ plants?” The vision of cross-class feminism cherished by M. Carey Thomas and Hilda Smith shattered completely when the Board of Trustees disapproved of the involvement of faculty and students from the Summer School in a strike of agricultural workers at nearby Seabrook Farms, and the College Board of Trustees forced the Summer School to leave Bryn Mawr College in 1938. The remarkable thing about this history is that such an institutional alliance worked at all.

The Bryn Mawr Summer School served as a model for four other workers’ education programs for women workers, including the Southern Summer School, the Summer School for Office Workers, the Vineyard Shore Labor School, and the Hudson Shore Labor School, a coeducational resident school established after the Bryn Mawr Summer School closed, at Hilda Smith’s family home in New York State.

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BUNTING v. OREGON (1917)

Bunting v. Oregon is a relatively minor case—not because it did not establish an important principle, but because it came at a time when the United States Supreme Court proved itself quite inconsistent in sanctioning protective labor legislation. In many ways, *Bunting* serves as a kind of ideological (although not chronological) way station between the negation of such legislation represented by *Lochner v. New York* (1905) and *Adkins v. Children’s Hospital* (1923) and the formal approval of such laws by the end of the New Deal.

The *Bunting* case grew out of a 1913 Oregon law that sought to regulate the wages and hours for all workers, not just the female laborers covered by *Muller v. Oregon* (1908). The statute made it a misdemeanor not to pay time-and-a-half for any work above 10 hours per day in the state’s mills, factories, and manufacturing establishments (with the exception of security, repair, or emergency work). The law also prohibited any work at all over 13 hours a day.

Franklin Bunting, owner of the Lake View Flouring Mills, disregarded the law, was found guilty, and received a fine of \$50. The Oregon Supreme Court upheld the conviction, and Bunting appealed to the nation’s highest court. Represented by two of the state’s most prominent corporate attorneys, Bunting argued that the law represented a violation of his rights to equal protection of the laws under the 14th Amendment.

The U.S. Supreme Court decided the case in favor of Oregon’s 10-hour law 5-3, with Chief Justice Edward White and associate justices Willis Van Devanter and James McReynolds dissenting. (Louis Brandeis recused himself because he had, before his appointment to the bench, helped prepare—with the help of Josephine Goldmark—the nearly 1,000-page brief for the state of Oregon.) The court majority, however, carefully limited its support of the Oregon statute, endorsing its regulation of hours, but not (through the overtime provision) of wages. Despite the state of Oregon’s explicit embrace of wage regulation in its brief, the court refused to touch that issue. In approving the regulation of hours, the Court generally followed the sociological perspective of *Muller*, recognizing the health benefits of limiting work to 10 hours and the broad prevalence of such limitations in Europe.

So, despite the Court’s striking down of maximum hours legislation for New York bakers in the critically important *Lochner* case, the Supreme Court continued to support this extension of protective labor legislation, which involved not only men and women but, at least indirectly, wages as well. Yet the Court steadfastly refused to overturn *Lochner*. And when the

issue of federal wage provisions for women workers came before the Court in *Adkins* in 1923, six of the justices resolutely struck down government power in that area. *Bunting* mattered much in the *Adkins* decision. Recalling the case as a crucial precedent, the majority of justices sharply demarcated the issue of wages from that of hours. In separate dissents, Chief Justice William Howard Taft and Associate Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes excoriated such a distinction. They also declared that, as far as they were concerned, *Bunting* had effectively served to overturn *Lochner*.

The New Deal judicial revolution that finally upheld government regulation of wages and hours would legally ratify—and indeed go well beyond—the principles of *Bunting*, although in the ensuing decades the case seemed to slip the memory of legal historians. Yet *Bunting v. Oregon* does show, at the least, that the Progressive Era Supreme Court never spoke with one voice when it came to the rights and protections of American workers.

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BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is the principal fact-finding agency for the federal government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. Following the example of 13 states that created labor statistics bureaus on their own, particularly Massachusetts, Congress passed, and on June 27, 1884, President Chester A. Arthur signed, a bill establishing a labor statistics agency. The new agency was named the Bureau of Labor and placed in the Department of the Interior. Congress placed the Bureau under the direction of a Commissioner of Labor Statistics, to be appointed by the president with the consent of the U.S. Senate, for renewable terms of four years.

Spurning Terence Powderly, then head of the Knights of Labor (KOL), President Arthur selected

Carroll D. Wright, who had been the head of the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics since 1873. Under Wright's leadership, the Bureau established a reputation for objectivity and for the production of high-quality reports. The various Bulletins, as well as Annual and Special Reports, covered subjects such as industrial depressions, strike investigations and industrial relations, working women and children, urban and ethnic matters, tariffs, wages and prices, and international labor matters.

President Cleveland recommended that the Bureau be enlarged to so that it could investigate the causes of labor disputes and perhaps serve as an arbitrator of labor disputes. At its convention in 1887, the KOL again recommended the establishment of a Department of Labor, and at the request of President Grover Cleveland, made recommendations as to the scope of the proposed department. Congress eventually passed a bill establishing a Department of Labor, but which did not give the department cabinet-level status. President Cleveland signed the bill on March 21, 1888.

The new department gained personnel and prestige, as Commissioner Wright reported directly to the president. The Department continued to be known for the quality and objectivity of its reports, and was recognized as the most important statistical agency of this period, exemplified as Wright supervised the completion of the 1890 census. Wright was also appointed by President Cleveland as chairman of a commission on the Pullman strike in 1894, and also played a role advising President Theodore Roosevelt during the 1902 Anthracite Coal Mine Strike, eventually serving as part of an arbitration commission that helped settle the strike.

In 1905, Dr. Charles P. Neill was appointed second commissioner of the Bureau of Labor, now part of the Department of Commerce and Labor, established in 1903. Neill strengthened the Bureau's headquarters-field fact gathering and statistical analysis work. His emphasis on studies for economic and social reform was in step with the ideas of the early Progressive movement.

Public Law 426-62, which created the Department of Labor on March 4, 1913, established the BLS within the new department. Section 4 of the Act mandated "that the Bureau of Labor Statistics, under the direction of the Secretary of Labor, shall collect, collate, and report at least once each year, or oftener if necessary, full and complete statistics of the conditions of labor, and the products and distribution of the products of the same, and to this end said Secretary shall have power to employ any or either of the bureaus provided for his department and to rearrange such statistical work and to distribute or consolidate

the same as may be deemed desirable in the public interests.” Dr. Royal Meeker was appointed the third commissioner of the BLS in August 1913 by President Woodrow Wilson.

Under Meeker, the Bureau faced a prewar recession and a wartime economy. The BLS began to produce regular reports on unemployment and employment, as well as a regular report on inflation, the Cost of Living Index, now known as the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The *Monthly Labor Review* was established in July 1915 to disseminate information from Bureau studies and remains the principal journal of fact, analysis, and research from the BLS.

In 1920, Dr. Meeker resigned his position to work for the International Labor Office of the League of Nations. Commissioner Ethelbert Stewart, a 33-year employee of the BLS and its predecessor agencies, succeeded Meeker. Under Stewart’s tenure, the BLS initiated a series of comprehensive studies of specific industries and developed productivity indexes, the forerunners of many current economywide and sector indexes produced by the BLS.

Unfortunately for Stewart, who spent much of his 12-year tenure attempting to mitigate the impact of post-World War I budget cuts, conflicting employment statistics rankled the Department of Labor at the onset of the Great Depression of 1929. The U.S. Employment Service (USES), drastically cut back during the 1920s and staffed with partisan appointees, reported far more optimistic employment figures to Secretaries of Labor James J. Davis and William N. Doak than those reported by the BLS, which were usually six weeks after the USES reports.

In July 1932, the 74-year-old Stewart was forced to retire, replaced by Dr. Isador Lubin, an economist with the Brookings Institution, in July 1933. Closely associated with Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, Lubin worked with the secretary, and outside consultants—including the American Statistical Association—to improve the Bureau’s ability to provide reliable economic data essential to the new federal agencies established under Franklin Delano Roosevelt to foster recovery from the Depression.

Although Dr. Lubin formally remained Commissioner of Labor Statistics until 1946, he was assigned to the Labor Division of the National Defense Advisory Commission in June 1940, and was appointed special statistical assistant to President Roosevelt in May 1941. Mr. Ford Hinrichs, the BLS chief economist, acted as commissioner in Lubin’s stead. Under Lubin and Hinrichs, additional regional offices were established to enhance the collection of wage, price, and employment information.

In addition to collection of information, the BLS actively sought new ways to analyze economic

information. In the 1940s, the Bureau was one of the first organizations to use input-output analysis, invented by Dr. Wassily Leontief. An important concept in economics, input-output analysis shows the extensive process by which inputs in one industry produce outputs for consumption or for input into another industry. The Bureau’s input-output work with Leontief had a direct effect on how the Agency measured the economy, leading to the development of producer price indexes. In addition, the Bureau’s work with Leontief also had other effects on the Agency. When a still-being-assembled UNIVAC computer inverted a 1947 input/output matrix, the Bureau found itself at the vanguard of computing technology.

In August 1946, Ewan Clague was appointed commissioner, and was immediately faced with a draconian 1948 federal fiscal budget eliminating 700 of the Bureau’s 1,700 positions. Increasing use of the statistics produced by the BLS, however, by the newly created Council of Economic Advisors (1946) and the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, and the 1948 agreement between the General Motors Company (GMC) and the United Auto Workers (UAW) calling for use of the Consumer Price Index for adjusting wages increased the public profile of the BLS.

Labor historians often refer to gradual establishment of postwar “corporate consensus” or “corporate liberalism” in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Corporate liberalism as a system can be characterized as one in which employers and labor leaders, with the encouragement of government, share a goal of day-to-day cooperation, guaranteed economic stability, and the protection of the rights of workers through nondisruptive collective action. Wages and benefits, rather than social reform, became the chief concern of unions. Perhaps the agreement between the GMC and the UAW to use the Consumer Price Index to adjust wages is emblematic of this corporate liberalism.

Clague continued to place emphasis on the BLS as a purveyor of reliable statistical indexes, revising the Consumer Price Index’s market basket data in 1961–1962 and undertaking economic growth studies for the analysis and projection of economic growth trends. By the time of Clague’s replacement by Dr. Arthur M. Ross in 1965, the BLS had obtained a conventionally accepted public image as a nonpartisan professional organization issuing reliable statistics.

Under Dr. Arthur M. Ross, the BLS continued to modernize operations, particularly by increasing the use of automated data processing operations begun in the early 1960s. Under Ross, the BLS began to centralize its business operations. Dr. Geoffrey

H. Moore, formerly the president of the American Statistical Association, succeeded Ross as commissioner in 1970 and continued to centralize the operations of the BLS.

In July 1973, Julius Shiskin, formerly the head of the Office of Statistical Policy of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), succeeded Geoffrey Moore as commissioner. Shiskin served as the chief economic statistician and assistant director of the Bureau of the Census, and the head economist of the Planning Division of the War Production Board from 1942 to 1945. At the Bureau of the Census he was instrumental in developing an electronic computer method for seasonally adjusting economic time series and for developing the *Business Conditions Digest*. At the OMB, he originated the *Social Indicators* report.

As commissioner during the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations, Shiskin was instrumental in preserving the political neutrality of the government's unemployment and work force statistics. By then, most federal wages, retirement, and entitlement programs, as well as most union collective bargaining contracts, had been linked with the Bureau's price indexes. Such indexation required complete confidence in the nonpolitical nature of the Bureau's operations. Shiskin also oversaw the complete overhaul of the preparation of the Consumer Price Index, as well as the Wholesale Price Indexes, which resulted in 1983 in the issuance of the present Producer Price Index.

Shiskin died while in office in October 1978 and was replaced by Dr. Janet L. Norwood, who was named acting commissioner. In March 1979, President Carter nominated her as the first woman to serve as commissioner. Except for a single acting commissioner, BLS commissioners serving since October 1978 have been women.

Early in her tenure, Norwood navigated a 12% budget cut in fiscal 1982, protecting the Bureau's core programs, and completed additional revisions of the CPI and Producer Price Index. Under her tenure, the BLS assumed responsibility for administering the Federal/State Cooperative national labor information programs.

Commissioner Norwood served until January 1, 1992, the effective date of her resignation. After an interim period of 23 months, during which William Barron served as acting commissioner, President Bill Clinton appointed Dr. Katharine G. Abraham as commissioner in 1993. During Commissioner Abraham's tenure, extensive research concerning the accuracy of the Consumer Price Index was done, laying the groundwork for several changes in the way the CPI was calculated. Much of the impetus for the

revision of the CPI was the result of the work of a commission created by the Senate Finance Committee and chaired by the economist Michael J. Boskin of the Hoover Institute. In 1996, the Commission issued a report sharply criticizing the BLS for statistical deficiencies in the price index overestimating inflation rates.

Although Abraham served two terms as commissioner, and expressed an interest in serving a third, she was not reappointed in 2001, the first time in the history of the BLS that a commissioner who wished to stay on was not reappointed. Dr. Abraham was replaced by Dr. Lois Orr, who served as the acting commissioner from October 2001 to July 2002. In July 2002, President Bush appointed Dr. Kathleen P. Utgoff as the BLS commissioner. Utgoff was widely recognized for her work as the executive director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, another agency within the Department of Labor.

During Utgoff's first term, the Bureau announced on August 5, 2005, that it would no longer collect the data on women workers in the Current Employment Survey (CES). The BLS defended its decisions against critics by noting first that the series imposed a significant reporting burden on survey respondents because payroll records do not typically include gender identification; second, the CES women workers series were little used; and finally the BLS would continue to provide extensive labor market information on women in other publications and reports.

As the BLS approached its 125th anniversary, the agency's veneer of nonpartisan objectivity appeared to shine less brightly, perhaps in partial result of the decline of the corporate liberal consensus of the 1950s and 1960s. In addition, as noted by former Commissioner Abraham, the BLS faced fundamental changes in the American economy, changes from a manufacturing to a service basis. Looking ahead, more comprehensive measurement of productive activities, however they may be organized, must be a priority within the Bureau of Labor Standards.

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C&O CANAL WORKERS STRIKE (1834)

In late January 1834, canal construction workers on the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal violently attacked each other near Williamsport, Maryland, leading to the intervention of federal troops in a labor dispute for the first time. The violence pitted workers from the north of Ireland called Fardowns or Longfords against those from the south, denominated Corkonians. The trouble began when Corkonian workers attacked Longford canallers, leaving one dead. Several days later, 200 Longfordmen descended upon their enemies from Cork working below Williamsport. Four days thereafter, a full-scale battle raged between upward of 700 men of the Longford faction and 300 Corkonians, the latter being routed and chased from the field. Five to 10 men died. The canal company called in the state militia, which arrested 35 canallers and wounded many more. To ensure the continued stability of the line, the governor, at the behest of the C&O, requested that federal troops be stationed on the line. Two companies were dispatched from Baltimore and remained into the spring. Under their scrutiny, the two factions parleyed and signed a treaty.

Characterized by the C&O and the local authorities as merely an unusually violent Irish brouhaha, the 1834 disturbances resulted from workplace issues and were not an isolated incident. At least 10 riots or strikes erupted on the canal between 1834 and 1840, leading five times to the dispatching of the state militia and once to the intervention of federal troops. The 1834 C&O Canal Workers strike and its suppression

illustrate much about the experience of unskilled labor, the intersection of class and ethnicity, and the unwillingness of the state to condone violent labor action, especially in the public works industry often backed by government funds.

The success of the Erie Canal (constructed 1817–1825) initiated a wave of speculative canal construction involving private companies and state agencies all purporting to perform the public work of facilitating trade and spreading progress. The C&O Canal Company, among the early imitators, planned to build an artificial waterway paralleling the Potomac River, and then crossing the Appalachian Mountains into the Ohio Valley. Construction began on July 4, 1827, with President John Quincy Adams turning the first spade of earth. From such auspicious beginnings soon flowed myriad problems. Canal construction suffered from chronic shortages of capital and labor. Private risk capital proved scarce, and the industry came to rely on state funds. Canal construction also required workers in unprecedented numbers for the era. The C&O, needing up to five thousand men in the mid-1830s, used different forms of labor, including slave and indentured, but relied primarily on wage laborers. The company passed the troublesome responsibility for the management of work and laborers onto contractors, who bid for the right to build sections of the canal. The company accepted the lowest bid, which forced contractors to cut their estimates as low as possible. Contractors, who were expected to employ, feed, and house an adequate work force, often confronted financial difficulties

and found it difficult to pay the men on schedule or complete their sections. Insolvent builders commonly abandoned the canal, leaving their workers unpaid and unemployed, a cause of much labor unrest.

Canal work was dangerous and living conditions primitive. Canallers toiled from sunup to sundown, exposed to injuries common to physical labor and the epidemics that regularly swept public works construction—malaria, yellow fever, and cholera, which struck the C&O in 1832. At night, they retreated to shanties at the worksite, makeshift huts or bunkhouses. Theirs was a difficult existence marked by hard toil, rude conditions, a bare subsistence, and a high degree of transience.

Most canal laborers were Irish immigrants, though some native-born and German workers could be found on the line. In need of work, already on the move, and having a reputation as unskilled laborers, the Irish funneled into what was one of the most difficult types of labor at the time. On canals, their ethnicity acted as a social bond, but also as a source of friction. To protect themselves from conniving contractors or unduly harsh conditions, canallers banded together. The Irish secret society constituted their model for organization. Forged in the Irish peasantry's struggle with English domination, Irish laborers imported the tactic of clandestine violence to New World workplaces, where it proved equally adept in the struggle with employers. Instead of the Irish Whiteboys or Steelboys societies, the canallers formed factions based upon county of nativity in Ireland.

As the company's finances soured, canallers feared that failure threatened and contractors would not be able to pay them. In fact, one contractor owed money by the company discharged his men without fully paying them. These laborers formed the core of rioters. Such economic fears fractured the work force into traditional factions, as Corkonians and Longford men banded together in an attempt to control the remaining jobs for their own members. Class experience fused with ethnic cultural forms to produce violent labor action.

Collective labor violence pervaded the canal construction industry—160 incidents of riots and strikes took place on canals in the United States and Canada from 1780 to 1860. The authorities responded by calling in the militia or troops 32 times from 1829 to 1849. The secret societies or factions that fomented the labor unrest amounted to nascent labor organizations. The conflict took the form of Irish factional fighting but was an ethnic acting out of class conflict. Factions used violence to establish some control over the labor force, maintain employment, and drive up wages. At times, they fought directly with the canal

companies by staging strikes against nonpayment of wages or unacceptable workplace conditions. Though of an internecine variety, such violence, as the 1834 C&O Canal Workers strike demonstrates, constituted as valid an expression of class action, as did the strikes and parades of skilled artisans.

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See also **Irish**

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Native Americans were the first Californians whose work secured the wealth of others. In 1769, at San Diego, Father Junípero Serra and the Franciscans initiated a mission system designed to Christianize and Hispanicize the native peoples. Though the missionaries wished to save souls, their religious goals were inseparable from the Spanish state's aim of producing a class of Spanish-speaking Christian farmers and laborers who would defend Spain's imperial interests. The Law of the Indies anticipated 10 years of tutelage, but the priests repeatedly concluded that the full conversion of their charges was a remote prospect. Consequently, from the 1760s until the Mexican era of the 1830s, native Californians were encouraged and coerced into laboring in mission fields and pastures. After 1775, flight was subject to military capture and corporal punishment. As a captive, though technically not enslaved, labor force, mission Indians cultivated wheat, barley, and corn; tended olive orchards and vineyards; and raised cattle, sheep, and horses. Some became weavers, tanners, blacksmiths, masons, and carpenters. As mission growth caused the depopulation of native villages and the alteration of ecosystems, the missions' surpluses appealed to hungry Indians, thereby ensuring a supply of labor. By 1820, the

20 missions of Spanish California housed 20,000 neophytes, who raised thousands of livestock and produced 100,000 bushels of crops annually. Productivity was hampered, however, by measles and typhus epidemics, which especially ravaged reproductive-age women and the very young. Disease, overwork, and the humiliation of physical punishment also led to fugitivism and rebellion. In 1824, the Chumash of southern California reacted to their strict work regime and abuse by soldiers with a major uprising. The Chumash captured and occupied Mission La Purisima and Mission Santa Ynez for a month and Mission Santa Bárbara more briefly before fleeing to the interior. In 1828, similar circumstances prompted Estanislao's rebellion at Mission San José. Finally, in 1833, under the guidance of Mexico's liberal Vice President Valentín Gómez-Farías, the Mexican Congress secularized the California missions. Though secularization was supposed to provide the Indians with a share of former mission lands and herds, it actually left them as a pauperized and dependent labor force. Most found employment as agricultural laborers and cowboys on the ranchos of the 1830s and 1840s. As during the mission years, they were not paid in cash, but in food, clothing, and shelter. In the absence of urban growth and economic diversification, unpaid Indian workers in agricultural occupations remained the norm in California until U.S. annexation in 1848.

Gold Rush to 1900

The Gold Rush of 1849 stimulated migration into California from around the United States and from Western Europe, China, Canada, and Mexico. Early migrants were independent prospectors, but by 1850, the placer gold that could be collected by shovel and pan was gone. Mining companies employing capital-intensive extraction methods, such as hydraulic mining, ushered in a wage-earning economy for California's 150,000 people. Miners continued to be important, but their daily wages fell from \$20 in 1848 to \$3 by 1856. Other occupations emerged that were ancillary to the gold economy, in lumbering, transportation, metallurgy, and construction. San Francisco was the state's principal city, port, and manufacturing center. In June 1850, the San Francisco Typographical Society was born as the West Coast's first union, followed by a union of the city's teamsters in July. Economic instability in the form of a rapid sequence of booms and busts, coupled with high labor turnover, hampered organizing in the 1850s. Strikes were frequently unsuccessful, such as those by San Francisco sailors in August 1850 and

printers in October 1853. After 1859, silver from Nevada's Comstock Lode fueled San Francisco's continued growth, and conditions improved for organized labor. In 1863, the San Francisco Trades Union became the first citywide federation of unions on the West Coast. Unions agitated for the eight-hour day, and in June 1867, San Francisco was the first city in the nation to grant this to its government workers. In February 1868, a state law provided the same for most workers, but was not enforced. By 1870, San Francisco firms produced 60% of the West Coast's manufactured goods and employed one half of California's industrial workers.

A legacy of the Gold Rush migrations, thousands of Chinese workers in the state engaged in boot and shoe manufacturing, cigar making, and railroad construction. Race played a major role in the development of the California working class, as white workers invoked racial prerogatives to defend themselves against a perceived Chinese threat. In 1859, several San Francisco cigar makers faced boycotts for employing Chinese, while in February 1867, white boot and shoe makers struck against wage reductions that they blamed on Chinese competition. While whites declared the Chinese to be inassimilable into white society and union culture, over 3,500 Chinese construction workers struck against the Central Pacific Railroad in June 1867 for a 12-hour day and a raise in pay. Nevertheless, Chinese resistance to exploitation failed to ingratiate them with their white counterparts. When California faced the national depression of 1873, anti-Chinese sentiment took institutional form in the Workingmen's Party of California (WPC) in 1877. The WPC dominated San Francisco's working-class wards and elected one third of the delegates to the 1878–1879 state constitutional convention, whose product included a clause banning the employment of Chinese on public works and by corporations licensed in the state. Even after the new party's demise, white workers' attitudes were reflected in the anti-Chinese stance of the otherwise progressive Knights of Labor, which had over one hundred assemblies in California between 1878 and 1895, and in organized labor's agitation for the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. In fact, anti-Asian sentiment was a powerful unifying force for California's white labor movement.

In the aftermath of the depression of the 1870s, California workers enjoyed a decade of prosperity that produced some organizational gains. In March 1883, the San Francisco Trades Assembly succeeded in its campaign for a California Bureau of Labor Statistics, while Los Angeles plasterers won the first recorded strike in the city's history. In February, San Francisco carpenters had won a nine-hour day and elimination of piecework. The following year,

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Los Angeles carpenters founded Local 56 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, whose eight hundred members made it the largest union in southern California. In the spring of 1885, San Francisco sailors formed the Coast Seamen's Union—later a principal component of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific—while the city's ironworkers established the Federated Iron Trades Council, the first of its type in the country. In January 1886, San Francisco labor leaders created the Federated Trades and Labor Organization, dedicated to uniting all western workers and their organizations; and in September 1890, their counterparts in the south formed the Los Angeles Council of Federated Trades. Threatened by the rising tide of unionism, San Francisco employers banded together in the Manufacturers and Employers Association in August 1891, planning to drive unions from the city. The depression of 1893 made their efforts unnecessary, as union membership fell 75%. One important exception was the San Francisco Building Trades Council (BTC), founded in 1896, which soon became a potent political force. In 1900, with the depression over, the BTC won a major strike that enabled it to impose union-only hiring and the eight-hour day. The BTC may have enjoyed more power over its members' working conditions than any other union in the nation at that time.

1901 to the Great Depression

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the California labor movement grew rapidly and scored important economic, electoral, and legislative victories. However, new challenges emerged as the growth of large-scale agricultural enterprises affected the conditions and distribution of labor and as a southward shift in population caused Los Angeles to displace San Francisco by 1920 as the largest metropolis of the West. In 1901, the San Francisco Labor Council pressed successfully for a state law tightening child labor regulations. In June of that year, a two-month strike by the city's waterfront workers and teamsters culminated in the formation of the Union Labor Party, which governed San Francisco from 1901 to 1906 and 1909 to 1911, refusing to intervene on employers' behalf in labor disputes. The city's female garment workers, laundry workers, and waitresses all built unions during this period as well.

Los Angeles, by comparison, offered a less hospitable environment for labor organizations. An industrial late bloomer, nineteenth-century L.A. had been an agricultural town with few skilled workers and a shortage of capital. As late as 1890, L.A.'s population

was only 50,000, one sixth of San Francisco's. Los Angeles had only one fifth as many industrial establishments as San Francisco, with 10% of the capitalization, and employing one tenth as many workers. When twentieth-century urban growth began in earnest, the *Los Angeles Times* publisher Harrison Gray Otis led that city's Merchants and Manufacturers Association in an effort to keep unions at bay and attract companies seeking a cheap labor force. In 1903, the Los Angeles Building Trades Council gave up its fight for the closed shop in the construction industry; a strike by iron molders ended with the imposition of open shop conditions by the Founders' and Employers' Association; and a strike of 1,400 Mexican laborers on the Los Angeles Railway Company was defeated as well. These latter workers belonged to one of the first Mexican-American unions, the Union Federal Mexicanos. Los Angeles employers were as effective at organizing themselves as were San Francisco workers. The Los Angeles labor movement suffered an additional blow when a huge explosion destroyed the Los Angeles Times building on October 1, 1910. Twenty people were killed, and two officials of the National Union of Iron Workers, John and James McNamara, were arrested and confessed to the crime.

Despite the unfavorable conditions that unions faced in L.A., in 1913 the administration of Republican Governor Hiram Johnson delivered new benefits to workers statewide, including workmen's compensation, an Industrial Welfare Commission that set minimum wages for women, an Industrial Accident Commission that enforced factory safety standards, and a California Commission of Immigration and Housing that regulated the living conditions of the migrant workers whose numbers grew as food cultivation and processing operations expanded.

By 1920, food processing was California's largest industry in terms of labor-force size and product value, followed by oil refining and shipbuilding. The state produced virtually all of the nation's lemons, olives, and apricots and 60% to 75% of its oranges, grapes, plums, and nuts. From 1900 to 1920, California's canned fruit and vegetable output grew from one quarter to one half of the national total. The seasonal workers in the fields and canneries were poorly paid and were often immigrants drawn from the mere 6% of Californians who were viewed as nonwhite. Shunned by the trade union movement, they occasionally organized themselves. In February 1903, California's first farm workers' union, the Japanese-Mexican Labor Organization, was formed in Oxnard. The new union's admission of Asians barred it from membership in the American Federation of Labor (AFL). In June 1908, the Industrial Workers of the

World (IWW) set up their first farm worker local in Holtville. In 1910, the IWW overcame Fresno's efforts to prevent their street speeches, but in 1912, vigilantes drove them out of San Diego. In August 1913, at the Durst hop ranch near Wheatland, IWW members led a protest over poor conditions after 2,800 men, women, and children arrived to fill half as many jobs. The event ignited into a shooting match, resulting in the death of two workers, the district attorney, and a sheriff's deputy, and the arrest and murder convictions of two IWW organizers, Blackie Ford and Herman Suhr. In 1919, largely in response to the IWW's militancy and opposition to the First World War, the state legislature enacted the Criminal Syndicalism Act, which criminalized the advocacy of violent change in industrial ownership and political power. With the IWW's postwar collapse, the AFL tried to organize agricultural workers into the Fruit and Vegetable Workers Association in 1920, but this lasted only until 1923. Early in the depression of the 1930s, the Communist-led Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU) rose to prominence in the industry. The CAWIU provided organizational support for strikes of Mexican and Filipino lettuce pickers in the Imperial Valley in 1930; of Santa Clara Valley cannery workers in 1931; and of Mexican, Filipino, Puerto Rican, and Italian pea pickers in Half Moon Bay in 1932. It was involved in the largest agricultural labor strike in U.S. history, involving 15,000 San Joaquin Valley cotton pickers in 1933. In response, growers formed the Associated Farmers organization, which fought unionism with violent vigilantism and contributed to the successful prosecution of CAWIU leaders under criminal syndicalism laws. The CAWIU dissolved in 1936.

New Deal Era and World War II

During the Great Depression, California workers joined in the national strike wave of 1933 to 1937. A longshoremen's strike in San Francisco in 1934 became a general strike authorized by the San Francisco Labor Council, and subsequent arbitration secured nearly all of the workers' demands. The pro-labor political environment characterized by congressional passage of the Wagner Act, which gave workers a federally protected right to organize, produced a doubling of union membership in San Francisco and significant gains even in L.A., where the Merchants and Manufacturers Association lost a battle with the Teamsters Union in 1937. The Pacific Coast District of the International Longshoremen's Association left the AFL and became the International

Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union of the new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which in turn chartered the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA), as well as leading drives among southern California's steel, automobile, rubber, and clothing workers. By 1940, the state had about 650,000 union members.

American participation in the Second World War tripled the state's manufacturing output and doubled its production labor force by 1947. The war stimulated shipbuilding in the San Francisco Bay Area, as characterized by the production of "Liberty Ships" at the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond. It also promoted the southern California aircraft industry, whose founders had been attracted to the area in the 1910s by its mild climate, cheap land, and nonunionized labor force. By 1945, almost 300,000 workers, 40% of whom were women, had built well over 100,000 aircraft for Lockheed, Douglas, Northrup, and other companies that drew 60% of all military contract funds in the state. Aside from bringing women into the industrial labor force, the war industries drew 340,000 African-Americans into California, where their numbers had always been negligible. Unions such as the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America forced the new workers into segregated auxiliaries. In 1943, at the Marinship yard in Sausalito, African-American workers withheld their union dues in protest against segregation and were barred from their jobs. In 1945, after an ineffectual investigation by the federal Fair Employment Practices Commission, the California Supreme Court ruled in *James v. Marinship* that segregated unions in a closed shop were unconstitutional. Nonetheless, shifting labor markets after the war left a growing number of African-Americans underemployed. Although the state of California had experienced economic inequities along racial lines since the Gold Rush, the declining fortunes of African-American workers added a new variant of inequality, once more familiar in the cities of the East.

Cold War to 2005

The Cold War drove new economic growth, as electronics and aerospace filled the void left by the decline of shipbuilding. By 1960, California firms received 25% of national defense spending. Population growth spurred the expansion of public infrastructure and public services, and thereby government employment. By 1951, over 40% of nonagricultural workers were unionized, but union membership declined over the

next 20 years while public sector employment grew. African-American and Mexican-American workers benefited from government hiring, which was less discriminatory than in private enterprise. One of the principal challenges of the period was the anti-Communist climate. In 1947, the House Un-American Activities Committee launched an investigation into Communist influence in the Hollywood film industry among mostly unionized workers, 250 of whom were then blacklisted. Faced with the anti-Communist provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act, the CIO purged its Communist-led unions in 1949. While the labor movement thereafter shied away from social activism, it continued its battle for material benefits and contributed to the expansion of the state's middle class. In 1958, California's unions helped to defeat a "Right to Work" initiative at the polls that would have outlawed the union shop. A milestone of the era was the founding convention of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in Delano on September 30, 1962. Led by César Chávez, the NFWA blended the strategies of the civil rights movement with Mexican-American identity politics and Catholic religious iconography to carry forward the mission of the old CAWIU and UCAPAWA. In September 1965, the NFWA joined with Filipino members of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee in launching the Delano grape strike. The two organizations eventually merged into the United Farm Workers union, which secured a favorable contract with the growers in July 1970 after a protracted struggle and consumer boycott. On September 22, 1975, Governor Jerry Brown signed the Agricultural Labor Relations Act, guaranteeing the collective bargaining rights of farm workers.

In 1968, reflecting the increasing importance and influence of public employees, the legislature granted these workers, except for teachers, full collective bargaining rights with the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act. Governor Brown ended the teachers' exclusion by signing the Rodda Act on the same day as the farm labor law. In September 1978, the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act brought the last major group of public employees in the state under collective bargaining law. As public sector union membership expanded during the 1980s and 1990s, so did the organization of service workers. In 1987, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 399 began its "Justice for Janitors" campaign in Los Angeles, seeking a pay raise, health insurance, and a single contract with all employers. On November 12, 1991, SEIU Local 660 led Los Angeles County workers in a successful one-day strike for a new contract. In November 1994, almost four thousand home health care aides in Alameda County, most of them

women, voted to join SEIU Local 616, the first time such workers had unionized in California. In 1999, in one of the biggest organizing achievements in U.S. history, 74,000 home care workers in Los Angeles joined SEIU Local 434B. In the early 2000s, California municipalities, including San Francisco, Oakland, San José, and Los Angeles, passed living wage ordinances for their employees and workers of companies on county and municipal contract. The decline of unionism in industrial employment since the 1960s, which California shared with the nation at large, was met with a rising tide of organization among public and service employees. This was opposed by economic conservatives, who played a partial role in the election of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2003.

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CAMERON, ANDREW (1834–1890) Civil War-Era Labor Activist

Andrew Cameron was an important leader of the American workers' movement in the period during and after the Civil War. Born in Berwick on Tweed, England, he worked as a printer in Chicago. He was one of the founders of the National Labor Union, along with William Sylvis. He attended the September 1869 Congress of the International Workingmen's Association, or First International, in Basle, as a delegate from the National Labor Union. He was a founder and president of the Chicago Trades Assembly in 1864, the same year that he began publishing the *Workingman's Advocate*, which lasted until 1877. In 1866, Cameron helped found the Eight Hour League and became its president. Throughout his life, he worked to both build the labor movement in Chicago and organize workers as a political force. Cameron was a skilled worker, however, who advocated uplift and temperance and was distrustful of foreign-born, Catholic workers. Especially after the late 1860s, Cameron advocated moderation within the labor movement. For example, in 1886, during the organizing drive that led to the eight-hour-day strikes of May Day, he spoke out against allowing socialists in the movement of the time. However, Cameron consistently pushed for reforms that would improve the lot of workers in Chicago and around the country.

The 1867 Midwest strike for the eight-hour day was an important turning point in Cameron's political evolution. Cameron and his compatriots had gotten the Republican-controlled state legislature in Illinois to pass a law stating that eight hours was a legal workday as long as no other contract was in place between workers and employers. Workers organized a large parade on May 1, 1867, and launched a citywide strike to enforce the eight-hour day. This strike was especially effective in the skilled trades that were already organized in unions and had been brought together in the Chicago Trades Assembly. It also included many construction workers in the Bridgeport neighborhood of Chicago. The strike also spread to other cities in Illinois, including Aurora and Springfield. Except for a few skilled workers, however, the strike failed to win its demands.

After the strike was repressed by the police, Cameron decided that counting on the two parties was not in labor's interest since many aldermen voiced support for the eight-hour law but winked at its violation. In 1868, the *Workingman's Advocate*

promoted an independent labor slate. By 1869, however, Cameron and the *Workingman's Advocate* went back to traditional politics and endorsed "respectable" candidates. Cameron was to retain this distrust of independent working-class political organization. In 1873, when a People's Party slate backed by immigrant workers won control of the city council, Cameron called the party a "canker worm...gnawing at the city's vitals." Cameron was opposed to the People's Party's Catholic, anti-temperance flavor, and he allied with Chicago's traditional business elites rather than the Catholic, immigrant workers.

Despite his often conservative political ideas, throughout his life, Cameron was in favor of amalgamation of the various trade unions in a given industry under one organization. He was also in favor of cooperation between unions in different industries. Thus, while his political ideas after 1868 point toward those eventually advocated by Gompers and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), he was against the division of the various craft unions that eventually emerged.

Cameron consistently advocated a form of free-labor republicanism which held that dependence on either an employer or the state would rob a worker of his democratic citizenship. It was from this position that Cameron attacked both the then-current distribution of wealth and power and the socialists who aimed to change it by state control over industry. Cameron consistently opposed the socialists then active in Chicago, though he often defended socialism in Europe and came out in favor of the Paris Commune in 1871. This free-labor republican ideology also motivated Cameron's distrust of unskilled, intemperate immigrant workers, who struck him as incapable of maintaining the kind of independence that he and his followers valued so highly.

According to some historians such as Richard Schneirov, Cameron's type of labor reform activism helped lay the groundwork for the reforms of the Progressive Era by pushing upper-class, protestant reformers to abandon their militantly antilabor, laissez-faire ideology.

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See also **Haymarket Affair (1886); May Day; National Labor Union; Sylvis, William**

CANNERY AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS INDUSTRIAL UNION

The roots of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU) date back to the summer of 1929 with the founding of the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL), the red industrial trade union federation established by the Communist Party USA (CPUSA). Created as dual unions during “Third Period Communism” as a rival to the craft-oriented American Federation of Labor (AFL) unions, the TUUL unions advanced the goal of organizing semi-skilled and unskilled workers who were traditionally ignored by the AFL. Delegates representing Mexican sugar beet workers from Colorado were present at the TUUL’s founding conference, setting up the Agricultural Workers Industrial League (AWIL) as the precursor to the CAWIU because the AWIL was not yet large or powerful enough to operate as a union.

The AWIL’s first real test was a baptism by fire when it took over the leadership of a strike that occurred in Imperial Valley, California. On January 1, 1930, a few hundred Mexican and Filipino lettuce workers in Brawley engaged in a spontaneous work stoppage, prompted by slashed wages and horrendous working conditions. Within days, 5,000 farm workers joined the walkout, making Imperial Valley the scene of a significant struggle. Early on, the Mexican Mutual Aid Society, the conservative and nationalistic organization directing the strike, was incapable of effectively combating employer assaults on meetings. Combined with the arrest of strikers, the work stoppage was threatened to be broken. Nevertheless, the walkout gained new life after the TUUL dispatched three young organizers, Frank Waldron (later known as Eugene Dennis), Harry Harvey, and Tsuji Horiuchi, from its affiliated AWIL to take over the strike leadership after learning about the walkout from the *Los Angeles Times*.

Once in Imperial Valley, the three activists, who had no prior organizing experience with agricultural laborers, worked behind the scenes to build up the strike’s rank-and-file leadership. Upon emerging from the underground, the organizers immediately set up an AWIL chapter that included Filipino workers in all aspects of the work stoppage. Through promoting rank-and-file activism and stressing trade union issues, as opposed to advancing revolutionary ideology, the AWIL rejuvenated a deteriorating strike. However, with the three organizers’ arrest, the authorities successfully prevented the distribution of strike relief. Faced with the risk of the arrest and deportation of the Mexican strikers, the union leaders ended the walkout on January 23 without achieving any demands.

The Imperial Valley strike served as a prototype for the organizing activity and other major work stoppages that the AWIL and its successor organizations—the Agricultural Workers’ Industrial Union (AWIU) in early 1931 and the CAWIU in July 1931 after it took over the leadership of a cannery workers’ walkout—conducted in 1931 and 1932. During much of these two years, the AWIU adopted a passive strategy of attempting to build the union through assuming the leadership of spontaneous work stoppages caused by wage cuts and intolerable working conditions, which were often brutally suppressed by the growers and authorities. In addition, at this time no serious effort was made at recruiting a stable, permanent base of members. Thus, by the end of 1932, the three CPUSA-led agricultural labor organizations had lost the four major strikes that they had directed since 1930 without obtaining any gains for the participating farm workers or for California agricultural unionism as a whole.

The CAWIU’s fortunes changed dramatically in 1933. Of the 24 walkouts led by the union that year in California, involving nearly 37,500 workers, the CAWIU obtained partial wage increases in 20 work stoppages, while only four resulted in a total loss for the union. Apparently, the three years of defeated strikes had provided a training ground and important lessons for the CAWIU. Beginning the year with a group of well-trained and dedicated organizers respected by the state’s farm workers, the union was more deliberate in its organization of walkouts. Preparing meticulous strike plans and formulating its demands through the diligent researching of wages, working conditions, and each crop’s harvest schedule, the CAWIU also organized democratically elected farm committees, representing each ethnicity, at mass meetings in each growing district. After achieving a wage increase, although not union recognition, in its first solid strike victory among 1,000 cherry pickers in Santa Clara County in June, the union engaged in a series of largely successful work stoppages, obtaining wage increases during August among sugar beet workers in Ventura County, tomato pickers outside San Diego, pear pickers near San Jose, and peach pickers around Tulare. However, the most important strike was yet to come in October among the more than 15,000 cotton pickers in the San Joaquin Valley.

With wages in the industry having declined 75% in the last three years, cotton pickers were ready for unionization. After organizers built union locals, developed leaders, and constructed alliances with liberal groups for attaining public support for the ensuing work stoppage, the CAWIU called a general strike for October 4. The walkout was characterized by grower



Lennord Cannery worker feeding tomatoes onto conveyor belt. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-080632-C].

violence. Workers who would not go back to work or leave the region were attacked, and authorities arrested workers they believed to be strike leaders. Within one week, 12,000 pickers had struck the region, with no cotton being harvested.

Public pressure over the continuing violence prompted federal intervention. Relief was provided for the first time in U.S. labor history to strikers; and George Creel, a New Deal administrator, established fact-finding hearings, which recommended a 75-cent increase per hundred pounds to resolve the strike. On October 27, the union's central strike committee persuaded the strikers to accept the proposal, arguing that the walkout had already gone on too long. Thus, this major struggle ended with no clear winner.

Returning to Imperial Valley after four years, the CAWIU launched another lettuce worker strike in January 1934, which was easily defeated due to terror carried out by growers and law enforcement officials,

who were often one and the same. With the Communist International's shift in its line in early 1934 from organizing revolutionary industrial unions during the "Third Period" to a return to "boring from within" the reformist unions during the start of the Popular Front period, the TUUL officially folded its operation in March 1935.

The TUUL's abandonment meant the dissolution of the CAWIU, whose mantle was picked up by the CPUSA-led United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA). Organized as a Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) affiliate in July 1937, UCAPAWA focused its organizing largely among the cannery and packing-shed workers as opposed to farm workers, deserting them in 1940. It would not be until the formation of the United Farm Workers (UFW) in the 1960s that California farm workers would obtain a voice and representation once more for their legitimate grievances.

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CAPITAL FLIGHT

Capital flight is the shift of production from existing facilities to new ones in locations where costs are lower and operating conditions are more favorable. Corporate managers engage in capital flight to escape the high wages and taxes, strict regulations, and especially the established unions typically found in areas where industries have long been in operation. "Disinvestment" is another term commonly used to describe the capital flight process. Since capital flight generally results in the downsizing or termination of production in the original location, it is a significant cause of de-industrialization. Although the terms "capital flight," "disinvestment," and "de-industrialization" are often used synonymously, the phenomena are not always equivalent.

Certain industries are more susceptible to capital flight than others. Relocation is virtually impossible for companies heavily dependent on inputs or skilled labor available only in the present location. Moving would be unattractive for a firm with very significant fixed investment at an existing facility or a union contract guaranteeing current workers the right to a job at a new location. Capital flight is much likelier to occur where none of these realities prevails. Business groups and government officials in less-developed regions frequently seek to build up the area economy by urging companies based elsewhere to set up local facilities. Incentives such as tax waivers are typically offered to encourage such investment. This kind of activity makes capital flight more probable.

The capital flight phenomenon burst into prominence in the 1970s. In the context of dramatic downsizing and restructuring of long-established industries, numerous firms shifted production to cheaper locales, often in less-developed countries. During this period, for example, American electronics producers and other large manufacturers moved work to new factories called *maquiladoras* just south of the Mexican border, where much lower wages could be paid. In the early years of the twenty-first century, numerous organizations transferred call centers and other white-collar functions to developing-world locations such as India. The latter moves were an important new manifestation of capital flight, as they demonstrated that what had been thought of as a phenomenon restricted to manufacturing could also take place in the service sector.

While capital flight began to attract significant attention in the late twentieth century, the phenomenon actually has a long history. European merchants of the sixteenth century, eager to avoid the expense of production by urban artisans in highly organized guilds, arranged for production to be carried out in a cheaper, more flexible manner by rural households. This process, known as "protoindustrialization," might be considered the first example of capital flight.

Early Examples of Capital Flight in the United States

Capital flight appeared in the United States relatively early in the industrial era. In the late nineteenth century, Massachusetts shoe manufacturers attempting to escape high wages and unionized labor set up plants in the towns of northern New England for the fabrication of their lower-quality goods. The garment industry of New York City saw significant capital flight during the early twentieth century as managers moved production out of a high-cost urban area with strong unions to locations in the surrounding states. After a successful mid-1930s union drive at its principal New Jersey factory, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) shifted output of radios to a new plant in Bloomington, Indiana.

Companies that engaged in capital flight to escape unionized labor often found that this goal was only temporarily achieved. Northern New England's new shoe workers of the late nineteenth century joined the industry's Massachusetts-based labor organizations, sometimes participating with them in joint strikes. RCA's Bloomington operation was unionized in the mid-1940s. The inexperienced unionists at the newer factories were initially less militant, and even union

pay rates in these locations were likely at first to be lower than elsewhere. Nevertheless, for the companies involved, it is unclear whether these (likely temporary) gains outweighed the expense and disruption of relocation. The labor movement as a whole may have actually benefited from these instances of capital flight, since the net effect was to spread unionism to areas of the country where it had previously been weak.

Difficulties in the Application of the Capital Flight Concept

The capital flight concept is often used in the general and academic literature in an overly broad, unnuanced manner. Labor scholars are particularly prone to making this mistake.

To begin with, the importance of capital flight can be exaggerated. Many writers tacitly assume that reducing production costs is the only factor motivating companies to relocate. In reality, however, firms move facilities for numerous reasons unrelated to the expense of production. Companies may do so to be closer to customers or needed inputs, or to consolidate production as part of a corporate reorganization. In each of the latter instances, capital is being *moved* (constituting local *disinvestment*, which may contribute to the original locale's *de-industrialization*). None of these are a case of capital *flight*, however.

There is also insufficient appreciation of the competitive context in which capital flight frequently takes place. Numerous industries saw the entry of new competitors at home and abroad over the course of the twentieth century, which led established producers to shift investment.

Events of the early twentieth century in the American cotton textile industry demonstrate the point. New England firms had long dominated the production of staple cotton goods but faced a new competitive threat after Reconstruction from swiftly expanding southern producers that benefited from the lower labor costs available in that region. By the 1920s, southern manufacturers had built up capacity and skill that enabled them to take over much of the national market for cotton goods. In response, some New England firms shifted production from their home region to the South, although most of the higher-cost producers in the northern region simply ceased operations. The action of the Yankee manufacturers that moved to the South was an example of capital flight, since these capitalists were indeed "fleeing" the high wages and unions of their home region. The circumstances,

however, hardly gave them a choice: if they had not relocated, most would surely have been forced out of business.

The example of New England cotton textiles had numerous parallels in the late twentieth century. Many American manufacturers that moved production to the developing world in the 1970s and after had come under fierce competitive pressure from producers based in Western Europe and East Asia.

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See also **De-industrialization; Maquiladoras**

CAREY, JAMES (1911–1973) Secretary, Congress of Industrial Organizations

James B. Carey was known as the "boy wonder" of the CIO workers movement, becoming president of a CIO union by age 25 and secretary of the CIO before he turned 30. His most important historical legacy was the dismemberment of the union that he had helped to found.

There was little in Carey's youth that suggested he might become involved in the labor movement. He was the fourth of 11 children, born in 1911 to a south Philadelphia Irish Catholic family. His father was a clerk at the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia and a staunch Democrat. James's goal was to become part of the middle class as an electrical engineer. He got a job at Philco but attended night school in engineering at Drexel and business management at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Finance. Carey's hopes were crushed by lack of opportunity, and he remained on the production line at Philco radio factory.

In the early years of the Great Depression, Carey was the leader of a group of young male inspectors interested in forming a union to combat harsh conditions and low pay. This group sought union recognition and went on strike, affiliating directly with the AFL as a federal labor union. Carey became an AFL staff representative for the large Philco local in 1934, and from this position he traveled across the Northeast, assisting other workers at radio and home appliance plants. Soon Carey sought an industrial union charter. The AFL continued to stall, but finally, in January 1936, they rejected his pleas, ordering him to take the locals he represented into the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, under Class B, or subordinate, membership status. In rebellion, Carey helped to organize the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) in 1936, became its youthful president, and led it into the newly organized CIO six months later. By 1938, John L. Lewis, head of the CIO, had appointed him as secretary-treasurer for the CIO, the second most powerful position in the organization, though most scholars agree that this was done because Lewis thought he could control Carey.

Carey sought to represent the more conservative direction of the CIO movement, and several factors influenced his rebellion against the leadership of his own union, whom he accused of being influenced by Communist Party (CP) doctrines. The first was Roman Catholic social thought, which advocated support for trade unions but instructed Catholics to make them an alternative to radicalism rather than the base for a socialist agenda. In the 1930s, many Catholics were repulsed by the active role of the Communist Party in the organization of the CIO and, like Carey, felt that they should help to weed out all who were influenced or were members. Carey's anti-Communism had also been influenced by leaders of the Philadelphia hosiery workers, socialists who had won their positions through bitter factional struggles with Communists in the 1920s. From the early point of bargaining, Carey sought to assure managers that they harbored no design on managerial control.

By 1940, Carey had begun a rancorous critique of the union, even from his position as president. Carey wrote columns suggesting that the position of the other leaders on foreign policy issues was formulated by the CP and not for workers' interests. But in the end, Carey's own blunders in negotiations with management (more than one group of workers demanded he stay away) reduced his clout; he was defeated for president of the union, with even many right-wingers voting for his replacement, who was an ally of the left. Ironically, the CP wanted Carey to be re-elected

to stave off attacks on the union, but the left-wing leadership refused its suggestions. Carey continued his criticisms from his position in the CIO, but they were tempered during the wartime. Nevertheless, Carey began to cooperate with and enlist the aid of the FBI in 1943, asking them for background checks of unionists. By 1946, Carey was meeting with J. Edgar Hoover regularly to discuss Communists in the CIO and sought advice from him on how to target the left. Carey also reached out to labor priests, who helped him to organize an internal dissident group, the UE Members for Democratic Action (UEMDA), which labeled the UE as authoritarian and subordinate to Moscow. This continued relentlessly as the Cold War escalated. Finally, when the UEMDA proved unsuccessful in union elections, the CIO in 1949 expelled the UE along with 10 other unions and established another union, the International Union of Electrical Radio and Machine Workers (IUE), and appointed Carey as its head. Funded by over \$1 million dollars in assistance by the CIO, the IUE won a majority of the members it contested, mainly on the argument that unions would be ineffective in bargaining if not associated with the CIO.

During the postwar period, Carey held key positions in the CIO. He helped to formulate the CIO's positions in respect to the global labor movement. Despite his fight with the Communists in the union movement in the United States in the immediate postwar, he sought to build bridges with workers across the globe, even those in the Soviet Union. As a delegate to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), created after WWII to be an international consortium for workers across the globe, Carey argued that Soviet Union workers should be included. But eventually he acquiesced to the State Department's anti-Soviet position and helped to bring the U.S. labor movement's foreign policy state in line with that of the U.S. government. Carey was appointed to the Marshall Plan's advisory committee, inaugurating his official status as labor statesman for the U.S. government, ended the affiliation with the WFTU, and endorsed the NATO alliance. He also worked to strengthen ties between the Democratic Party and the CIO. In order to reduce the possibility that the CIO's Political Action Committee might develop into a third-party challenge, he helped change rules that ensured its subordination to top CIO policy. He also advocated for a progressive position on civil rights within the CIO.

Carey's performance in the IUE increasingly came under attack after the UE was decimated. His critics, including those who had become his allies in the formation of the IUE, accused him of appointing cronies as organizers and of being personally

responsible for failing to organize much of the decentralizing industry. Others suggested he was insane or at least delusional. Still others complained of corruption in the union. In 1965, he was defeated for union election and became a labor liaison for the United Nations Association. He died in 1973.

ROSEMARY FEURER

See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations**

CAREY, RONALD (1935–) **International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

Ronald Carey, more commonly known as Ron Carey, is remembered in the chronicles of labor history for three acts. First, he was elected as a reform candidate to the presidency of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) in 1991 in the first rank-and-file ballot in the union's history. Second, Carey led the successful strike against United Parcel Service (UPS) in 1997, which was one of labor's great victories since the 1960s. Finally, he is remembered for having been forced to step down as the Teamsters' president because of an illegal fund-raising scheme (although he was cleared of all charges); this led to the election of James Hoffa, Jr.

The son of a UPS delivery man, Carey also joined the company as a driver in 1955. Within two years, he was a shop steward, and in 1967, he became president of Teamsters Local 804 in Queens, New York. Carey was an exception to the vast majority of Teamster officials: he was not corrupt, had a modest salary (less than the chef at the Teamsters' headquarters), and was "militant." In the 1960s and 1970s, Carey was not afraid to lead his local out on strike to support his members. Likewise, in the 1980s, Carey opposed national contract settlements repeatedly. However, his greatest claim to fame occurred in the 1990s when under his presidency the Teamsters moved to the left and began to once again resemble a militant union.

In 1986, the U.S. government had begun investigations into the Teamsters through the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), believing that the Teamsters union was corrupt and had ties with the Mafia. Indeed, from 1957 to 1990, every president of the Teamsters, save Billy McCarthy, has been convicted and sentenced for a federal crime. In March 1989, the U.S. government and the Teamsters reached an agreement. The government dropped the RICO charges in return for the democratization of

the Teamsters, including allowing the rank-and-file to elect national leaders.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU)—a reform caucus within the Teamsters committed to democracy and union militancy—decided not to field a candidate for the 1991 IBT presidential election but instead to endorse Carey because he supported its goals of union democracy and militancy in collective bargaining. TDU organized meetings in support of Carey; its members provided places for Carey to stay as he toured the country, and passed out literature, made phone calls, organized rallies, and got out the vote. This effort paid dividends. In December 1991, Carey and his entire slate won a three-way race, receiving 48% of the vote and giving Carey and his supporters control of the executive board. However, voter turnout was only 28%. In addition, through TDU efforts, the 1991 Teamsters convention saw 275 reform delegates elected (15% of the total delegates). However, this demonstrates the extent that the old hierarchy remained in office at different levels, as there were 1,900 delegates elected in total.

Nevertheless, under Carey's leadership, the Teamsters moved to the left. Carey was the leading voice against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and he increased the organizing budget, while reducing union officials' salaries. Likewise, he increased education for stewards and rank-and-file members; slashed the president's salary by \$50,000; sold the union's jets, limousines, and condos; and put an emphasis on contract campaigns, local unions, and shop floor organizing. In addition, the Teamsters endorsed the 1992 Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton. However, the Teamsters did not endorse Clinton in the 1996 presidential election because of his support of NAFTA.

Carey's second great achievement is his leading of the Teamsters to victory over UPS in 1997. As the 1993 UPS contract failed to meet member expectations, the Teamsters implemented many new campaign tactics. The Teamsters prepared well in advance for the 1997 negotiations. The Teamsters conducted a survey of its UPS members in the lead-up to the contract negotiations. It asked for a list of contract priorities and activities workers were willing to undertake. It attempted to get all rank-and-file UPS Teamster members involved, even if Carey opponents headed their locals. This was crucial, considering the long-standing Teamsters tradition of decentralized power bases; that is, Teamster locals had a great deal of power and were often opposed to the national body. The Teamsters held rallies, built unity between full-time and part-time employees, and sought alliances with community groups and unions internationally in overseas UPS plants. Following the rejection of a "last, best, and

final” contract offer from UPS, the Teamsters went on strike. Following a 15-day strike, UPS caved in to a majority of the union’s demands. Carey claimed that the Teamsters’ victory marked a new era where unions could once again stand up to big business. Indeed, it was thought that the Teamsters’ victory would be the relaunching pad for the revival of the U.S. union movement.

However, the 1997 UPS negotiations were Carey’s last major triumph. Instead of relying on the rank-and-file during his successful 1996 re-election campaign, as he did in 1991, Carey hired political consultants. Whether Carey needed the consultants to be re-elected is open to debate (Carey may have been concerned that only 28% of Teamsters voted in 1991, not to mention that the old hierarchy still had considerable resources and were in positions of power within the union). However, the consultants—the November group—implemented an illegal fund-raising scheme on Carey’s behalf. The scheme saw the Teamsters “donate” \$885,000 to political organizations and in return channel \$221,000 into Carey’s re-election campaign. Federal prosecutors, however, could not find enough evidence to lay charges relating to the fund-raising scheme. Instead, they accused Carey of perjury as he repeatedly denied involvement in the scheme to federal grand juries and the court-appointed monitors of the Teamsters. While Carey was eventually cleared of all charges by a Federal court jury, during the investigation the Justice Department forced Carey to step down as president and the Teamsters to conduct a new presidential election. In the election, James Hoffa, Jr.—Jimmy Hoffa’s son—defeated the TDU-backed candidate Tom Leedham to become president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Moreover, a federal oversight panel expelled Carey from the union, from holding any union office, and even from associating with friends and supporters within the Teamsters. Despite Carey’s being acquitted of perjury and no charges ever being laid against him for involvement in the fund-raising scheme, these rulings remained in force.

Carey is remembered as a leader who reformed the Teamsters away from decades of corrupt business unionism toward becoming a progressive union and offered hope for those seeking the revival of the U.S. union movement.

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CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church, with a worldwide membership of a billion believers and a long and sophisticated theological tradition, cannot be easily placed with respect to the labor movement. Its teachings promote justice in wages and worker solidarity while defending private property and the rule of law. The popes in their social encyclicals have envisioned the widespread distribution of property and harmonious relations between workers and owners of all classes. Catholic priests and laity have filtered Church teaching into their particular social, economic, and political situations in various and sometimes conflicting ways. In the United States, Catholics have been prominent in union membership and leadership; they have also been well represented among business managers, executives, and conservative political figures.

Historical and Theological Background

Arising out of Judaism, Christianity from the beginning has contained in tension two views of manual labor, both rooted in the Genesis account of creation. One view sees work as dignified and as participating with God in creation; the other sees toil as cursed, a result of the fall (original sin). The spread of Christianity, therefore, did not immediately and dramatically change the dominant views of the ancient Greek and Roman societies in which the new religion flourished, views which were themselves varied and often ambivalent.

The concept of the incarnation, of God being enfleshed as a man (and as a carpenter’s son), did furnish additional theological support for the idea of labor as intrinsic to human dignity. In general, the early Church Fathers (ca. 100–500 AD) viewed labor positively. In addition, instead of idealizing the attainment of riches as had many of the ancients, they emphasized detachment from material goods and the obligation to share them freely. They generally recognized the validity of private property, but harshly criticized the wealthy and powerful who exploited the weakness of workers.

A significant development occurred with the promulgation of the monastic ideal promoted by St. Benedict of Nursia in the sixth century. Benedict's motto, *ora et labora*, expressed the view that work was exalted even to the level of prayer. Contemplation and toil became co-equal methods of serving God, and idleness was to be avoided. Such theological developments notwithstanding, medieval Europe remained for centuries stratified according to the tripartite arrangement of consecrated religious, warriors/political rulers, and serf or peasant laborers.

The rise of industrial organization that swept Europe beginning in the eighteenth century resulted in a shift in the relationships among workers, owners, and the Church. In terms of the new understanding of worker-owner relations that was regnant by the middle of the nineteenth century, Catholicism could not be simply identified with either labor or capital. Bishop Wilhelm von Ketteler of Mainz (1811–1877) led a Catholic movement for social reform and labor organization, while in many quarters Catholicism remained closely tied to the old regimes of Europe and to the principle of aristocratic privilege.

This was the context in which Pope Leo XIII wrote an encyclical letter that articulated the teaching of the Church with a view to the “new things” of the modern world. *Rerum Novarum* (1891) changed the perception of the Church among many contemporaries who had considered it a reactionary force. Leo wrote, for example, of the right of workers to a just wage, one that would maintain a breadwinner and his family in “frugal comfort.” He criticized the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few and upheld the right of voluntary association, specifically commending labor unions. At the same time, he reiterated the Church's defense of private property, condemned socialism, and emphasized the need for Catholics to form and join unions that were not compromised by secular and revolutionary ideologies.

Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (1981) elaborated on the themes of *Rerum Novarum*. John Paul stressed the dignity of work as a means to transform nature and achieve personal fulfillment. He extended the concept of worker to include those who manage business and those who perform intellectual work. He reiterated the “principle of the priority of labor over capital” but also denounced the Marxist view that the tension between laborers and owners could be overcome only by class struggle. Instead, he proposed a spiritual understanding of work and recognition of moral responsibilities on the part of owners, workers, and governments, which would alleviate the conflict generated by the materialist assumptions at the heart of both communism and liberal capitalism.

Catholic Church and Labor in the United States

In the United States, Catholics had been a miniscule percentage of the population until the arrival of large numbers of Irish and Germans after 1815. Immigration of Catholic Irish increased exponentially after the potato famine of 1845, and from that time on the Church was heavily urban and immigrant, with both its leaders and congregants usually of the laboring classes. Over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century, nativism, anti-Catholicism, and anti-unionism coalesced in Republican politics, and Catholics gravitated toward unions and the Democratic Party.

Leo's encyclical addressed several controversies that had been roiling the American church. Its defense of private property was seen as a rebuke to Henry George and his followers (among whom, prominently, was a New York priest, Edward McGlynn). Its endorsement of organized labor settled still simmering disputes over the role of Catholics in unions. It is estimated that at least half the membership of the Knights of Labor was Catholic (including its president from 1881 forward, Terence Powderly), but the organization came under scrutiny from some bishops because of its similarity to other “secret societies” (for example, the Masons) that the Church forbade its followers to join. The matter had been partially resolved in 1887, when Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore interceded in Rome and headed off a proposed condemnation of the Knights.

By 1891, the Knights were in decline, but *Rerum Novarum* provided new impetus for Catholics to become active in the labor movement, even if its exhortation to form specifically Catholic labor unions was widely interpreted as irrelevant to the pluralist context of the United States. While atheism underpinned many European unions and stimulated Catholic unionists to form separate labor federations, American unions' religious neutrality provided no such impetus. The cautious endorsement of organized labor by Church leaders is reflected in the assessment made by an author in the influential *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907–1914): “Although the evil effects of the union are frequent, and sometimes very serious, they seem to be, on the whole, morally outweighed by its good effects.”

Although Catholics often had direct control of religious unions in continental Europe, broad swaths of the labor movement were off limits. American Catholics, in contrast, seldom dominated unions, but they exerted influence across organized labor. The extent to which American unions were influenced

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by socialism is a matter of debate among historians, but it is certain that Catholic union members and leaders played important roles in steering American unions in nonradical directions.

Catholics, by 1910 numbering 16 million in a population of 92 million, were represented among all social classes and political persuasions, but they remained disproportionately Democrat and working class. They shared in the general ebb and flow of American labor organization. The effects of the post-war Red Scare and the prosperity and anti-union business activity of the 1920s led to declining union participation. Social Catholicism was not in hibernation, however. The new national organization of American bishops, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, commissioned a statement on social issues to be written by Catholic University of America professor Father John A. Ryan. The bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction (1919), which endorsed minimum wage laws and social insurance, was widely viewed as indicative of the official Church's coming into line with a progressive political agenda.

The early twentieth century witnessed the first appearance of "labor priests," who would become familiar characters to employers and workers across the country. Labor priests supported organized labor by providing spiritual and material support for strikers, preaching the benefits of organizing, and mediating between workers and owners. Among the best known were Peter Dietz in Milwaukee; Peter Yorke in San Francisco; Charles Owen Rice in Pittsburgh; John P. Boland in Buffalo; and George G. Higgins, who held John Ryan's old position as head of the bishops' Social Action Department. Jesuit John Corridan of New York became perhaps the most famous when his role among the longshoremen was depicted in the Oscar Award-winning film, *On the Waterfront* (1953).

Beginning in the 1930s, many Catholic institutions, in particular Jesuit colleges and universities, opened labor schools for the training of laity. At their peak in the 1940s, there were more than one hundred.

With the onset of the Great Depression, the identification of Catholics with the Democratic Party and with organized labor solidified. John Ryan was appointed to several positions in Franklin Roosevelt's administration, and Milwaukee diocesan priest Francis Haas became one of the Department of Labor's most active strike mediators. Bernard Sheil, an auxiliary bishop in Chicago, was a well-known champion of organized labor. In 1937, a group involved in Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker movement organized the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. Catholic consensus in favor of the New Deal began to break down in the mid-1930s and

suffered a major blow when Roosevelt's court-packing plan disturbed Constitution-devoted Catholic intellectuals and writers. Radio priest Charles Coughlin had already turned against Roosevelt. Al Smith, a Catholic and erstwhile Democratic presidential candidate around whom Catholics had rallied in 1928, joined the Liberty League in denouncing Roosevelt in the 1936 election.

Catholics remained disproportionately Democratic-leaning for several decades, but they also shared in the revival of conservatism that began in the 1940s. Discontent with organized labor was one manifestation of this development. Father Edward Keller, an economist at the University of Notre Dame, advocated right-to-work legislation in the pages of Catholic scholarly and popular periodicals.

The conservative counter continued in 1955, when Catholic William F. Buckley Jr. founded *National Review* to promote, among other causes, limited government intervention in the economy. Conservatives were given a boost by geopolitical developments. The long-standing reputation of the Church as an anti-communist force benefited it when anticommunism became perhaps the dominant strand in post-World War II American politics and culture.

The Church's anticommunism did not by force of logic turn Catholics against organized labor—Catholic priests and labor leaders had long been fighting communist elements within unions. But the Soviet threat and attendant developments such as the rise of Senator Joseph McCarthy (a Catholic) brought into disrepute any person or organization deemed to be tainted by association, and distinctions between American trade and industrial unions and the international communist movement were easily lost.

By the 1960s, the labor priest was a less common figure, though he had not disappeared entirely. Bishop Hugh Donohoe in California continued the tradition of episcopal support for labor activity. But many Catholic priests—and increasingly sisters—joined civil rights and antiwar activists in a radicalism that departed from traditional Catholic social action and separated them from many union leaders and members who opposed those movements.

Catholic radicalism lacked the official backing of the Vatican and the hierarchy, as well as the support of a broad swath of laity, and would never come to dominate the American Catholic Church as organized labor and Democratic politics had. Instead, Catholics, far removed from the heyday of immigration and increasingly assimilated, became as a group undifferentiated from non-Catholic Americans. By the election of 1972, the choices of Catholic voters approximated those of the American electorate as a whole.

Yet even as the large-scale immigration of western and southern Europe faded into the past, a new, heavily Catholic wave of immigration swept into the nation's cities and southern countryside. Mexican-Americans in California, led by Catholic César Chávez's United Farm Workers (UFW), provided new strength to organized labor. The connection between old and new Catholic labor activism was evident in the bishops' selection of Monsignor George Higgins as liaison to the UFW.

In the closing decades of the twentieth century, as union membership in general declined, the prominence of organized labor as an issue on the Catholic agenda waned. Moral and cultural issues such as abortion and family breakdown overtook workers' rights—and eventually communism—as the chief concern of many Catholics. The shift was much remarked during the elections of the 1980s, when Catholic union members figured significantly among the so-called Reagan Democrats. Catholics nonetheless remain an important labor constituency, and the bishops' 1986 pastoral letter on the economy restated official support for many of the goals of organized labor.

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See also Association of Catholic Trade Unionists; Chávez, César Estrada; Knights of Labor

CENTRAL AMERICANS

Central Americans have been coming to the United States since the nineteenth century, but the numbers were not large until after 1970. The immigrants who

arrived during the 1930s formed communities in major American cities such as San Francisco and New York. These newcomers were generally middle class, educated, and often political refugees or labor leaders. A few were exiled military officers and politicians who had lost faith in the ability of their governments to promote what they believed needed to be done to develop their countries. Some others, not necessarily refugees, came in search of a better economic life.

A few more came during World War II when job opportunities opened in the United States. Another wave arrived during the 1940s and 1950s. The census reported that approximately 60,000 Central Americans entered prior to 1965. During the 1960s, another 100,000 arrived, marking the beginning of a steady movement of people from Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, and Honduras. But it was the outbreak of civil war and violence, as well as failing economies, that propelled a substantial wave of these immigrants after 1970.

It is important to realize that people from these countries have different cultures, experiences, and motivations for emigration. In Nicaragua, a left-wing group, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, threatened the livelihood of many elite members of the old regime. Members of the dictatorship of the Anastasio Somoza Garcia family began to leave even before the Sandinistas seized power in 1979. Fifteen thousand members of the Somoza family and their followers headed for Miami, with many of them able to bring their money with them.

After the fall of Somoza, the U.S. government backed a revolutionary group based in Costa Rica and Honduras, the Contras, with the goal of replacing the left-wing Sandinistas with a government more acceptable to the United States. Because of the resultant violence, accompanied by economic difficulties, and the draft, working-class Nicaraguans also fled to the United States.

A problem the Nicaraguans shared with other Central Americans was becoming legal immigrants in the United States. Many lacked the necessary skills or family connections for visas. They came anyway, coming through Mexico and illegally crossing the southern border of the United States.

Because of the violence in their land, Nicaraguans sought refugee status. However, few were admitted as refugees. Once in the United States, many then applied for asylum, despite the availability of only a few thousand places annually. In addition, to win asylum, individuals had to prove that they had a "well-founded fear" that they would be persecuted if they returned to their native countries. Such individual claims were difficult to demonstrate, and the

vast majority of Nicaraguans were denied asylum. Immigration officials said that they were economic, not political, refugees and claimed that being subject to a civil war and violence did not demonstrate that the asylum petitioners had a threat aimed directly at them.

Yet the Nicaraguans had supporters in the United States, mainly immigrant rights groups or religious leaders who believed that Central Americans deserved to remain in the United States. An immigrant judge in Florida said that he found the American government's position inconsistent. The judge noted that the United States was trying to overthrow a radical government in Nicaragua, but persons fleeing from that left-wing state were being denied asylum. Others rushed to their aid the approval rate increased briefly, but most Nicaraguans were still not granted asylum. Their case became weaker when the civil war ended and the Sandinistas were voted out of office in 1990. However, many Nicaraguans wanted to remain in the United States because they had established families and found employment during the 1980s. Finally, after prolonged debate, Congress passed the Nicaragua Adjustment and Central American Relief Act of 1997 (NACARA), which gave many of these refugees the opportunity to become legal immigrants. In the four-year period before NACARA was passed, only 21,000 Nicaraguans legalized their status; in the four-year period after NACARA, 66,000 Nicaraguans did so.

For Salvadorans and Guatemalans, the situation was somewhat different, but they too fled violence due to a civil war. The United States supported right-wing governments there. Indeed, the Central Intelligence Agency engineered a coup that installed a reactionary government in Guatemala in 1954, replacing an elected reformist regime, and Guatemala, too, was ruled by a right-wing government. Opponents of the governments in both nations resorted to guerilla tactics in an effort to replace those holding power. The United States supported the attempts to defeat the guerrilla movements, which resulted in civil wars that left tens of thousands of persons homeless, exposed to massive destruction and violence. Government military units were especially violent and feared by both Guatemalans and Salvadorans. Central America earned a reputation for being the most violent region of the world in the 1980s. An estimated 200,000 Guatemalans alone perished in conflict in the 1980s; most did not take sides in the war but were caught between the two sides. The response of many Guatemalans and Salvadorans was to flee their nations and cross into Mexico, where they found only a temporary haven. Many decided to head farther north and enter the United States legally or without proper immigrant

papers if they could not qualify as resident aliens under the immigration laws.

Once in the United States, many of these nationals claimed asylum like the Nicaraguans had. However, the granting of asylum by the United States would be an admission that the U.S. government supported violent governments in power and the brutal tactics carried out by government troops. For those who had entered the United States illegally before 1982, an amnesty was possible as provided by the Immigrant Reform and Control Act of 1986, and 65,000 Guatemalans and a similar number of Salvadorans qualified. But most Central Americans entered after 1982, and over 90% of their claims for asylum were rejected. The federal government made it clear that it did not welcome a large-scale migration of "feet people," even those fleeing from a radical leftist government.

Another problem with obtaining asylum was the backlog, the majority of whom were Central Americans. This backlog reached 300,000 claims at its peak in the early 1990s—a figure that made it impossible for immigration authorities to consider their applications quickly and carefully. Before that time, groups sympathetic toward Central Americans provided help in the courts and forced the immigration authorities to follow proper procedures in handling asylum cases. As a result, a number of Central Americans received the right to remain in the United States by becoming resident aliens. NACARA was aimed mainly at Nicaraguans, but it also allowed some persons from the other two nations to become legal immigrants.

The end of civil conflicts created further difficulties for Central Americans seeking asylum. In Nicaragua, Sandinistas were defeated in an election, and peace returned after 1990. How could one claim political persecution under the newly elected regime? The ending of the civil wars in the early 1990s in El Salvador and Guatemala also made asylum nearly impossible to win for these nationals.

During the hostilities and even after, there was a way these Central Americans could remain in the United States, at least temporarily: the federal government could grant them extended voluntary departure, a temporary period to remain in the United States until peaceful conditions returned in their native lands. Before 1990, such a status was granted on an ad hoc basis but was made part of the Immigration Act of 1990 and called Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Several hundred thousand Central Americans received TPS, but it did not give them permanent residence. However, it provided them with a period of time in which they would not be deported. Receiving TPS was an admission that the United States recognized that conditions were not ideal in either El Salvador or Guatemala. While TPS allowed many to

remain in the United States temporarily, it was possible to become an authorized immigrant by marrying an American citizen or finding employment that would qualify under the Immigration Act of 1965. It should be noted that a majority of persons in the 1990s who became immigrants were already in the United States; they adjusted their temporary status to legal immigrants, and these included a number of Central Americans.

A growing number of the claims of Central Americans for immigrant status in the United States were successful. In 2002, over 31,000 Salvadorans became immigrants. The figure for 2003 was 28,296, and for 2004 it was 29,795. El Salvador, which generated the largest flow, was becoming one of the main sources for immigration to the United States—seventh on the list of sending nations. In addition, immigration authorities recorded roughly 18,888 Guatemalan newcomers in 2004, the second largest source for Central American immigrants.

After the peace accords became effective in the 1990s, Central Americans continued to come and work and live in the United States as undocumented immigrants. Although estimates varied in the early twenty-first century, Central Americans made up nearly one fourth of all undocumented persons and possibly numbered one million persons.

Other Central American nations did not experience civil wars and extensive violence, though economic conditions in these countries were hardly ideal. The most stable Central American nation was Costa Rica, which also had the highest standard of living; as a result, few Costa Ricans headed north. Without a civil war to make them flee to the United States, immigration from Honduras, Panama, and Belize lagged behind their neighbors; and Costa Rica and Honduras housed many of the refugees from war, at least temporarily. Of these nations, Honduras sent the largest number north. The number from Honduras was half that from Guatemala and only one quarter of El Salvador's share. For Honduras, an additional problem occurred in 1998 when Hurricane Mitch ripped through Central America, which was centered on Honduras. Thousands fled to neighboring countries, and thousands of others went to the United States. In addition to those Hondurans already in the United States illegally, these undocumented immigrants were granted TPS, allowing them to remain legally, at least temporarily. TPS was extended until early 2005. Belize sent fewer than 1,000 persons to the United States as resident aliens annually. Panamanian entries averaged roughly 1,500 in the 1990s.

Overall, the Central American population grew substantially between the 1970s and the early twenty-first century. The 2000 census indicated that

El Salvador was the largest Central American group with 665,000 recorded, followed by 372,000 Guatemalans and 217,000 Hondurans. Nicaragua totaled 177,000. It is not known how many others, mostly unauthorized, were left uncounted by the census or missed by the border patrols.

Searching for a New Life

One hundred thousand Nicaraguans followed the elite settlement of their countrymen to the Miami, Florida, region. While the elite often found better jobs because they were educated, many of those arriving as the civil war spread struggled. In Miami, Cubans sometimes aided these newcomers, because the first wave was fleeing a socialist regime in Nicaragua, just like the Cubans fleeing Fidel Castro's communist state in Cuba.

From elsewhere in Central America, many middle-class immigrants also fled. However, the vast majority of those coming from Central America were poor farmers or urban workers without money, hi-tech skills, and knowledge of English. For them, a new life in America meant starting at the bottom. Central Americans resemble Mexicans in their social and economic background. Whereas one quarter of white native-born Americans held college degrees, fewer than 10% of Salvadorans did. Fewer than 40% of Salvadorans had graduated from high school, compared with nearly 90% of white native-born Americans. Their incomes were low, and the proportion living in poverty was greater than that of the general American population. And it was common for both men and women to work. Guatemalans were similar to Salvadorans, and Hondurans and Nicaraguans were only slightly better off.

Central Americans settled in cities and communities where many of their countrymen had established themselves and where low-paying jobs beckoned to them. In Washington, DC, they were noticeable in restaurants—washing dishes and clearing tables—and if they were lucky and knew English, waiting tables. In other cities, a few found employment in garment factories or in hotels cleaning rooms. For women, domestic housework was available.

Los Angeles claimed the largest settlement of Central Americans, laboring in the lowest-paid jobs, such as the garment industry or as household workers. Because of their low incomes, Central American families often doubled up in their living arrangements. In some cases, three families shared a single apartment.

While most Central Americans settled in cities such as Los Angeles, one of the main themes in post-1990

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immigration to the United States was the dispersal of resident aliens outside of the six major states for immigrants (California, Texas, New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Illinois). To be sure, roughly two thirds of the newcomers settled in these states in the first years of the twenty-first century, but those states' share of the foreign-born population had declined, as many immigrants headed for states such as North Carolina, Missouri, Minnesota, Arkansas, and Iowa, where few immigrants had been seen before.

Just as urban Central Americans used networks, so did those settling in smaller cities, towns, and suburbs. In 1987, a Guatemalan immigrant was hired by Perdue Farms, located in Georgetown, Delaware. Soon others followed, some of whom were relatives or from the same village as the first migrant. Soon whole communities of Central American immigrants appeared in towns where no immigrant communities had existed before 1990. Employment was a key to these networks, but so were churches and other familiar organizations.

While government officials labeled all Salvadorans and Guatemalans as Hispanics, many could scarcely speak Spanish. Rather, they were Maya but had many of the same reasons to leave their violent and poor land. They, too, built networks for the path to America. A Maya community developed in Indian-town, Florida, built around seasonal agriculture. In Morgantown, North Carolina, working-class jobs in the chicken-processing industry provided the lure, but these were undesirable positions. A large Maya community also developed in Los Angeles, and another was found in Houston. The first Maya to arrive in Houston was Juan Xuc, who came in 1979. He sent for relatives in his home village, and soon a steady stream of these Maya from Guatemala had built a Houston community.

For many young men without immigrant papers, the most difficult way to make a living was casual labor. In cities, and especially in suburbs, young men stood on selected street corners waiting for a day's work. If they were lucky, they would be hired in construction, which was booming in the early days of the twenty-first century. But many had to work in landscaping on a daily basis whenever such outdoor work could be performed. If unlucky, they received no employment at all and had to try again the next day. Some communities did not like young Central Americans (and Mexicans) standing on street corners, and several towns attempted, with little success, to halt these suburban informal hiring halls.

An important reason why these young men were willing to take such jobs was to earn money and send it home. Remittances were a vital part of these immigrant streams. Salvadorans sent \$2.5 billion home

in 2004, the largest figure of the Central American nations. The men hoped, too, that their children back home, or those with them, would find a better future. Certainly second-generation Central Americans were better educated than their parents and were learning English. Their incomes exceeded their parents' but still lagged behind native-born white Americans. Central Americans were largely an immigrant community, and the future of the second generation was not clear.

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CENTRAL LABOR UNIONS

Central labor unions (CLU) are localized groups that serve as an umbrella organization for unions, generally as a type of go-between between the local unions and the national association. While some of the

purposes might have changed over the years, the basic concepts have remained in place.

CLUs serve several purposes. Quite often there are labor issues that cross the lines between skilled and unskilled labor, between jurisdictions, and between different locals and councils. CLUs help to formulate policies that will enable the different bodies to approach a situation in a unified manner. Such tactics may involve the calling of a strike or boycott, whether primary or secondary, sympathy strikes, or even activities where a protest is not an issue, such as a parade or picnic.

CLUs often walk a fine line between keeping the international organization satisfied, recognizing the differences between their affiliated locals, deflecting public opinion branding them as puppets for the main organization, and debunking rumors about not caring enough for local concerns. To those in the national organizations, there is sometimes concern that these CLUs may try to take control from them. The late AFL-CIO president George Meany saw the CLUs as appendages to the AFL-CIO.

Prior to the rise of the modern union, skilled craftsmen organized themselves into guilds. Each particular craft had its own guild—shoemakers, printers, carpenters, and so on. Many of the concerns that face the labor movement in modern times were also important to these guilds. These included the apprentice system, wage scales, the number of work hours, working conditions, and the drive for the closed shop, meaning that only members of the guild were permitted to work in a particular place. Strikes were not unheard of. In the early years of the New Republic, many guilds went on strike in order to protect their interests. These guilds also served social purposes. Many provided small libraries for the use of their members, and some established insurance programs to provide for the families of members who were injured or killed on the job. Until fraternal benefit organizations such as the Knights of Columbus were created, these guilds were instrumental in taking care of their members.

Some of the earliest forms of CLUs began during the 1820s. The Mechanic's Union of Trade Associations was formed in Philadelphia in 1827. In places such as Philadelphia and New York, the number of trade associations grew by at least 50% over the next decade or two. Throughout the nineteenth century, these early CLUs were far more independent than modern ones, which are now affiliated with a national organization.

What is known as the modern union began to rise during the post-Civil War era. Formed in 1866, the National Labor Union (NLU) welcomed unions and city trade assemblies within its fold. The NLU

especially pushed for an eight-hour day for federal employees and created the National Labor Reform Party, a political entity to promote labor's agenda.

The Knights of Labor (KOL) was the next large national union, founded in 1869. This was an industrial, rather than a craft, union federation, open to those with and without particular skills. At first it was limited to the Philadelphia area, but then it expanded beyond those boundaries in 1874, thereby becoming a more national union. Like the NLU, however, the KOL would ultimately decline.

In New York, the CLU there was instrumental in organizing what many believe to be the first Labor Day in 1882. The New York CLU worked to both unionize and exert political power. Chicago would later in 1886 pick up on the idea of a recognized May Day.

The nation's largest labor organization, the AFL-CIO, first began in 1886, shortly after the deadly Haymarket Riot in Chicago, as the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The AFL was a craft union federation and persuaded many members of the KOL to join its ranks. Samuel Gompers, who held the presidency of the AFL (with a brief one-year exception) until his death in 1924, was opposed to industrial unionism. His "pure and simple" unionism focused on organization and economic power rather than political entanglements.

CLUs sprung up in all areas of the country. In Los Angeles, during 1884–1885, the printers, along with several other unions, established a Trades Council in order to support both a strike and a boycott. In order to support these actions, a daily labor paper was created in July 1885, but although it was on a firm financial footing, the paper wound up serving the cause of the printers exclusively. This new Trades Council also helped to mediate a labor dispute, a move that proved to be quite fruitful.

Other trades in Los Angeles followed this suit by establishing their own CLUs; the building trades, plasterers, painters, and carpenters all hoped to capitalize on this idea. These CLUs also went beyond trade organization by taking on political issues as well. A new Los Angeles Trade Council was formed in 1885, but this new organization failed to integrate many unions under its fold, as many of these locals were afraid to lose any form of autonomy. Another aspect of the problem was the intense anti-Chinese sentiment among the West Coast workers. Many of these workers feared that the new Trades Council would recognize, and incorporate, the Chinese workers. This fear was actually unfounded, as this new Trade Council even took part in an anti-Chinese convention in November 1885. Also, during that same year in March, a convention in San Francisco tried to

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unite the Pacific coast craft workers, but most unions showed little, if any, interest in the idea.

One very important CLU was formed in Chicago in 1896. Here, the AFL placed all the AFL-recognized unions under a central body, the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL). There were some central bodies already in existence in the city, one of which was the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly, formed in 1877. One of the main purposes behind creating the CFL was to curb corruption, especially amongst the leaders. Some leaders, such as Martin “Skinny” Madden and William Pomeroy, took corruption to heights none ever thought possible. Still, even after its formation, the CFL was still rife with graft. Madden continued to control the CFL, using strong-arm tactics to ensure his command.

Many of the city’s other unions, as well as the Illinois State Federation of Labor (which was in itself a type of CLU, although on a state, rather than a city, level), worked to remove Madden from power. In 1905, this took place. Under the watchful eyes of the Chicago police, an election was held, and the Irish-born John Fitzpatrick was given the presidency. Fitzpatrick was known for his honesty, and he and Gompers had a long working relationship, although at times the CFL strayed from official AFL policy.

During the New Deal, the labor movement, especially the AFL, took advantage of the gains provided by the federal government. Union rolls swelled. In 1935, led by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers of America (UMW), a new federation was formed, the Committee of Industrial Organization (CIO—which changed its name in 1938 to the Congress of Industrial Organizations). As opposed to the AFL, the CIO was an industrial union, organizing workers regardless of their skill level. The two organizations were at odds for a number of years, eventually forming themselves into a single body, the AFL-CIO. But prior to that time, there was considerable bad blood. Some CLUs, such as the Central Labor Union of Great Falls, and the Rochester Central Trade and Labor Council, donated small amounts of money to the CIO in 1937. The result was that many AFL-affiliated unions would not recognize these organizations.

The AFL-CIO saw its share of troubles concerning CLUs and keeping them within the fold. During the first years of the 1930s, prior to the formation of the CIO, the auto workers in Ohio were making independent strides. Some CLUs were told to disband if they went against AFL policies. In 1934, the Cleveland Auto Council was determined to form its own international union. In 1935, the AFL Executive Council sent calls to all federal unions in the auto industry to send delegates to a convention in Detroit. Despite the

250 delegates in attendance, very little was accomplished, as there were persistent squabbles over issues such as the election and/or appointment of officers.

During 1995, the Teamsters and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) withdrew from the AFL-CIO, causing a number of problems for central labor unions. Some of these problems were financial difficulties, loss of grassroots organizational activities, the feeling of disaffiliation, and loss of potential protection that might have been provided by the CLU and the AFL-CIO. In addressing these concerns, the AFL-CIO took several steps concerning the existing CLUs. These stipulations included the submission of financial statements, with financial assistance to those in arrears due to the disaffiliation, and meetings to establish plans of action. In addition, CLUs were not permitted to accept any unions or dues, or to allow access to records, participate in political or solidarity activities, or issue mobilization campaigns with disaffiliated unions. The AFL-CIO also began to make plans for establishing advisory bodies and strategy campaigns, and for strengthening working relationships with the still-affiliated CLUs.

MITCHELL NEWTON-MATZA

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CHÁVEZ, CÉSAR ESTRADA (MARCH 31, 1927–APRIL 23, 1993) President, United Farm Workers of America

César Chávez was the charismatic president of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, who led the union for over 30 years. During his career, he dedicated himself to fighting for a decent standard of living as well as justice for agricultural laborers. Through his efforts, he obtained union representation and contracts for one of the poorest and most exploited groups in the United States. As a labor leader,



César Chávez, half-length portrait, facing left. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-111017].

he became a national symbol of the Mexican-American civil rights movement that emerged in the 1960s. In recognition of his achievements, schools, parks, and streets have been named after him. California declared his birthday, March 31, a holiday in his honor. It is the first American holiday honoring a Latino leader.

Born in 1927 near Yuma, Arizona, Chávez was named after his grandfather, who in the 1880s had fled the hardships of peonage under the dictatorship of Mexican President Porfirio Díaz. Chávez's father, Librado, married Juana Estrada, an immigrant from Chihuahua, in 1924. After the couple married, they left the family ranch and operated a general store, while Librado served as the local postmaster. The couple had six children. César was their second child and oldest son. The Great Depression caused severe hardship; the family lost their business and moved back to Librado's parents' farm. Drought coupled with depression economics and fraud forced the family off the ranch and into the migrant stream.

Desperate to survive, the family responded to notices of steady agricultural work in California. The relatively stable existence in Arizona presented a stark contrast with the migrant worker experience in California. Customary attendance at Laguna School outside Yuma, combined with farm chores, was

replaced by frequent absences at some 30 schools in California's fertile valleys. Unpredictable harvests and the demands of the poverty-stricken migrant life dictated the family's precarious existence and limited access to education and adequate housing. The experience left an indelible impression on the 10-year-old Chávez.

Seasonal agriculture drove the family's routine. In a yearlong cycle, the Chávezes began their journey in the Imperial Valley, just over the California-Arizona border, picking peas and mustard greens and bunching carrots. In mid-spring, the family traveled to Oxnard for beans and then north to San Jose for the fruit harvest. Then it was on to the Sacramento Valley for the early summer harvest. In late summer, grapes, prunes, and tomatoes needed cultivating in the Fresno area. In the fall, the cotton crop in the San Joaquin Valley required laborers. The arduous sequence repeated itself when the Chávezes returned to their winter base in the Imperial Valley. The work was exhausting, the wages poor, the hours long, the conditions substandard, the housing inferior, and the labor contractors unscrupulous. After his father sustained an injury, Chávez left school to work full-time in the fields. With his graduation from the eighth grade in 1942 at age 15, he ended his formal schooling. Chávez credited his mother's strength and Mexican Catholicism for sustaining the family during these difficult years.

Enlistment in the U.S. Navy in 1944 interrupted the migrant cycle for Chávez. He served in the western Pacific as a deckhand. At the end of the war, he returned to California to work in the fields and in 1948 married Helen Fabela, a young farm worker he had previously courted during the many times his family had labored in the grape harvest in Delano. Characteristic of the high postwar birthrate, the couple had eight children between 1949 and 1959. With a growing family to provide for, Chávez returned to the migrant life, traveling up and down the state with his relatives, his young wife, and their small children. Like many young men of his generation, his military service had changed him. He grew dissatisfied with this dismal employment with no prospects. In the increasingly politicized racial and ethnic communities during the 1950s, this discontent propelled the establishment of groups committed to challenging injustice and prejudice intensified by wartime social tensions. Organizations spread quickly in cities and towns with large Mexican-heritage populations.

The CSO Years

In California, the Community Service Organization (CSO) was one of the associations that reflected the

renewed interest in civic, social, and political activism. Started in Los Angeles in 1947 with joint financial support from the Chicago-based Industrial Areas Foundation (an initiative of social activist Saul Alinsky) and the Civic Unity League (established by Ignacio López), the CSO successfully backed the candidacy of Edward Roybal for the Los Angeles City Council. With this base, he was elected in 1962 to the U.S. House of Representatives, the first Hispanic from California to serve in Congress since 1879.

Capitalizing on its achievements in Los Angeles, the CSO launched an operation to organize chapters throughout California and the Southwest. In northern California, cities such as San Jose and Stockton were targeted. In San Jose, CSO organizer Fred Ross enlisted an initially skeptical Chávez, who was residing in the Mexican-American barrio Sal Si Puedes (which translated means “Get out if you can”). A reticent volunteer before becoming a paid organizer, Chávez quickly became the national director of the group in 1958. Assisting her husband’s effort, Helen Chávez frequently relocated her family to central valley towns slated for membership drives and prepared mailings. Tirelessly conducting house meetings, recruiting organizers, and establishing new chapters, Chávez built a loyal membership, honed his leadership skills, and initiated contacts with other Mexican-American community activists, such as Dolores Huerta and Gilbert Padilla. In addition to conducting citizenship drives and voter registration campaigns, the group protested discrimination in housing, employment, and education; advocated for neighborhood improvements; and worked to curb police brutality. In the early 1960s, Chávez pressed the CSO to undertake a more difficult challenge. When the CSO board declined to endorse his plan to organize agricultural laborers, Chávez abruptly resigned from this organization in 1962.

The Founding of the Union

With Dolores Huerta and other sympathetic CSO colleagues, Chávez started the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in 1962. For a number of years, Chávez and Huerta concentrated on building membership. Chávez centered his efforts in Delano, supported by his wife, Helen, who worked in the fields and raised their family. Huerta, a single mother of seven children estranged from her second husband, based her operation in Stockton, where she received financial help from her relatives. After repeated requests, she finally consented to join Chávez in Delano.

Chávez and Huerta agreed to spend several years solidifying their support before directly confronting agribusiness. This plan abruptly ended in 1965. In that year, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), a predominately Filipino union under the leadership of Larry Itliong and financed by the AFL-CIO, asked Chávez and Huerta to respect their strike against Delano grape growers. The membership voted overwhelmingly to honor the walkout, thus launching the celebrated Delano grape strike.

For five difficult years, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, or UFWOC (after the AWOC and NFWA merged in 1966), fought the powerful California wine grape and, later, table grape growers. The union received a big boost with a visit and pledge of financial help from UAW President Walter Reuther and important support from Senator Robert F. Kennedy, when the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor conducted hearings in Delano in March 1966. The struggle between the fledging union and agricultural giants attracted significant coverage from the national media. Although the union achieved success with an agreement with Schenley Industries, Chávez soon realized that strikes in the fields were unlikely to yield lasting results, given the overwhelming resources and political power of agribusiness. Frustrated with the need to picket extensive areas and facing intimidation, anti-union tactics, and the entrenched influence of corporate agriculture, the UFWOC turned to civil rights-era strategies of massive demonstrations, civil disobedience, and fasts by Chávez. Energized by the philosophy of nonviolence successfully pursued by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., Chávez and his supporters mobilized support for a national boycott on behalf of farm workers. Linking civil rights activism with appeals to solidarity based on Mexican Catholicism, liberation theology, and a sense of ethnic pride, Chávez won contracts with well-known wine grape growers, vulnerable because of their highly visible brands. The UFWOC then focused its resources on the more intransigent table grape producers.

Building on the successful boycott that targeted wineries, Chávez called on farm worker families to fan out across the country to entreat urban unions, religious supporters, students, antiwar protestors, environmentalists, consumer groups, sympathetic politicians, Mexican-American organizations, African-American allies, and average housewives to create an international boycott to exact concessions from agribusiness. The boycott eventually forced table grape growers, first in Coachella and later in Delano, to negotiate. The breakthrough came in the 1970s when growers signed the historic contracts covering 85% of the industry.

Twenty Years of Struggle

Instead of ending the bitter struggle, the years from 1970 to 1975 marked a more unified stance by agribusiness against the United Farm Workers (UFW), which became a chartered affiliate of the AFL-CIO in this period. A more coordinated effort between California growers, their political allies, and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters materialized. Even before the union could fully savor its victory in the grape vineyards, it confronted a lettuce strike in the Salinas area and rival Teamster contracts with vegetable producers. This jurisdictional dispute spilled over into the contract renewal talks with grape growers. In 1973, the Teamsters decimated UFW membership by signing contracts with former UFW grape producers. Workers voted to strike, and Chávez reinforced the boycott, embarked on a national speaking tour, and organized protests across the country. Back in California, violence broke out. Kern County jails overflowed as a result of massive arrests of farm workers and their supporters. In addition to labor disputes with Gallo wines, the union entered into another protracted boycott of lettuce, grapes, wines, and other products.

After years of hostile relations with the Reagan administration, the union welcomed the election in 1974 of Governor Jerry Brown. Chávez and his political allies in the Democratic Party lobbied the governor to support legislation that would end the continual turbulence in the fields and provide a legal foundation for the union's existence. A legislative compromise between the Brown administration, corporate agriculture, the Teamsters, and the UFW resulted in the passage of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) in 1975. Although the union accepted restrictions on the secondary boycott, for the first time in California's history, farm workers had the right to engage in government-regulated collective bargaining.

With the appointment of members to the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB), Chávez's farm workers appeared on the threshold of a new epoch of labor relations. In a flurry of field organizing, the UFW did, in fact, win the majority of elections. But discord in the fields was not over, as the Teamsters mounted an aggressive organizing campaign and corporate agriculture marshaled its political power to terminate funding for the ALRB. Chávez fought back with the ultimately unsuccessful Proposition 14 ballot, aimed at making the ALRB a permanent part of the California constitution.

The 1980 presidential victory of pro-agribusiness Ronald Reagan signaled a national tilt toward

conservatism and an antilabor climate. The election of Republican Governor George Deukmejian, a friend of corporate agriculture, exposed a similar shift in California. Additionally, the UFW experienced internal dissent regarding strategy and mounting criticism toward Chávez's centralized leadership. Strong differences of opinion and exhaustion from the intense battles led to the departure of longtime members of Chávez's inner circle. Union membership, which had peaked in the 1970s, drifted downward.

Unwavering in his commitment to farm workers, Chávez experimented with new tactics in the 1980s. Incorporating new technology, the UFW invested in direct mail and computer-generated mailing lists. Charges that Chávez had abandoned his original vision and de-emphasized field organizing grew. The decrease in activity, a characteristic that the UFW shared with the labor movement in general during the hostile Reagan era, prompted some observers to claim that Chávez had discarded his convictions and that his cause had lost its direction.

An Untimely Death

Ignoring the criticism, Chávez pressed ahead. In 1993, his sudden death in his sleep in San Luis, Arizona, not far from his birthplace, stunned his followers and admirers. He had gone there to testify in a legal suit against growers. Poor nutrition as a youngster, debilitating fasts, and the weight of leadership had extracted a heavy price. After years of declining membership and increasing indifference to farm worker concerns, Chávez's dream seemed to revive as a massive expression of grief over his unexpected passing overwhelmed farm workers and the many middle-class supporters whose lives he had touched. An estimated 40,000 mourners traveled to Delano to mourn and honor him. Millions more viewed the funeral on major national and international broadcasting outlets. His death promised to breathe new energy into "*La Causa*" (the farm workers' cause).

Despite his untimely death at age 66, Chávez remained an enduring symbol of change in many respects. His greatest aspiration was improving the lives of the men, women, and children who toiled in the fields. His dedication and drive awakened the conscience of a nation to the abject poverty and wretched circumstances of field workers, particularly those of Mexican heritage, in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. As a result of his charismatic leadership, workers and their middle-class supporters demanded dignity and respect; in addition, contracts negotiated wage increases and better work conditions,

including the provision of water and sanitary facilities, pesticide protections, and grievance procedures through the collective bargaining process. Under union contracts, workers also received health and pension benefits and their own credit union. Chávez's vision served as a catalyst for the emergence of the Chicano rights movement, "*El Movimiento*," in the 1960s. *La Causa* mobilized farm workers, middle-class Latino organizations, Mexican-American students, and Chicanas (women) to espouse a new sense of cultural pride and to fight for their civic, political, social, and economic rights. With his appeal for justice, dignity, and nonviolence, Chávez's message connected with middle-class Anglos and other racial and ethnic groups in a cross-class and cross-race coalition for social change. The recipient of many awards, including the Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian honor, bestowed posthumously by President Bill Clinton in 1994, the modest and soft-spoken Chávez eschewed the trappings of a major national figure and remained committed to his farm worker roots.

MARGARET ROSE

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- See also Agricultural Labor Relations Act (1975); Delano Grape Strike (1965–1970); Huerta, Dolores C.; United Farm Workers of America*

CHAVEZ-THOMPSON, LINDA (AUGUST 1, 1944–) American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations

Linda Chavez-Thompson is a second-generation Mexican-American who was born in Lubbock, Texas. Chavez-Thompson learned about hard work early in life: as a 10-year-old child who weeded cotton in west Texas full-time during the summer, and as a 15-year-old who quit school to help support her family by "hoeing and picking cotton on a full-time basis." Over the next 35 years, as an adult, she held several staff and high-profile leadership positions in local, state, and national labor organizations. Elected executive vice president of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in 1995, she is the highest-ranking minority representative in the U.S. labor movement in the early twenty-first century.

Chavez-Thompson has been connected in some capacity to organized labor for more than 40 years. In 1971, as the international union representative for the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in San Antonio, Texas, she was assigned to work in six "antilabor" states—Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah—in an attempt to increase union membership, particularly among the Spanish-speaking.

In the early 1970s, she gained considerable experience in union activities as the assistant business manager and then the business manager of AFSCME Local 2399. Chavez-Thompson undertook a major leadership role in labor through her position as the executive director of Local 2399 a few years later. In that capacity, she was responsible for creating policy, engaging in political action, and educating legislators about labor issues. As a result of several other labor appointments, for example, national vice president of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and the international vice president of AFSCME, she

carved out an important place for herself in the labor movement.

From 1993 until the latter part of 1995, she served as the vice president of the AFL-CIO. In early 1995, many top-ranking AFL-CIO members had begun to recognize the spiraling decline of the organization. In order to stem the tide of this decline, several union leaders asked then president Lane Kirkland to step aside in favor of Tom Donahue, his vice president. Kirkland adamantly refused to step down, and Donahue declined to campaign for the AFL-CIO presidency. Chavez-Thompson became part of a triumvirate of union insurgents that included John Sweeney, head of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and Richard Trumka, head of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) that formed a slate to run for the AFL-CIO leadership offices to replace longtime AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland and other incumbent union officials. Sweeney, Trumka, and Chavez-Thompson campaigned for substantive change in the AFL-CIO's operating philosophy and ran under the banner of "A New Voice for American Workers."

Their vision was to dramatically transform and reshape the 13 million member organization by making it more relevant for its membership, starting with their election in the late twentieth century. On October 25, 1997, Sweeney and the other members of the New Voice slate were swept into office after a hotly contested election between their camp and the camp of the interim AFL-CIO president, Tom Donahue, who had replaced Kirkland, who resigned as president prior to the 1995 convention.

As executive vice president, one of Chavez-Thompson's primary roles was "to reinvigorate the American labor movement." Toward that end, she advocated some innovative approaches to increasing the membership and the political activism of the AFL-CIO. She and the other labor leaders organized Union Summer, a project that sought to bring young people into the movement as union organizers and political activists. Chavez-Thompson was re-elected to a four-year term as executive vice president on September 30, 1997, and then re-elected for a second four-year term in 2001 and a third four-year term in 2005.

Chavez-Thompson has continued to play a significant role as one of the AFL-CIO's most prominent figures. She has focused her attention on the recruitment of Hispanic immigrants to increase the ranks of the AFL-CIO's dwindling membership, and she has sponsored several initiatives to develop coalitions with local, community, and women's rights groups and with nationally known civil rights organizations, such as the League of United Latin American Citizens

and the National Council of La Raza and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Chavez-Thompson has also become a major spokesperson for the AFL-CIO through her key appointments to various labor and political boards of trustees. She is a member of the AFL-CIO's Housing Investment Trust (HIT) board of trustees, which is responsible for investing the pensions of union workers in various real estate projects (housing) and which oversees almost \$4 billion in assets. Chavez-Thompson was appointed to President Bill Clinton's Initiative on Race and his Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. In 2005, Chavez-Thompson was appointed as a vice chairperson of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) under the leadership of its chairperson, Howard Dean, the former governor of Vermont (1991–2003) and a Democratic candidate for president of the United States in 2004.

Chavez-Thompson continues to play a major role in the American labor movement.

JOSEPH C. SANTORA

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF LABOR

The Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) was formed when two older labor organizations in Chicago, the Trades and Labor Assembly and the Labor Congress, merged in 1896 and applied for an American Federation of Labor (AFL) charter. From the Trades and Labor Assembly, the CFL inherited the membership and militant traditions of a group of local unions that included bricklayers, sailors, and carpenters, among many others. The Labor Congress, a group dominated by German-speaking socialists, bequeathed to the CFL its interest in the reform politics of the populist People's Party and the fledgling Progressive movement in Illinois. Although the Chicago Federation of Labor officially pledged to avoid political

endorsements upon becoming an AFL affiliate and to follow the AFL's national policies, the Chicago labor organization remained, in historian Richard Schnierov's words, "politicized to its core" and often served as an independent and powerful voice within the AFL. The first program of the CFL endorsed federal ownership of the railroads and telegraphs and municipal ownership of all utilities.

During the early years of the twentieth century, the CFL's reputation was marred by the corruption and racketeering of its president, John "Skinny" Madden. But in 1905, reformer John Fitzpatrick was elected to the CFL presidency, a position he held from 1905 to 1907 and from 1909 to 1946. Fitzpatrick enjoyed a reputation for absolute integrity and was strongly committed to union democracy. At a time when many labor leaders advocated centralizing contract powers within national and international union bureaucracies, Fitzpatrick sought to restore these powers to local unions. He also made CFL meetings a forum for democratic debate, advocated referendums on major union issues, and sought to reform parliamentary procedures within the AFL convention.

The CFL president's advocacy of democratic reforms won him the support of a talented group of labor activists. Among these, some, like Fitzpatrick himself, clearly fell within a "progressive union" tradition and advocated moderate evolutionary change within the labor movement and American society. Foremost among this group were Ed Nockels, CFL secretary; Margaret Haley and Lillian Herstein of the Chicago Teachers Federation; and Robert Buck, editor of the CFL's insightful newspaper, the *New Majority* (1919–1924). Until a fateful split in 1923, Fitzpatrick also welcomed socialists and syndicalists, who sought to bore from within the AFL to promote class revolution. Among these was William Z. Foster, a future leader of the Communist Party who played a critical role in organizing Chicago's packinghouse and steel workers. An Irish immigrant and ardent Irish nationalist, Fitzpatrick also strengthened the CFL by forming close alliances with area immigrant leaders, hiring immigrant labor organizers, and making the local labor movement a center for immigrant nationalist activities. The combined efforts of progressives, radicals, and immigrant labor activists helped to transform the Chicago Federation of Labor into one of the largest and most militant city labor councils in the country.

World War I ushered in a particularly important era in the CFL's history as the organization became a center for pacifist politics as well as for major industrial organizing drives. CFL leaders like Fitzpatrick opposed American entrance into World War I, partly because of their ethnic ties to former homelands.

Equally important, however, was that many CFL activists were imbued with an ethos of international labor solidarity and believed that the business class was trying to drive the country into war for the sake of its own profits. They argued, however, that it would be workers who paid the price on the battlefields. In an effort to undermine the rush toward war, the CFL fought efforts to introduce military training in the schools, staged parades opposing military preparedness, and rallied on behalf of a movement demanding a democratic national referendum on the question of war or peace. The CFL also lobbied the AFL to demand that American citizens be prevented from entering war zones so as to prevent the escalating pattern of attacks that would inevitably lead to war.

At a carefully planned meeting of AFL representatives from which municipal labor leaders were excluded in March 1917, however, the AFL pledged its loyalty to the government in the event of war. Its efforts to mount a national antiwar campaign thwarted by the AFL, the CFL devoted 1917–1918 to using the wartime situation to labor's advantage. In particular, the CFL became, in the words of historian James Barrett, the "heart and brain of the two great World War I drives to organize mass-production workers in the steel and meat-packing industries." The campaigns scored some significant successes during the war but were undercut by fierce business counterattacks and by ethnic and racial divisiveness in the postwar era. The CFL's innovative campaigns nonetheless marked an important step forward in the march toward industrial unionism.

Disillusioned by the AFL's close relationship with the Wilson administration during the war, the CFL also launched independent city and county labor parties in 1919 and played a leadership role in creating the Illinois Labor party and the national Farmer-Labor party. The parties were particularly notable for their imaginative reinterpretation of American democratic ideals to justify democratic control of industry, majoritarian rule by a labor party, a democratic alternative to the League of Nations, and support for nationalist rebellions throughout the world.

Although Fitzpatrick lost decisively in his bid for mayor of Chicago in 1919, he fared surprisingly well for a third-party candidate. National Farmer-Labor Party presidential candidate Parley Christiansen, however, performed abysmally in 1920, undercut by AFL opposition, lack of funding, and a lack of press coverage. Subsequent efforts to build a more broadly based labor party movement faltered when communists packed one of the movement's conventions with their own delegates and wrested control of it from Fitzpatrick and his colleagues. Fitzpatrick subsequently

disavowed the party that emerged from the convention, and a bitter animosity developed between the CFL and Chicago-area communists that would have divisive consequences for the future of the city's labor movement.

Censured by the AFL for its independent labor party politics and disillusioned by the fruits of its political labors, the CFL renewed its commitment to the officially nonpartisan policies of the AFL in 1924. Yet in many ways the CFL remained an independent and visionary force in the labor movement. The CFL secretary Edward Nockels, for example, continued to pursue his dream of an independent labor radio station, despite the early indifference of the AFL. Nockels, in contrast to many of his superiors in the AFL, was convinced of the revolutionary potential of the new technology and, according to historian Nathan Godfried, hoped to use a labor-owned radio station "both negatively, as a way to counter the propaganda of the capitalist media and positively, as a way to shape working-class culture and consciousness." The CFL secured a license to operate radio station WCFL, the "Voice of Labor," in 1926 and soon began broadcasting a creative mix of labor news shows, music, sports, and entertainment. WCFL fought many valiant battles with the Federal Radio Commission over the allocation of clear radio frequencies and changed greatly over time, but nonetheless continued to broadcast until 1978, when the CFL sold the station.

During the early years of the Great Depression, the CFL also continued to play a leadership role in the movement for industrial unions. Historian Barbara Newell has noted that after the Roosevelt administration successfully secured passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act, small locals sprang up in the meatpacking and steel industries that "formed around a nucleus of employees . . . who had been introduced to trade unionism in the earlier organizing attempts of Fitzpatrick and Foster." The CFL vigorously supported Chicago's meatpacking and steel locals, and they in turn played an important role in transforming the union movement in the two industries. Following the lead of the AFL, however, the CFL refused to aid the industrial union campaigns of the Congress of Industrial Organizations after it emerged in 1935. In part, CFL leaders feared a divided labor movement. Fitzpatrick, still bitter over the demise of the Labor Party, also distrusted the area communists who led many CIO organizing drives. The split in the ranks of labor isolated the CFL from key segments of the industrial union movement that it had previously nurtured.

The election of William Lee to the presidency of the CFL after Fitzpatrick's death in 1946 brought a significant shift in focus to the organization. Lee, who reigned as president until 1984, oversaw the merger

between local AFL and CIO unions and became notable for cultivating close ties with the Cook County Democratic Party and the Democratic Mayor Richard J. Daley. Supporters argued that Lee's close relationship with Daley helped the CFL to expand its community influence: CFL representatives were awarded seats on the board of nearly every major public body in Chicago, including the Board of Education, Housing Authority, and Public Building Commission. Opponents charged that Lee undermined the independence and militance of the Chicago labor movement and aligned it on the wrong side of many civil rights struggles.

Since 1984, a succession of CFL presidents has revitalized campaigns to organize nonunionized workers and has mobilized to try to stem the national tide of deteriorating conditions for many union workers. The CFL has also demonstrated a renewed interest in global economic and foreign policy issues, as was evidenced in a vigorous discussion on the planned U.S. invasion of Iraq in February 2003. Campaigns and debates in the early twenty-first century suggested that many of the issues raised by twentieth-century labor activists would remain relevant into the twenty-first century.

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See also **Central Labor Unions; Farmer-Labor Party; Fitzpatrick, John; Foreign Policy**

CHICAGO TEACHERS' FEDERATION

The Chicago Teachers' Federation, founded in 1897 and powerful through the 1920s, was the largest teachers' association of its time and the first to affiliate with organized labor. Organized by and for elementary school teachers, its membership and staff consisted almost entirely of women, who dominated the teaching staff. At its height in the early 1900s, over half of six thousand Chicago elementary school teachers were members of the Federation. Its success was due primarily to its two officers, former teachers Catherine Goggin, who acted as secretary until her death in 1916, and Margaret Haley, who acted as business representative until her death in 1939. Haley, in particular, had a defining impact on the Federation during her 40 years of leadership, and she directed the organization's political agenda.

With a membership of disenfranchised women, the Federation held little power in the city and state offices with which it had to promote its cause. In order to bolster its authority, the Federation made an unprecedented alliance with organized labor, affiliating with the Chicago Federation of Labor in 1902. The membership led to a barrage of public criticism, yet it also led to salary increases and political power. In 1916, the Federation became Local 1 of the newly formed American Federation of Teachers. In 1917, however, the Federation was forced to withdraw from both organizations under a series of Board of Education regulations that effectively prohibited its teachers from memberships in labor unions.

The Federation was founded to defend a recently won pension law for elementary teachers and to protest a freeze on teacher salary increases, but its scope soon expanded into broader economic and political reform. In one of its earliest public actions, the Federation challenged corporate taxation exemptions that minimized the Board of Education budget, and it opposed the movement to reorganize city school administration away from community governance into a powerful, centralized superintendent's office. The Federation also joined with other Chicago organizations in campaigns for electoral and municipal reform, and with labor in opposing vocational education and school budget cuts.

The Federation functioned in part as an intellectual and political organization for women teachers, providing educational course work and promoting teacher participation in school management through democratic school and district councils. A regular Federation newsletter and monthly membership meetings kept the membership engaged in ongoing political work, and its tiny office in downtown Chicago was often jammed with teachers busily writing

broad­sides to promote current campaigns. Its female leadership advocated women's suffrage and equal pay for men and women teachers.

The Federation gained national recognition by challenging the policies of the administrator-dominated National Education Association (NEA) and demanding the participation of women teachers in that organization. Between 1897 and the 1920s, the Federation sent hundreds of teachers to the annual NEA meeting, forcing the organization to address the needs of classroom teachers and leading to the 1920 election of Chicago Superintendent Ella Flagg Young as the first woman NEA president. In these years, the Federation was known to teachers throughout the nation as a powerful advocate for women elementary teachers' rights, and it developed great political clout in Chicago and in the larger educational community.

Federation membership was overwhelmingly female and predominantly Irish-American. Concerned about the marginalization of their own group, Federation leaders were not willing to include men teachers or high school teachers in their organization. Long-standing ethnic bigotry also led them to ignore African-American teachers. As the Chicago teaching staff diversified in gender, race, and ethnicity with the expansion of secondary schooling after World War I, the Federation became increasingly isolated from the growing, and more inclusive, AFT locals, and it refused to join in the 1937 amalgamation that became the Chicago Teachers' Union. After Haley's death, the Federation limped along with its aging female membership, monitoring the pension and taking conservative stands on the persecution of communist teachers in the 1950s and on racial integration of schools in the 1960s. The Federation formally disbanded in 1968.

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See also **Haley, Margaret**

CHICAGO TEAMSTERS STRIKE (1905)

A bitter labor dispute, the Chicago Teamsters strike of 1905 lasted 105 days, from April to August 1905, and violence stemming from the strike left 416 people

injured and 21 dead. The strike resulted from efforts by Chicago employers to reduce the power of the Teamsters Union, efforts that were only partially successful. In seeking to achieve their goal, employers promoted public concerns about union corruption and sought to fan racial tensions in the city.

In 1905, Chicago was a stronghold for the recently formed International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). Nationwide, the union claimed a membership of 45,000 with about 30,000 of those members located in Chicago. Organizing efforts in Chicago had begun in 1899 and enjoyed great success by 1902. The union's rapid growth benefited from a network of collusive arrangements with team owners associations. In return for agreeing to a closed-shop contract, the union promised employers it would help enforce cartel arrangements controlling competition and price. These agreements led most team owners to support union organization of their employees, the drivers. As the union grew, it assumed an increasingly active role in the city's labor affairs. By choosing whether or not they would honor another union's picket line, team drivers often could determine the fate of a strike or organizing campaign. If the drivers refused to cross the picket line, they denied the employers needed supplies. In so doing, Teamsters were in fact engaged in a kind of sympathy strike. The union used this power to pressure employers in a range of industries to agree to accept the organization of their employees. In so doing, the Teamsters earned the ire of Chicago's business interests.

As union gains mounted across the country in the early years of the 1900s, an employer counteroffensive resulted, and Chicago employers took a leading role in this counteroffensive. Associations of employers, in Chicago and other cities, sought to engage in concerted efforts to break organized labor's power by attacking key union strategies, such as the union shop contract and the sympathetic strike. The Chicago Employers' Association (CEA) specifically hoped to confront the Teamsters Union, because of the latter group's strategic role in promoting organized labor in that city.

The CEA's opportunity came in early April 1905, when the Chicago Teamsters declared their intention to support a strike by the United Garment Workers Union (UGW), whose members had been fired several months earlier by Montgomery Ward & Company. When the Teamsters announced that their members would make no more deliveries to Montgomery Ward & Company until it came to terms with the UGW, the CEA responded by having all of the other city's department stores order their drivers to make the forbidden deliveries, forcing those Teamsters to join the walkout as well. In this way, the CEA spread the

dispute beyond the initial company. When the UGW pulled out of the dispute in late April and the Teamsters tried to end it, the CEA kept the strike alive by refusing to allow the striking Teamsters to be rehired.

By early summer, about five thousand Teamsters were on strike, and on Chicago's streets, daily street battles took place between strike supporters and convoys of nonunion wagons with armed guards on board trying to negotiate the unfriendly city avenues. The city assigned the bulk of its police department to strike duty, but Mayor Edward F. Dunne, who had been elected with the support of organized labor, refused to have the crowds driven from the streets. Nor would he call for state or federal forces to enter the city and restore order. Without such a request from the mayor, neither Illinois's governor nor President Theodore Roosevelt was willing to intervene. As a result, the employers' wagons remained vulnerable and unable to make all of the needed deliveries.

The employers turned for help to the courts, where they received more sympathetic treatment. Court injunctions forbade further union picket activity. But more significantly, the employers convinced the state prosecutor's office to launch a union corruption investigation that could bring the Teamsters Union's leadership into disrepute. Meeting on a daily basis with the CEA, state prosecutors directed a grand jury probe that eschewed any investigation into employer activities and which came to focus on the private life of the Teamsters president, Cornelius P. Shea. Details about Shea's alleged visits to a brothel and an extramarital relationship became front-page news, supplemented by unsubstantiated charges of bribe taking. In July, the grand jury indicted Shea and other union leaders, not for corruption, but on conspiracy charges that stemmed from leading a sympathetic strike. Despite the bias of the investigation, the mud stuck; and the union's leaders, as well as the strike, were discredited in the eyes of many Chicagoans.

Just as corruption charges swirled around the strike, so too did racial tensions. African-Americans from southern cities made up a portion of the replacement drivers recruited by the CEA. Chicago newspapers highlighted the role of these black drivers, and in news stories and cartoons, the papers played on white racial antipathies. Similarly, the Chicago police encouraged violence against black replacement drivers, and at one point during the strike, police rioted through a district of town where some of the replacement drivers were staying. Some observers charged that the CEA sought to play on racial tensions in order to create a violent incident that would justify intervention by the state militia. But the Teamsters, which had from the beginning been a biracial

CHICAGO TEAMSTERS STRIKE (1905)

union, urged its membership to avoid seeing the strike in racial terms.

By August 1905, the strike petered out to its end. The Teamsters accepted the fact that their striking members would not be rehired, and the CEA gave up its efforts to destroy the union. Although department store drivers remained nonunion for decades, most of the rest of the city's teamsters remained well organized. But a chastened Teamsters Union avoided further involvement in sympathy strikes. More significantly, the corruption charges had undercut the legitimacy of the union's power, which was now seen as abusive and irresponsible.

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See also **International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

CHILD CARE

As slave and unpaid labor in households, and as paid work in the market economy, the organization of child-care work by both gender and race plays a central role in the labor history of the United States. An analysis of the work of child care (both historical and contemporary) reveals continuity, as well as changes, in the ways in which gendered and racialized ideologies of motherhood and care organize social and economic life.

The Agricultural Economy, Slave Labor, and Child Care

Women's slave labor as field workers, care workers, and child bearers demonstrates the ways in which the gendered and racialized organization of labor benefited white land owners. Given the legal status of slave children as property constituting both future workers and "commodities" that could be sold, slave women's bearing of and caring for children enhanced the productivity and economic status of the master. If slave women were fortunate enough to keep their children, they were most often denied the opportunity to care for them. On larger plantations, slaves not capable of

field work (older women and children) often assumed the work of providing collective care for slave children while their parents worked in field and house labor.

A small number of slave women worked as house servants and, while prohibited from caring for their own children, were deemed suitable to care for the children of their white masters. Slave women provided child care and served as wet nurses for the children of their masters while the white mistress managed the household (performing some direct household labor depending on the size of the plantation). This gendered and racialized organization of labor presages the status hierarchies further developed in the industrial economy—in the provision of paid and unpaid child care, as well as in other forms of labor.

The Industrial Economy: Gendered and Racialized Ideologies and Practices

In the mid-nineteenth century, the growth of industrialization in the United States fostered an increasingly dualistic, gendered, and racialized view of social and economic life: a division of labor into "separate spheres" of family and market. As production moved from plantations and farms to factories, households took on a new identity. Perceived to exist in the "private sphere," households were increasingly viewed as serving the social and economic roles of consuming rather than producing. In contrast, the market became identified as the sphere of production: the "public sphere." These transitions in the location and perception of work resulted in an ideology that not only distinguished the family from the market, but also identified these two spheres as explicitly gendered. The workplace, a place of paid labor, rationality, and competition, became identified with an ideology of masculinity. In contrast, women's behaviors and values were construed to be the result of their relational family experiences, and home and family became increasingly idealized as a place of feminine nurturance, affection, and care. This idealized notion of womanhood (often called the cult of domesticity or the cult of true womanhood) clearly conflicted with the reality of the lives of immigrant women, women of color, and poor white women whose paid labor was essential to the survival of their families. Nonetheless, the racialized, gendered, and class-based ideal took root, and the ideology of white womanhood and the full-time, at-home mother intensified in the American consciousness.

The competing need for women of color and poor women to provide unpaid domestic work (including child care) in their own homes, and the need for them as paid workers in the market economy, led to the first formally recognized day nurseries. With the growth of urban industrial production, poor women increasingly sought income through factory work and were unavailable to care for children within their own families. In response, philanthropists and wealthy women joined forces in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to organize charitable “day nurseries.” Often viewed as a “necessary evil” by whites (and some blacks), day nurseries were seen to provide a service for those families unable to transition smoothly to the ideal of the emerging industrial economy—a family in which wives engaged in unpaid domestic (household) labor while husbands engaged in paid industrial production. In contrast, the black clubwomen’s movement, acknowledging both black mothers’ employment and the racial segregation of most white-run nurseries, established day nurseries for black children. Under the leadership of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), local affiliates organized urban day nurseries to care for African-American children in both the North and the South.

As a result of the reduction in both immigration and social reform activism, day nurseries declined following the Progressive Era and WWI. With the decline of charitable day nurseries, the subsequent major development in child care involved the emergence of private nursery schools and kindergartens serving middle- and upper-class families. While private nursery schools emerged as an institution of the middle and upper classes to promote early childhood education and development, day nurseries and child-care facilities were increasingly stigmatized as serving the working poor—families unable to achieve the ideal of a male breadwinner and female homemaker.

The Great Depression and World War II: Change and Continuity in Child Care

The Great Depression and WWII are often heralded as an era of dramatic change in both the public attitude toward and public provision of child care. While direct federal involvement in the provision of child care during the 1930s and 1940s represented a change from previous practice, a closer look at federal policy reflects historical continuity in its endorsement of

gendered and racialized ideologies regarding women’s labor—including the paid and unpaid care of children.

During the Great Depression, female-headed households increased through divorce and desertion, thereby challenging the ideology of the “separate spheres” with its male breadwinner and female homemaker. Without a male breadwinner, how could mothers provide full-time care for their children? Congress partially addressed this conflict with enactment of the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program in 1935. While publicly funded grants aided poor mothers in providing the basic necessities for their children, ADC continued to endorse the gendered division of labor and the ideology of the full-time, at-home mother. “Deserving” white mothers who were unable to sustain a male/female family structure through no fault of their own (for example, white widows) were viewed as most suitable for ADC. Limited support was available for divorced, separated, or deserted mothers; benefits were systematically denied to African-American mothers; and able-bodied women with school-aged children were disqualified from the program. In addition, while providing limited funds for the support of children, ADC provided no economic benefits to mothers themselves, further endorsing the need for the income of a male breadwinner in a family.

Given the growth of female-headed households and limited government support, women increasingly sought paid employment. In labor markets organized by race and gender, domestic service, including child care, served as one of the primary sources of employment available to immigrant women, women of color, and poor white women. Yet, Congress denied home-based workers rights under the labor legislation enacted during the New Deal—including the Fair Labor Standards Act, the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Social Security Act, and the National Labor Relations Act. This exclusion of women’s home-based paid labor further reflects the historical privileging of white male industrial workers by policy makers and the unwillingness to recognize women’s paid household and care work as legitimate labor.

In 1933, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) instituted Emergency Nursery Schools, primarily to provide jobs for unemployed teachers and, only secondarily, as a source of child care for working mothers. Many of the Emergency Nursery Schools were segregated, and qualified white teachers often refused to work in schools serving black children. In addition, employment turnover in nursery schools remained high, especially so with the growth of the war industry and the availability of more lucrative jobs for women in industrial production.

With the rearmament and mobilization programs of 1940–1941, the Federal Works Agency, with funding through the Lanham Act, took over the provision of child-care programs previously sponsored by the WPA. The war industry and federal government combined to train white women for industrial positions as welders, shipfitters, riveters, and machinists. Women of color, trained and hired to a much lesser degree in skilled industrial positions, found employment in clerical and janitorial jobs. Despite its recruitment of women workers, the War Manpower Commission appealed to mothers of young children to stay at home, and only when the majority of single women were employed in the war effort did the Commission seek to draw married women into production. Further, Congress clearly stated that the provision of publicly funded child care under the Lanham Act constituted a “war emergency measure” and that government funds were both limited and temporary. Reflecting Congress’s position, at their peak in 1944, federally funded child-care centers cared for only a small portion of children in need—an estimated 120,000 children out of an estimated one million needing care. Unwilling to provide full public funding of group child care, the Federal Security Administration explicitly encouraged mothers to find individual care for their children.

The federal endorsement of child care as the private responsibility of families was further demonstrated at war’s end when the government quickly dismantled federally funded child-care programs. By October 31, 1945, all federally subsidized child-care centers received notice of funding termination. In addition, government-funded publicity campaigns explicitly encouraged mothers to leave paid labor and return to the prewar ideal of the full-time, at-home mother.

The Postwar Period: Child Care Becomes an Enduring Public Issue

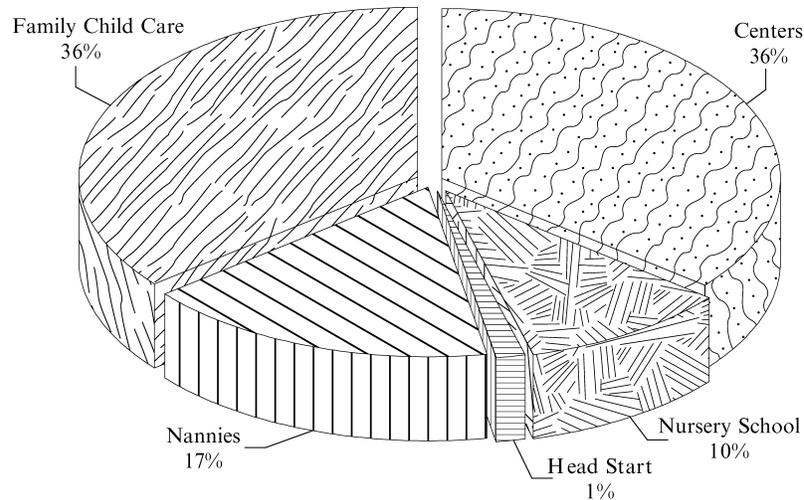
As policy makers terminated war-related child-care programs, the race- and class-based ideal of the full-time, at-home mother again grew and held sway well into the 1960s. Nonetheless, mothers continued to engage in paid labor in record numbers. While only 11% of mothers of young children reported engaging in paid labor in the immediate postwar period, that number grew dramatically, reaching 47% by 1980 and 62% by 2004. During these same years, black mothers of young children participated in paid labor at a rate 10% to 15% higher than their white counterparts. As mothers entered the labor force in record

numbers, their previous availability as full-time, at-home mothers declined—yet the need for child care remained. Who would care for this growing number of children? Ironically, but not surprisingly, it is women (disproportionately women of color and often mothers themselves) who provide the child care that enables other women to work outside the home.

A Contemporary Perspective

The increased employment of white and middle-class mothers in the postwar period reflects the changing ideology of motherhood. Values central to the cult of true womanhood and the ideology of the full-time, at-home mother included motherhood as incompatible with labor force participation, the need for a clear gendered division of labor in families (male breadwinner and female homemaker), and child care as the private responsibility of families. In contrast, the reality of the lives of postwar white and middle-class mothers increasingly reflected the historical ideology of motherhood long applicable to poor women and women of color—motherhood is compatible with labor force participation; the paid labor of mothers is often needed to support families, and the government may provide limited child-care benefits in selected circumstances. With this change in both the practice and ideology of motherhood, the conflict between women’s responsibilities as mothers and as paid employees became increasingly visible—as did the increased demand for child care as a service provided in the market economy.

Employed mothers use a variety of forms of institutional and noninstitutional care to meet the needs of their children. The most prominent form of care for young children of employed mothers remains informal care provided in families and households. In 2002, 52% of child care (both paid and unpaid care) used by employed mothers was provided in the informal economy by relatives, friends, and family members. The more visible form of child care is paid child care provided in both formal settings (for example, child-care centers, preschools) and home-based settings by family child-care providers (offering paid group care in the home of the provider), and by nannies and au pairs (see Chart 1). Despite the visibility of formal child-care centers as a source of paid care, in 2002, the majority of paid child care for young children (53%) was provided in home-based settings by family child-care providers and by nannies.



Child-Care Arrangements of Preschoolers of Employed Mothers: 2002

Source: Tabulations derived from "Who's Minding the Kids?" *Child Care Arrangements Winter 2002*, PPL Table 2a, U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/child.ppl-177.html, November 2005.

Paid Child-Care Work: Subsistence-Level Employment

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, child care stood as one of the 10 most rapidly growing industries in the United States. Despite this growth, the historical organization of paid child-care work by gender, race, and ethnicity remains constant. In 2003, women made up over 95% of paid child-care workers, and women of color made up one third of the child-care work force. Women of color disproportionately occupy the most poorly paid and lowest-status child-care jobs (as entry-level aides in centers and in homes as nannies and au pairs). In addition, the continued globalization of labor is reflected in child-care employment. As "transnational mothers," women from developing countries increasingly seek domestic employment in the United States, sending remittances from their domestic and home-based child-care work to others who care for their own children in their country of origin.

Child care remains a poverty-wage industry. Child-care workers earn one half as much as comparably educated women. In 2004, a quarter of child-care teachers and administrators reported incomes below 200% of the poverty line (roughly the minimum necessary to pay for basic necessities without public assistance). In the same period, nannies and family child-care providers reported earnings well below the minimum wage. In addition, domestic employees who worked as personal attendants (for example, nannies)

were explicitly excluded from federal legislation guaranteeing the right to a minimum wage.

In 2004, only one third of center-based teachers and administrators reported receiving health care as an employment benefit, and only one fifth reported participating in a pension plan. In the same period, home-based family child-care providers and nannies reported that they were not covered under even the most basic of medical insurance and had insufficient wages to invest in pension or retirement plans. Lack of benefits and low wages took their toll, as one third of center-based and home-based providers left child-care employment each year in the early twenty-first century—most often to seek higher-wage employment.

Turnover, wages, and quality of care are interrelated in child-care employment. As early as 1988, research identified the most important predictor of quality child care as the wages of teachers and providers. Multiple studies have documented the presence of well-compensated, well-educated, and consistent child-care providers as significant predictors of quality care for children. Short-term benefits of quality child care include children's ability to socialize and learn, while long-term social benefits include lower crime, higher employment, lower poverty rates, and greater economic productivity. Thus, the needs of children and families for quality care, as well as the long-term interests of society for productive citizens, are directly linked to higher-quality jobs for child-care workers. Meeting the needs of children, child-care providers, and the community proves to be mutually enhancing.

Addressing the Needs of Children, Child-Care Workers, and the Community

How might the need for high-quality care and high-quality jobs for child-care workers be addressed? Child-care workers and their advocates have used a variety of means to increase the quality of care, as well as the quality of child-care jobs. These include unionization, grassroots organizing, and campaigns for public funding of child care. While less than 5% of the child-care work force was unionized in 2003, in the same year five international unions reported active campaigns to organize child-care workers. Nonetheless, a union contract in and of itself is insufficient to change the wages of child-care teachers and providers. Given parents' limited ability to pay the full cost of quality care, as well as the public benefits that accrue from quality care, advocates, Unions, and policy makers have argued that public funding is essential to increase the stability, training, and compensation of the child-care work force. In 2001, 37 states reported funding indirect child-care compensation initiatives (for example, training and professional development programs). In the same year, 23 states reported programs to directly increase wages and benefits for child-care teachers and providers. The enactment of such programs implied public recognition that, as in K-12 education, long-term social benefits accrue through a public investment in the development and education of young children.

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CHILD LABOR

The commonly accepted twenty-first-century definition of child labor is the employment of children below a certain age as determined by custom or law. In most developed nations throughout the world, children working under the age of late adolescence—with exceptions made for schoolwork, household chores, and some paid work such as babysitting—is viewed as exploitative and unjust. The United States, as with other nations with advanced economies, passed through stages in its history wherein child labor was essential and normative, and only later came to be considered a social and economic problem. In developing nations functioning in the global economy of the twenty-first century, issues and challenges relating to child labor, to varying degrees, reflect many of those found in the United States at earlier stages of its economic growth.

Child labor in the United States has historically been integral to the family, or household, economy. Within the family economy, all members of the household contribute to the economic well-being of the familial unit. Middle- and upper-class families, especially those living in cities, often did not rely on the labor done or wages earned by their children for the economic survival of the household unit. But for poor and working-class families, as well as the majority of farming households, children and their labor power were vital and valuable resources. As the nation's economic development passed through various phases, the labor of children and their roles within both family and national economies have changed.

Child Labor in Colonial America

Child labor in the North American colonies was an expected and accepted aspect of everyday life. The colonies were land-rich but labor-poor, and as they matured, they faced chronic shortages of labor. The work of children was valued, not only as it was immediately used, but also as a preparation for a future, productive adulthood. As such, work itself and skills obtained in its execution were an integral part, or even the whole, of a child's formal education.

For children, their labor fell along a spectrum of “freeness” among the varying degrees of bound and free labor existing within the colonial economy. The spectrum ranged from work done within a free household headed by a child's own father to indentured servitude and to chattel slavery. Slaves labored as house servants in cities from Boston to Charlestown, on small farms in the North and the southern



Indiana Mfg. Co., Boy taking boards away from “double cut-off” machine. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, National Child Labor Committee Collection [LC-DIG-nclc-04487].

backcountry as labor supplementary to that of freeholder families, and constituted the largest component of the agricultural work force of the staple-crop plantation system that had firm roots in the southern colonies by the eighteenth century. Enslaved children worked where adult slaves worked, whether that were in the fields or the kitchens of their owners, or within the slaves’ quarters as part of a family unit, as soon as they were able to learn how to perform even the most rudimentary tasks.

Indentured servitude was a system by which individuals, both male and female, were bound to a master for a term typically ranging from four to seven years, or until the child reached adulthood. These indentured servants worked in a variety of capacities, but especially in agriculture. In return for the rights to the servant’s labor, the master was to provide food, shelter, clothing, and when the contract came to an end, “freedom’s dues,” which included rewards ranging from clothes and a small sum of money to livestock, tools, and sometimes land. In the cases of apprenticeship to skilled tradesmen, the bound child was typically male and living in an urban area, and the master provided education and training in a craft. Children bound to indentured servitude were often orphans or the children of poor, widowed, criminal, or dependent parents. Large numbers of apprentices came as well from families of middling economic means, while some slave owners apprenticed young,

male slaves so that they could learn trades that would make a household, farm, or plantation self-sufficient.

On small and large freeholder farms in New England, the Mid-Atlantic, and the southern backcountry, the household economy was largely self-sufficient. Here, immediate family members and possibly one or two hired hands, indentured servants, or slaves constituted the labor force. The household was the primary unit of production and consumption, and within this context the labor of children was vital. The very youngest children were responsible for tasks like feeding chickens or spooling thread. Older children, usually by the age of 10, if not earlier, mimicked the work done by their same-sex parent. For girls, they began learning the arts of “housewifery” from their mothers and did work which comprised in large part food preservation, cooking, sewing, cleaning, and medical and child care. Boys worked with their fathers doing numerous tasks that included plowing, sowing, and harvesting the fields, tending livestock, clearing land, and chopping wood.

Child Labor and Early Industrialization

After the American Revolution, the northern United States became increasingly market-oriented, industrial, and dependent on wage labor at the same time that

slavery came to an end in the region. As the “market revolution” took place in the North, growing numbers of households changed from productive to consumptive units. With few exceptions, the South continued to base its social and economic foundation on agricultural pursuits and was a region where the economy was inexorably linked to slave labor and staple-crop production. Through the Civil War, work done by children in the South, whether the children of white yeoman farmers in the upcountry regions or enslaved children working on southern farms or plantations, remained much the same as it had been during the colonial era. The same may be said of those living of farmsteads in newly settled western territories.

But new and different demands for child labor emerged in the northern states through the antebellum period. Ever larger numbers of households devoted their time and labor power to specialized production for the marketplace. With immigration and in-migrations into cities as well as towns along transportation and travel routes to and from the West, markets for both foodstuffs and consumer goods grew exponentially. Farming families began growing crops or produce not for a household’s sole use but for sale. Women and children began using their labor not to make clothes and foodstuffs for household consumption but to take in piecework, like sewing shoe uppers or ready-made garments, for cash payment that could purchase a range of household goods. Child labor, therefore, became an integral aspect of industrial homework in the rural countryside.

The putting-out system in which the “surplus labor” on family farms participated was part and parcel to the declining system of production of whole goods and apprenticeships within skilled trades. Master craftsmen, who became *de facto* bosses of semiskilled and unskilled workers, found that they could increase production and make the highest profits by breaking the manufacture of goods into smaller and more unskilled tasks that were “put out” into the countryside and done by rural women and children. Or the production of goods was carried out in industrial workshops by boys and men who would have formerly filled the ranks of apprentices and journeymen. Women and children in cities also took in piecework to support themselves or to supplement declining wages earned by husbands and sons now working in semiskilled or unskilled labor.

Industrial production also began drawing significant numbers of children into factories, especially into New England’s cotton textile mills. Through the 1830s, these textile manufacturers tapped into local pools of surplus agricultural labor and recruited a work force of young, mostly single women. These women lived in boardinghouses owned by the mills,

and many intended to work only a short time to supplement the earnings of a family farm or to earn a dowry. By the 1840s, however, an increased pace of production, declining workplace conditions, and lower wages paid for textile work drove many of these young women out of the mills at the same time that the first large numbers of Irish immigrants, pushed to the United States by poverty and famine, began taking jobs there. As this transition took place, mill owners abandoned the boardinghouse system and embraced instead a family labor system wherein the company hired multiple family members and set wage scales according to what a family rather than an individual might earn.

Textile manufacturing was just one of a growing number of manufacturing enterprises in the industrializing North that employed children. The workday in the mills averaged up to 12 hours a day during a six-day workweek, in poorly ventilated and often unsanitary conditions that left children with little time to attend school and that had likely adverse effects on their health and well-being. In addition, the low wages paid to children, especially within the context of the family labor and wage systems, had the effect of lowering wages paid to workers throughout individual industries. It was for these reasons that debates began over whether child labor was a positive good or a social and economic problem.

Child Labor and Reform

With the end of the Civil War came a reorganization of labor in the United States. Most significantly, slavery was abolished, and the entire nation, for the first time in its history, operated on a free-labor system. The war began increased industrialization and consolidations of capital in the Northeast and Midwest. Rapid expansion and settlement in the territories of the far West began. And in the South the foundation was set on which railroad building and industrial development would be built in the 1870s and 1880s and continue apace on a scale not before seen in the region. Immigration from abroad and in-migrations to cities from the countryside accelerated as well and supplied the labor needed to fuel this industrial growth. While these changes created opportunity and great wealth for some, it created discontent and hardship for others.

As economic expansion in the United States continued at a brisk pace through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, children were a continued presence in the agricultural and nonagricultural work forces, laboring on farms, in industrial

homework, in the street trades, and in mills, mines, and factories. By 1890, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that over 1.5 million children ages 10 to 14 were gainfully employed, 6.5% of the nation's total farm and nonfarm work force. The number of these children employed in industrial jobs increased more than threefold between 1870 and 1900, from just over 350,000 to nearly 1.1 million. It was when this crush of youngsters began working on the streets as peddlers, newspaper boys, and messengers, at home manufacturing piece goods, and in various capacities in mills, mines, food canneries, and factories for 10, 11, and 12 hours a day that child labor came to be widely recognized as an alarming fact of modern American life that needed to be changed. Although children, native and immigrant and black and white alike, continued to work, and worked hard, on farms—whether as members of families working a plot of owned or rented land or employed on commercial farms as itinerant pickers—groups calling for child labor reform perceived this work as fundamentally different from and even healthful in a way that industrial employment in factories and homes was not. Many turn-of-the-century child labor reformers saw agricultural work in this way, because it usually occurred under the supervision of parents and out of doors. It therefore remained largely absent from the wider child labor dialogue and the legislation passed in the first three decades of the twentieth century to regulate it.

Organized labor had been a vocal opponent of child labor since early in the nineteenth century. During the 1880s, 1890s, and through the turn of the century, national unions like the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor placed banning child labor high on their lists of objectives. These unions stressed the negative impact that long hours of work in unhealthy and unsafe surroundings had on children. But they also explicitly linked their attack on child labor to a broader assault on the family wage system, and to bolster calls for a living wage that would enable wage-earning men to support their families without wives, sons, and daughters working as well. Nonetheless, the reality of the situation remained that employers in general were recalcitrant about raising wages to a prescribed minimum, let alone a living wage standard, and the immediate, wholesale removal of children from the labor force would undoubtedly leave vast numbers of working families economically worse off than they currently were.

The issue of child labor, especially the humanitarian abuses seen inherent in it, also drew the attention of middle-class reformers by the turn of the century. What would be the future of the nation, these reformers asked, in a republic dependent on a strong,

educated, and engaged citizenry for its stability? The predominately white constituency of the child labor reform associations that had organized at the local, state, and national levels by the first decade of the twentieth century often articulated their arguments against child labor in nativist and racist terms. Reformers in northern and urban areas, in particular, questioned the ability of the nation to assimilate the large numbers of immigrants flooding into the United States if foreign-born children or children of foreign-born parents worked from childhood rather than attending school. Child labor reformers in the South, for their part, predicted a demise of the system of white supremacy that undergirded southern society should white children continue to labor sunup to sundown in mills and mines while their black counterparts went to school or worked in more healthful conditions on farms.

These arguments resonated with both the public and politicians during the Progressive Era, when both organized labor and middle-class reformers looked to the state to bring about effective child labor reform. Massachusetts passed the first child labor law in the United States in 1836. Through the turn of the century, state legislatures passed laws setting minimum ages and maximum hours of work for children, as well as compulsory education statutes in the industrialized North and Midwest, often at the behest of concerted lobbies representing organized labor and social reformers. By 1900, organized labor and child labor reform organizations concentrated their efforts on securing the passage of regulatory child labor laws in the South, and in 1903, Alabama passed the first twentieth-century child labor law in the region. In spite of such progress made at the state level, gaps remained from state to state in child labor regulations, school attendance laws, and their enforcement. While some child labor reformers continued their efforts at the state level, others began to work for a federal child labor law. Initial efforts did not result in the passage of a national law but facilitated the establishment of the U.S. Children's Bureau in 1912. Congress passed the first federal child labor regulation, the Keating-Owen Act, in 1916, but the U.S. Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional two years later. This was an important factor leading to a push, albeit unsuccessful, for a constitutional amendment granting Congress the authority to regulate child labor.

By the early 1920s, however, state child labor and compulsory education laws began having a measurable impact on the numbers of children working in industries throughout the United States, and the implementation of new technologies in numerous industries made work previously done by children obsolete. Yet, it was the onset of the Great Depression and

federal legislation passed as part of the New Deal that facilitated the most precipitous decline of child labor nationwide. During the catastrophic economic crisis, public perceptions radically changed about the role and powers of the federal government, and during the prolonged period of high unemployment, public sentiment turned solidly against giving jobs to children and adolescents rather than to adults. The child labor provisions outlawing the employment of anyone under 16 years old that were part of the codes of competition developed under the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in many cases only reflected changes that had already occurred. Although the NIRA was declared unconstitutional in 1935, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) in 1938 banned the employment of children under 16 years of age in all mining and manufacturing industries engaged in interstate commerce. It was not until 1949, however, that Congress amended the FLSA to include the first provisions relating to commercial agriculture.

Child Labor in the Age of Globalization

Child labor in the United States was largely eradicated during the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, in the early twenty-first century, it remained a persistent problem, especially among migrant agricultural workers and in the garment industry, where large numbers of immigrants worked, many of whom were in the United States illegally. Child workers were also found in industries worldwide—not uncommonly under dangerous, illegal, or exploitative conditions—in agriculture, manufacturing and mining, domestic and service industries, and numerous illicit trades ranging from drug trafficking to prostitution. Children were frequently employed directly or indirectly through subcontracted orders for companies headquartered in the United States or Western Europe, nations with stringent domestic child labor regulations. In fact, in the global economy, national child labor laws were not applicable beyond a single country's borders, and child labor reformers in the new millennium faced similar challenges that reformers in the United States faced at the turn of the last century, when vast disparities existed in child labor laws from state to state. Indeed, globalization had only hastened the “race to the bottom” in numerous industries, as capital was invested and reinvested in those places where operating costs were the lowest, which often came at the expense of the poorest in the global labor force. Globally, but most visibly in developing nations where opportunities for gainful employment were few, access to schools was limited, industrial regulations

were nonexistent or routinely violated, and labor was cheap, unorganized, and often repressed, child labor continued to be a pressing social and economic issue in the twenty-first century.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; American Standard of Living; Antebellum Era; Apprenticeship; Artisans; Children’s Bureau; Civil War and Reconstruction; Colonial Era; Fair Labor Standards Act; Family Wage; Garment Industry; Globalization; Great Depression: 1930s; Indentured Servitude; Keating-Owen Child Labor Act (1916); Knights of Labor; Living Wage; Midwest; Migrant Farmworkers; National Child Labor Committee; National Industrial Recovery Act; New South; Prostitution; Revolution and Early National Period; Slavery; Textiles; World War II**

CHILDREN’S BUREAU

Established in 1912 within the Department of Commerce and Labor, the Children’s Bureau was the first federal agency headed and staffed by women. Although it started off with a tiny budget and a mandate limited to research, the bureau played a major role in the development of U.S. children’s policies. During the height of its influence, it published hundreds of studies on laws and social conditions affecting children, distributed child-rearing advice to millions

of mothers, and spearheaded a mass women's movement that pressed the federal government to take greater responsibility for child welfare. Bureau officials shaped federal prohibitions on child labor and drafted the 1935 Social Security Act provisions for maternal and child health services and Aid to Dependent Children (welfare). The bureau is housed in the Department of Health and Human Services, where it provides grants to the states for foster care, adoption, and the prevention of child abuse.

The first two Children's Bureau chiefs, Julia Lathrop and Grace Abbott, were longtime residents of Jane Addams's Hull-House, and they shaped the bureau—and U.S. child welfare policy—according to their maternalist political beliefs. They saw childhood as a distinct stage of life requiring nurture and protection, believed that women had a special ability—and responsibility—for child welfare, and urged policy makers to make children their top political priority. Drawing on their extensive women's reform network, Lathrop and Abbott fashioned the Children's Bureau into a sort of national social settlement, the center of women's welfare activism. But their child welfare vision was distinctly middle-class: they believed all children needed education, a middle-class standard of living, and a "proper" home with a stay-at-home mother and a father who earned a decent wage.

The campaign against infant mortality was the bureau's first and most successful initiative. In 1915, 10% of all infants and almost 20% of infants of color died before their first birthday. To reduce infant and maternal deaths, the bureau improved the collection of vital statistics by expanding the birth registration area, distributed educational pamphlets, such as the bestselling *Infant Care* and *Prenatal Care*, and investigated the causes of infant and maternal mortality. Its infant mortality studies, based on interviews with mothers, were particularly innovative, for they mobilized community support while hammering home a key finding: the sharp correlation between poverty and infant death. By 1918, an estimated 11 million women had joined the bureau's baby-saving campaign.

The passage and implementation of the Sheppard-Towner Act between 1921 and 1929 marked the high point of the Children's Bureau's popular influence. The first federal social welfare measure in the United States and the first "women's" bill enacted after women won the vote, Sheppard-Towner provided matching grants to the states for prenatal and child health clinics, midwife training programs, visiting nurses, and other educational programs to reduce infant and maternal mortality. Despite providing no medical or nursing care, Sheppard-Towner was very popular with working-class mothers and contributed

to a modest reduction in infant mortality. Yet right-wing groups and the American Medical Association waged a bitter campaign against the bill, which they called a Bolshevik threat to the home, and eventually secured its defeat. The shutdown of Sheppard-Towner programs in 1929 brought the end of the maternalist movement. Although public health services for mothers and children were restored in the 1935 Social Security Act and expanded in the Emergency Maternity and Infant Care (EMIC) program of World War II, these strictly medical programs were targeted to specified populations and did not inspire broad popular support.

Child labor reformers had been the most vocal early advocates of a federal children's agency, and bureau officials made the abolition of child labor a top priority. The bureau administered the 1916 Keating-Owen Act, the nation's first child labor law, until it was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1918. Yet, unlike the baby-saving campaign, which received enthusiastic support from a broad cross-section of mothers, working-class parents who depended on their children's earnings did not necessarily share the bureau's middle-class ideas about the evils of child labor. Mothers could accept or refuse Sheppard-Towner health services, but restrictions on child labor were compulsory, and the bureau offered few alternatives to families' lost income. In any event, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Keating-Owen, and a second child labor law passed in 1919. Bureau supporters responded with a vigorous campaign for a child labor amendment to the constitution, but it was not until 1938 that the Fair Labor Standards Act wrote prohibitions on child labor into federal law.

Historians have debated the Children's Bureau's impact on U.S. welfare policy. Some praise the agency for its expansive vision of a welfare state that served children from every region, race, and class. Bureau officials were unusually responsive to its constituents, they argue, and the agency functioned as a "women's branch" of the federal government for a short time. In contrast, other scholars emphasize the bureau's middle-class bias and moralistic views of family life. Bureau efforts to promote "scientific" child rearing and a bland diet undermined ethnic cultures and healing practices, including midwifery, while the strategy of "putting children first" reinforced conventional gender norms. Bureau officials promoted policies, such as Aid to Dependent Children, that punished women who were sexually active outside marriage and stigmatized single mothers. Well into the 1930s, the bureau opposed maternal employment and birth control.

For good or ill, the Children's Bureau helped to produce a major transformation in the lives of working-class mothers and children. By 1929, one

half of U.S. babies were born to mothers touched by the agency's modern child-rearing advice. By the end of World War II, infants of every race, class, and region were born in hospitals, and infant and maternal mortality rates had declined. Nearly one hundred years after the bureau was founded, child labor remains largely illegal, childhood is recognized as a distinct life stage, and federal responsibility for child welfare is an established American value.

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See also **Addams, Jane; Child Labor; Hull-House Settlement (1889–1963); Keating-Owen Child Labor Act (1916)**

CHINESE EXCLUSION ACTS

The Chinese Exclusion Act, adopted in 1882, barred practically all Chinese immigrants from entering the United States for 10 years. It was the first federal law ever passed banning a group of immigrants based solely on race or nationality. The law also prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming American citizens. The Chinese Exclusion Act was renewed in 1892 and 1902, and made permanent in 1904. It was repealed in 1943.

Chinese immigrants began coming to America in large numbers in 1849, drawn by the gold rush to California. Many worked as miners, cooks, laundrers, and agricultural and manufacturing laborers. Racial hostilities erupted in the mining camps when whites tried to drive all "foreigners"—Mexican, South American, and Chinese—from the region. Some Chinese immigrants had signed contracts in their native land to work for a set period of time at low wages, and miners and others singled them out for attack. Exploiting this sentiment, California politicians passed numerous discriminatory laws against

the Chinese in the 1850s that restricted their settlement and forced them to pay special taxes. Despite these measures and the bigotry and violence, Chinese immigrants kept coming to California and the western United States. In the 1860s, the Central Pacific Railroad Company brought thousands of workers from China to build the western portion of the transcontinental railroad. By 1870, 63,254 Chinese were living in the United States: 49,310 (78.0%) of them in California and 62,864 (99.4%) in the West. Because few Chinese had settled east of the Rocky Mountains, Chinese immigration remained a regional rather than a national issue.

This changed in 1870 when a manufacturer in North Adams, Massachusetts, transported 75 Chinese immigrants from California to break a shoemakers' strike. Workers throughout the East and Midwest protested vigorously, denouncing this "importation" of Chinese laborers. Although lacing their comments with racism—a racism voiced in Congress and newspapers everywhere—workers did not oppose Chinese immigration, distinguishing carefully between "imported laborers" and "free immigrants."

The North Adams incident and ensuing uproar drew national attention to the Chinese issue, but California remained the hotbed of anti-Chinese activity. Chinese composed 8.5% of the state's population in 1870 and one fourth of San Francisco, the state's largest city. Because most Chinese immigrants were single men, they composed one third of the city's work force. When the Panic of 1873 ushered in a major nationwide depression and sent unemployment soaring, Chinese immigrants became a scapegoat throughout California. Politicians of both parties urged Chinese exclusion, and a candidate could not be elected governor or senator without advocating immigration restriction. With the aim of winning California in the presidential election of 1876, both the Republican and Democratic parties wrote anti-Chinese planks into their national platforms.

The national railroad strike of July 1877 sparked anti-Chinese riots in San Francisco. These riots gave birth to a new political organization, the Workingmen's Party of California (WPC), which sought to rein in corporate power and end Chinese immigration. WPC president Denis Kearney emerged as the leading anti-Chinese crusader, and the party quickly threatened Republican and Democratic dominance in the state.

In 1878, President Rutherford B. Hayes urged restriction of Chinese immigration and suggested renegotiating the Burlingame Treaty, an 1868 pact between the United States and China that permitted free immigration. Congress then passed a resolution endorsing this policy. In January 1879, the House of

Representatives passed the Fifteen Passenger Bill, a measure aimed at limiting to 15 the number of Chinese passengers on each incoming ship to the United States. When the bill reached the Senate in February, James G. Blaine became its most prominent sponsor. Senator Blaine was the leading contender for the Republican nomination for president in 1880. In championing the bill, Blaine argued that Chinese exclusion would defuse class and racial tensions and protect American workers. The Senate passed the bill, but President Hayes vetoed it on the grounds that it violated the Burlingame Treaty. He instructed the secretary of state to open formal negotiations with China to modify the treaty.

In 1880, both the Republican and Democratic platforms strongly endorsed Chinese immigration restriction. In accepting his party's nomination for president, Republican James Garfield, who prevailed over Blaine at the deadlocked convention, highlighted his opposition to Chinese immigration. Garfield won the election, and two weeks later, American and Chinese diplomats signed a new treaty giving the United States the power to restrict Chinese immigration, so long as "[t]he limitation or suspension shall be reasonable." The Senate ratified the treaty in May 1881 by a vote of 48 to 4, and in October, Chester Arthur, who had just become president following Garfield's assassination, proclaimed the treaty in effect.

As Congress began drafting an anti-Chinese measure, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU) held its first meeting in November 1881. The delegates, after vigorous debate, endorsed a resolution favoring Chinese exclusion. Samuel Gompers, one of the meeting's organizers, wrote that the FOTLU, which in 1886 would rename itself the American Federation of Labor, "was the first national organization which demanded exclusion of coolies from the United States." Ever since 1870, politically active union leaders and workers in the East had sought a ban on imported contract labor rather than on Chinese immigration. When the Fifteen Passenger Bill sailed through Congress in 1879, the labor movement expended scant effort on its behalf. In late 1881, however, with Congress poised to enact Chinese exclusion and a ban on imported labor nowhere in sight, some labor leaders in the East began moving toward an anti-immigration stance. The FOTLU's move signaled this new direction.

In March 1882, Congress passed a measure that would have banned Chinese immigration for 20 years. President Arthur vetoed this bill, arguing that the long suspension was not "reasonable," and thus a violation of the new treaty. Congress revised the bill, reducing the length of exclusion from 20 years to 10. Officially titled "An act to execute certain treaty

stipulations relating to Chinese," the new bill passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, 201 to 37 (with 53 not voting), and in the Senate, 32 to 15 (with 29 not voting). Arthur signed the bill on May 6, 1882. The Chinese Exclusion Act banned all Chinese laborers from entering the United States, excepting only diplomats and their servants. The law set a precedent for all future anti-immigration laws and remained in effect for 61 years.

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See also **Kearney, Denis**

CHINESE LABORERS' STRIKE ON THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD (1867)

When it comes to labor unrest, one of the most unusual confrontations in American history was the Chinese strike against the Central Pacific Railway in June 1867. It was probably the first nonviolent strike of its size in American history.

The saga of the Central Pacific began with the creation of a loan by the U.S. Congress for the construction of a Transcontinental Railway. The concept was to link St. Louis, the most western depot in the East, with Sacramento, California, the closest

reasonable depot to San Francisco. In those days, passage from Sacramento to San Francisco was by water. Four men in California, dubbed the "Big Four,"—Charles Crocker, Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, and Mark Hopkins—created the Central Pacific Railway. The Central Pacific would require a substantial amount of manpower, which, in those days, California had in scant supply.

Traditionally viewed as amiable and passive, the Chinese were considered strike-proof. With this incentive, Charles Crocker imported 50 Chinese laborers from China in 1865. The Chinese proved to be so dependable and hardworking that more were imported. Called "Crocker's pets," they eventually numbered more than seven thousand. Not only were the Chinese hard workers, they were also fearless. At Cape Horn in the Sierra Nevada, for instance, the railway was stopped by an impassable rock wall that rose a sheer 4,000 feet. A tunnel could not be built through the wall, so a roadway had to be constructed up the sheer face of the precipice. To hew the roadway out of solid rock, the Chinese constructed two-man baskets of wooden strips. These were lowered into position from the top of the cliff, and dynamite charges were strategically placed. Then the men in the baskets were hauled out of danger as fast as the ropes could carry them. At least 37 men did not make it back up safely.

Chinese laborers became so efficient that they became a prime commodity on the labor market. In 1867, when Crocker tried to get more Chinese workers, he found them in short supply. To attract more workers, he was forced to raise wages, to \$35 a month up from \$31. Rather than being pleased with the wage increase, the Chinese already working on the railroad went on strike. On June 25, 1867, a large number of Chinese left their grading job and went back to their camp. There they demanded \$40 a month, with the workday reduced to eight hours. (The workday was actually eight hours, but the foremen were lax in enforcing that rule.) They also wanted shorter shifts in the tunnels where the labor was cramped and dangerous, and, according to the *Sacramento Union* (July 12, 1867), they wanted to eliminate "the right of the overseers of the company to either whip them or restrain them from leaving the road when they desire to seek other employment."

When Central Pacific officials refused to negotiate, the Chinese raised their wage demands to \$45 a month. The strike spread until workers all along the line quit their jobs. Construction came to a standstill.

For a week, the railway work was stalled. Crocker refused to raise wages and tried to find other workers to replace the Chinese. His plan was to use recently freed slaves because "a Negro labor force would tend

to keep the Chinese quiet as the Chinese had kept the Irishmen quiet." But the labor market was too tight; Crocker could find no reliable and available alternative to the Chinese.

Crocker decided it was time to get tough. He cut off the food supply to the strikers. A week later, he visited the Chinese encampment and told the workers in no uncertain terms that he made the rules, and they did not. If they agreed to pay a fine and went back to work, all would be forgiven. If they did not, they would not be paid for any of the work done in June.

Four days later, the Chinese were back at work with no increase in wages or decrease in working hours. The few holdouts were harassed by a posse of Central Pacific employees. "If there had been that number of whites in a strike," Crocker remarked later, "there would have been murder, drunkenness and disorder." But with the Chinese, "it was just like Sunday. The men stayed in their camps. They would come out and walk around, but not a word was said; nothing was done. No violence was perpetrated along the whole line."

The legacy of the Chinese on the American West has largely been underemphasized. Without them, there would not have been a Transcontinental Railroad. They worked under the most dangerous of conditions, sometimes spending months underground. The Central Pacific had to build 15 tunnels through solid granite, a task most engineers thought was impossible. One of the most impressive was the Summit Tunnel, which was 1,659 feet in length. It was started from both ends and then, to speed up the work, a shaft was dropped from the top of the rock wall. Men were lowered into the shaft and worked from the inside out as other teams of men were working from the outside in. Even with 400-men shifts working around the clock, the tunnel progressed at less than a foot a day. And when winter came, the men burrowed tunnels in the snow to the work site. Windows and chimneys were cut into the snow tunnels, and for many months that was the only daylight the workers would see.

The labor was not without human cost. By the time the railway was completed, about 1,200 Chinese laborers had died. The bones of the dead were sent back to China, totaling approximately 10 tons.

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CIGAR MAKERS INTERNATIONAL UNION

The Cigar Makers International Union (CMIU), one of the founding unions of the American Federation of Labor, was one of the most important organizations of skilled workers in the late nineteenth-century United States. Often described as the prototype of the politically cautious craft union, it embodied many of the contradictions and problems of the American labor movement in its institutionally formative phase. Its members were ethnically diverse and for the most part highly skilled. The CMIU organized workers, from small town and urban environments; its members were often socialists, but political conservatives could also be found in the union.

Fraternal organizations, separated from each other by ethnicity and language, took the place of unions in the early years of the trade before the Civil War. These groups had almost no political profile. This changed with the founding of the Cigar Makers National Union in 1864 in New York City. The new organization comprised locals from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New England, and Ohio. This group was joined by locals from Chicago and Canada, changing the name to Cigar Makers International Union in 1867. By the late 1860s, the union had 5,900 members. In New York, Local 15 was the “English” (that is, English-speaking) local, while Local 10 organized a group of German-speaking cigar makers.

The decades from the 1870s to the early twentieth century were a period of transformation for the cigar industry. The introduction of the cigar mold, with its accompanying subdivision of labor and the decline of skilled cigar makers’ status, brought new semiskilled workers from Eastern and East Central Europe into the trade in great numbers. In some areas, female, semiskilled workers soon began to dominate a growing industry. On the urban West Coast, Chinese immigrants entered the cigar trade as well. The Cigar Makers International Union struggled with these changes. It accepted only skilled craftsmen, and therefore excluded semiskilled workers such as stemmers as well as female workers in general. The union fought vigorously against Chinese cigar makers and became one of the core supporters of the anti-Chinese movement in the West.

But the industrial and economic crisis of the 1870s also propelled the union toward a more activist political stance. As part of a group of like-minded

socialist immigrants, Samuel Gompers and his colleague Adolph Strasser started a local organization of politically active cigar makers in New York City in 1874 that they called the United Cigar Makers of North America. Its mostly German-speaking members were also active in the socialist labor movement of the city, and in 1875, they joined the CMIU as a third New York City local (Local 144). This self-consciously “American” union was open to workers of all backgrounds, at least in its early years. It soon gained members and influence. Samuel Gompers was its first president. In 1877, Adolph Strasser became the president of the CMIU and the editor of its monthly newspaper, the *Cigar Makers Official Journal*.

A disastrous 1877 strike of tenement workers in New York City, the union’s stronghold, propelled the leaders of the CMIU into the national limelight as they tried to organize and direct the formerly non-union tenement workers. But when the strike was lost after a few months, it almost sank Local 144 and propelled its leaders into a much more conservative position in the years to come. With the economic depression of the mid-1870s hitting the cigar industry everywhere, the CMIU suffered a great decline nationwide in 1877 and 1878. By late 1877, the International Union numbered only 1,016 members nationwide. Only 17 locals remained in 1878.

By the early 1880s, the CMIU solidified its position as a union of skilled workers with a system of high dues (at first 10 cents, and by the 1880s 25 cents a week) and good benefits for its members in case of illness, unemployment, or death. A system of financial equalization allowed union members who traveled in search of work to join any local without initiation fees and to claim benefits nationwide, should the need arise. A restrictive system of strike approvals allowed union members to strike selectively (and claim benefits) but prevented the kind of mass walkouts that had crippled the union in 1877. While women and semiskilled workers were not explicitly excluded at first, these lower-paid workers were unable to afford the dues. Tenement workers were not admitted. With the worst of the economic hard times behind it, the CMIU once again began to grow in the early 1880s.

But the focus on benefits and financial stability and away from larger political questions also sowed discord. In 1882, a group of German socialists fielded an alternative slate of candidates for office in Local 144 and won. CMIU President Strasser declared the election invalid, and as a result, the largest and most influential local of the CMIU split. Soon the New York rebels were joined by dissident cigar makers elsewhere. Together they formed the Cigar Makers Progressive Union, a nationwide organization of socialist cigar makers.

1882–1886 were years of dual unionism for the cigar makers. This heightened the political profile of the trade nationwide. The Progressives proceeded to promote a program of politicized union activism and a more inclusive (and lower dues) membership policy. The CMIU stuck to its high dues program with extensive benefits, but also tried to organize Bohemian and German-speaking members in new locals. The CMIU was also one of the most important unions behind the founding of the Federation of Trades and Labor Unions of the United States (FOTLU) in 1882. CMIU Local 144 member Samuel Gompers became the president of this organization.

The labor upheavals of the mid-1880s strengthened the momentum for reunification of the union, and by the end of 1886, the Progressive Union and the CMIU merged. The Progressives were chartered as separate locals within the CMIU. Politically, the former Progressive union locals remained visible for decades as supporters of socialist ideas, platforms, and candidates in national debates and local elections and campaigns. In conventions in 1891 and 1893, members of the former Progressives demanded a political action clause in the union's platform, and in 1891, socialist members of the CMIU contributed to the majority that voted to elect the union president directly by membership vote rather than by a convention. As a result, President Strasser resigned. George Perkins became president of the CMIU, an office which he held until 1927. The union's headquarters, which had been in Buffalo since 1886, were moved to Chicago. The union had no conventions between 1896 and 1912.

By 1890, the CMIU counted 24,000 members nationwide in 276 locals in North America. The Clear Havana industry of Tampa, Florida, representing the high end of the industry, was the most significant segment of the cigar industry that remained largely outside the union's orbit. As the cigar industry expanded, the union grew with it in most parts of the country. Small and medium-sized shops were the core of the union membership, which numbered almost 34,000 in 414 locals by 1900. In 1909, the union had reached its zenith with about 44,000 members, between 40% to 48% of the nation's cigar makers. The CMIU's stronghold was in New England, though the largest locals continued to be in New York and Chicago.

The union's structure, administration, and benefit system reflected a community of men engaged in skilled craft manufacture, highly protective of their status. The union's organizing activity centered on promoting the union label among consumers and retailers, and its organizational strength rested on the fact that manufacturers felt compelled to produce their more expensive grades of cigars with a union label.

The CMIU's weak point lay in its inability to incorporate new forms of work and new classes of workers. Cigarettes were becoming the best-selling tobacco product by the early twentieth century. The cigar industry employed an increasing number of women so that by 1910, Edith Abbott began to call it a "woman's industry." Few of the female cigar makers were members of the CMIU. As mechanization crept into the cigar industry at the same time, skilled male workers became even more expendable. Despite a 1915 change in the union's constitution that allowed (women) team workers to become members, membership recovered only temporarily.

A series of strikes shook the industry and the union during and after World War I, with both women and men participating in the struggle for higher wages nationwide. But this two-year period of labor militancy (which the leadership tried to deflect, to no effect) did not change the position of the union's members in a changing and declining industry. By the early 1930s, the union's membership had declined to 19,000, fewer than half from a dozen years earlier. The average age of its members had already reached 64 by the late 1920s. When the Depression struck, the cigar trade and its union were in a vulnerable position.

The CMIU never recovered from its decline in the 1920s, losing out to the American Tobacco Workers Union in the organization of tobacco and cigarette workers. About 2,000 members were all that remained of the CMIU in 1974, when this formerly mighty organization voted to merge with the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union.

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CIVIL RIGHTS

Civil rights are rights, such as liberty, equality, and access to the political system, that come with citizenship. The fight to establish civil rights for all Americans regardless of race, creed, color, or gender has been the principal and most singular American struggle for almost four hundred years. This battle over what one commentator once labeled the "American dilemma"—a nation born in liberty but which denies it to many citizens—has touched every facet of American life and history. And it has involved Americans of every social station: average unionists and elite

politicians, women and men, African-Americans and immigrants, and children and adults. A complete accounting is impossible here. Rather, this entry focuses on one aspect of civil rights history: the long and ongoing travail of workers to achieve fairness and equality.

Since the British first colonized the North American coastline, there have been differences between those engaged in labor and those for whom they worked over the right to freely enter into a contract, the right to freely leave that contract, and the right to negotiate the conditions of work. The British and other European colonists who eventually established the United States built their labor systems to some significant extent upon the backs of workers who were not free and had no civil rights. Enslaved American Indians, indentured colonists, and enslaved Africans and African-Americans labored in the British North American colonies in oppressive conditions where the rights and liberties enjoyed by first-class citizens of the empire were not bestowed upon them. Moreover, attempts to redress their grievances or to improve their lot were often met with violent repression.

In the American setting, this relationship between worker and employer became increasingly untenable. By the end of the eighteenth century, a group of British colonists rebelled against their imperial leaders, metaphorically arguing that these colonial rulers were attempting to enslave all English colonists. Although the British had no intention of putting all white Americans to work on plantations, images of slavery and antislavery were important to political rhetoric of the 1770s. The new nation that the American Revolution brought forth was predicated upon the idea that all citizens were entitled to the rights of life, liberty, and happiness. In practice, there were limits to the Declaration of Independence and later the Constitution. Women and minorities, particularly African-Americans, were denied their civil rights. Establishing first-class citizenship rights to property, profit, and politics has been the work of civil rights and labor activists for four centuries.

Although in the United States the phrase “civil rights” became popularized in the later nineteenth century and not the eighteenth century, there were nonetheless several important historical developments in the colonial era that had a great impact on later movements to create equality and equity in the United States. Among these developments was the creation of a segmented and segregated labor force in terms of race, gender, and ethnicity. During the colonial period, a central problem of the British North American colonies was the desperate labor shortage in the New World. As attempts to subjugate local Native Americans failed to fill English labor needs, colonial leaders

turned to European, mostly British, indentured servants to work the fields and perform various tasks essential to sustaining the New World experiments. These workers did not have the same rights and liberties as planters and artisans. Some historians have argued further that the latter’s rights were in fact based upon the former’s subjugation.

From Virginia to Massachusetts, colonial promoters recruited young adults to work in the New World in less-than-free conditions. The deal seemed quite reasonable. Prospective recruits signed an indenture (that is, a contract), which bound them to work for a term of four to seven years on a plantation or with an artisan in exchange for passage to the British colonies. At the end of the term, each servant would be set free with “freedom’s dues”: a new set of clothes, a few tools, and 50 acres of land. Thousands jumped at the chance to build a new life in the colonies. From the early 1600s through the 1760s, eight out of every 10 migrants to the British North American colonies came as indentured servants. Most were single men between 15 and 24 years of age. They tended to work on tobacco plantations, laboring in the fields planting sprouts, transplanting seedlings, and grooming the plants. They also worked in barns curing tobacco and making it ready for transport.

At best, indentured servitude was a kind of apprenticeship. At worst, the system mirrored slavery in that servants worked at the master’s irrational will and whim. Unfortunately, most servants experienced harsh, painful working lives in the colonies. Before 1650, two out of every three servants died before the end of their term of indenture as a direct result of disease, poor diet, and maltreatment. Physical abuse was not uncommon and rarely punished. Running away from one’s indenture was not unheard of either. Punishments for that could be severe and included extensions of years of service. Moreover, if one was a black or a white female servant, other sets of rules applied. White male indentured servants were treated better than any of their counterparts. And yet, this was not saying much. Consequently, servant revolts in the colonial period were rare but not exceptional. The largest and most famous was Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676. Instead of improving the working lives of British colonists following Bacon’s revolt, Virginia planters and colonial leaders opted to invest in a more repressive labor system: slavery.

African slavery in the New World was already several hundred years old before the British fully adopted it. Moreover, even though it is clear that African slaves lived in the North American colonies in the early 1600s, the institution was not inescapable. Perhaps the best example remains the story of Anthony Johnson, an African slave who was sold to

a white Jamestown planter in 1621. “Antonio the Negro” worked for his master for a little over a decade, when he was able to purchase his freedom. Declaring his freedom by choosing a new name, Anthony Johnson, he eventually became an influential planter in his own right. Johnson died in 1670 at the moment when the status of blacks in the colonies was changing. Because of revolts of white servants and freedmen as well as the continued severe labor shortage, more and more white planters began to import African slaves. From 1619 to 1810, over half a million Africans were forcibly brought to work in the British North American colonies and later the United States. For our purposes, what is significant about the slave experience was that (1) Africans and African-Americans were forced to work without contracts and without any rights to profit or property. In other words, they had no civil rights. (2) The status of slavery became a badge that all black Americans had to bear even after the Civil War. Their skin color became the mark of servitude and of a life of permanent discrimination against them and their progeny.

African-Americans were not the only group to be denied civil rights in the colonial period and after. Regardless of race and ethnicity, women did not share the same rights as white male workers. In the nineteenth century, some white women came to see their situation as akin to racial slavery. In fact, there were similarities. By accident of birth, society denied women political, economic, and social rights. They existed in a kind of permanent dependent status, legally covered first by their fathers, then by their husbands, and finally by their male children. As a general rule, they did not vote or hold office. They did run intricate and essential aspects of local economies, but even when those resulted in monetary profits, women did not always have full claim to them. Moreover, women workers often competed with men, and rarely did they win those contests. Take, for example, the life of Martha Ballard. Born in 1735, in Oxford, Massachusetts, Ballard became a midwife as well as an exceptional housewife. As a medical practitioner, she often battled local doctors over her patients and her treatments. Although she won many of the skirmishes, other midwives were not so successful. Eventually, midwives lost their battle with doctors, who frowned upon and delegitimized their craft. Similarly, in the early nineteenth century, men wrestled the dairy industry away from women, who had built it up, especially in New England, as part of their informal economy.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, as the antislavery movement gained momentum, the women’s rights movement began to flourish. At the core of this women’s movement was the demand for rights to control their working lives. In July 1848,

two hundred women activists and abolitionists (including 40 men, such as the pre-eminent civil rights leader Frederick Douglass) met in Seneca Falls, New York, to debate women’s rights. The convention’s public statement, titled the “Declaration of Sentiments,” declared boldly that “we hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Mirroring its predecessor from the Revolutionary era, the Declaration of Sentiments then listed grievances: disenfranchisement, lack of all property rights including the right to wages, denial of education, and marriage, which made women “in the eye of the law, civilly dead.” Thus, the women’s rights movement was as much about women workers’ civil rights as it was about political rights such as suffrage.

In the years before the Civil War, both the women’s rights and abolitionist movements seemed to be moving toward a similar goal, the establishment of civil rights to Americans without respect to race or gender. In the antebellum period, there were few means to improve the working lives of women and minorities. One path was the law, but as abolitionists and women’s rights advocates discovered, legal solutions to their problems were hard to find. There were some successes. In the antebellum period, several states, including New York, passed laws establishing property rights for married women. Similarly, by the early twentieth century, several states—all of them in the West—had granted women suffrage rights. But the gains were halting and not enough to improve the lives of women generally.

For African-Americans, the law offered little hope. Although northern states passed gradual emancipation laws after the American Revolution, the lives of free blacks remained precarious. On the one hand, they faced discrimination on the job, in politics, and in society. On the other hand, because of the various fugitive slave laws, many found themselves torn from their families and forced into slavery. In 1857, the U.S. Supreme Court dealt a serious blow to the efforts to widen the legal path toward freedom. Dred Scott had been a slave of an army surgeon, John Emerson. Emerson’s tour of duty took him and Scott into the Wisconsin Territory, above the 36°30’ line demarcating slave below and free above. After Emerson’s death, Scott sued for his freedom on the grounds that he had lived in free territory. Speaking for the Court, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney ruled that Scott was not free because African-Americans were not citizens. The *Dred Scott* case propelled the abolitionist cause as well as fueled the political discontent that eventually would result in a Civil War.

The War of the Rebellion transformed America in a fundamental way. No longer were African-Americans excluded from first-class citizenship, at least constitutionally. During the Reconstruction that followed the war, the U.S. Congress passed three constitutional amendments that theoretically placed African-Americans on equal footing with other citizens. The Thirteenth Amendment (1865) abolished slavery and indentured servitude. Among other things, the Fourteenth Amendment (1868) established the principle that states cannot pass laws that deny citizens "life, liberty, or property" without due process. Finally, the Fifteenth Amendment (1870) provided all African-American men the right to vote. Additionally, during Reconstruction, the federal government created an agency to help ex-slaves move from slavery to freedom. The Freedmen's Bureau engaged in a variety of activities. It helped resettle displaced persons who had been uprooted as a result of the war. It gave out rations to those who could not feed themselves. From 1865 to 1869, the Bureau supplied 21 million meals to hungry black and white southerners. The Freedman's Bureau also fostered a new educational system in the former Confederacy in order to instruct the next generation of workers and leaders. Finally, Bureau agents aided freedmen and women in finding jobs and negotiated fair terms for employment. They helped draw up tens of thousands of contracts between these new wage employees and their employers. Ironically, many of these jobs were back on the plantations. As one historian has written, the old dependencies of white planters and black farmhands did not end once slavery died.

Regardless, from the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 to the Compromise of 1877 when Reconstruction ended, African-Americans experienced tremendous advancement as workers and as members of the new southern polity. African-Americans were integral in the formation of the new southern state governments. They not only participated in the constitutional conventions but also after the new states were formed voted in large numbers and held office. Their political contributions extended to all facets of the government, from jury boxes to state houses. Ex-slaves fought hard for these gains, and they met stiff resistance at every turn. In general, whites resented the elevation of blacks to a status of equality. All across the South, white vigilante groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) threatened, attacked, and even murdered black politicians and activists. These groups also set their crosshairs on black workers. Although they were new to wage labor, African-American workers understood that to improve their working conditions, they had to organize and pressure employers. Labor unrest on plantations frightened not only

white planters but Freedman's Bureau officials as well. Some southern whites responded with violence. Nevertheless, these nascent unionists pushed ahead.

The results of the 1876 presidential election, however, spelled doom for the generation of freedmen and women who emerged with new working lives after the Civil War. The movement to deny African-Americans their civil rights in the South predated the electoral fiasco. Before they were reconstructed, several states passed so-called Black Codes, which severely limited African-Americans' ability to rent or purchase property. Additionally, they could not freely enter or leave employment contracts, take time off work, testify in court, possess firearms, or speak freely. Momentarily suspended during Reconstruction, these laws came back in the late 1870s and through the 1890s. They were known as Jim Crow laws, and the U.S. Supreme Court eventually ruled them constitutional in 1896 in the infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision.

In addition to legal measures enacted to keep blacks in a second-class position, some white southerners adopted violent methods. The KKK gained power and influence as the nineteenth century came to a close. As Ida B. Wells reported at the turn of the century, lynchings in the South were frequent occurrences. According to statistics compiled by the NAACP, from 1882 to 1931, 3,318 black men, women, and children were lynched. That is a rate of over 60 killings per year. As Wells so aptly demonstrated, many of these murders related to the economic successes of black workers and businessmen. Whites resented deeply the advances of former slaves. Lynching was but one way to abrogate civil rights; race riots were another. As blacks began to assert their civil rights, some whites tried to force them back into a slavlike condition. Such pressures sparked white-on-black riots in New Orleans (1865), Memphis (1866), and Hamburg, South Carolina (1876). The racial violence of the late nineteenth century demonstrates that free African-Americans still wore an indelible badge of inferiority. The Civil War had emancipated them, but they were not able to live and work as whites did.

At this critical juncture for African-Americans living in the Gilded Age, the central question was: how do we secure civil rights? One answer might have resided in the new labor movement. The National Labor Union (NLU), which arose during the years immediately preceding the Civil War, stood for interracial unionism. But rhetoric about equal did not translate into interracial organizing. Unlike the NLU, the Knights of Labor stated publicly both that black workers should be equal to white workers and that they all should belong to unions together. None other than Frederick Douglass and the

pre-eminent black journalist T. Thomas Fortune supported the Knights. Unfortunately for black workers, the Knights did not last. After the 1886 Haymarket Square Massacre, the Knights suffered a decline and eventually gave way to the rival American Federation of Labor (AFL—established in 1881). The AFL was an umbrella group of craft unions. At its founding convention, many members of the Knights of Labor attended, including Jeremiah Grandison, an African-American worker and a member of the Knight's Local Assembly 1665 (Pittsburgh). It became clear to Grandison that the AFL was going to be much more conservative on racial issues. He spoke up during the conference, telling his colleagues that it would be absurd to ignore black wage earners who potentially could become strikebreakers. In fact, this had already occurred in the mining areas of Pennsylvania's Tuscarawas Valley. Grandison maintained that the only way to stop scabbing was to open the unions as widely as possible.

Initially, Grandison and those in the AFL who supported interracial unionism were able to sway official AFL policy. From 1886 to 1895, the AFL pushed craft unions toward racial inclusivity. For example, in 1890, the AFL refused to admit the International Association of Machinists until it dropped its constitutional clause denying African-American membership. But five years later, the AFL had abandoned its position. Although it still gave lip service to equality in employment, the AFL accepted the Machinists in 1895 when it transferred its ban on blacks from its constitution to its ritual. In 1896, the Boilermakers were accepted into the AFL without having removed its constitutional ban on black workers. Moreover, locals had considerable power to exclude workers not specified by union constitutions. In the absence of an international's mandate to a local about black workers, locals often established their own. Four major AFL affiliates (the Flint Glass Workers, the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Plumbers and Steamfitters, and the Asbestos Workers) denied admittance to black workers by tacit consent of the locals.

By the twentieth century, the AFL had earned a well-deserved reputation for abiding, if not supporting, racial exclusion. Many of the AFL's international unions such as the Airline Dispatchers, Railroad Telegraphers, Railway and Steamship Clerks, Railway Mail Association, and Switchmen denied the right to join on racial grounds, limiting those eligible for membership to "white" workers. A few AFL unions such as the Railway Mail Association were more specific, stating that only those of the "Caucasian race or native American Indians" could join,

while the Firemen's constitution defined "white" as excluding "Mexicans, Indians, or those of Spanish-Mexican extraction." Still other AFL unions (such as the Boilermakers, the Blacksmiths, the Maintenance of Way Employees, the Railway Carmen, and the Sheet Metal Workers) openly excluded African-American workers by admitting them into segregated, auxiliary unions. In some cases, notably among longshoremen, separate locals allowed some opportunities for black workers. However, in most cases, segregated locals created distinct disadvantages for African-Americans. Those auxiliaries had no voice in local or national union affairs, were completely represented by the white officers of the main local, had no grievance procedure, and frequently had fewer benefits than those afforded white members. As the black economist Robert C. Weaver once put it, black workers in these setups had second-class union status but paid first-class dues.

If most unions then protected the interests of their white members, they also guarded against any erosion in the status of male workers. Unions frequently functioned as a way for white male workers to privilege themselves over African-Americans and women as well as various ethnic group workers such as Chinese, French-Canadians, and Mexicans. Such was definitively the case with the American Federation of Labor. Since its inception, the AFL had refused to embrace women workers, preferring to keep them at arm's length. In 1881, when the AFL met for the first time, no women were present. This was at odds with the previous experiences of the labor movement. Women were the vanguard in industrial unions in the 1820s in New England textile mills. They were the bedrock of the shoemakers unions in the 1850s and 1860s. And, of course, they were instrumental to the success of the Knights of Labor, which had nearly 50,000 female members by the 1880s. In contrast to these organizations, the AFL developed a reputation for favoring the organization of women workers while not actually doing it. At its second convention in 1882, the AFL formally "extended to all unions of women equal opportunity to participate in future conventions with unions of men." This call netted one female delegate the following year, Charlotte Smith, the president of the Women's National Industrial League. Two years later, the AFL refreshed its call for women to join. Unsurprisingly, few did. In 1891, the AFL seemed to change course and hired a female organizer, Mary E. Kenney. After a year of unproductive work in New York City, AFL President Gompers fired her. During the 1892 and subsequent conventions, members highlighted the problems facing women workers and called for reform. Sometimes

there were positive developments. In 1900, the AFL gave a charter to the new International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, which had both male and female members. But generally, despite its public pronouncements, the AFL failed to take concrete steps to widely organize women workers.

In the absence of AFL organizing, working women and their allies pursued another strategy to establish civil rights, especially the right to determine the conditions of their labor. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, reformers sought protective legislation as a means to establish equality for women workers. The key moment came in 1908 when the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Muller v. Oregon* that a state law setting a maximum of 10 hours of work per day for factory women and laundresses was constitutional. This ruling overturned an earlier decision, *Lochner v. New York* (1905), in which the justices had struck down a 10-hour limit for bakery workers. Apparently, in the *Muller* case, the Supreme Court was swayed by future justice Louis D. Brandeis, who with the assistance of Florence Kelley and Josephine Goldmark of the National Consumers' League, had demonstrated the ill effects of long hours. Not only did excessive work outside the home damage women's health, but it hurt the family as well.

The *Oregon* decision and the state 10-hour workday law were demonstrable advances for female workers. Yet, in terms of civil rights, these victories and others like them had an ironic result. By upholding the Oregon law, the Supreme Court was in essence stating that unlike men, women did not have liberty of contract in all cases. Unlike first-class citizens, solely because they were women, they could not enter into contracts without any restrictions. This made women akin to child wards of the state. Thus, protective laws like the Oregon 10-hour statute rested upon the reality that women workers did not enjoy civil rights akin to their male counterparts. This legal trend reached a peak in the 1940s. By World War II, virtually all states, the District of Columbia, and every major territory including Puerto Rico had laws that limited women's wage workday to eight to 10 hours (per employer), established weekly limits of no more than 60 hours, and frequently prohibited or limited night work and the establishment of a minimum wage. The AFL, the nation's largest labor organization, wholeheartedly supported these statutes as long as they dealt with women. Unlike social reformers and feminists, who spearheaded reform campaigns for protective legislation, AFL leaders saw the laws as a means of shoring up the family and protecting their privileged status by discouraging employers from hiring women in the first place while ensuring

reasonable conditions for those who did enter the labor force.

During the era of Franklin D. Roosevelt, new social and political movements were born that built upon the gains of the Progressive Era and dramatically reshaped the United States, making civil rights possible for women and minority workers. This historic change hinged on the advent of the New Deal. In 1933, President Roosevelt signed the National Industrial Recovery Act, which, among other things, established in its famous Section 7(a) the right for workers to organize unions and bargain collectively. Initially, most of the new unions and new unionists belonged to the American Federation of Labor. The AFL, however, was unable to handle the rising tide of unionization. In 1935, a group of labor leaders broke away from the AFL to form the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Among its founding principles, the CIO was dedicated to ending racial and sex discrimination in employment. For example, the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA), which was affiliated with the CIO, was a progressive, interracial union. It worked to eliminate segregation on the job as well as wage differentials between northern and southern meatpacking factories. African-Americans also became leaders in the UPWA. Such high levels of interracial solidarity had a very tangible result. In 1954, the union began a 14-month strike against a Boston packing plant. Despite employer and some community pressure, the interracial union held together and saw the strike to a successful completion. The CIO was similarly dedicated to advancing the civil rights of women workers and ending discrimination. The CIO's unions, such as the United Electrical Workers, made equal pay for equal work a hallmark of their organizational campaigns.

In general, the revived labor movement—both the AFL and CIO—in the 1930s and 1940s transformed American politics. Black and white workers, men and women, now demanded equality in unions and in the labor market. They were unwilling to accept empty platitudes or one-sided compromises. The stellar example comes from the years leading up to American involvement in the Second World War. President Roosevelt's defense mobilization from 1939 to 1941 did release the American economy from the Great Depression's horrific grip. Yet, for the most part, the economic opportunities that preparedness created were for whites only. Discrimination was common in the South. In Texas, for instance, one out of every two new defense jobs was only for whites. However, this was no regional phenomenon. In Ohio, African-American workers were barred from eight out of every 10 jobs. To fight the discrimination in the

“arsenal of democracy,” in 1941, A. Philip Randolph, the leader of the all-black Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, announced that unless President Roosevelt took decisive action to open the factory gates for all Americans, he would march 100,000 black workers down Pennsylvania Avenue in protest. Rather than bear the international embarrassment of such a march, FDR met with Randolph. In return for calling off the march, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, which ordered defense contractors to end job discrimination on account of race, creed, color, or national origin. To enforce his edict, President Roosevelt established the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC). Although the FEPC did not eliminate discrimination on the home front, it did advance civil rights by providing a model for future reform.

From the late 1940s through the mid-1960s, both the postwar African-American civil rights movement as well as the postwar feminist movement saw the re-creation of the FEPC as a key means to create first-class citizenship. Congressional conservatives had dismantled the wartime FEPC in 1946. In 1964, after an 18-year campaign, Congress bowed to public pressure from activists and from many labor unions and passed the Omnibus Civil Rights Bill, which outlawed employment discrimination on account of race, creed, color, national origin, and sex and which created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce the law. Along with the other legislative milestone, the 1963 Equal Pay Act, the Civil Rights Act went far to remove the badges of inferiority that white women, all African-American workers, and many immigrants had been forced to wear for centuries.

Since the 1960s, the history of civil rights and workers has not been one of unalloyed success. In the late 1990s and through the new millennium, workers had to fight to maintain or to create civil rights in the workplace. One constant was the advocacy of the labor movement. Unions played critical roles in forcing companies as diverse as Wal-Mart and Mitsubishi Motors to become equal employment opportunity employers. And it was not always a successful struggle. Nonetheless, the parameters of the fight have been quite clear. At the start of the twenty-first century, American society remained a place where the blessings of liberty were bestowed on some more than on others. Since the 1930s and 1940s, the others in American history have increasingly demanded full citizenship rights. The story of this movement among African-American and women workers has been quite well documented. However, in the early twenty-first century, other disenfranchised Americans sought civil rights. In the future, historians will write

about gay, lesbian, and “disabled” workers and the concept of first-class citizenship. In the United States, civil rights have been natural rights; workers have had to capture them and wrestle to keep them. It has been a centuries-long process and not a starting or ending point in history.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Randolph, A. Philip

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964/TITLE VII

Congress ended a southern filibuster against federal civil rights legislation for the first time ever in June 1964, and on July 2, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. Title VII, Equal Employment Opportunity, is arguably the most important section of the entire act in that there was a quick and visible increase in women and minority group employment. In general, the act made it unlawful for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization to discriminate in employment against persons because of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Historical Precedents

The American at-will employment doctrine adopted by states has generally denied any remedy to employees treated arbitrarily by an employer, absent union representation or contract. An employer could hire and fire freely. For a short time, the federal courts even protected this doctrine as a Fifth Amendment right against a federal statute that prohibited firing employees for union membership. Congress relied on the commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution as a basis for Title VII. The commerce clause gives Congress the power to regulate commerce between the states and with foreign nations. In *Heart of Atlanta Motel*, the Supreme Court upheld Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with a broad interpretation of Congress's right to regulate interstate commerce that extends to local activity that has a substantial impact on commerce. Interestingly, the Court rejected the Fifth Amendment claim. This case made clear that the Supreme Court would defer to the power of Congress to prevent discrimination under the commerce clause and that claims of liberty and property deprivation by business would not prevail.

Federal law had addressed discrimination in federal civil service employment prior to the New Deal era of the 1930s and 1940s. Facing a mass march of African-Americans on Washington in 1941 organized by A. Philip Randolph, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802, which extended protection from race, creed, color, and national origin employment discrimination to all defense contracts, federal employment, and federal vocational and training programs. The Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) was established to investigate complaints, attempt resolution, and make recommendations. The FEPC expired in 1946. However, these efforts laid the foundation for Title VII and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of the 1960s.

During the late 1940s and 1950s, Presidents Truman and Eisenhower addressed discrimination in government contracting. Some members of Congress introduced legislation during this period to end various employment discrimination practices. However, rarely was such legislation considered by the full body, and no legislation was passed.

The Road to Passage

On June 11, 1963, President John F. Kennedy addressed the nation on television and asked, "Who among us would be content to have the color of his skin changed?" Earlier that day, Alabama Governor George Wallace had stood in the doorway at the University of Alabama as a symbolic gesture opposing the admission of two black students. President Kennedy promised to strengthen his civil rights proposal. In the preceding months, Martin Luther King Jr. had been jailed in Birmingham for protesting segregation and issued his "A Letter from the Birmingham Jail." Robert Loevy, in his book *The Civil Right Act of 1964*, described King's letter as the "Declaration of Independence of the civil rights movement."

After the assassination of President Kennedy in November 1963, President Johnson placed the civil rights legislation as a high priority and a fitting tribute to the dead president. The conservative chairman of the House Rules Committee, Howard W. Smith, agreed to let the committee vote out the civil rights legislation in January 1964. As the House debated the bill, he moved to add an amendment prohibiting sex discrimination in employment in addition to race, color, religion, and national origin. Such action was intended to defeat the bill by dividing supporters. However, the strong support of liberals such as Martha Griffiths led to approval of the amendment in about two hours. The House of Representatives passed the bill on February 10, 1964.

Senate passage was required before the bill could be sent to the president for signature into law. Senate leaders attempted to bypass the Senate Judiciary Committee by placing the House bill directly on the Senate calendar. Opponents began a filibuster, an extended speech, to prevent voting or action by the Senate on the committee referral issue. They ended this after 16 days in order to avoid an early cloture (limit debate) vote.

The Senate debate on the House bill began soon after. Hubert Humphrey, the bill's Democratic floor leader, needed 67 votes out of the 100 senators to end the opposition filibuster to the main bill. The Democrats needed the support of some Republicans in

order to close debate. Illinois Senator Dirksen formed a group of Republican senators to support cloture. However, some members of that group proposed three amendments. Any amendments would mean the bill would be sent back to the House if the bill passed the Senate. Needing the votes, the Democrats agreed to a consideration of the amendments. One amendment related to jury trials passed. The jury trial issue was important to opponents because of the historical use of white male juries to protect conservative values.

The Dirksen group of Republicans supported the cloture vote, and for the first time, the opposition filibuster to civil rights legislation had been stopped. The Senate approved the civil rights bill as amended, and the amended bill went to the House of Representatives. The bill did not have to return to the Senate when the House voted 289 to 126 to approve the Senate-amended legislation. President Lyndon Johnson signed the bill, which had become the Civil Rights Act of 1964, on July 2, 1964. This new act included Title VII on equal employment opportunity.

The Act

Title VII generally applies to employers of 15 or more, employment agencies, unions that operate hiring halls or have at least 15 members, and government. Both “disparate treatment” and “disparate impact” on protected groups and individuals are banned. Protected groups and persons are those subject to discrimination or harassment based on religion, national origin, race, color, or sex. Protected employees may include former workers for the employer as in *Robinson v. Shell Oil*, where a retaliation claim was made based upon a recommendation by Shell to a potential new employer. Claims must be filed rather quickly, generally within 180 days. Claims are made with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission unless there is a state agency that enforces antidiscrimination laws.

The Cases

The U.S. Supreme Court’s first major Title VII case, *Griggs v. Duke Power*, made clear that congressional intent was to remove barriers used in the past to favor whites. The Court struck down the requirements of a high school diploma and an intelligence test because neither was shown to be significantly related to requirements of the job, they worked to the substantial disadvantage of blacks vis-à-vis whites, and the jobs

had formerly been filled only by whites. These disparate impact cases often rely on statistical evidence.

Disparate treatment cases are often made on facial evidence or circumstantial evidence. Facial evidence is where the employers essentially advertises their bias. An example of such evidence might be an ad seeking “men only” for certain positions. Most cases involve circumstantial evidence. This evidence proves facts that allow people to infer the discriminatory intent. In *McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green* and *Texas Community Affairs v. Burdine*, the Court held that persons making disparate treatment claims must first show that they are a member of the protected groups, that they were qualified for the job or benefit, and that the job or benefit stayed open or was filled by a person not in the protected groups. If the employer fails to explain a clearly legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for its action, the employee wins. If the employer makes such an explanation, the burden shifts to the employee to show that the reason given was a pretext or a cloak for the real discriminatory reason. The employer does not have to show that the person selected was better qualified.

Disparate treatment cases often involve a variety of motives, some of which may be legal and others not. Employee claimants then need to show that the wrongful motivation was a significant factor in the decision. The employer may claim that it would have taken the action even without the wrongful factor. Even if this is true, the 1991 Civil Rights Act allows the employee to certain relief and attorney fees.

Sexual harassment cases are of two types: quid pro quo or hostile environment. Quid pro quo means a deal, something given for something else. Here the employer or its agents condition employment or benefits on receipt of sexual favors. The Court held in *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson* that harassment creating a hostile or abusive work environment violates Title VII, even without economic loss to the employee. In *Harris v. Forklift Systems*, the Court held that actionable harassment is that which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to change the conditions of the environment and create an abusive work environment. More than mere offensiveness is needed, but less that tangible psychological injury.

Employers may in narrow circumstances have the Bona Fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ) defense. This defense is not applicable to race. In *International Union, U.A.W. v. Johnson Controls*, the Court held that the trait the employer seeks must be essentially central to the business and pertain to the particular position. Substantially, all of the excluded group must be shown to lack necessary traits.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has helped make women’s work patterns more like those of men,

according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, although the impact may be less positive for poor women. Employment opportunities for minorities have increased greatly. Yet, gaps remain in education, employment, and income. Unions see diversity as strength, with 27% of union members being persons of color. In 2002, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received 84,000 complaints.

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See also Affirmative Action; At-Will Employment; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Fair Employment Practice Committee; Randolph, A. Philip

CIVIL RIGHTS CONGRESS

The Civil Rights Congress (CRC) parried the mounting storm of Cold War hostility to defend the rights of African-Americans and leftist political activists from 1947 to 1956. In 1946, members of the National Negro Congress, a network of militant civil rights and union activists, the International Labor Defense, a legal defense group, and the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties formed the CRC. At its peak in the late 1940s, the New York City-based CRC

boasted 10,000 members and 70 locals, with especially vibrant chapters in Detroit, New Orleans, Los Angeles, the Bay Area, and Seattle. Originally conceived as a mass-based organization, the CRC increasingly acted against particularly egregious cases of legal injustice. Its members fought against racial violence and incursions of civil liberties for specific defendants as well as created pamphlets and organized rallies to advocate justice through the court of public opinion. While the CRC lost most of its battles, its courageous members exposed McCarthyism and racial repression as twin impediments to democracy, piercing the aura of the “silent 50s” and serving as a precursor to the larger mass movement for racial equality during the next decade.

Civil Rights Congress leaders initially had ambitious plans for a mass movement. The CRC fought alongside labor unions and other progressive organizations in calling for the prosecution of the Klan, pressuring President Truman to support civil rights measures, and investigating racial violence against black veterans. One successful 1947 national campaign was its call to “Oust Bilbo.” CRC chapters distributed 185,000 petitions that demanded Mississippi Senator Theodore Bilbo relinquish his seat due to his sponsorship of black and working-class disenfranchisement that continued to get him undemocratically elected. While Bilbo’s death soon thereafter ended the campaign, it brought international publicity to widespread southern repression of voting rights. In addition to national campaigns, CRC chapters desegregated stores in places like Des Moines and Boulder, fought for jobs in Philadelphia, and registered voters in New Orleans.

The CRC never sustained a mass movement. Its leaders, including Aubrey Grossman and William Patterson, were self-critical of the CRC’s strategy for not having a “union backbone.” Aside from coordination with waterfront workers in New Orleans and the West Coast, the fur and leather workers in several cities, and autoworkers in Detroit, the CRC did not have a strong union membership. In addition, when in 1947 the attorney general labeled the CRC a “subversive organization,” liberals and conservatives alike began to dismiss it and disassociate from it, calling it a “Communist front.” With several Communists as prominent members, the CRC now had serious problems convincing liberals that they prioritized racial justice above loyalty to the Communist Party (CP). Soon thereafter, the CRC became a circumscribed network of leftist activists who focused on specific legal cases.

The CRC made international causes out of cases of racial injustice, like that of the Trenton Six. This case involved six young black men arrested for the murder

of a white shopkeeper in New Jersey. Despite witnesses who reported having seen only one light-skinned black man at the scene, a 55-day trial resulted in convictions of all six defendants. The CRC entered the case in 1948 and dubbed it the “Northern Scottsboro.” Their agitation led to the release of four of the original defendants, but the courts still convicted three black men of the crime. Meanwhile, local CRC chapters fought similar “legal lynchings.” In its prolific Los Angeles chapter, for example, 30 CRC-affiliated attorneys fought 89 cases in 1949, most involving police brutality and racial discrimination.

In the South, CRC cases like that of Willie McGee and Rosa Lee Ingram confronted racial and sexual stereotypes. McGee, a black Mississippi truck driver, had an ongoing affair with a white woman, Willett Hawkins, for whom he did yard work. In 1946, Mississippi police arrested McGee after Hawkins’s husband accused him of rape. The CRC fought the case for five years through the courts, held mass meetings, and exposed the frame-up in the press, but lost the battle for his reprieve when the state executed him in 1951. While this case relied upon Jim Crow notions that sex between black men and white women could only stem from rape, the case of Rosa Ingram in rural Georgia exposed another stereotype: that white men would never violate black women. John Stratford, a tenant farmer, hit Ingram with the butt of a rifle, and, by many accounts, tried to sexually assault her. Responding to her mother’s screams, one of Ingram’s sons hit Stratford over the head and killed him. Ignoring this self-defense, police arrested Ingram and two of her sons, and a jury sentenced all three to death in 1947. Less-militant organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), but especially a group of dedicated leftist black women who formed the Sojourners for Truth and Justice, agitated for a reversal of the verdict. The collaborative effort led to the Ingrams’ release from prison in the early 1950s.

While fighting for domestic civil rights, the CRC also put racial injustice on the international stage to expose “the Achilles’ heel” of U.S. foreign policy. The CRC linked its belief in freedom for racial minorities to anticolonial movements and opposed the Korean War as imperialist. By 1951, CRC leader William Patterson drafted, and then presented, a 240-page document called “We Charge Genocide” to the United Nations. The State Department and moderate civil rights groups like the NAACP scrambled to mute Patterson’s indictment by releasing its own milder propaganda, sponsoring international tours of moderate African-Americans, and repressing CRC members back home (including the U.S. government’s confiscation of Patterson’s passport upon his return

from Europe). Nevertheless, progressive unions like the leather workers and longshoremen supported and sold copies of the petition, and people in places as far away as India challenged U.S. diplomats about racial oppression by posing specific questions about cases like Willie McGee and the Trenton Six.

As the Cold War became more repressive with the McCarran Act of 1950 and FBI infiltration of the CRC’s chapters (with cooperation from NAACP leaders), the defense of its right to exist sapped its energy. Subversive Control Board prosecutions based on the McCarran Act cost the CRC hundreds of dollars weekly; a mob attacked Paul Robeson and other CRC supporters in Peekskill, New York, in 1949; police put members of the CRC bail fund in jail; and judges flouted the Sixth Amendment by prosecuting and refusing to allow CRC attorneys to defend clients like the Trenton Six. In addition, Communist leaders criticized the CRC for not doing enough to defend top Party members from prosecution for sedition under the 1940 Smith Act. The CRC came to the defense of the indicted CP leaders because its members saw this attack by the U.S. government as a threat against the first line of defense for civil liberties for all Americans. However, by defending top leaders like the “CP 11,” the CRC gave credence to its critics, who labeled it the legal wing of the Communist Party. As the Cold War became more repressive, the CRC lost members and financial resources. This repression caused its demise in 1956, though the militant tactics and legal strategies it employed would arise again in the mass movements for civil rights during the next decade (its last case was the lynching of Emmett Till), but especially in campaigns against police brutality and government repression that re-emerged in the late 1960s.

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CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

The Civil War and Reconstruction witnessed an upsurge in labor organizing that brought into being the first national trade federation, the end of slavery, and

the first national strikes. By the end of Reconstruction, chances for a national labor movement that included the South and that was committed to equality without regard to race or gender had been weakened.

On the eve of the Civil War, America's 11.1 million workers fit into two broad legal categories, free and slave. The single most common occupation remained farming, which employed roughly 3.35 million whites and 2.52 million slaves, for a total of 53% of all workers. The growing manufacturing sector employed 1.5 million Americans (14% of the work force), of which one fifth were women. Approximately the same number found employment in construction and commerce, categories that encompassed everything from starched-collar merchants in their counting houses to shirtless stevedores unloading cargo on the docks. Women predominated among the 665,000 service workers, which included the single largest female occupation, domestic servant. Smaller cohorts labored in transportation, mining, and a variety of other pursuits.

Within each section, types of work varied by region. Most industrial workers (86%) lived in the free states of the North, but they were outnumbered by the North's farmers. Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania contained just over half of the industrial work force, and another quarter lived in neighboring northeastern states. Farming mixed with a much smaller manufacturing sector in the old Northwest. The North housed 87% of the nation's 4.1 million foreign-born. Most immigrants had arrived from Ireland and Germany since the mid-1840s. The poorest immigrants gathered in the North's cities and took up low-paying jobs in commerce and industry.

In the South, slave-based agriculture was strongest in the seven states of the lower South, where enormous profits from the staples of cotton, sugar, and rice crowded out other activities. Slaves made up almost half of the lower South's population. In the eight states of the upper South, the slave population ranged from a high of 33% in North Carolina to a low of 2% in Delaware. Industrializing cities like Baltimore, Richmond, and St. Louis mixed with plantation districts and broad belts of small farms devoted to grain and livestock.

In the far West, the Gold Rush of 1849 spawned a mining and manufacturing boom in California, while Oregon attracted farmers. In California, 35,000 Chinese workingmen (9% of the state's population) toiled in mines, railroads, and urban sweatshops.

Although few northern white workers and farmers (or factory owners, professionals, or any other segment of the white population) endorsed immediate abolition and racial equality, many more supported free soil, the cheap distribution of federal land from

which slavery would be excluded. The opening of the West to settlement in the 1840s increased sectional conflict by raising the question of slavery's legality in this newly acquired federal territory. In the mid-1850s, a new party, the Republicans, emerged in the North as the free-soil rival to the Democrats, who were allied to southern slaveholders. In the South, small farmers occasionally clashed with wealthy slaveholders, but most supported slavery's expansion because of its perceived economic benefits and their commitment to white supremacy.

The erosion of traditional craft work arrangements and living standards provided an additional spur for workers to back free soil as an alternative to factories and sweatshops. The reality of permanent wage work for even the most highly skilled changed organizing strategies. In place of Jacksonian-era boycotts to enforce mechanics' price lists and Associationist calls for utopian industrial communities, workers turned to craft unions, which addressed issues related to their status as wage earners. During the 1850s, at least 26 national unions were formed. The Panic of 1857, followed by the secession-related business slump of 1860–1861, hampered these efforts. In February 1860, 20,000 shoemakers in Lynn, Massachusetts, staged the largest strike in pre-Civil War history to protest falling wages and the introduction of labor-saving machines. Many employers raised pay, but strikers failed to win collective bargaining rights. During the strike, some workers connected their demand for equal rights to emancipation. In 1860, only five national trade unions survived, and the combined membership of all unions, local and national, accounted for 10% of industrial workers.

Law and brute force prevented slaves from organizing unions, much less voting for antislavery politicians. Nevertheless, African-American slaves developed strategies for resisting their masters. They cooperated to control the pace of work, accumulated cash through garden plots and slave hiring, and organized a political community around church services and family networks. Slaves also defied the risks of recapture by running away and, much more rarely, by engaging in suicidal rebellions. Aided by free blacks in the cities, and by conductors on the Underground Railroad like Harriet Tubman, slaves were poised to strike for freedom when the opportunity arose.

The presidential election of 1860 provided that opportunity. The Republican Party drafted a free-soil platform and nominated Abraham Lincoln, an Illinois lawyer who emphasized his youthful career as a rail splitter. The Democratic Party split into northern and southern wings. Campaigning on the slogan "free soil, free labor, free men," Republicans appealed to workers and small farmers by promising

CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

to protect the right of ordinary Americans to gain access to productive property and claim a fair reward for their toil. Carrying only 40% of the popular vote, Lincoln won the election by garnering a majority in the electoral college that came exclusively from the free states.

Notwithstanding Lincoln's assurances that he would leave slavery alone where it already existed, southerners regarded his election as the first step toward general abolition. In December 1860, South Carolina, a leader of proslavery southern nationalism, quit the Union. During the next six months, 10 more slave states joined South Carolina to create the breakaway Confederacy. In line with public opinion in the North and four loyal border slave states, Lincoln vowed to preserve the Union with slavery intact in the South.

During the secession crisis, northern organized labor was divided. Few wanted war, but fewer still favored capitulation to the slaveholders. On February 22, 1861, trade union leaders from 12 states met in Philadelphia to advocate "concession not secession." Known as the Committee of Thirty-Four, the leaders supported the Crittenden Compromise, a peace plan that allowed slavery to expand south of the Missouri Compromise line. Despite the conciliatory efforts of some labor leaders, most farmers and workers agreed with Lincoln that slavery's expansion could not be permitted. After Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, even those in favor of compromise rallied behind Lincoln.

Northern workers backed the Union because the stakes were high. Defeat would weaken democracy, cut off the South's markets, and expand slavery westward, possibly even into the North. Several labor leaders organized their unions into military companies, causing their organizations to disband for lack of members. Radical fraternal societies, like the German *Turnverein*, volunteered *en masse*. In all, mechanics and laborers made up 42% of the Union military.

The response of southern labor was more complicated. In the 11 seceding states, poor whites solidly backed the Confederacy amidst the fervor created by secession and Lincoln's promised invasion. In 1861, the South's few cities harbored pockets of Unionism. In New Orleans, the largest Confederate city, the extreme Southern Rights candidate finished third in the 1860 presidential election. Some anti-secessionist workers, including the caulkers' union leader Richard Trevellick, left for the North, while others lay low until federal occupation in April 1862 allowed them to make a stand. In the border slave states, urban white workers fought secession. In Baltimore, gangs of pro-Union workers joined Union soldiers in combating a secessionist mob on April 19, 1861.

In St. Louis, German militia volunteers routed a Confederate force seeking to capture a federal armory.

Slaves welcomed the chance for freedom. News of Lincoln's election and secession prompted talk of escape, revolt, and cooperation with federal troops. Slaveholders near Natchez, Mississippi, put down one such slave conspiracy early in 1861.

Although southerners on both sides thought that Lincoln intended to abolish slavery, his administration began the war committed to maintaining the institution where it already existed. The pressure of war and the actions of slaves brought about a change of course. Despite the federal government's initial promise to return runaways to the masters, slaves understood that an enemy of their oppressor was by definition their friend. Slaves' awareness of this fact manifested itself prior to Fort Sumter. In March 1861, eight slaves arrived at federally held Fort Pickens, Florida, in search of freedom. The trickle that began at Fort Pickens turned into a flood of refugees by the end of 1861 as slaves fled to Union lines whenever federal troops approached. Fugitives made themselves valuable to their hosts by offering their services as cooks, laundresses, teamsters, blacksmiths, and common laborers and thereby freeing up soldiers for the front lines. Conditions were especially acute in federal outposts in the lower South, like Fortress Monroe near Norfolk, Virginia, and the Sea Islands off South Carolina. These acts of self-emancipation forced Union commanders to decide between ignoring Lincoln's orders and sheltering the fugitives, who by the summer of 1862 numbered in the tens of thousands, or returning them to Confederate slaveholders against whom their troops were fighting. In May 1861, Fortress Monroe's commander, Benjamin Butler, a Massachusetts Free-Soil politician and 10-hour-day advocate, banned the return of so-called contraband, or runaway slaves, to their secessionist masters. Other Union commanders from Missouri to South Carolina made similar judgment calls.

These acts of slave self-emancipation and the success of Confederate arms at Bull Run, the Peninsula, and many other battles in 1861 and 1862 persuaded Lincoln that a limited war would not work. In the summer of 1862, the Republican Congress enacted laws aimed at punishing the Confederacy and promoting free labor. These included nullification of the Fugitive Slave Acts, orders to seize slaves from rebels, government employment of African-Americans as laborers and soldiers, and the abolition of slavery in Washington, DC. The most significant of these laws was the Second Confiscation Act, passed on July 17, 1862, which set free any slave who entered Union lines and stated that his or her owner was disloyal. (The First Confiscation Act, passed on August 6,

1861, freed only those slaves directly employed in the Confederate war effort and was harder to enforce.) Passage of the Second Confiscation Act showed that despite Lincoln's wish to appease moderate slaveholders, slaves themselves had forced the Union to fight for universal liberty.

For farmers and workers, Congress banned slavery in federal territory; increased access to higher education; established a progressive income tax; and passed the Homestead Act, which gave 160 acres of public land to any settler who stayed on it for five years. On January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation freed all slaves in rebel-held territory. Although two and a half years of war remained, Lincoln's Republican Party had replaced a war for reunion with a war for freedom.

Because of its smaller population and lack of industry, the Confederacy confronted shortages of troops and supplies sooner than did the Union. On April 16, 1862, the Confederate government enacted conscription for all fighting-age white men. The draft law gave slaveholders one exemption from conscription for every 20 slaves they owned. Rich men could also pay a bounty or hire a substitute to take their place. The law outraged yeomen farmers torn between the demands of the army and pressing affairs at home. Like the draft, the collapse of the southern economy hurt poor southerners the most. Prices rose six times faster than wages, and some basic commodities like salt were completely unavailable. A tax in kind and impressments of supplies exacerbated complaints that the Confederate cause was a "rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

Dissent took many forms. In Appalachia, Unionists and deserters fought as guerrillas. On April 2, 1863, in the Confederate capital of Richmond, a mob of hungry women, many of whom were married to men working in local iron foundries, rioted to protest high prices and scarcities and then looted local shops. Despite these protests and a steady loss of territory and lives to the Union war machine, the Confederacy remained a popular cause with most whites living inside its borders. That loyalty enabled Confederates to fight until April 1865, long after major battlefield defeats made Union victory inevitable.

Despite having more people and resources, shortages became acute in the North by 1863. Although not as severe as in the South, workers' wages rose by half while the cost of living doubled. The withdrawal of millions of men to the military failed to raise wages above prices because employers replaced human labor with machinery and hired women in place of men.

More problematic for northern labor was the federal Conscription Act of March 3, 1863. Like

Confederate officials, federal authorities allowed conscripts to pay a \$300 commutation fee or furnish a substitute. Protests took place across the North. The most severe disorder occurred in New York City from July 13 to 16. Mob attacks on draft officers addressed grievances about conscription, but destruction of an African-American orphanage and lynching of black men spoke to racial hatreds stoked by exaggerated reports of black strikebreaking and resentment against Union efforts in behalf of slaves.

In New York City and in draft violence in central Pennsylvania, Irish immigrants stood out as rioters. Despite the sensational tales of rioting dockworkers and Molly Maguires, a far larger number of Irish-Americans fought for the Union army (144,221) than took part in antiwar violence.

Economic hardship generated a surge in trade union organizing between 1863 and 1865. Fifteen new national unions were organized, although several disappeared before the war ended. More successful were citywide trade assemblies and local unions. The movement for shorter hours took off in 1863 when Ira Steward, a leader of the Machinists' and Blacksmiths' International Union, organized the Boston Eight Hour League.

The upsurge in union activity extended to women workers whose numbers increased during wartime. In 1863, New York's female garment cutters created the Working Women's Protective Union to fight abuses and lobby for shorter hours and better wages. Branches of the union formed in Boston, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Chicago, and Philadelphia.

Strikes over pay and hours brought retaliation from employers, who were forming their own associations and who relied on federal troops to suppress strikes. The longest and most repressive federal intervention in a labor dispute occurred in Pennsylvania's anthracite region. Troops also broke strikes at munitions factories, docks, and railroads.

As northern workers struggled to advance the condition of free labor, southern slaves fought to make freedom universal and to win full equality with other citizens. Black military service spurred this effort. Black abolitionists like Frederick Douglass recognized that the public equated military service with citizenship, and they pressed Congress to enroll African-Americans. The enlistment of 186,000 African-Americans (90% of whom had been slaves before the war) undermined northern resistance to emancipation. Black military service helped turn the tide on the battlefield, and African-American veterans became leaders in the postwar struggle for equality.

In 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution abolished slavery throughout the United States and focused national attention on wartime

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experiments over what free labor would mean for ex-slaves. Those wartime experiments followed three paths. The first was the military itself, which employed one fifth to one third of the black men in several Confederate states. In a second model of free labor, ex-slaves settled on land confiscated from their masters. Limited to a few such as coastal South Carolina and the Mississippi plantation of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, land titles proved hard to maintain but freedmen in these locales did manage to establish control over their own labor and households. The closest resemblance to slavery existed in the federally controlled lower Mississippi Valley, where commanders used a contract labor system that paid the minimum for subsistence and perpetuated features of the old regime, such as work gangs.

At war's end, northern workers and southern freedpeople had fought together for freedom and shared common goals. Both groups wanted to expand their rights as workers in the American economy, both looked to the state as an agent of progressive social change, and both supported equal rights in the abstract. However, the commitment of white farmers and workers to racial equality was limited, and on that rock would founder efforts to create a more inclusive labor movement.

The North's limited commitment to ex-slaves enabled former Confederates to regain power in southern states under the lenient policies of President Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln after he was assassinated on April 14, 1865. In the South, former Confederates tried to re-establish slavery through discriminatory laws known as the Black Codes, which prevented African-Americans from quitting work, pursuing nonfarm occupations, or otherwise exiting the world of staple-crop agriculture. The injustice of wartime foes subjugating allies and vicious race riots in New Orleans and Memphis outraged northern public opinion sufficiently to bring the so-called radical wing of the Republican Party to power in 1867.

At their most ambitious, Radical Republicans sought to instill free labor values into southern society. More modest plans included guaranteeing blacks equality before the law, reinvigorating the southern economy, keeping ex-Confederates from power, and building the Republican Party in the South. Workers joined in the radical coalition with northern industrialists, middle-class reformers, women's rights activists, and southern freedmen, who won the right to vote in 1870.

For a brief time, Radical Reconstruction transformed racial and economic relations in the South. African-Americans not only voted but elected themselves to high office. The Fourteenth Amendment,

passed in 1868, protected their civil rights. Civil Rights Acts passed in 1870 and 1871 (also known as the Enforcement Acts) provided recourse to federal courts for civil rights violations. State governments built schools, outlawed segregation, eliminated vestiges of slavery like the whipping post, banished debtor's prison, and democratized government by ending property qualifications for voting and instituting the secret ballot.

This transformation of southern society was short-lived. By 1877, former Confederates acting through the Democratic Party and the paramilitary Ku Klux Klan had retaken, or "redeemed," all of the South's state governments. Radical Reconstruction collapsed for many reasons, chief among which was the failure of northern whites to sustain their commitment to former slaves. Conflict between workers and employers and quarrels internal to the working class undermined northern resolve.

Already evident in wartime strikes, conflict between labor and capital intensified as workers pressed for changes that had been postponed during the war. Hope that labor would reap the rewards of military victory informed the eight-hour-day leagues that spread across the North in 1865. Simultaneously, state and national labor federations grew. In 1866, the National Labor Union (NLU) held its first meeting and called for laws mandating an eight-hour workday. Shorter hours angered businessmen, who otherwise supported Radical Reconstruction. Employers and many Radical Republican politicians understood free labor to mean freedom from interference in the marketplace, be it the coercion of slave owner or the meddling of government. To legislate the hours of work struck them as the entering wedge for wholesale tampering with property rights. Wealthy northerners viewed efforts by southern Republicans to redistribute land through tax seizures as part of the same dangerous movement.

In 1872, these disaffected Republicans abandoned the radicals for the Liberal Republican movement. Liberals nominated onetime Free-Soiler Horace Greeley on a platform of fiscal retrenchment and clean government. Greeley lost to incumbent Ulysses S. Grant, but his bolt from the party hurt the Radicals.

Labor activists had also grown restive with Republicans. Despite his lenient treatment of the South, President Andrew Johnson signed an eight-hour-day law for some federal employees, and the Democratic Party railed against bankers and Wall Street financiers. Unable to win significant legislation from the Republican Congress, workers turned toward the Democrats and third parties.

Conflict among workers further eroded support for equal rights under Radical Reconstruction. Seeking

labor's support, women's suffrage advocates attended the NLU convention of 1869. The convention refused a seat to women's rights leader Susan B. Anthony both because delegates, almost all of whom were men, opposed woman's suffrage and because the Working Women's Protective Association, which Anthony represented, had engaged in strikebreaking.

The NLU and other trade unions had similar conflicts with black labor. In 1869, the NLU seated its first African-American delegates but otherwise refused to cooperate with black workers who were excluded from most unions. In 1869, Isaac Myers, a Baltimore ship caulker, founded the Colored National Labor Union (CNLU) to coordinate labor reform on behalf of African-American workers in 18 states. Although NLU president Richard Trevellick attended the initial meeting of the CNLU, the existence of a separate African-American national federation signified the failure of postwar labor leaders to overcome prejudice within their ranks. Unlike numerous white trades unionists, Meyers and his colleagues backed the Republican Party, which had fought for freedom during the war and resisted the Democratic attack on Reconstruction.

Racial identity also prevented labor solidarity in California. By 1870, Chinese workers made up one quarter of the state's work force. White unions excluded Chinese workers and boycotted Chinese-made products. Shunned by their coworkers, in 1867, Chinese railroad workers struck for higher pay on the Transcontinental Railroad. Railroad executives contemplated importing African-American strikebreakers from the South, but after a week, work had resumed at the old rate.

Some white workers fought against racism. Alonzo Draper, leader of the Lynn shoe strike, headed a regiment of the United States Colored Troops. Abolitionist Wendell Phillips participated in the eight-hour movement. NLU president William Sylvis toured the South to recruit blacks. Despite these efforts, conflicts over race, class, and gender weakened the labor movement.

The Panic of 1873, the longest economic contraction prior to the 1930s, dealt another blow to organized labor and Reconstruction. With unemployment at 25% in New York City and riots by the jobless occurring there and elsewhere in the industrial heartland, northern interest in helping the South's poor dried up.

In 1873 and 1874, strikes occurred on railroads and in northeastern textile mills. In 1875, Pennsylvania miners waged a long, unsuccessful strike that ended with the trial of the Molly Maguires. In July 1877, the Great Strike on the railroads—the first national strike in U.S. history—shut down several major cities and

once again brought labor into armed conflict with government troops. Already opposed to strikes, the NLU was led by these events further away from workplace activism. While middle-class reformers tried to make the NLU into a political party, some labor reformers gravitated toward socialism and currency reform, a remedy that also appealed to farmers hit hard by the Panic.

Other labor activists gravitated toward tightly organized semisecret unions like the Knights of St. Crispin, a shoemakers' organization, and the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, which originated among Philadelphia garment makers in 1868. In 1870, the Knights of St. Crispin boasted 50,000 members, the largest of any contemporary union, and they won a strike in the old battleground of Lynn. An employer counterattack and the Panic of 1873 did away with the Crispins. The Knights of Labor, on the other hand, survived to carry forward the traditions of labor reform.

Cut off from the labor movement, former slaves in the South adjusted to Reconstruction's decline. Immediately after the war, the Freedmen's Bureau, an offshoot of the federal military, negotiated labor contracts between ex-slaves and their old masters. Over time, the contract system broke down because of cash shortages and resistance by freedpeople to white employer supervision. In its place, black families agreed to pay the landlord with a share of the crop in exchange for use of the land. From the perspective of former slaves, sharecropping, as this system was known, limited contact with white employers and gave blacks day-to-day control of their labor. Landlords opted for sharecropping because it solved the problem of cash scarcity and because tenant debt could be manipulated to keep black labor bound to the land. Redeemer governments passed crop lien laws to ensure that indebted tenants would remain in place.

Instead of sharecropping, some African-Americans, usually younger men, continued to contract for wages and migrated between plantations. Others moved to the cities of the South in search of jobs and relief from rural hardships. Southern manufacturers, however, routinely refused to hire blacks, and many found the cities no better than the countryside. Reluctantly, some African-Americans abandoned the South. In 1879, the Exodusters, a movement of 15,000 former slaves, migrated from the Mississippi Valley to Kansas.

By 1876, only three southern state governments remained in Republican hands. These were also the only states still to have federal troops defending African-American access to the courts and ballot box. Republican nominee Rutherford B. Hayes eked out an electoral college win over Democrat Samuel

Tilden, who won the popular vote. A stalemate lasted into 1877. Republicans who had already abandoned most of the South gave up their final outposts. They did so as much out of exhaustion with Reconstruction as from any deal cut with Democrats. Reconstruction's defeat also spelled defeat for the egalitarian promise of free soil, free labor, and free men, for which northern labor had gone to war in 1861.

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See also Abolitionism; African-Americans; Chinese Laborers' Strike on the Transcontinental Railroad (1867); Free-Soilism; Fugitive Slave Acts; Germans; Greenback-Labor Party; Irish; Knights of Labor; Knights of St. Crispin and the Daughters of St. Crispin; Know-Nothing Party; Lynn Shoe Strike (1860); National Labor Union; Railroads; Railroad Strikes (1877); Sharecropping and Tenancy; Steward, Ira; Strike-breaking; Sylvis, William; Thirteenth Amendment; Trevellick, Richard; Tubman, Harriet

CLAYTON ANTITRUST ACT (1914)

In 1914, in response to President Woodrow Wilson's support of the antitrust movement, Congress passed the Clayton Antitrust Act. The Act was a weak attempt to regulate the growing monopolies that gave a small number of businessmen immense power over the marketplace. Labor leaders' initial celebrations over the legislation were quickly replaced with disappointment as the Act and its implementation failed to provide meaningful reforms.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, industrial workers, tradesmen, and reformers protested an economy that privileged the wealthy and disadvantaged the laboring classes. In the 1880s, they fostered a movement in opposition to trust building, the practice that allowed a small number of companies to gain disproportionate control over the economy. These trusts, broadly defined, included those business owners who forged agreements with owners of similar businesses in order to eliminate other competitors and monopolize the market. A few powerful companies, like Standard Oil, took control of businesses that supplied all the services involved in their industry, providing them with an advantage over less-integrated competitors. The antitrust movement campaigned for legislative reforms that would outlaw such activities.

In 1890, Congress passed the Sherman Antitrust Act as an initial measure to regulate certain business activities. The Sherman Act attempted to make it illegal to conspire or make contracts to form trusts that restrained free trade and commerce between states or with foreign nations. The Act, however, was vague, failing even to define its terms, and the probusiness-leaning Supreme Court rendered the Act ineffective. Congress failed to respond, but workers, who suffered from low wages, long hours, and dangerous working conditions that were the effects of these trusts, organized and went on strike.

Employers used the courts and physical violence to quash workers' protests. Business owners increasingly secured injunctions from the courts to prohibit unions

from engaging in strikes and called on the police and militia to force protesters to disperse. The labor leaders who challenged these injunctions, including Eugene Debs in the 1894 Pullman strike, were found in contempt of court and jailed. Labor leaders responded by intensifying their campaign for additional legislation that would regulate against trusts and grant laborers the right to organize and act to protect their interests.

With slow, but growing, administrative support, under Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson, the antitrust movement made some tentative gains in the first decades of the twentieth century. AFL President Samuel Gompers and others lobbied the Congress, asking for antitrust laws that would outlaw trusts but exempt labor unions. In 1914, Congress finally acted. It passed the Clayton Antitrust Act ostensibly to outlaw trusts, which Gompers optimistically and incorrectly dubbed the working people's Magna Carta. Congress also passed the Federal Trade Commission Act, which created a commission authorized to regulate competition, charge violations, and gather trade information.

The Clayton Act tentatively attempted to fix loopholes in the Sherman Act. It prohibited pricing agreements that created monopolies and restrained trade, interlocking directorates in large corporations, firm acquisitions of stock in a competitor, and contracts that required purchasers to refrain from dealing with the sellers' competitors. The Act authorized holding officials of the corporation individually responsible for antitrust violations. Further, it exempted labor organizations from the antitrust restraints, explicitly providing that labor unions did not constitute unlawful combinations in restraint of trade. The Act, however, left ambiguous what union activities were permissible, allowing for the possibility of judicial regulation of labor organizations.

The federal courts used the ambiguities of the Act to strike down many of the regulations on business and to impose regulations on labor unions. Supporting these lower court decisions, in 1921, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the provisions of the Clayton Act did not impede the court's power to grant an injunction against labor unions. While the Court did acknowledge that laborers had the right to unionize, it ruled that any strikes or boycotts they conducted that impeded the flow of interstate commerce were illegal. As a result, employers continued to seek injunctions against labor unions to prevent strikes and boycotts, and courts continued to uphold them into the 1930s. Not until the New Deal and the passage of the Norris-LaGuardia Act in 1932 did the government provide meaningful antitrust policies and laws.

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CLERICAL WORK AND OFFICE WORK

Clerical work and office work are categories of white-collar work found in business offices and the administrative divisions of manufacturing establishments. Attached to the bureaucratic and record-keeping functions of capitalism, clerical and office work expanded with the growth of manufacturing, financial, commercial, and other economic activities over the last two hundred years. Specific jobs within the category of clerical and office work have changed considerably during U.S. history. In the earliest years of the United States, educated, well-connected young men with aspirations for advancements in the world worked as clerks in business, law, and commercial establishments and could have realistic expectations of rising through the ranks. Throughout the dynamic and volatile economy of the late nineteenth century, office and clerical work were a part of a growing service sector. Women took newly created positions such as typewriting. Even though women considered office work better than factory labor, they could not expect that their positions would provide advancement within the firm. Throughout the twentieth century, the clerical and office work sector grew as firms increasingly applied technology to office practice and employed women to do the work.

Most scholarship on clerical work and office work appeared after World War II. C. Wright Mills and Harry Braverman first alerted academics and the public to the situation, experience, and plight of the white-collar worker doing clerical and office work. Those interested in the world of work realized that this sector of the labor force could not be ignored. In addition to the growth in the size of the service sector generally, and the clerical sector specifically, scholars such as Mills and Braverman focused on the changing nature of twentieth-century capitalism and the alienating nature of some work in the clerical sector. Writing in 1951, Mills described a "new," albeit diverse, white-collar middle class emerging in the post-World War II period. Almost a quarter of a century

later, Braverman described the ways in which this new clerical sector had become like factory work. Building upon Braverman's work, labor historians and women's and gender studies scholars from the 1970s on turned their attention to office and clerical work because it was recognized as the quintessential female job of the twentieth century. So powerfully had this job become gender typed, that when a man took the position, describing the gender was necessary; he was not a secretary, but a *male* secretary. Scholarship has focused on (1) the effects of technology and scientific management on office and clerical work and those who perform it; (2) the relationship between women and office work; (3) unionization; and (4) economic transformations of late twentieth-century capitalism.

Office and Clerical Work in the Nineteenth Century

The earliest clerical and office work fell into four categories: bookkeepers, office boys, copyists, and clerks. Basic literacy and mathematical skills, and a good hand, were the only skills required; however, since these were considered entry-level positions, employers hired only young men from good families. During the early nineteenth century, when firms and their bureaucratic requirements were small, record-keeping work was modest. Each business required unique skills from its male office staff. Office boys were younger, newer entrants into the firm with no expectation to move up through the ranks. Bookkeepers were in charge of important financial information and transactions and might use this job to improve their position in the firm. The category of clerk might contain a great variety of positions such as postal clerk, billing clerk, shopping clerk, railroad clerk, or hotel clerk, obviously contingent upon the enterprise. Men with skills in shorthand took stenographic transcriptions for trials and legal documents, depositions, and verbatim accounts of speeches. Men took clerk jobs in the growing bureaucracies in Washington DC as a way to enter a lifetime career of public service.

Throughout the nineteenth century, men not only filled a growing number of jobs in this category of employment but also availed themselves of opportunities to train for a variety of office jobs. To meet the demand for office workers, private business colleges appeared in many large cities during the middle of the nineteenth century. Before this sort of training and education was available in the public schools, these

institutions provided basic business training to young, ambitious men who did not have family or business connections. These employment and educational opportunities were attractive to young men. According to Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, in *Rereading Sex*, the young male clerk living and working alone in the city was "surrounded by a new 'sporting culture' with its many attractions." The city's amusements, which included taverns, theaters, and houses of prostitution, were nonworking equivalents to a masculine work space in the office. Some male office workers, like their brothers in the skilled trades, punctuated their workdays with trips to the office building's saloon for a quick shot. More respectable members of the clerking class could partake of leisure activities and housing provided by the Young Men's Christian Association and similar services provided to launch middle-class lives in the city.

Women and Clerical Work

The Civil War started the women's story in clerical and office work. When young men employed in government bureaucratic offices left their jobs to fight during the Civil War, women were called upon to fill the positions previously taken only by men in federal agencies and bureaucracies. Once women had broken through this important barrier and demonstrated that they had the skills and ability to do the work, there was no turning back. Starting in the 1870s, women enrolled in private business colleges, demanded clerical training courses in the public schools, took a large percentage of new positions available, and participated in conversations in trade journals and associations, asserting their right to take this new occupational opportunity for women. Between 1870 and 1930, women's share of the clerical labor force increased from less than 3% to over 50%. In Chicago in 1890, for example, roughly the same percentage of the male and female labor force, roughly 9%, worked at the 41,000 office positions. By 1930, when there were 238,000 office jobs, women dominated the jobs numerically, and over a third of all women in the labor force (and only 11% of the men) were doing office work.

The appearance of women in the office coincided with major changes in office work. The number of jobs in clerical and office work increased dramatically. Many new jobs were in existing categories, such as bookkeeping and clerkships, but some of the increase was from the creation of new jobs in the business office. The most important new position was the

stenographer-typist, an office worker who took stenographic transcription of a text and typed it. This position resulted from the invention and widespread use of the typewriter and the pairing of this technology with stenography. This increased the educational and technological requirements of the copyist position. This office job also occupied a different position in the hierarchy of the firm. Stenographer-typists, later called secretaries, could be found working for one boss as a personal assistant, or in some of the larger firms, could be found working in a large, factorylike office with others doing similar work, later called a typing pool. Even though this was a new position that required new skills, because it was filled by young, white, native-born women, it was no longer a stepping-stone to advancement in the firm.

The growing importance of bureaucratic tasks and the growing numbers of individuals doing office work prompted many firms to develop a more efficient system of work. Magazines like *System* (1902–1930) shared scientific and practical information on how to improve office practice. Mechanical engineer William Henry Leffingwell applied the scientific management techniques of Frederick Winslow Taylor to clerical work. Certain office jobs resembled factory work, with the application of a variety of office machines. The adaptation of new technologies to the business world created new positions such as the switchboard operator and telephone receptionist. Women found jobs ranging from the exclusive private secretary to the lowly file clerk. Men were still found in certain types of office jobs, such as postal clerk and bookkeepers. Although they might still aspire to work their way up from the mailroom, women's career aspirations were limited to the clerical occupations themselves.

This limitation on women's advancement through the ranks of a firm, now known as the glass ceiling, was as much a result of the separation of many office jobs from male seniority lines as it was from occupational barriers attached to many office jobs. These occupational barriers resulted from assumptions about the sex, race, age, and class position of those taking office jobs at this time. Many companies would only hire young, native-born, white, and in most cases, Protestant women. Even though many young, second-generation working-class women saw a job in an office as a step up from factory work, clerical jobs were not open to all women. Individual firms might not hire African-Americans (the small number of African-American businesses certainly did), Catholics, Jews, certain ethnic groups, older women, married women, or women with children. The "marriage bar" for women was particularly powerful in office work before World War II. According to Sharon Hartmann

Strom, in *Beyond the Typewriter*, "the marriage bar was both a cultural convention and an arbitrary workplace requirement. The cultural norm before World War II was to expect that when women married, they would retire to home, especially if they had children." The marriage bar kept women's work separated from men's; it justified paying women less and kept women's wages low; and it supported the family wage ideal—the goal that men should earn enough to support a family.

It would be a mistake, however, to minimize the importance of the appearance of this occupational option to women at this time. Rationalized and restricted, office work still held promise to a group of women with limited occupational opportunities. Office work was clean, light, relatively well-paid employment for women. During the first decades of the twentieth century, women who took office jobs in the city, called businesswomen, participated in redefining the gendered nature of work and public space. Office work, previously a male job, took place in what had been considered male space, the business office. The prospect of women entering this work space, as well as a variety of spaces in the city, enlivened a conversation about women in the city. In an era when commentators were already concerned about "women adrift" and the "white slave trade," single women taking public transportation, striding unchaperoned on the streets, taking elevators in the new skyscrapers, and working side by side with unrelated men were not always considered acceptable. The reformer Jane Addams, in *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil*, believed that female office workers, who were often the only women in their offices, were particularly susceptible to the temptation of becoming fallen women. If some women felt constrained by imagined restrictions or fear, many hundreds of thousands more demonstrated women's ability to move about the city and do this type of work by simply doing it. Progressive reformers of all types responded by providing a variety of services to girls training to become or working as office workers in the city by providing city lunch rooms, boarding houses, vocational educational and placement services, organized leisure activities, and professional organizations. Female office workers and their allies made the city and its skyscrapers their own.

Representations of the Office Worker

After Herman Melville immortalized the purgatory of the middle-aged man left behind at the clerk's desk in

his short story “Bartleby the Scrivener” (1853), most representations of clerical and office workers were female. Female office workers were always interesting characters in U.S. popular culture. As Sinclair Lewis told the story of the life of a female office worker in *The Job: An American Novel* (1917), he pondered the dilemmas of the modern, twentieth-century woman. The very earliest films, shorts shown in nickelodeons, featured female clerical workers in a variety of sensationalized and comprising positions. The plots of these films tapped into the audience’s uncertainty about girls taking these positions. The female office worker could just as often appear as a young girl in an unwholesome environment, the victim of a predatory male boss, or a young, beautiful vamp seducing her boss away from his usually old-fashioned, battle-ax wife. During the 1920s, as the young, single, white, Protestant girl became a more regular feature in the downtown business office, her screen persona changed. During the flapper era, the office worker on film became the good girl next door trying to make her way in the world. She was thoroughly modern in her appearance and behavior but used new feminine wiles to get the rich, handsome husband at the end. Any controversy associated with women doing office work was resolved by the 1930s, when films such as *The Office Wife* (1930) promoted the message that good office workers make good wives.

In the postwar period, representations of female office workers reflected ongoing renegotiations of women’s positions in the world of work. In *Desk Set* (1957), office worker Katherine Hepburn sparred with the man hoping to computerize the office, Spencer Tracy, about the indispensability of women over machines in every aspect of life. Influenced by the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the film *Nine to Five* (1980), with Lilly Tomlin, Jane Fonda, and Dolly Parton as office workers in the same office, humorously raised the issues of the glass ceiling and sexual harassment. This film also explored the importance of collective support and sisterhood among office workers to bring about change. *Working Girl* (1988) presented an ambitious female office worker, who not only bests her female Ivy League boss in business, but also steals her boyfriend. Once again, office work (and some very well-chosen outfits) was the recipe for female success and happiness.

Recent representations of office workers, male and female, take up the alienating and absurd nature of modern bureaucratic life. The popular comic strip *Dilbert* and the BBC situation comedy *The Office* (recently remade by a U.S. network) both present the office as the perfect setting for the theater of the absurd. Sitting in a cubicle, talking to disembodied voices at the other end of a wireless phone, e-mailing

countless, faceless individuals throughout the globe, and engaging in meaningless rounds of work with no clear authority or purpose have become a symbol of alienation in the modern world.

Unionization

The mainstream labor movement has always considered office workers, particularly female office workers, difficult to unionize. The leaders of the dominant craft-oriented American Federation of Labor supported the family wage ideal and considered office workers, and other female workers, as only temporarily in the labor force. Nevertheless, there have been periods in U.S. history when office and clerical workers in many different industries have been successfully organized into unions. The changes in office practice at the start of the century and technological changes after World War II provided ripe conditions for workplace organizing, while feminism provided the ideology to justify it.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL)—an AFL-affiliated organization dedicated to organizing and supporting women workers in a number of the largest U.S. cities—was only moderately successful in organizing office workers into unions. For example, the Chicago WTUL-affiliated Stenographers’ and Typists’ Association had a small membership of less than 200 in 1911. Chicago’s civil service employees belonged to the more successful Office Employee Association that had a membership approaching one thousand by 1920. Female progressives and labor advocates undoubtedly perceived exploited female factory and sweatshop workers as more deserving of their attention than white-collar workers; and female office workers may have been less interested in participating in what they considered working-class activities.

The creation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and an upsurge in labor activism, often undertaken by communists and socialists in the labor movement during the late 1930s, brought about new efforts on behalf of office workers. According to Sharon Hartman Strom, the CIO chartered three office worker unions in 1937—the United Federal Workers, the State, County, and Municipal Workers of America, and the United Office and Professional Workers of America. They did well in the 1930s and 1940s but suffered during the communist purges in the 1950s. The AFL chartered its own union, the Office and Professional Employees Union, in 1944. Bringing together a number of locals in the private

and public sector, it began with 22,000 members and today boasts 145,000 members. This union, however, often had male leaders, and this may have made it less appealing to the millions of female office workers in the United States in the era after World War II. Large industrial unions like the Steel Workers and particularly the United Automobile Workers (UAW) sought to organize white-collar workers in their industries. The United Automobile Workers, for example, began to pay attention to the white-collar employees as early as 1941, although certain large employers such as General Motors (GM) and Ford resisted any attempt to organize office staffs. With the creation in 1962 of the TOP (Technical, Office, and Professional) Department, the UAW began to make some progress toward organizing office staff. By the end of the 1960s, TOP had more than 80,000 members. The UAW also led efforts to organize office workers on college and university campuses.

The feminist movement of the late 1960s and 1970s inspired many female office workers to create new organizations to improve their work lives. Fed up with dress codes, sexual harassment, and a lack of respect and professional behavior at work, female office workers chanted slogans such as “Respect, Raises, and Roses” and formed new organizations like 9to5. While this brought a greater measure of fairness and equity to many work settings, the benefits of this activity were uneven and spotty. Office workers in public-sector workplaces (and at many colleges and universities) joined or created good unions. Gains in the private sector were spottier.

Recent Trends in Office Work: Technology and the Contingent Worker

Technology has altered office work throughout history. The invention of the typewriter during the 1870s provided the impetus for the creation of the job women took as they entered the office—the stenographer-typist. The term “typewriter” was used to refer to both the machine and the young female who operated it. Scholars often claimed that women could take this job because the new invention was gender neutral. This explanation, however, ignored the very powerful associations that already existed between young, white, middle-class familiarity with the piano keyboard and typewriting as a transferable skill. Young women with musical skills were, in fact, recruited for early typewriter work. A variety of office machines appeared in the business office after the typewriter, but the most important technological change in office practice occurred after World War II

with the application of computer technologies to a variety of clerical jobs. Key punch operation was an early data processing function that required mind-numbing repetition and attention to detail. The electric typewriter contributed to the creation of the typing pool. Word processing systems appeared in the 1970s, and personal computers and terminals replaced many typewriters at workspaces. As more sophisticated machines came into the office, office workers needed greater technological skills. Scholars have noted that this has not always translated into any increase in pay or general recognition of these new skills. Office workers with extensive knowledge of new technologies are often classified as office managers and executive assistants. Those with limited or no technological skills are found in routinized and less-well-paid clerical duties. Contrary to dire predictions of the end of office work in the paperless office, office work has continued to change with new technologies and bureaucratic organization.

The woman behind the typewriter changed along with the machinery. During the 1950s, the age and race of female office workers began to change. Older and married women entered the clerical labor force after World War II, many returning to the labor force once their children were in school or out of the house. These middle-aged workers often claimed that the extra income allowed their families to send children to college or to buy a second car or vacation home. Marriage and pregnancy bars persisted until the 1970s, but many employers dropped these employment restrictions earlier. Many employers also began to hire African-American women. Discriminatory practices certainly persisted, but in many large companies, the first inroads of women of color in office work began in the post-World War II period.

Late twentieth-century changes in capitalism had a profound effect on office work. Shifts to the service and information technology sectors profoundly altered fundamental ideas about work. In an attempt to become lean and flexible, many firms increased the amount of temporary workers in their labor force. By using a greater percentage of temporary workers, companies could reduce benefit and health-care costs. Advances in technology have allowed some firms to rediscover homework. Outfitted with a PC at home, a worker, who was usually a woman with young children, could perform many paper-processing functions in her own home and at times that accommodated her schedule. This “electronic cottage” simultaneously evoked the sweatshop revisited and the solution to the post-feminist middle-class woman who wanted to have it all. That clerical homework has not completely replaced office employment is a testament to the isolation and exploitation of

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homework. Some firms have even found it profitable to contract out or “outsource” whole sectors of office practice, such as accounting, bookkeeping, or billing departments. All of these so-called contingent workers (temporary, homeworkers, outsourced) are a growing part of the clerical and office labor force.

Recent Trends in Office Work: Globalization

These technological and organizational changes in the nature of office and clerical work have created conditions allowing for the outsourcing of contingent workers overseas. In English-speaking nations in the Caribbean, India, and elsewhere, firms can employ cheaper workers for a whole series of front-office tasks (such as telemarketing) and back-office tasks (such as data entry and processing). The globalization of white-collar jobs has even provoked a recent congressional hearing, as many fear that white-collar work will suffer the same fate as manufacturing jobs. This will surely bring great change and, in some cases, hardship to workers in the United States. The effects on workers overseas, however, are still unfolding. The sociologist Jasmin Mirza studied the implications on gender roles as lower-middle-class Muslim women in Lahore, Pakistan, took jobs as receptionists, secretaries, telephone operators, drafts-women, computer operators, and designers during the last decade. Even though the number taking these jobs was small and the impact was still limited, this scholar concludes that women’s appearance in the office and other public spaces challenged existing gender roles and expanded possibilities for women. Despite the real exploitation that office and clerical workers suffer as a result of new technologies and work arrangements, the transformative potential of women seeking white-collar jobs in offices in the city should never be underestimated.

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COAL MINING

See **Mining, Coal**

COALITION OF BLACK TRADE UNIONISTS

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) was formed in 1972 when more than 1,200 African-American union officials and rank-and-file members gathered in Chicago, Illinois, for two days to discuss the direction of the American Federation of

Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and the role black workers could play in the larger labor movement. The initial meeting, which took place on September 23–24 at the LaSalle Hotel, was attended by representatives from 37 unions, making it the single largest gathering of black unionists in the history of the American labor movement.

Although the formation of the CBTU was the product of the frustration black trade unionists had felt within the labor movement, especially since the merger of the AFL-CIO in 1955, the catalyst was the neutral position the AFL-CIO Executive Council took in the 1972 presidential election between incumbent Richard Nixon and George McGovern. The five prominent black labor leaders issued the call for the first conference immediately after George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, and the Executive Council ignored the voice of black American workers by endorsing neutrality at their meeting held in August. Those who objected to the Executive Council pronouncement thought it was tantamount to contributing to the re-election of Nixon. In the call that went out for the CBTU conference, the five leaders noted their concern over the upcoming presidential election, making clear their wish that George McGovern, the candidate of the Democratic Party, win the presidency. In the minds of CBTU leaders, the re-election of Richard Nixon would continue economic circumstances that did not favor the interests of labor. In particular, CBTU leaders cited continued unemployment, inflated prices, frozen wages, and the appointment of judges on the U.S. Supreme Court who would be insensitive to the rights of workers, minorities, and the poor. Finally, they were convinced that the election of Nixon over McGovern would result in the reversal or neglect of civil rights. The five who called the initial meeting were William Lucy, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; Charles Hayes, vice president of the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen of North America; Nelson Jack Edwards, vice president of the United Auto Workers; Cleveland Robinson, president of the Distributive Workers of America, District 65; and William Simons, president of the American Federation of Teachers in Washington, DC, Local 6.

Charles Hayes, the first black trade unionist ever elected to Congress, chaired the meeting and mobilized those gathered by noting the need to create a structure for black and minority unionists that reached beyond the November elections. Hayes suggested an organization of the trade union movement that would give guidance and direction as well as assist minorities in overcoming some of the obstacles that black workers faced within the ranks of

organized labor. Hayes, in an interview with this author, discussed hurdles placed before black labor by both employers and union officials. Thus, while the presidential election provided the moment for forming a new organization, the momentum was generated by the frustration many African-American trade unionists felt as minority players within the labor movement.

During the 1960s, black trade union officials had worked to end institutionalized racism on the job and in the unions through the Negro American Labor Council (NALC). But that organization, headed initially by A. Philip Randolph, was considered by many to be too inflexible and entrenched in the larger union bureaucracy by the early 1970s. Many of the leaders who called for the formation of the CBTU were activists in the NALC who thought that organization was shackled by the aura of Randolph. The CBTU activists, many of whom were once loyal followers of Randolph, felt Randolph was too comfortable with the status quo. One of these activists and Randolph's successor as head of the NALC, Cleveland Robinson, pledged NALC's resources to the fledgling organization of CBTU. Another, Charles Hayes, said he thought Randolph's moment as the voice for black labor had passed by the late 1960s. While acknowledging the incredible debt African-American labor owed to Randolph, Hayes was anxious to form an organization that would try to utilize the power of the nearly three million black workers in organized labor.

The vision the five organizers carried to Chicago was to make the labor movement more relevant to the needs and aspirations of black and poor workers. The emergence of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit in the late 1960s highlighted the question of discrimination and lack of black representation within the labor movement. The CBTU liked to characterize its formation as the "awakening" of "the sleeping giant." The CBTU held its first convention five months later in May 1973 in Washington, DC.

There was opposition to the new organization. Bayard Rustin, an African-American colleague of Randolph from the 1940s, thought the CBTU was unnecessary. Rustin claimed that the new organization was redundant because, as he told *The New York Times*, black trade unionists had already assumed leadership roles in their unions and in their communities.

Accomplishments

The CBTU declared that its goal as a progressive forum for black workers was to help connect issues

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within unions to those within the black community. Through the years, the CBTU has been active in promoting black leadership within the union, advocating concerns of women workers, and mobilizing labor around human rights issues. The CBTU has led efforts to open more union leadership positions to African-American trade unionists, enhancing the viability of the labor movement through inclusion and diversity.

Since its first gathering, the CBTU has been influenced by the inclusion of African-American women. Between 35% and 40% of the 1,200 delegates who attended the initial 1972 meeting were black women. The CBTU's first executive committee was made up of five women. In 1982, the CBTU Executive Council organized the National Women's Committee as a way to form educational workshops focusing on teaching women how to play a leadership role within the union and address issues important to the larger community.

Political action has been high on the CBTU's agenda since its inception. Charles Hayes, as both a representative in Congress and founding member of the steering committee, was prominent in organizing the Congressional Black Caucus. Hayes was also a leader in the successful effort to elect Harold Washington as mayor of Chicago in 1983. Hayes and thousands of volunteers from the labor movement raised money and got out the vote in what was a very close election. The CBTU's efforts helped with the appointment of U.S. Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, the first African-American to hold that cabinet position.

The CBTU also added its weight to human rights causes, both in the United States and around the world, especially in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Domestically, it has been a voice for equal representation for residents of the District of Columbia. While taking a stand against Pinochet's military junta in Chile and the Abacha junta in Nigeria, it supported Caribbean workers exploited by American firms opposed to unions. The CBTU was in the vanguard with its positions against the apartheid state in South Africa. In 1974, it was the first American labor organization to pass strong resolutions calling for an economic boycott of South Africa, and CBTU President William Lucy was a founder of the Free South Africa Movement in 1984, which mobilized black workers into a grassroots anti-apartheid campaign. After Nelson Mandela was released from prison in 1990, Lucy raised over \$250,000 from American unions, which helped finance Mandela's tour of the United States and ease the transition of the African National Congress in the new South Africa. The CBTU also passed resolutions highlighting political

and human rights issues involving workers in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

The CBTU has continued to grow since its formation in 1972. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, there were 57 chapters in the United States and one in Ontario, Canada, representing the interests of over 50 different international and national unions.

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COALITION OF LABOR UNION WOMEN

Since its founding convention in 1974 in Chicago, Illinois, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) has sought to increase the empowerment of women in the labor movement. In 1974, more than 1,200 union women from across the United States met to create an organization that addressed the needs of millions of unorganized working women and make unions more responsive to the needs of all working women. CLUW is not a labor union. It is a coalition that provides its members with information and the tools necessary to bring about change in their local unions. CLUW provides a forum and structure where working women share common problems and concerns and develop action plans within the framework of their individual unions.

CLUW is the only organization that represents the interests of working women in the mainstream of the labor movement. It seeks affirmative action in the workplace to obtain equal hiring, promotion, classification, and pay for female union members. CLUW strives to strengthen the influence and participation of women within their unions, encourage political and legislative activity, and increase the number of union members in the female work force.

CLUW headquarters are in Washington, DC, under the direction of the national president and national staff, which comprises the organization's executive director, the director of the CLUW Center for Education and Research, the national organizer, and two additional staff positions. The organization has always maintained very close ties with organized labor not only to remain true to its founding mission,



Mrs. Elibia Siematter, working as a sweeper at the roundhouse, Clinton, Iowa. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA-OWI Collection [LC-DIG-fsac-1a34803].

but also to preserve its interests on the agendas of its labor union partners.

National officers hold positions for four-year terms and include the offices of president, executive vice president, treasurer, recording secretary, and corresponding secretary. Several vice president and immediate past president positions, as well as an executive director and counsel, make up the remainder of the National Officers Council, which is the organization's governing body. The National Officers Council comprises 19 female union leaders. Members of the National Officers Council represent national labor unions from a wide range of occupations and trades, including the United Auto Workers (UAW), public-sector unions—the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Office and Professional Employees' International Union (OPEIU), the United Association of Nurses (UAN), the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), and the Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA). Indeed, CLUW members come from 60 international and national unions across the United States and Canada. CLUW is endorsed by the AFL-CIO and

its international and national unions, and most of the unions from which CLUW members come are AFL-CIO member organizations.

The national executive council meets at least six times each year to act on organization business and to guide and plan biennial national conventions. National conventions have been held every other year since 1974 in cities across the United States. National- and local-level officers are elected each biennium, totaling more than 350 officers across the country. Convention workshops have covered such issues as sexual harassment; domestic violence; living with breast cancer; HIV/AIDS; juggling the demands of work, union, and family responsibilities; the mobilization for the inclusion of contraceptive coverage in health-care plans; organizing for immigrant rights; Social Security; meeting the needs of mature workers; and recruiting new generations of women workers. CLUW's initiative to recruit young working women includes demonstrating the union wage advantage, solidarity among fellow workers, and unity on issues affecting their lives.

Although domestic violence has been addressed by many organizations over several years, CLUW has focused its efforts on making domestic violence a union issue. With four million women experiencing domestic violence every year, the abuse directly affects union members, who can be both the victims of domestic violence, as well as the abusers themselves. CLUW has received federal grant money to create a video and training curriculum to inform its members on how to address this and several other issues. CLUW's program of internal union education seeks to provide its members and nonmembers alike with the resources to combat social and economic injustice.

National conventions have also coincided with the publication of newsletters and handbooks, and CLUW seeks to leverage its influence by participating with other working women's initiatives and organizations. Information gathering and distribution have always been at the core of CLUW's work. In 1975, CLUW published *Women and Health Security*, which was the first of several information resources released over the years. CLUW has sought to conduct research and distribute information on timely topics of interest to its membership and working women in general. Its publications have included: *Commitment to Child Care* (1977); *Effective Contract Language for Union Women* (1979); *Lead: A New Perspective on an Old Problem* (1981); *A Handbook for Empowerment of Union Women* (1982); *Bargaining for Child Care: A Union Parent's Guide* (1985); *Women and Children First: An Analysis of Trends in Federal Tax Policy* (1990); *Is Your Job Making You Sick? A CLUW*

Handbook on Health and Safety (1991); the *Family Medical Leave Act Resource Guide* (1993); and *Sharing Our Stories: Voices at Work* (1999). CLUW members participate in, and the organization cosponsors, many initiatives and efforts that are relevant to working women, including several United Nations Decade of Women conferences, as well as voter registration campaigns, the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor's "Working Women Count" survey, Equal Pay Day, the Wal-Mart Day of Action, and the Seneca Falls, New York, anniversary celebration.

With the growth of the electronic medium, CLUW has been able to distribute information more broadly and with less expense than in the past. Since information gathering, outreach, and education remain at the core of the organization, more effective and efficient distribution of information has expanded its influence. From the organization's Web site, union leaders and women workers who are interested in organizing can find information on ways to develop a local chapter, contact persons for existing local chapters, sample recruitment materials to attract new members, tips for new chapters, and forms and policies. In addition, all publications, a calendar of events, and promotional items are found on the CLUW.org homepage, "The new online frontline for working women" (www.cluw.org).

The organization's standing committees cover administrative tasks like elections, archives, recruitment, and finance, and they also feature topical issues that CLUW intends to continually devote resources toward. Topical issues that maintain standing committees or task forces include affirmative action, family issues, nontraditional jobs, union organizing, women's health, young women workers, violence against women, and minority issues. Separately, the CLUW Education and Research Center was created in 1979 to address all of these issues and more, providing education and training to its chapters in order to fulfill the organization's mission. In addition, the Education and Research Center has awarded educational scholarships to young women in labor studies programs.

Although CLUW policy is determined at the national level, the local CLUW chapters are responsible for putting the strategies into action. Local chapters function to empower women to bring about changes in their local unions. Since the focus of activity for local CLUW members is within their own unions, the local CLUW chapter provides its members with resources and tools in order to effect change within their locals. CLUW local chapters educate members, keep them up-to-date on a variety of issues of concern to working families, and provide a support network

for women in unions. Over 75 local chapters are in 29 states, from New York City and Washington, DC to Kenai, Alaska; Toledo, Ohio; and Frankston, Texas.

The four primary objectives of the organization have not changed over the past 30 years: CLUW seeks to promote affirmative action in the workplace; strengthen the role of women in unions; organize the unorganized women; and increase the involvement of women in the political and legislative process. These goals continue to provide the foundation for the organization's activities and have manifested in many diverse initiatives: equal pay, child and elder care benefits, job security, safe workplaces, affordable health care, HIV/AIDS awareness, contraceptive equity, and protection from sexual harassment and violence at work. CLUW received a multiyear \$250,000 grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS in workplaces. CLUW has been very active in the class action discrimination lawsuit against Wal-Mart, charging that company with systematic discrimination against women in hiring and promotions. The suit charges that Wal-Mart fails to provide equal assignments, promotions, training, and pay and retaliates against women and men who complain about these practices. Women make up nearly two thirds of the firm's hourly sales employees but hold only one third of management positions, and are disproportionately concentrated in lower-paying, lower-mobility departments such as customer service, cosmetics, housewares, toys, fabrics, and clothes. In addition to class-action advocacy, CLUW has worked on Capitol Hill to lobby on behalf of other issues important to working women, including Social Security reform, the antisweatshop "Behind the Label" campaign, and the raising of awareness of women workers' plight at multinational manufacturing plants in and around Juarez, Mexico.

In addition to national conventions, workshops, and advocacy, CLUW has endeavored to achieve its four primary objectives through education and outreach to its membership. This outreach has taken many forms over the past 30 years and has included the aforementioned publications, bimonthly newsletters, and the production and sale of consciousness-raising job-site tools, including "The 9 to 5 Guide to Combating Sexual Harassment" and "It's Not Funny, It's Not Flattering...It's Sexual Harassment" note cards. For more than 30 years, CLUW has worked closely with other working women's organizations as well as its own membership and union organizations to address the full range of issues faced by working women and union parents.

SHARON MASTRACCI

COHN, FANNIA (1885–1962)
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

Thorny, thin-skinned, and highly emotional, Fannia M. Cohn was a member of the pioneer generation of Jewish immigrant women who built the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). A gifted organizer, Cohn came to the attention of American labor leaders when she led a largely teenage group of female underwear makers from 35 different countries in a massive and successful general strike in 1913. Three years later, at the age of 31, she became the first woman elected vice president of a major American labor union. Cohn remained a central figure in the ILGWU for half a century, promoting her vision of a labor movement that fed not only the body but the heart and mind as well. Of all the aspirations she had heard working women voice on picket lines, at meetings, and in late-night study groups, she believed one to be at the heart of their interest in trade unionism: the desire for personal development and education. She devoted her life to fulfilling that goal.

Skeptical about the efficacy of legislating change, Cohn believed that only through education could workers become truly liberated. Education, she thought, would give women the confidence to challenge gender as well as class inequalities. And only through education, Cohn felt, would men abandon their prejudices toward women. That worker education grew and flourished in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century was in large part due to Cohn's tireless, almost fanatical labors on behalf of that cause. Drawing the support of some of the nation's leading scholars and academics, Cohn became the driving force behind the creation of a vast network of worker education programs between 1915 and 1962: worker universities, night schools, residential colleges, lecture series, and union hall discussion groups. By the time of her death in 1962, worker education programs had taught hundreds of thousands of men and women across the United States who might otherwise never have had the chance to experience advanced schooling. And the name of Fannia Cohn was known to all throughout the world who were interested in bringing higher learning to the working classes. Her name, wrote ILGWU colleague Leon Stein at the time of her retirement, had come to "stand for pioneering efforts to increase the educational opportunities for men and women in the shops" (Orleck 1995:295).

Many young middle-class revolutionaries through history have talked of abandoning their comforts and privileges to join the working-class struggle. Cohn was one of the few who did. Born in Kletsk, Poland,

to cosmopolitan parents who, according to Cohn, "distinguished themselves with culture, wealth, and humor," she was unusually well educated for an East European Jewish girl of her generation. Her parents prided themselves on holding progressive views both in terms of politics and the education of their daughters, all of whom were sent to an elite private school, where they were taught to read and write Russian as well as Yiddish. Cohn attributed her passion for learning to her mother. Cohn was, she said, "raised by mother on books...My mother wanted her children to be no less than professors" (Orleck 1995:22).

Cohn did make education her life's work. But her mother never imagined that study would lead her intense and emotional daughter where it did. Much to her family's dismay, 16-year-old Fannia Cohn joined the Minsk branch of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, an underground organization that hoped to spark peasant uprisings by assassinating hated government officials. Three years later, after her brother was almost killed in a pogrom, Cohn swallowed her revolutionary pride and accepted steamship tickets from her cousins in New York.

Her family was relieved to have fiery Fannia at a safe remove from revolutionary activity, but the young hothead soon angered them by refusing to accept a wealthy cousin's offer to put her through college and graduate school. "Coming as I did from a revolutionary background," she explained, "I was eager to be with the people...I was convinced that to voice the grievances, the hopes and aspirations of the workers, one must share in their experiences" (Orleck 1995:23). Like hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants of her generation, Cohn went to work in a garment shop. There she immediately began agitating for higher wages, improved working conditions, and shorter hours. For the next four years, she moved restlessly from shop to shop throughout Brooklyn's garment districts, carefully laying the ground for an uprising.

In 1913, Cohn led a strike of 35,000 "white goods" (underwear) makers, forging a new local union and earning her a seat on that union's first executive board. In 1915, she was hired by the ILGWU to organize Chicago dressmakers. Cohn achieved what other organizers before her, including Rose Schneiderman, had been unable to do. She founded the city's first dressmakers union. A Chicago newspaper, lauding her skill, style, and erudition, called her "one of labor's shrewdest diplomats" (Orleck 1995:79). She demonstrated that diplomacy at the 1916 ILGWU convention, where she was elected vice president. Cohn, perhaps to deflect resentment that a

daughter of the middle class was the first woman to win a seat on the executive board of a major U.S. union, insisted that she had been drafted to run as part of a shop-floor movement to place a woman in union leadership. But colleagues recalled that Cohn wanted the position badly and had campaigned fiercely, and strategically, for the nomination.

Shortly after her victory, Cohn convinced the union's executive board to create an Education Department—modeled on the one she and Pauline Newman had helped found in Local 25, the shirtwaist makers' union. As secretary of the ILGWU Education Department, Cohn helped develop courses in history, economics, literature, and current events that opened up the possibility of higher education to thousands of garment workers. In a union whose membership was heavily female, women vastly outnumbered men in these early worker education courses. In classrooms, on field trips, and on retreats, Cohn urged women workers not to settle for small changes, but to seek empowerment in the broadest sense—an improved quality of life, economic advancement, and intellectual stimulation. They did. Newly emboldened by classes in history, politics, and literature, militant women garment workers began to call for greater representation in the leadership of their union. And they articulated an alternative vision of what the ILGWU could be—an egalitarian and socially transformative community of workers.

These women's shop-floor rebellion soon turned into open warfare with an immigrant male union leadership that was just beginning to gain political power through the conservative inner circles of the American Federation of Labor. The internecine struggles that followed nearly destroyed the garment unions. The Right-Left labor battles of the 1920s have usually been attributed to a split between members of the Socialist and Communist Parties. But the first shots were fired in the years after World War I, by women schooled to rebel in Cohn's early worker education classes.

Cohn chose to stay with the ILGWU when thousands of militant women and men left, but it was a choice that isolated and wounded her. The union's leadership never forgave her for refusing to condemn the rebellion she'd helped to spark. And many of the militants whom she had inspired now condemned her for appearing to capitulate to what they saw as a grasping and corrupt ILGWU leadership. By 1924, as a high-ranking official rooted in union headquarters, Cohn was cut off from the radical labor Democrats who would have been her most natural allies. In a poisonous atmosphere of mutual dislike and distrust, Cohn would struggle with the

ILGWU's male leaders ceaselessly for nearly four decades.

Fannia Cohn offset her strained relations with union leaders by cultivating some of the nation's leading intellectuals as allies and even instructors in her worker education courses. Economist John Kenneth Galbraith, literary critic Van Wyck Brooks, and historian Merle Curti taught during the 1930s in Cohn's worker education courses. Cohn would order pastrami sandwiches from Manhattan's famous Stage Delicatessen for her favorite scholars and cluck over them as they ate: "Es Nokh a sandwich, Kenneth," one colleague recalls her saying as she patted the back of the world-famous Galbraith after he finished a lecture for her garment workers.

The progressive historian Charles Beard became a lifelong friend and supporter, lauding Cohn for "splendid efforts in the field of labor education. No one in America is doing more than you are...You hearten workers throughout the country" (Orleck 1995:173). The labor economist Theresa Wolfson worked closely with Cohn for many years, as a friend, instructor in various programs for women workers, and one of the first academics to document the role of women in the labor movement. Wolfson also became Cohn's sounding board during a lifetime of doing battle with unappreciative union leaders. Cohn described herself as having "the sensitive heart and tender emotions of the artist and the poet." Wolfson understood how difficult it was for a woman with such a temperament to survive in the rough-hewn world of organized labor, telling Cohn that she "realized with such poignancy of feeling what it means to be a woman among men in a fighting organization" (Orleck 1995:190).

Cohn found supporters in the union among the younger generation of women and men whom she mentored and nurtured with great affection. "She loved the young people," recalled colleague Leon Stein, and the young people loved her." Cohn called the women activists who came of age in the 1930s "NRA babies," and she schooled them in the history of the union's early years. Among the most successful of Cohn's protégées from that era was black Panamanian garment organizer Maida Springer Kemp, who went on to become African affairs representative for the AFL-CIO. "Fannia Cohn, that name in ILG history," Springer said. "I respected and revered her" as one of the pioneers who built the labor movement. "When the men in the unions wanted to settle for less, these women were prepared to go on and be hungry and march into the winter" (Orleck 1995:202).

Cohn was widely respected by African-American trade unionists for being among a small handful of

white labor activists who regularly reached out to black workers. A. Philip Randolph, founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the best-known black labor leader of the mid-twentieth century, wrote to thank Cohn for her unwavering support. “You have given encouragement, support and cooperation during the years and dark days of my struggle to organize the Negro workers...There is no comment on my humble efforts that I prize more highly than yours” (Orleck 1995:198).

Despite her international reputation and the high esteem in which Cohn was held among many academics and trade unionists, by the end of World War II, the male leadership of the ILGWU viewed Cohn as a burden to bear, a relic of the union’s radical past. ILGWU President David Dubinsky likened her to U.S. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins. “FDR has got Fannia Perkins,” he was fond of saying. “And I’ve got Fannia Cohn. We’ve both got our cross to bear” (Orleck 1995:197). Dubinsky felt that Cohn did not understand the new realities of a union that was based as much in Pennsylvania and California as it was in New York, that was made up of native-born white Christians, Afro-Caribbeans, and Mexicans, not only immigrant Jews and Italians. Dubinsky and the ILGWU Executive Board wanted the aging woman warrior to step aside gracefully. Then the union could trot her out for ceremonial occasions, strike anniversaries, and Education Department dinners. Cohn was having none of it.

Finally, in September 1962, when Cohn was 77 years old, the union forcibly retired her. They held a testimonial luncheon at which her old detractors lauded her. The union newspaper *Justice* ran a two-part profile of the pioneering activist, giving her full credit for the role she had played both in the early strikes that had galvanized the ILGWU and in spreading worker education throughout the labor movement. Cohn accepted the tribute with her characteristic close-lipped smile, shook hands with her colleagues, and came back to work the next day—and every day after that. An exasperated David Dubinsky ordered her personal effects packed and her office cleared out to make room for Cohn’s replacement. He changed the locks on her office door. Resolutely, Cohn continued to come in. She would sit for hours, with her coat and hat on, upright and silent in the hallway outside of her old office at union headquarters. The standoff lasted for a full four months, until on December 23, 1962, she failed to appear. Friends searched her apartment and found her body. The tiny, unswerving activist had died of a stroke. Nothing short of death could have kept her from her post at ILGWU headquarters.

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See also Dubinsky, David; **International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995)**; Schneiderman, Rose; Springer, Maida

COLD WAR

The Cold War was the defining conflict of the second half of the twentieth century. Throughout the 50-year struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union, the American labor movement became one of the staunchest supporters of Cold War foreign policy. Even after the Democratic Party largely abandoned liberal anticommunism in the wake of the Vietnam War and Watergate, AFL-CIO leaders such as Lane Kirkland remained powerful voices opposed to Soviet imperialism, particularly in Poland.

Labor Anticommunism

Unlike in many Western European countries, the American labor movement had a long history of opposing communism and other leftist ideologies. While exceptions to this certainly existed, and while leftists and communists played important roles in the creation and maintenance of many unions, the leadership of the AFL-CIO and the vast majority of its constituent unions endorsed an anticommunist position and did their best to reduce or eliminate the presence of communists within unions.

While many scholars see labor’s anticommunism as being a reflection of the anticommunism that pervaded much of Cold War American culture, the hostility of the mainstream of the labor movement toward the left goes back considerably farther. Instead, labor’s hostility toward communism was rooted in two major factors: first, a belief that communists

and other sectarian leftists placed the interests of their parties over the best interests of labor; and second, the fact that independent trade unions were usually one of the first casualties when a communist or leftist regime came to power. Both of these long predated the beginnings of the Cold War and largely motivated the AFL's anticommunist policy beginning with the late nineteenth-century attempts of the Socialist Labor Party to undermine and infiltrate the federation and its affiliates.

Things are more complicated when it comes to the CIO, however. It is certainly true that communists and other leftists played important roles in founding and organizing CIO unions. But the majority of CIO unions were neither left-led nor terribly friendly to communists and communism. And major CIO leaders, like John L. Lewis and Philip Murray, were hostile to the communists, even if they were willing to use them as organizers. When the CIO purged its communist-led unions in 1950, it was only partially a result of Cold War tensions and rising anticommunism. More important was the general hostility toward communism among Catholic workers and the fact that the CIO's left-led unions had backed Henry Wallace's third-party presidential campaign in 1948.

Cold War Liberalism and Labor

The American labor movement, particularly the AFL-CIO after the 1955 merger between the two labor federations, was one of the leading institutions of Cold War liberalism, an ideology which opposed both foreign communism and domestic conservatism. As part of the Cold War liberal consensus, the AFL-CIO supported a vigorous American foreign policy, with an emphasis on containing the expansion of the Soviet Union, along with an expansion of New Deal programs domestically. The AFL worked closely with a number of Cold War liberal institutions, particularly the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), which formed one of the bases for the labor-liberal alliance that stretched from the 1940s through the end of the 1960s.

In many ways, the AFL-CIO became the last bastion of Cold War liberalism after its repudiation by most members of the Democratic Party in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A combination of the Vietnam War, Watergate, and the rise of the New Left led many Democrats to reject the staunch anticommunism that was at the heart of Cold War liberalism. This can perhaps best be seen in the endorsement of Eugene McCarthy over Hubert Humphrey by the ADA, up until then the premiere Cold War liberal

institution. As a result of the endorsement, a number of leading labor figures resigned from the organization, and the AFL-CIO became increasingly separated from its former allies in the labor-liberal alliance.

This split within American liberalism was reproduced, to a more limited extent, within the ranks of labor. A handful of unions, particularly those that had once been in the CIO, such as Walter Reuther's United Auto Workers (UAW), did not embrace the staunch anticommunism that had become AFL-CIO policy under George Meany and that continued under Lane Kirkland. In 1968, Reuther led the UAW out of the AFL-CIO, at least in part over the same ideological divisions that had split the labor-liberal coalition in the ADA. Moreover, this divide between the anti-communist liberals and the "anti-anticommunists" on their left within the AFL-CIO would only deepen during the 1970s and, particularly, the 1980s. Those AFL-CIO members and unions that opposed the executive board's position on international affairs would become stronger and more vocal as the Cold War drew to a close, and this division played a major part in the eventual ouster of Lane Kirkland as the head of the labor federation.

AFL-CIO and Latin America

After the breakup of the labor-liberal alliance, the AFL-CIO largely continued to support an anticommunist foreign policy abroad. However, this support became increasingly controversial within the labor federation. The foreign policy initiatives of the AFL-CIO under Lane Kirkland, in particular, provoked a strong reaction from the federation's more left-wing and progressive unions, which eventually resulted in his ouster. This was especially true with regard to the AFL-CIO's interventions in Latin America.

In both instances, the labor federation was committed to the support of free, independent labor unions abroad and opposed the control of both the authoritarian right and the communist left. This led the AFL-CIO to make enemies on both sides of the domestic political spectrum. Kirkland was forced to advocate a policy that alienated many in the labor movement, opposing the Republican Party's domestic agenda while at the same time generally opposing the foreign policy agenda of the Democrats. Despite these difficulties, however, Kirkland and the AFL-CIO remained committed to a vigorously liberal anti-communism throughout the Cold War.

The situation in Nicaragua during the 1980s illustrates nicely the difficulties faced by the AFL-CIO

during that time. Before the Sandinistas came to power in 1979, the AFL-CIO had a pre-existing relationship with the Unified Workers Federation (CUS), a local Nicaraguan labor federation that had opposed the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. The Sandinistas, however, following a pattern set in many previous Marxist revolutions, aimed at exerting more centralized state control over labor unions and set up their own labor federation in competition with the CUS. The Sandinistas also placed serious restrictions on union activities, including attempts to ban strikes. As a result of these actions, the AFL-CIO took a strongly anti-Sandinista stance, largely on the grounds that the Nicaraguan regime undermined the rights of a free, independent labor movement.

Most of the American left, however, was highly sympathetic to the Sandinista regime and became increasingly hostile to the AFL-CIO and Lane Kirkland because of their anticommunist stance. In addition, the labor federation alienated many on the American right by refusing to support the Reagan administration's guerrilla Contra war against the Sandinistas. Kirkland and other members of the executive board were skeptical of the ability of CIA-backed insurgencies to install democratic regimes abroad, and thus opposed the Republican Party's major foreign-policy program in Nicaragua. In an attempt to support American-style trade unionism in Nicaragua, the AFL-CIO managed to isolate themselves from their natural allies on both the right and the left.

Solidarity and Poland

The AFL-CIO's stance in favor of the Solidarity movement in Poland resulted in many of the same ambiguities that arose from its Latin American policies. The labor federation quickly rallied to Solidarity's defense after its founding in 1980. Once again, however, their defense of independent trade unionism abroad failed to win them much support from the domestic right or the domestic left. While only a small percentage of the domestic left supported Poland's communist regime, large segments of the right and the left greatly feared anything that might lead to instability in the Eastern bloc. While remaining anticommunist, these domestic political forces, which largely included both the Reagan administration and the mainstream of the Democratic Party, feared that Solidarity's destabilizing of Poland might lead the USSR to intervene militarily in Eastern Europe or elsewhere.

Nevertheless, Kirkland and the AFL-CIO remained staunch supporters of Solidarity and have

been considered by some scholars to be the Polish union's strongest advocates in the United States. While most Western European nations refused to pressure Poland to lift the ban on Solidarity that had been imposed soon after its founding, the AFL-CIO loudly and consistently announced its support for the union and worked closely with its leaders to coordinate their strategies. Throughout Solidarity's years underground, the AFL-CIO became its principal supplier of material aid, including over \$4 million in financial aid and considerable printing supplies. And when Solidarity was legalized in 1989 and won a successful election removing the communist regime from power, Kirkland and the AFL-CIO were widely hailed as one of the parties principally responsible for the movement's success.

Solidarity's victory in Poland is often considered the beginning of the end of the Cold War. In the end, Kirkland's policy of supporting free and independent trade unionism abroad was generally successful. The hostilities it generated, however, particularly among the left wing of the AFL-CIO, led to deep-seated resentment against the federation president. In 1995, a coalition of the largest trade unions in the AFL-CIO successfully pushed for Kirkland's resignation, arguing, among other things, that his foreign-policy initiatives had taken resources away from much-needed union organizing activities.

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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining refers to the method of determining the standards of employment through negotiation by employers and union representatives. The term first came into use during the 1890s, coined, according to the English Fabians Sidney and Beatrice Webb, by her in 1891, and propagated in the United States by their landmark book, *Industrial Democracy* (1897). To some degree, nomenclature was only catching up with practice; American unions engaged in collective bargaining before it had a name. But naming it also underscored the temporal fact that collective bargaining was not coterminous with trade

unionism. The constant was the collective effort to improve labor's condition—"job-consciousness," Selig Perlman called it, in *A Theory of the Labor Movement* (1928). Bargaining came later.

The presumption in collective bargaining is that employers are a party to the terms of employment. That was not the presumption of nineteenth-century artisans and craft workers. The standards for wages, hours, and work norms to which they adhered—expressive not of what the market would bear but of what they considered honorable and appropriate for their craft—were "legislated" by the union. Enforcing these terms on employers depended on the refusal of members to work with anyone not holding a union card or adhering to union standards. In industrial conflict, therefore, the pivotal issue was the closed shop. This regime was long-lived, enforced by union control over labor markets and by the autonomous nature of craft production. Over time, however, as the sustaining industrial conditions eroded, the unilateral exercise of craft power gave way to the trade agreement, although as late as the early 1920s the San Francisco building trades still set the terms of work and, while sometimes consenting to arbitration of disputed issues, balked at signing "time" agreements.

We define collective bargaining as a "method" of representing workers, but it was also an expression of job-consciousness, and in this guise part of a larger discussion about ultimate ends. Job-consciousness, although historically always robust, co-existed with alternate tendencies toward independent labor politics and, more grandly, toward labor-reform schemes like those advanced by the Knights of Labor. With the launching of the AFL, visions of an expansive, multifaceted labor movement faded. The argument of the pure-and-simple unionists who founded the federation was that an American movement could not afford anything but an exclusively job-conscious focus, and for them that meant, in instrumental terms, collective bargaining.

Pure-and-simple unionism never entirely carried the day. It was contested by the politically engaged left, sometimes operating inside the AFL, and, after 1905, explicitly rejected by the syndicalist International Workers of the World (IWW), which demonstrated that, in certain circumstances, workers were better off using pressure tactics than signing a labor agreement. Even so, collective bargaining was the dominant mode, sustained ideologically by the voluntarism espoused by Samuel Gompers and institutionally by the principle of trade autonomy, which acknowledged the supremacy within the AFL of the national unions responsible for collective bargaining.

The Webbs treated the advent of collective bargaining as an aspect of institutional maturation: the

"primitive democracy" of unilateral action gave way to "representative government," and responsible leadership took command. But in the American context, market and technological forces were at least equally as important, instructing union leaders in the necessity of making employers parties to the terms of employment.

Consider the case of coal mining, where the most compelling fact was that cutthroat price competition translated directly into depressed wages and into petty forms of cheating—over coal weighing, unpaid dead work, and so on—by hard-pressed operators. Understanding this, miners focused from the earliest days on coal prices, even resorting after the Civil War to unilateral suspensions of work in hopes of reducing supplies and raising coal prices and then, in an attempt at regularizing price and wage movements, by negotiating sliding scales. By the 1880s, union leaders began to think more strategically. They concluded that the only way to defend their miners was by reducing the competitive pressures on the industry's labor relations through joint action with the industry.

Once operators accepted this proposition in 1897, a complex bargaining structure took shape, with a joint interstate conference that negotiated uniform standards for the "basing points"—equivalent districts in the participating states—that in turn became the basis for negotiating local tonnage rates and work rules at state and district conferences. The objective of all this machinery was the reverse of what industry-wide bargaining normally aims for—not to take wages out of competition, but to make wages the variable cost, enabling all operators in the Central Competitive Field, no matter how disadvantaged by location or by thin coal seams, to survive within a stabilized price structure. There was a name for this: competitive equality.

At the time, at the turn of the century, the joint interstate system in coal seemed emblematic of the coming of age of collective bargaining in America. It was a sign of the chastening effects of the labor strife of the 1890s that Attorney General Richard Olney, after brutally suppressing the great railway strike of 1894, thereafter advocated federal mediation of railway labor disputes and, to that end, became the principal architect of the Erdman Act (1898). A more comprehensive sign of public approval came from President McKinley's U.S. Industrial Commission, which in 1900 hailed collective bargaining as an expression of industrial democracy. In the private sector, prominent figures formed the National Civic Federation, with the specific mandate of encouraging collective bargaining. And in key industries, employers seemed disposed to give collective bargaining a try, famously including national agreements by

metal-trades associations with the Machinists and Molders.

The expectation that collective bargaining would become the norm in American industry, however, proved illusory. The most ambitious of the experiments—in the metal trades, in meatpacking, at International Harvester—quickly foundered over disputed issues and strike actions. In other countries, such setbacks might have been accepted as part of the learning curve—as it was, for example, by the British metal trades at this time—but not by American employers. The National Metal Trades Association and the National Founders Association transformed themselves almost overnight from agencies for collective bargaining into the aggressive vanguard of a national campaign for the open shop. What this reflected, of course, was an abiding animus by American employers against dealing with workers collectively, an animus rooted in cherished principles of property rights and liberty of contract and nourished after 1900 by the new vogue for managerial control inspired by Frederick W. Taylor.

In the face of this resistance, union growth stalled around 1904 at two million, a tenth of the nonagricultural labor force. A third belonged to local trades, most notably, building and construction, but also printing, retail, food services, transportation, and a miscellany of crafts. What stymied collective bargaining in these local markets was an inability to leverage strength from one locality to another, so that the characteristic pattern was of a patchwork of union representation. In industries operating nationally or regionally, collective bargaining was best established in glass, certain branches of the metal trades (stove manufacture, shipyards, and machine fabrication), and mining. On the railroads, the operating brotherhoods were strongly organized and so, increasingly, were the nonoperating crafts, which, to surmount their fragmentation, began to advocate “system federation,” that is, joint bargaining over entire railroad systems. Railroads resisted the shifts in power that this entailed—resulting in an epic four-year strike at the Illinois Central and Harriman lines—but in the end, largely gave way. System federation became the accepted way of conducting negotiations with the shop crafts.

The halting progress of collective bargaining manifestly was governed by some intricate, but favorable, calculus of union power and employer benefit. In the Central Competitive Field, the soft-coal operators had been forced to the bargaining table by an expectedly potent strike in 1897 and then won over by the promise of market stability. Anthracite, by contrast, had no such need; a cartel already controlled that sector. So the anthracite barons put up a stiffer

fight, succumbing finally in the great strike of 1902 to President Roosevelt’s extra-ordinary intervention, but even then not conceding union recognition. Nor, despite the triumph of collective bargaining, was the Central Competitive Field itself sheltered from anti-unionism. The challenge came from the open-shop West Virginia and Kentucky coalfields, whose cheaper product undercut the northern union operators and increasingly imperiled the joint interstate agreement.

In the clothing industry, the balance of forces shifted differently. As in soft coal, garment manufacturing in its various branches was furiously competitive, with very much the same exploitative effect: hard-pressed employers sweated and cheated workers for that extra penny. Clothing unions had no way of relieving the pricing pressures on employers, but they did have leverage on the production side. The crucial transaction there was the negotiation of endlessly varying piece rates. What the unions offered was a process for rationalizing this negotiation and, because they applied standards (not only for piece rates but over labor conditions) across shops, to some degree taking wages out of competition. It also became possible, once rate-setting gave the unions entry into the workplace, to take on the industry’s chaotic methods of production and, by raising efficiency, carve out further space for higher wages. The celebrated innovation, originating in Louis D. Brandeis’s Protocol for Peace that settled the great cloak-and-suit strike of 1910, was a joint system for adjudicating disputed rates and contract infractions, with an impartial umpire as the final arbiter. But no less important were the industrial-engineering departments set up by the unions to help bring the industry’s shop practice into the twentieth century. Altogether, it was, say the historians Philip Taft and Selig Perlman, “a spectacular conquest of a new province for industrial government based on union recognition.”

Arriving at “industrial government,” however, had taken a wave of savage strikes and was no harbinger of industrial peace more generally. The country stood aghast at the murderous bombing of the *Los Angeles Times* building in 1910 by respected officials of the structural iron workers’ union; at the successes of the IWW in leading mass strikes by textile workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912, and Paterson, New Jersey, in 1913; and at a ghastly climactic episode in 1914, the torching by state militia of a tent city at Ludlow during a bitter Colorado coal miners’ strike for collective bargaining that asphyxiated many strikers’ wives and children and plunged Colorado into a virtual civil war.

With the “labor question” finally on the Progressive agenda, the newly installed Wilson administration appointed a blue-ribbon U.S. Commission on

Industrial Relations, whose job it would be, as the youthful journalist Walter Lippmann wrote, to explain the “deep-seated discontent” afflicting American workers. In its Final Report, the commission took note of “an almost universal conviction that . . . they, both as individuals and as a class, are denied justice.” The core reason for industrial violence, including the McNamara bombing, was the fierce anti-unionism of American employers. In its most important recommendation, the Report called on the federal government to protect the right of workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining.

On its heels came World War I, and what had seemed, in 1915, an exercise in national education was suddenly translated into wartime policy (much of it by veterans of the commission). With war production its top priority, the Wilson administration imposed collective bargaining where unions already had a foothold (as in the railway shops and shipyards) and, where they did not, asserted the right of workers to organize and to representation by shop committees (a half-step, in the wartime context, to collective bargaining). Although the Wilson administration hastily reversed course after the Armistice, its wartime record left an indelible imprint, in at least four ways.

First, Wilson’s penchant for elevating necessity into principle—the world safe for democracy, industrial democracy at home—invested the right to organize with an enduring legitimacy. Employers still fired union workers, only they could no longer justify doing so. That part of the debate was over. Second, the wartime resort to shop committees prompted employers, as a defensive measure, to set up their own employee representation plans (ERPs), which after the Armistice they deployed in their battles against trade unions. The ERPs, they argued, offered a legitimate alternative to collective bargaining. In so doing, they recast the terms of debate. The question became systemic: not either/or but “what kind?” Third, the labor crisis provoked by the war enflamed this debate and crystallized a next question: how should it be resolved? It should be resolved by putting it to the workers, “by representatives of their own choosing,” concluded the president’s Industrial Conference, as it sought, unsuccessfully, to mediate the great steel strike of 1919. In that phrase (“by representatives of their own choosing”) is the kernel of a state-mandated regime of collective bargaining. Finally, “representatives of their own choosing” survived and became lodged in public policy because wartime control of the railroads led, when it came to labor, not to the restoration of past practice but to the Railway Labor Act (1926), which prohibited “interference, influence or coercion” by employers in the designation of representatives by employees. In this

guise, under the rubric of company domination of a labor organization, “representatives of their own choosing” was definitively approved by the Supreme Court in 1930. And in the landmark Norris-LaGuardia Anti-Injunction Act (1932), the phrase was there, in the law’s declaration of public policy embracing labor’s right to organize and engage in collective bargaining.

All that was left for the New Deal was the discovery that “representatives of their own choosing” demanded more than barring company domination of labor organizations. In the case of the railroads, this had not been apparent because the 1926 law (which the unions had helped write) assumed the presence of the existing unions. But in the core mass-production industries, unions enjoyed no such standing. The furious battles over representation that broke out there during the early New Deal forced the NRA labor boards, in deference to the free-choice language of Section 7a, to fashion rules for determining whether workers preferred the company-created employee representation plans or outside unions. This was the genesis of Section 9 of the Wagner Act (1935): on a showing of majority support in an appropriate bargaining unit, a labor organization would be certified by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) as the exclusive bargaining agent with whom the employer had a “duty to bargain.” To that extent, the employer’s liberty of contract—sacrosanct in this realm for a hundred years—had been breached.

But in principle, no further. The Wagner Act mandated collective bargaining, but (as the Supreme Court stressed in upholding the law) “it does not compel any agreement whatever.” Nor, in that spirit of free collective bargaining, did it undertake to meddle with the right to strike or the scope of bargaining, a point the law underlined by affirming the freedom of the parties to negotiate union-shop agreements. It was here, on the fraught issue of union security, that the fragility of the line drawn by the law’s architects soon stood revealed, first by the imposition during World War II of maintenance of membership on open-shop employers, and then, as the pendulum swung, by the Taft-Hartley Act (1947), which authorized states to prohibit union-shop agreements. Right-to-work laws were touted as a victory for individual liberty, but they also infringed on a long-settled aspect of liberty of contract in labor agreements. The Taft-Hartley assault was, in fact, wide-ranging—on the right to strike (authorizing 80-day cooling-off periods), on economic weapons (declaring secondary boycotts unlawful), on eligibility (denied to foremen), and on the status of labor agreements (made, for the first time, legally enforceable). As for the NLRB, it became the policeman of good-faith bargaining, most intrusively by enforcing the distinction drawn after

Taft-Hartley between mandatory and permissive bargaining issues.

It turned out that by mandating that collective bargaining begin, the state also assumed a responsibility for how it proceeded. That truth, although resisted by the Wagner Act's authors, was almost at once evident in the case law interpreting the law; Taft-Hartley only drove it home.

Although collective bargaining began as soon as the Wagner Act passed constitutional muster in 1937—sooner, in fact, at the bellwether firms U.S. Steel and General Motors—a decade went by before its features fully emerged. Initially, while the Great Depression was still in effect, wages and benefits took a back seat to the workplace grievances that had fueled the unionizing drive and the wildcat aftermath. And then World War II intervened, bringing a halt to free collective bargaining. Far more than in World War I, the economy converted to war. Control on labor relations was virtually by fiat, with far-reaching, sometimes unforeseen consequences. Much that became distinctive—expansive fringe benefits, arbitration in the grievance system, formal job-classification systems—can be traced to World War II. The war, moreover, consolidated the grip of the industrial unions and stirred unparalleled militancy. After VJ Day, a great strike wave swept the country, causing 4,630 work stoppages and bringing out 4.9 million workers. In steel, automobiles, meatpacking, rubber, and other basic industries, union coverage was close to complete; overall, two thirds of all manufacturing workers were organized. Finally, the reconversion debate over economic policy amplified the context for collective bargaining. It became labor's responsibility, pronounced the CIO's Philip Murray, "to lay the groundwork for an era of full employment." That meant a high-wage, low-price program for spurring consumption and industrial production.

In the first round of postwar negotiations in 1945, Walter Reuther tested that proposition at General Motors. He demanded a 30% wage increase with no rise in GM prices, and when the company demurred, challenged it to "open the books." General Motors implacably resisted this "opening wedge" for prying "into the whole field of management." The company took a 113-day strike, rebuffed the government's intervention, conceded its market lead to competitors, and soundly defeated the United Auto Workers (UAW). Having made its point, GM laid out the terms for a durable relationship. It would accept the UAW as its bargaining partner. It would make the contract the engine for an ever-higher living standard of its worker—signaled by its offer in 1948 to peg wages to the cost of living (adjusted every three months) and to an annual productivity factor (3 cents

an hour). The price was that the UAW abandon its assault on the company's "right to manage." When it signed the five-year GM contract of 1950—the Treaty of Detroit, so-called—the UAW definitively accepted the company's terms.

The battle at General Motors was, of course, an exemplary case. But if events elsewhere were less sharply drawn, and outcomes more shaded and varied, the central tendency was everywhere the same. Surveying the scene in 1960, the great industrial-relations scholar Sumner H. Slichter was satisfied that labor and management had arrived at "a balanced relationship."

When leading academics and practitioners met that year at the University of Chicago to assess the "structure" of collective bargaining that had emerged, they took note of the bewildering array of bargaining arrangements. With about 150,000 contracts in effect, what else could have been expected? Within this diversity, however, seminar participants identified a clear tendency toward "centralization," in two main forms. Multi-employer negotiation was the norm in local (retail, construction) and regional (trucking, longshoring) markets. In basic industries like auto and steel, industrial unions generally engaged in "pattern" bargaining, negotiating companywide agreements with a lead firm that then diffused across the industry—a variant, in effect, of industrywide bargaining. In either case, the aim was the inclusion of all the enterprises that could be said to be in direct competition with each other. On that basis—by the ability to pass on collective-bargaining costs—enabling them to fulfill GM's pledge of a rising standard of living for American workers.

Weekly earnings for industrial workers went from \$54.92 in 1949 to \$71.81 (in 1947–49 dollars) in 1959. Over the decade, spendable real income for the average worker with three dependents increased by 18%. Collective bargaining delivered greater leisure (paid holidays and lengthier vacations) and, in a startling departure, a social safety net. The labor movement far preferred an expanded welfare state, as in Europe, but having lost that battle after World War II, it turned to the bargaining table. By the end of the 1950s, union contracts commonly provided defined-benefit pension plans (supplementing Social Security payments), company-paid health insurance, and for two million workers, mainly in auto and steel, supplementary unemployment benefits (SUB). The sum of these advances was that new sociological phenomenon, the "affluent" worker—as evidenced by relocation to the suburbs (half of all workers by 1965), home ownership, cars and other durable goods, and (the infallible signs of rising expectations) installment buying and a doubling in the number of working wives

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

between 1945 and 1960. For industrial workers, the union contract was becoming the passport, as Reuther boasted, into the middle class.

The durability of the bargaining system that had produced this remarkable result seemed beyond question at the time, even among the seasoned experts attending the University of Chicago conference mentioned above. Yet one can already spot (with the benefit of hindsight) warning signs in its discussion of meatpacking. This was an emblematic CIO industry, highly concentrated, with master contracts generating wages and benefits just short of auto and steel. But in 1960, the dominant Big Four packers were losing market share. A host of competitors had sprung up, profiting from a transportation revolution that shifted livestock traffic from railroads to highway trucking and swept away the geographic advantage that old-line packers like Swift and Armour had enjoyed at the great Midwestern stockyards. By operating close to rural feedlots and cost-cutting producers—most notoriously, Iowa Beef Packers (IBP)—these competitors ultimately shattered the collective-bargaining system and restored meatpacking's grim reputation as a sweated, low-wage industry. Between 1982 and 1996, real hourly wages fell by 31.4% and by 2002 stood 24% below the national average for manufacturing.

Brutal as it was, meatpacking's devolution was historically unremarkable, only reaffirming the contingency that has always characterized American collective bargaining. When the sustaining economic environment shifts, the bargaining system either responds—as, for example, John L. Lewis did by abandoning Competitive Equality for an industrywide, high-wage strategy when coal lost ground to oil in the 1920s—or goes under—as Lewis's painstakingly built structure finally did when coal after the 1960s became an open-pit, western industry. What was historically remarkable, however, was the economic hurricane that meatpacking's devolution heralded. The environment on which the postwar bargaining system had been premised was largely swept away after the onset of "stagflation" in the early 1970s. In relative terms, manufacturing rapidly faded (accounting for scarcely 14% of GDP by 2002); the postwar era of sheltered markets ended, signaled by deregulation of the airlines, trucking, and communications; and as a register of its waning powers, labor virtually abandoned the right to strike. By 2005, collective bargaining covered fewer than 8% of all private-sector employees, a world away from the 35% of 1955.

Among the questions for historians to ponder is why, in light of the country's history of labor violence, this catastrophic contraction proceeded with so little social friction. Relatively few employers, in

fact, actually broke unions. It could be done under the labor law, by decertification, but not easily, and generally not without first provoking a strike and bringing in permanent replacements. Employers preferred a less strife-ridden choice. If their operations were movable, they moved. Plant closing was, as a study of RCA revealed, a long-favored method of union-busting, even among high-end manufacturers. But globalization vastly increased the incentives, to the point, indeed, where union/nonunion no longer was determining. In industry after industry, no American operation could compete against Mexican or Chinese workers. Labor's decline might be described as deunionization by stealth: no jobs, no collective bargaining.

As for its actual practice, that was, predictably, mostly a function of the collapsing economic environment. Industrywide patterns that had taken labor costs out of competition fragmented and, in some firms, so did companywide agreements that had prevented "whipsawing" of plants. At both levels, negotiations pitted job security—the union priority—against reduced wages and benefits—the management priority—with outcomes conditioned by the company's financial distress. An ironic subtext of concession bargaining was its subversion of GM's precious right to manage. Asking for big concessions meant opening the books. And depending on how big, unions might take a seat on the board (Chrysler) or a stake in the company (United Airlines) or even, in the direst cases, total ownership (Weirton Steel). Unfortunately, what had seemed revolutionary in 1946 was, in failing companies 40 years later, a mostly empty victory. A variant of this development was an abortive effort at transforming "adversarial" collective bargaining into labor-management cooperation, driven especially by claims that rigid work rules damaged American "competitiveness," which was then abandoned in the mid-1990s as employers opted for a business model that embraced downsizing and outsourcing. Judged by its own standard, as a vehicle for maximizing the terms of employment, collective bargaining in fact did its job. If anything, the differential value for union workers increased at a time when employers were hell-bent on cutting costs and shedding benefits.

As for the 120 million others, inhabitants of a burgeoning service economy, a question arises about the relevance of a collective-bargaining system shaped by the nation's industrial past. Among labor's challenges—one sure to increase over time—is what kind of representation to offer to workers whose needs are not met by seniority, or work rules, or defined-benefit pensions, and perhaps cannot even be reduced to the terms of a union contract. The term "collective

bargaining” was coined in the 1890s. It might be that a new term will have to be coined, corresponding to an economic transformation just as sweeping as the industrial revolution that gave rise to collective bargaining over a century ago.

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COLONIAL ERA

A crushing demand for labor existed throughout all the colonies and provinces in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British Colonial America. To meet the demand, various labor systems developed. The range of climates and the varieties of cash crops, as well as differences among the settlers themselves, determined the different types of labor regimes. In the early seventeenth century, three distinctive labor regimes took shape. The first came into being in the Chesapeake colonies (Virginia and Maryland), the second in the English West Indies (Barbados, Nevis, St. Christopher, Antigua, Montserrat, and Jamaica), and the third in the New England colonies (Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Haven). With the growth of English settlement, especially after the restoration of Charles II in 1660 and the establishment of Great Britain in 1707 (created from the union of England and Scotland), the

established labor systems of the earlier colonies expanded into new regions. Various forms of free and unfree labor existed throughout British Colonial America. The self-sufficient artisans and tradesmen who made up the ranks of free laborers promoted the idea of upward social mobility, laying the foundation in the process for what has since been celebrated as the American Dream. At the same time, British Colonial Americans relied on various forms of unfree labor, such as indentured servitude and slavery. The use of unfree labor repeatedly led to resistance. Indeed, the history of the colonial era is replete with narratives of runaway servants as well as insurrections and rebellions by both servants and slaves. By any measure, the adoption of racially based chattel slavery as a solution to chronic labor shortages constitutes the most disturbing aspect of the entire era. While slavery was centered in the British West Indies and the British southern mainland colonies, it existed in every colony. Slavery, originating during the colonial era, bequeathed to American civilization the festering problem of racism, a problem that continues to haunt the United States in the twenty-first century.

Chesapeake Colonies: Virginia and Maryland

Tobacco production in the Chesapeake colonies of Virginia (England’s first permanent colony in North America founded in 1607) and Maryland (founded in 1634) spurred the migration of thousands of young, white indentured servants. These young laborers, often from impoverished backgrounds, flocked to Virginia and Maryland in the 1700s seeking a better life. Young, unmarried men composed the majority of these English laborers. They voluntarily signed a labor contract, called an indenture, in which they pledged to work for a number of years. Usually an indentured servant served a term of between four to seven years. In exchange for their labor, they were promised passage to America, food, board, clothing, and in some cases, a plot of land at the expiration of their contract. During most of the 1600s, a brisk trade in white indentured servants existed in the Chesapeake colonies as white servants composed the dominant labor regime that produced, harvested, and loaded the Chesapeake tobacco for export to Europe. Africans, who were first brought to Virginia in 1619, labored raising tobacco along with white servants. Because laws creating chattel slavery, by which blacks were reduced to the status of property, did not exist in the early decades of English colonization in the Chesapeake, these Africans labored as servants. Indeed, chattel slavery was unknown in England. Thus,

the English colonists had no example of slavery to draw on.

During the early and mid-1600s, some Africans in the Chesapeake, especially those who converted to Christianity, became landowners and had servants of their own. For reasons that are still debated by historians, Africans increasingly found themselves reduced to the status of chattel slaves. Some scholars argue that this transition is best understood as the result of a maturing colonial society in which some planters had grown wealthy enough to afford slaves, a more expensive form of labor than indentured servants. Other scholars point to the social unrest in the 1670s—especially a Virginian uprising in 1675–1676 known as Bacon’s Rebellion—as an important step on the road to the adoption of slavery in the Chesapeake. This uprising, which briefly toppled Virginia’s royal government in 1676, originated from discontent among whites, including a large number of enraged former white indentured servants, whose prospects of owning land had dimmed. According to some scholars, this uprising led planters to increasingly turn to slavery, a type of labor they hoped would be more manageable than unruly white servants.

By the beginning of the 1700s, chattel slavery had been encoded into law in Virginia and Maryland. Defined as property, Africans, who were brought in increasing numbers to the Chesapeake in the 1700s, were bought and sold by Anglo planters. The traffic in slaves increased dramatically in the eighteenth century, resulting in a sizable African Creole population in the Chesapeake. While a handful of Africans in the eighteenth century gained freedom, the majority were relegated to the dehumanizing status of chattel, subject to the will and caprice of whites. During the 1700s, convict labor formed another type of unfree labor in the Chesapeake. Transported to the Chesapeake for crimes committed in Britain, these laborers worked for longer terms, depending on their crime. For the most serious offenses, convict laborers served for life. Yet, the adoption of slavery in the Chesapeake has arguably had the most lasting and troubling consequences. Historians, most notably Edmund Morgan, have argued convincingly that African slaves not only did the backbreaking labor but also provided whites with a sense of racial privilege. Among whites, racial solidarity trumped differences in economic status. Race therefore served to unite poor whites and wealthy white planters. By the time of the American Revolution (1775–1783), African slavery provided American revolutionaries with a way to understand their struggle against perceived British tyranny. White solidarity set alongside black slavery provided meaning to the founding fathers’ sense of liberty.

English West Indies

In the English West Indies, including Barbados, Nevis, St. Christopher, Antigua, and Montserrat, planters turned to African slavery much sooner than the English colonists in the Chesapeake colonies. First settled by the English in the 1620s and 1630s, these islands initially followed in the example of the Chesapeake colonies by producing tobacco. Just as in the Chesapeake, young, white, male indentured servants rushed to the English Islands to grow tobacco. By the 1640s and 1650s, however, the planters focused on the production of sugar, a crop that thrived in the tropic climate of the islands and was far more lucrative than tobacco. With the transition from tobacco to sugar, planters in the English West Indies invested heavily in African slaves. The flow of white indentured servants slowed so that by the late seventeenth century few made the journey to the islands. By then, planters in the West Indies, including the island of Jamaica, which had been taken from the Spanish in 1655, imported thousands of Africans to toil on sugar plantations.

In the eighteenth century, the British islands stepped up their forced migration of Africans. Olaudah Equiano, one of the thousands sold into slavery, arrived in Barbados in 1756. He described the West Indies as a death trap, a place of widespread and unimaginable brutality, where Anglo planters raped, mutilated, and murdered Africans with impunity. Acts of resistance by slaves led to especially gruesome reprisals by white authorities. The horrendous treatment in the English West Indies of African slaves resulted in a staggering loss of life. According to Equiano, planters had to import thousands of new Africans each year in order to maintain a steady population of slaves.

New England

The labor system in the New England colonies differed significantly from the labor systems in the English West Indies and the Chesapeake colonies. The New England colonies were established by zealous Protestants, known as Puritans, during a burst of emigration in the 1630s and early 1640s known among some scholars as the “Great Migration.” Unlike the Chesapeake and the West Indies, the cold climate and rocky soil of New England did not sustain cash crops during the colonial period. Instead, New Englanders turned to traditional agriculture, fishing, and the maritime trade to make their living.

In comparison with the other regions of English settlement, New England was relatively poor.

While indentured servitude and slavery existed in New England, it was the reliance on child labor that set the New England colonies apart from the other early zones of English colonization. Because colonial New England families tended to be very large, with six or more children being the norm, the region essentially produced its own labor force. New England's child labor regime served several purposes beyond simply meeting the demand for labor. First, in colonial New England, where the Puritan faith predominated, children received religious instruction in the households where they worked. In this way, the New England child labor system created communities bound together by shared religious belief. Second, this system of child labor allowed for extensive supervision over the large number of young people in New England. The placement of children in the households of relatives increased the degree of oversight and control. (The Puritan emphasis on the doctrine of original sin, which in practice meant children were viewed as natural-born sinners, helped to maintain New England's labor regime.) Some of the strains experienced by New England's child laborers found expression in cases of witchcraft. The historical record illustrates that on several occasions young servants believed the Devil was tempting them with promises of easing the burden of work if they would serve him. Slavery was practiced throughout New England, though the number of slaves in comparison to the Chesapeake colonies and West Indies was relatively small. Thus, the New England colonies are best described as societies with slaves as opposed to slave societies. Only wealthy New Englanders could afford slaves, and these slaves usually served to further advertise elite status. The majority of New England slaves were concentrated in the maritime communities, especially in port towns like Newport, Rhode Island, and Boston, Massachusetts.

Restoration Colonies

After the restoration of Charles II in 1660, England significantly expanded its mainland American holdings. Indeed, by the mid-1700s, a continuous line of British colonies, stretching from Maine to Georgia, had replaced what had been the scattered seventeenth-century English outposts. The new English possessions, known collectively as the Restoration colonies, included the middle colonies of New York (1664), New Jersey (1664), and Pennsylvania (1681).

The Restoration colonies also included North and South Carolina. New Hampshire, established by royal decree in 1679, formed another Restoration colony. In all these possessions, the older systems of unfree labor expanded.

Middle Colonies

Various unfree labor systems thrived in the Middle Colonies. New York City, which had been founded by the Dutch as New Amsterdam in 1624 and conquered by the English in 1664, had a mixed unfree labor force of white indentured servants and slaves. As in other areas of British Colonial America, the racial divide separating white servants and black slaves solidified during the 1700s. After a number of fires broke out in 1741 in New York City, for example, white authorities suspected a conspiracy by black slaves to take over the colony. They arrested and tried scores of slaves. Many slaves were brutally executed. The 1741 fear of a conspiracy provided the pretext for white New Yorkers to clamor for strict laws restricting the activities and movements of the city's enslaved population. As in other areas of British Colonial America, New York City's reliance on slavery and resulting fears of slavery rebellion among whites provided the foundation for a racially divided society.

New Jersey, taken from the Dutch in the 1660s, and Pennsylvania absorbed large numbers of indentured servants. The experience of William Moraley, an indentured servant, provides one example of what life was like for servants in the Middle Colonies. Falling on hard times in England as young man, Moraley set sail to America after signing an indenture in London. He arrived in Philadelphia in 1729, where he was sold to a New Jersey Quaker. Unhappy with working in New Jersey and hoping to be sold to someone in Philadelphia, Moraley followed the path of many indentured servants by running away. He was caught, however, and returned to his master. When he fulfilled the term of his indenture, Moraley failed to find his place in colonial society. He traveled throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York before returning to England in 1734. He published his memoirs in 1743, in which he described the differences between servants and slaves in the Middle Colonies. Slaves suffered greatly. Those who endeavored to escape were flogged unmercifully. At the same time, masters who murdered their slaves escaped any punishment at all. Servants, too, suffered at the hands of their masters, who legally controlled their actions. Unlike slaves, servants could not marry.

Lower South

The labor system in the lower South that took root in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries largely derived from the model established in Barbados. Indeed, the majority of the English colonists who settled in what is now Charleston, South Carolina, in 1670 had left Barbados. In the decades following the first settlement, the English replicated the slave labor they knew from the West Indies. South Carolina's culture and dependence on slavery spread northward into North Carolina. It also spread southward into Georgia, a colony founded in the early 1730s as a buffer between South Carolina and Spanish Florida. Though the founders of Georgia banned slavery, the prohibition was repealed in the late 1740s, and slavery soon flourished. Unlike the West Indies, rice proved to be the most lucrative crop for Carolinians. Rice production, beginning in the 1690s, further propelled the expansion of chattel slavery in the lower South. By the 1710s, black slaves formed a majority in South Carolina. In 1739, slaves in South Carolina began the largest slave rebellion in British Colonial America. The Stono Rebellion began when slaves learned that Spanish Florida would provide asylum to escapees from the British colonies. The promise of freedom motivated nearly two dozen slaves in South Carolina to begin the trek south to Spanish Florida. As they moved south, they killed whites and recruited other slaves. The rebellion faltered as whites tracked down and killed the slaves. None of the slaves who took part in the Stono Rebellion ever reached freedom in Spanish Florida.

Free Labor in British Colonial America

In the pre-industrial world of British Colonial America, the majority of inhabitants worked the land. In these agricultural colonies, the ultimate goal for the majority of the migrants was to own land. Indeed, it was the prospect of becoming a landowner that spurred the migration of thousands of English colonists. Promoters of colonization carefully created an image of British America as a land of small, independent farmers. Throughout all the colonies, attaining the status of yeoman farmer—a colonist who controlled at least a small estate—served as the standard of respectability. In particular, land ownership conferred on colonial Americans the coveted status of independence, free from being dependent on others. The much-prized sense of personal independence

derived from holding land fee simple (in absolute possession) also had political ramifications. In most colonies, only those who achieved the status of yeoman farmer could take part in local political decisions by exercising the right to vote. Many writers, including the Frenchman J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, celebrated the opportunities in British Colonial America to own land. Arguably, Thomas Jefferson provided the most famous statement of the exalted place of the independent farmer. "Those who labour in the earth," Jefferson wrote, "are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people." This version of the colonies and the early republic as a world of small, prosperous farms assumed that the yeoman farmer was a white male. Indeed, the independent yeomanry by definition excluded women and non-whites.

Eighteenth-century British Colonial America was also a world of free working people. The counterparts to the independent yeoman in the countryside were the artisans and tradesmen in colonial towns and seaports. The path to the status of artisan and tradesman began with an apprenticeship. Unlike an indentured servant, who had to perform any labor his/her master commanded him/her to do, an apprentice was tasked with learning a specific trade or profession by working for a master artisan or tradesman, who agreed to teach the apprentice the mysteries of a given trade. After completing an apprenticeship, the laborer took on the status of journeyman. A journeyman had mastered a given trade but had not reached the full status of master artisan. Journeymen instead labored for wages under the direction of a master artisan. Only when a journeyman had accumulated enough capital to set up his own shop did he attain the rank of artisan or tradesman. Benjamin Franklin's almanac (published from 1733 to 1758 under the pseudonym "Poor Richard" Saunders) and his *Autobiography* presented advice for how to become a successful and self-made tradesman. According to Franklin, the artisan and tradesman who gained material wealth and the respect of his peers had to be hard-working, sober, and in general, adhere to an ethic of constant self-improvement. Indeed, artisans and tradesmen created a culture that promoted a spirit of both individual independence and mutual support. In a larger context, Franklin's depiction of America as a place of potentially unlimited social mobility for the diligent and careful young tradesman provided the basic formula for the American rags-to-riches narrative. Yet the success of artisans and tradesmen in British Colonial America was abetted by the existence of vast numbers of slaves and other unfree workers who never had the chance to succeed.

New France

Far fewer French settlers came to North America than English colonists. Nonetheless, the French created a large, if sparsely populated, New World empire that stretched from the St. Lawrence River, through the area of the Great Lakes, through the Mississippi Valley south to New Orleans.

In the seventeenth century, the majority of French immigrants came as indentured servants (“engages”), who served terms of three years. They performed the brunt of the heavy labor in New France. At the expiration of their three-year term, many engages returned to France. The French colony of Louisiana, claimed by the French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, sieur de La Salle in 1682 and named in deference to Louis XVI, enslaved Native Americans and imported black slaves to grow a variety of crops, the most profitable of which was indigo. Sugar was introduced in the 1750s and gradually supplanted indigo as the major cash crop.

Spanish Colonial Florida and New Mexico

Florida and New Mexico composed the two major Spanish Colonial holdings in what is now the United States. Founded in 1565, St. Augustine, Florida, served as the Spanish military outpost responsible for protecting the annual treasure fleets that sailed from Havana to Spain from pirates and, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from encroachments by the British in the North. While the Spanish in Florida relied on black slave labor, a 1693 Spanish royal decree also provided official sanctuary for slaves from British South Carolina if the escapees converted to Catholicism. In 1738, the town of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose was founded as a free black town. The Spanish hoped the town of Mose would destabilize the British colonies of Georgia and South Carolina. The Spanish plan partially succeeded: the existence of Mose spurred the 1739 Stono Rebellion in South Carolina. During the colonial era, the town of Mose attracted hundreds of slaves seeking to escape slavery in British Colonial America.

When the Spanish began to subjugate the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1598, soldiers were rewarded with *encomiendas*, which required the Pueblo to make tribute payments of cloth, skins, and corn. The Spanish used Native Americans as servants and, even though slavery was banned in New Mexico, Native Americans were also held in bondage. The *genizaros*, or Indian slaves, were usually Apache or

Navajo who had been captured in war. Spanish labor practices and the efforts to convert the Pueblo to Catholicism in colonial New Mexico had disastrous consequences for the colonists in 1680. Organized by the medicine man Popé, the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 toppled Spanish New Mexico. Sante Fe and other Spanish outposts fell to the Pueblo. It took 12 years before the Spanish reconquered New Mexico.

From Mercantilism to Free Trade

Colonial-era labor history is also the history of economic systems in transition and economic thinking in fluctuation. Indeed, the various labor practices in colonial America played an important role in stimulating change. Throughout much of the colonial era, mercantilism composed the dominant economic theory. Mercantilists believed a fixed amount of wealth, measured in bullion, existed in the world and that the state’s ability to amass wealth depended on creating a favorable balance of trade. To that end, mercantilists argued that government must control trade to increase the power and financial standing of the state. Thus, Spain attempted to control the flow of silver and gold, mined by unfree labor in its American possessions, by employing heavily guarded treasure fleets. England followed the logic of mercantilism by passing a series of acts in the seventeenth century known collectively as the Navigation Acts. The English Navigation Acts prohibited foreign ships from trading in the colonies and required that the most important colonial crops, such as sugar from Barbados, Chesapeake tobacco, and Carolina’s rice, be shipped directly to England. The Navigation Acts also required that colonial commodities be transported on vessels where the majority of the crew, as well as the captain, were English. The logic of mercantilism also found expression in the slave trade with the formation of the Royal African Company in 1672. The company exercised a monopoly over the English slave trade until the 1690s.

Various forces worked against mercantilism during the colonial era, however. Perhaps the greatest force for change was a powerful strain of individualism and individual liberty that motivated British colonists to chafe at what they viewed as the limitations imposed by mercantilism. In British America, colonists frequently disregarded the provisions of the Navigation Acts, preferring instead to insist on their right to freedom of trade. Benjamin Franklin, who advised colonists that “God helps those who help themselves” and emphasized freedom of private enterprise and individual initiative, contributed to the new economic

outlook. Tragically, Franklin's viewpoint originated in an age when the existence of unfree labor, especially slavery, profoundly shaped the vision of potentially unlimited upward social mobility and individual wealth for laboring whites.

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COLORED FARMERS' ALLIANCE

Between its formation in late 1886 and its demise by the end of 1892, the Colored Farmers' Alliance organized at least one million African-American

farmers and farm laborers into an organization that promoted unity and self-help among its members. When the organization became involved in economic, labor, and political activism, however, it encountered harsh and sometimes violent white opposition. This white backlash against the Colored Alliance, along with the organization's failure to significantly improve its members' financial condition, led to its downfall, but even as it disintegrated, it still mobilized many African-Americans in support of the People's (or Populist) Party, which was a force in southern and western politics from 1892 until at least 1896.

Like the all-white Southern Farmers' Alliance (formally known as the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union), the Colored Farmers' Alliance began in Texas. White farmers in central Texas formed the Southern Alliance during the mid-to-late 1870s, and that organization was just beginning to enter its period of major growth when African-American farmers, with a modicum of assistance from whites, formed the Colored Alliance in east Texas in 1886. As many as five different Colored Alliance organizations were formed during 1886–1887, but the two primary groups were one formed in 1886 in Lee County, led by the white "general organizer" Andrew J. Carothers, and another formed in December of that year in Houston County, led by the white "general superintendent" R. M. Humphrey, a Baptist minister, and black president J. J. Shuffer. The latter group eventually absorbed the others and named itself the Colored Farmers' National Alliance and Cooperative Union, more generally known as the Colored Farmers' Alliance. The organization established chapters in all 11 states of the former Confederacy as well as Delaware, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Nebraska.

According to its declaration of principles, the Colored Farmers' Alliance aimed "to promote agriculture and horticulture," "to educate the agricultural classes in the science of economic government, in a strictly nonpartisan spirit," "to develop a better state mentally, morally, socially, and financially," "to aid its members to become more skillful and efficient workers," to "protect their individual rights," to raise funds "for the benefit of sick or disabled members, or their distressed families," and to facilitate "the forming [of] a closer union among all colored people who may be eligible to membership in this association," among other goals. Like the Southern Farmers' Alliance, the Colored Alliance established cooperative stores for its members as well as large cooperative exchanges in Houston, New Orleans, Mobile, Charleston, and Norfolk, Virginia. But also like the Southern Alliance, the Colored Alliance lacked the capital and business acumen needed to



Sam Crawford oiling (i.e., greasing) tractor on his Maryland farm / Cooper. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Visual Materials from the NAACP Records [LC-USZ62-130378].

succeed in many of these enterprises. The Colored Alliance succeeded in other tangible ways, though, such as raising money for the construction of schools and churches for African-Americans and for the aid of sick members and the families of deceased members.

Nevertheless, the Colored Alliance, which relied upon dues from its generally cash-strapped membership, failed to improve the material conditions of most of its members through these endeavors. When Colored Alliance leaders tried to take more direct measures for the financial assistance of the rank and file, however, disastrous, even tragic results often followed. In 1889, in Leflore County, Mississippi, for example, a Colored Alliance leader named Oliver Cromwell encouraged members to do business with a Southern Farmers' Alliance cooperative store in a neighboring county rather than with local white merchants, who held many black farmers in a state of debt peonage through the crop-lien or credit system. Leflore County whites soon ordered Cromwell to leave the county, but Colored Alliancemen boldly rose to his defense. Subsequently, armed whites—led by the Mississippi National Guard—attacked and

killed not only Cromwell but about 25 other African-Americans as well. Similarly, when R. M. Humphrey called for a regional strike of southern black cotton pickers in September 1891 for the purpose of procuring higher wages (which were as low as 50 cents per hundred pounds), white planters, including Southern Alliancemen, denounced the plan as unwise and dangerous. Most black cotton pickers agreed and ignored the strike call, but in Lee County, Arkansas, some pickers walked off the job and tried to coax or intimidate others into doing the same. A biracial posse led by the white county sheriff put a decisive end to the strike, killing at least 15 African-Americans in the process.

Such attempts at economic or labor activism by the Colored Alliance underscored the tensions between the organization and its southern white counterpart. While the two organizations sometimes collaborated in cooperative ventures and made some identical demands for reform, such as currency and land reform and government ownership of railroads, they differed on some fundamental issues of economics and politics. The Southern Alliance vehemently opposed Congress's proposed Lodge Election Bill, which would have provided for federal supervision of federal elections, while the Colored Alliance, whose members were most likely to be victimized by violence or intimidation during elections, supported the bill. Furthermore, the Southern Alliance represented many middle-class farmers or farm operators, many of whom employed Colored Alliance members, male and female, and thus were threatened by Colored Alliance efforts at economic improvement.

After the failure of the cotton pickers' strike, the Colored Farmers' Alliance rapidly deteriorated; by the end of 1892, the organization had virtually disappeared. Nevertheless, the Colored Alliance's presence continued to be felt in politics through its influence on the Populist movement. The Colored Alliance had preceded the Southern Alliance in calling for the formation of a third political party, despite its self-avowed "nonpartisan spirit," and a number of Colored Alliance leaders and organizers worked actively for the Populist Party even as (and after) the Colored Alliance disintegrated. Of course, the Populist Party itself collapsed by the end of the nineteenth century, but in retrospect, the failure of most of the Colored Farmers' Alliance's efforts at economic, labor, and political activism should not diminish its significant place in history as the largest organization of African-American farmers and farm laborers during an era in which most African-Americans were tillers of the soil.

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COMMISSION ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (1910s)

Battered by the open-shop movement and shamed by the McNamara brothers' surprise confession to bombing the *Los Angeles Times* building in 1912, the American labor movement caught a break from the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR) in 1913. Chair Frank P. Walsh turned a government investigation into a partisan tribunal that blamed employers for violence on picket lines. While labor organizations like the AFL and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) rejected state solutions to the labor problem, the CIR called for federally protected labor rights and ultimately helped shape World War I labor policy.

In 1912, in the wake of the McNamara confessions, Progressive intellectuals and reformers petitioned Republican President William Taft to convene a special commission to investigate industrial violence. Once Taft announced the creation of the Commission, AFL President Samuel Gompers demanded that AFL union leaders should be allotted Commission seats and recommended AFL Treasurer John Lennon, James O'Connell from the AFL Metal Trades Department, and Austin Garretson of the Order of Railway Conductors. Progressives denounced Gompers's choices as reactionary bureaucrats. After Congress funded the Commission, the AFL, National Civic Federation, and National Association of Manufacturers lobbied for their appointees (and found common ground in opposing the appointment of an IWW representative). When Democrat Woodrow Wilson won the 1912 presidential election, none of the commissioners had yet been approved by the Senate.

Wilson took up the matter in early 1913, agreeing to retain Gompers's nominees. To represent business, Wilson proposed California government official Harry Weinstock, flour mill owner Thruston Ballard, and railroad executive Frederick Delano. Democratic fund-raiser Florence Jaffray Harriman and Wisconsin labor economist John R. Commons were put forward to represent the public. Louis Brandeis turned down a seat, so President Wilson turned to Kansas City labor lawyer Frank P. Walsh to chair the committee. Walsh had started out as a corporate lawyer, but in a

road-to-Damascus transformation, on January 1, 1900, he abandoned his old practice and flung himself into Progressive reform and radical agitation. Largely unknown on the national scene, his nomination aroused little opposition. Walsh eagerly accepted the appointment and won Senate confirmation in September 1913.

Walsh convened the Commission and launched a series of dramatic public hearings on the strikes and industrial conflicts of the day. The Commission visited textile strikers in Paterson and Atlanta, garment workers in New York, and tenant farmers in the South. After mineworkers' tents caught fire in Ludlow, Colorado, the CIR sent investigators to the coalfields and interrogated mine owner John D. Rockefeller in a Manhattan auditorium before large crowds. Walsh won the enduring admiration of American workers for his pointed questioning of employers and his sympathetic ear for laborers. However, some of his fellow commissioners grew uncomfortable with Walsh's open partisanship. Commissioner Commons had expected research by the CIR's industrial economists, which included W. Jett Lauck, Sumner Slichter, William Leiserson, and Selig Perlman, to inform a deliberate inquiry and propose legislation. Walsh preferred spectacle to staff analysis.

This conflict intensified by early 1915, as Commons pushed for more impartial study and evenhanded treatment of employers. Walsh deflected the challenge, but tension remained. As the CIR's funding ran out, the Commission turned to drafting a final report. Walsh and the three labor representatives produced a radical manifesto calling for constitutional amendments to protect workers' rights to organize, investigation of employer misconduct by the Federal Trade Commission, restrictions on private detectives, and taxes on inheritances and land. This was too much for Commons. He wrote his own report calling instead for national mediation boards run by nonpartisan staffers. Harriman signed Commons's report, while the employer representatives produced a third report that condemned employer brutality as well as the closed shop, sympathy strikes, and the boycott. The failure of commissioners to agree on a single report struck observers as a failure.

As the CIR closed down, Walsh convened a private version of it called the Committee on Industrial Relations. Progressives organized mini-Committees in cities to lobby for the legislation proposed in Walsh's CIR report, while Walsh organized progressives to support strikers and called for both Democratic and Republican platforms to include federal labor reforms. Needing the votes, Wilson embraced the CIR, granting rail workers the eight-hour day with the 1916 Adamson Act and delivered progressives and

unionists to the Democrats in the 1916 election. The CIR foreshadowed both the New Deal coalition and the AFL-CIO split over the proper role of the state in labor relations and shifted public attention from union thuggery to bosses' depredations.

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See also **Adamson Act; Commons, John Rogers; Ludlow Massacre (1914); McNamara Brothers**

COMMONS, JOHN ROGERS (1862–1945) Labor Historian

Commons was the scholar most responsible for institutionalizing the university study of labor history and contemporary labor issues. The basis for Commons's academic innovations was his distinctive challenge to academic orthodoxy and his career-long incorporation of labor studies into economics. When his mature program generated specialized fields in labor economics, industrial relations, and labor history, he gained renown for founding the "Wisconsin School" of scholarship in each specialty. Wisconsin School scholarship was closely identified with "institutionalism," the cross-disciplinary movement that Commons helped launch. Institutionalists sought to supplant the prevailing version of social science, focused on the hypothetical behavior of individuals, with analysis emphasizing the actual role of collective actors in organizing and governing modern capitalist societies. The connection between the theoretical restructuring advanced by institutionalists and the practical restructuring of American capitalism by Progressive reformers was manifested across Commons's career. A builder of institutions as well as a scholar of institution-building, Commons shaped his research program to support his evolving reform agenda for altering the labor-capital power imbalance. Due to his success in combining social reform and social

science, Commons influenced labor history as well as labor historiography.

Commons's introduction to labor scholarship began in 1888 at Johns Hopkins University, where he studied "labor problems" with the subject's academic pioneer, Richard Ely. With Ely as his sponsor, Commons developed his own approach during his tenure at the University of Wisconsin's Economics department (1904–1932). Ely initially hired Commons to increase the department's coverage of labor topics and to enlarge the empirical base for labor scholarship by directing the department's American Bureau of Industrial Research. The curriculum featured labor history after Commons taught the initial course in 1905. Within a decade, he achieved a series of firsts for labor studies: an undergraduate minor, a graduate field, and a faculty team of specialists. As Bureau director, Commons led his students (several became his colleagues during the process) in producing the 10-volume *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society* (1910–1911), followed by the two-volume *History of Labour in the United States* (1918), which analyzed "labor organization" across the nineteenth century.

Commons provided the interpretive framework for the Bureau's analytical history. His focus centered on wage workers' collective actions to contest their employers' control over their industrialized labor. But his account emphasized how workers repeatedly shaped their organizations to respond to nonindustrialized features of American political economy. Commons drew particular attention to the extension and structuring of markets during the prolonged stage of merchant capitalism, since workplace power depended on workers' organizational capacity to curb market competition. He also stressed workers' unprecedented access to partisan politics, where their issues were routinely sacrificed and individualistic ideologies impeded their elaboration of collectivist alternatives. Based on his reading of the documentary record, Commons presented America's political-economic institutions as effectively constraining workers' efforts to build the labor institutions necessary to advance their class interests. His perception of workers successfully using, and changing, the institutional environment was confined to the century's end, when they responded to newly ascendant employer capitalism by mobilizing to establish "constitutional government in industry."

While completing novel labor history projects, Commons was active in the university-government collaboration called the Wisconsin Idea, framing reforms that established the state of Wisconsin as a national leader in the public regulation of business. His labor legislation included factory safety standards,

workers' compensation for workplace accidents, and centralized regulation under a tripartite authority: the Wisconsin Industrial Commission. Commons had previously participated in groundbreaking initiatives to investigate labor-capital relations (U.S. Industrial Commission, 1900–1902) and to promote labor-capital bargaining for trade agreements (National Civic Federation, 1902–1903). Through his leadership in the Wisconsin Idea, he tied his program's research agenda to the cutting edge of labor reform. "Commons and associates" served as investigators for the Russell Sage Foundation's Pittsburgh Survey (1906–1907) and the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations (1913–1916). For the American Association for Labor Legislation and the Wisconsin Industrial Commission, organizations whose creation they facilitated, their roles included administration as well as research.

The experience of combining labor research with labor reform shaped the remainder of Commons's career. As a practitioner, he focused his later activities on expanding the organized constituency for federal-level worker insurance programs and labor market regulation. The reach of his network-building was manifested in his honorific leadership positions: codirector, National Bureau of Economic Research (1920–1928); president, Stable Money Association (1922–1924); and president, National Consumers' League (1923–1935). Many of his students followed his lead, with the majority devoting their careers to labor-related policy making and public administration. They came to national prominence through their involvement in a wide range of New Deal initiatives, including drafting Social Security legislation and directing the National Labor Relations Board. Their visible impact reinforced the acclaim Commons received for pioneering significant elements of the vision and practice that came to fruition in New Deal labor reform.

After presiding over the American Economic Association (1917) during a period of heralded political-economic reconstruction, Commons focused his scholarship on reconstructing economics. In two major studies, *Legal Foundations of Capitalism* (1924) and *Institutional Economics* (1934), he located the changing institutional governance of capitalist economies at the center of economic analysis. By redefining the subject matter of economics, Commons revised its scope to include "nonmarket" modes of control—particularly, the control exercised by labor unions, business corporations, and public regulatory bodies. During this period, his Wisconsin associates extended their historical survey to 1932 with the publication of two final volumes of *History of Labor in the United States* (1935). Selig Perlman led the later effort,

while publishing the theoretical study that influentially defined American unionism as "job-conscious unionism." Perlman's interpretation, which blended Commons's analysis of unionism under merchant capitalism with Samuel Gompers's practice of trade unionism, became synonymous with the Wisconsin School approach to labor history.

Through mid-century, the historical studies produced by Commons and his students provided the dominant framework for studying labor. However, by the 1960s, the Wisconsin School approach lost its appeal, considered overly historical and institutionalist by most labor economists and insufficiently historical and institutionalist by a new generation of historians interested in labor. Champions of the "new labor history" challenged the interpretive hold of the "old labor history," criticizing the shortcomings of Commons and his associates. Because of their exclusive focus on organized labor, their histories omitted the majority of workers. Due to their narrow conception of labor organization, their institutional focus slighted the social and cultural institutions workers used to challenge the control capitalists wielded over workplaces and America's free-market economy. New labor historians initially emphasized the limitations of old labor history in order to transcend them. With subsequent syntheses of how structures of social power and structures of social meaning have intersected in workers' lives, continuities as well as departures define the relation between old and new labor histories.

Commons's legacy ultimately rests on the realism that informed his labor scholarship. The importance he placed on studying workers' interactions with changing institutional realities still resonates in debates over how to historicize workers' experience with American capitalism. Likewise, his realist stance still applies to the positions scholars take in the wider contest over whether the study of capitalism will be grounded in capitalism's actual history. Commons's historical investigation of the nonmarket institutions governing economic development was designed to promote a double transformation. First, to overturn the social science that represents economic interactions and outcomes as solely governed by market institutions in accordance with natural laws. Second, to overcome the attendant social philosophy that denies the persistence of power struggles among collective actors to configure America's economic governance structure. Of the continuities between Commons and his successors, the most consequential is the shared commitment to providing the realism missing in conventional wisdom.

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See also **Commission on Industrial Relations (1910s); Historiography of American Labor History; Perlman, Selig; Taft, Philip; Workers' Compensation**

COMMONWEALTH v. HUNT (1842)

The landmark case of *Commonwealth v. Hunt* (1842) was the first instance when a state supreme court ruled that laborers could lawfully organize.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, tradesmen were largely independent. During the 1830s, early advances in industrialization began to effect changes in ways that goods were produced, increasingly diminishing the control tradesmen held over their labor. In response, some journeymen organized to fight primarily against low wages. The Boston Journeymen Bootmakers' Society formed in 1835 for these aims. It successfully organized strikes in 1835 and 1836 to raise the wages of its members.

The elite denounced labor societies, citing two main objections. First, it claimed that such collectives violated the individual worker's right to contract. Second, it argued that by organizing on issues of pay and work hours, the collectives interfered with the free market. To destroy the associations, the elite solicited state district attorneys to prosecute workers who organized for criminal conspiracy.

American judges and legal scholars debated how the common law conspiracy doctrine should be applied in the states. Most judges held that an otherwise lawful act when committed by an individual (such as a demand for higher wages) became criminal under the conspiracy doctrine when committed in collective (as a restraint on free trade). There were some lawyers, however, who argued that the underlying act had to be criminal or at least unlawful (a civil offense) to substantiate the crime of conspiracy.

In the 1840s, the Massachusetts courts addressed the issue of whether forming a labor collective substantiated a charge of criminal conspiracy. In 1840, a Massachusetts trial court found seven members of the Boston Journeymen Bootmakers' Society guilty of criminal conspiracy for forming a union. The journeymen appealed. Two years later, Chief Justice Shaw of the Massachusetts Supreme Court reversed the convictions. Agreeing that the underlying alleged acts were all lawful, Shaw ruled that these acts, even when committed in combination, could not substantiate a charge of criminal conspiracy.

Shaw's decision did rule that unions were lawful, but it did not allow unions to engage in strikes. Shaw, who was not known as a friend to labor, viewed the collective as a unit created by a contract entered into voluntarily by autonomous individuals. Once formed, the collective operated as a liberal entity within the free market; however, it was also bound by the rules of contract. If the collective entered into an employment contract, its existence would not protect it from prosecution for violating that contract by striking.

Union activists who hoped that *Hunt* was part of a movement to provide laborers with some support were ultimately disappointed. There had been two recent political acts that imposed some limited regulation on industry. In 1840, President Van Buren had issued an executive order establishing a 10-hour day for federal employees, and in March 1842, the Massachusetts legislature made it unlawful to employ children under 12 for more than 10 hours a day in the mills. After the Civil War and through most of the nineteenth century, however, prosecutors continued to charge striking laborers with criminal conspiracy. It would take almost a century before state courts provided any meaningful support for laborers.

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COMMUNICATIONS/TELEGRAPHY

Ever since 1845, when the company formed by American inventors/entrepreneurs Samuel Morse and Alfred Vail first linked up the East Coast cities of Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston in a chain of electrical communication, the telegraph has been seen both as a technological revolution and as a commercial milestone. The wired electromechanical technology of Morse’s dot-and-dash “key” would inspire a cascade of similar devices such as stock tickers, alarm systems, rudimentary fax machines, and, of course, telephones. And the organizational innovations that enabled local branch telegraph operators to respond to orders from managers at urban, regional, and national scales would help one firm, Western Union, become the first ever to grow literally coast-to-coast in its rise to what many at the time called “natural monopoly” power (a monopoly allowed to exist by the government because duplicating such expensive technology over such a vast geography seemed absurdly wasteful). However, lurking behind both the “lightning technologies” and the firms that developed and owned them was a vast reserve of human labor that was also crucial to the century-long success of the telegraph.

Certain categories of telegraphic labor remained relatively constant, from the technology’s birth in the mid-nineteenth century to its decline in the mid-twentieth: lineworkers and machinists constructed and maintained the physical plant of poles, wires, and repeaters; male and female operators sent and received coded messages using this infrastructure; young messengers ferried those messages in printed form to and from the office; clerks of all sorts

interacted with customers and managed complicated work schedules or pricing schemes; and managers at every level attempted to keep the entire process running as if it were one large machine. But at any particular moment, exploring the telegraph industry’s division of labor reveals that its simple advertising stereotypes of lonely rural telegraph operators or eager urban messenger boys masked a complicated and polarized set of working conditions, which varied not only by skill and technology but also by geography.

Working in the Telegraph Industry

Of all the workers within the telegraph division of labor, the operators were perhaps the best known. Idealized as a standardized job, the work of sending and receiving telegraphic messages always varied with the type of technology employed and the level of skill demanded in any particular setting. Operators in small railroad offices with light traffic might serve additional functions as managers, lineworkers, ticket agents, or even messengers. They were often employed in subcontracting arrangements and paid in part by rail companies, which received free telegraph time in return. Operators in larger commercial offices would be separated into different grades, from contingent “on-call” daily labor to salaried branch managers. At all levels, their working day waxed and waned with buy/sell orders, press messages, greeting messages, and bulk corporate telegrams all coming in at different times and demanding different levels of skill and speed. Eventually, specialized operator niches for commodity exchanges, news wire services, and the leased lines of private corporations emerged. And gradually, the skill of tapping and listening with Morse code was rendered unnecessary with the development of typewriterlike “Automatic” keyboards. As Thomas Jepsen has shown, female operators were present even during the rise of the telegraph during the Civil War; however, turn-of-the-century urbanization, mechanization, and competition in the telegraph began to favor the employment of young women in the large commercial offices, a transition accelerated even further in the 1920s as the telegraph companies began using the telephone for message collection and even message distribution.

No matter what the context, operators were not simply message encoders and decoders. In the early days of the telegraph, operators were expected to “walk the line” to find the source of a transmission break. Paul Israel has shown that as the industry matured, it was operators with their tacit knowledge

of the equipment and its limitations who offered some of the most important technological improvements to management. But the hallmark of the expanding and consolidating telegraph industry was an increasingly detailed division of labor: linework became the province of a skilled electrical trade, and invention moved increasingly out of the machine shop of on-the-job experience and into the laboratory of college-taught electrical theory.

A similar set of polarizations based on geography confronted telegraph clerks and messengers. In small towns and railway offices, a messenger or clerk was likely to be related to the local operator or manager. These settings provided messengers and clerks with the greatest opportunity to use their job as an apprenticeship and “learn the key” to advance into an operator slot. In the larger cities and commercial offices, by contrast, clerical work was highly routinized, and messenger work experienced such high turnover that advancement into operator jobs was rare. Inside the large commercial office, systems of pneumatic tubes might be tended by girls on roller skates transferring printed messages from station to station. Clerks who scheduled messenger routes might demand kickbacks or favors from the boys. Messengers themselves would be kept seated in back rooms with separate entrances, in order to control their behavior (and keep them out of the customer’s sight). And managers used a variety of tactics, from assessing fines to mandating uniforms, to attempt to control the messenger’s labor in the streets and at the site of the customer.

As Gregory Downey has shown, messengers in particular vexed the telegraph managers with their paradoxical labor role—simultaneously a technological bottleneck and a service and advertising necessity. Managers continually attempted to use technology to either enhance the telegraph messenger (by outfitting him on bicycles and motorcycles) or to replace the telegraph messenger (whether through telephone operators or rudimentary fax machines). Western Union messengers were advertised as hourly labor to customers, in what was arguably the first nationwide “temporary agency.” Or they might be used as a nationwide marketing force, distributing free product samples, promotional leaflets, or political advertising to targeted urban and suburban neighborhoods. The telegraph industry went to great lengths to ensure its supply of messengers, even in the face of the tougher child labor and mandatory education laws of the 1910s and 1920s, culminating in an in-house Western Union “continuation school” in New York City that graduated hundreds of boys annually in the 1920s and 1930s.

Organizing the Telegraph Industry

From the very start, the widely varying working conditions and wage relations within the telegraph labor force, coupled with constant management pressures to cut office costs and increase message speed, made telegraphers of all kinds ripe for labor-organizing efforts. But at the same time, as Edwin Gabler has argued, the widely held perception of telegraph work (especially skilled male operator work) as a “middle-class profession” helped structure early telegraph organizations as benevolent societies and “company unions” rather than industrial labor organizations.

The first major labor action against management came with the 1883 strike of the Brotherhood of Telegraphers (affiliated with the Knights of Labor) against Western Union (then under the control of robber baron Jay Gould). The unusual combination of both operators and linemen lent power to the month-long strike, but the lack of participation from press and railroad telegraphers (who soon split off into their own associations) helped doom the effort. Another try began in 1903 with the formation of the Commercial Telegraphers Union (CTU), affiliated this time with the trade unions of the American Federation of Labor. A wildcat strike in 1907 had as its only positive result the initiation of a government investigation of the telegraph industry. Soon after, in 1909, American Telegraph & Telephone (AT&T) purchased a controlling interest in Western Union in an attempt to bring order to the labor and technology of both systems. AT&T relinquished control in 1914, only to see the post office take over both the telegraphs and the telephone industry through World War I. The outcome of both AT&T and government management control was the creation of a company union, the Association of Western Union Employees (AWUE), and the demoralization of the CTU through the 1920s.

Surprisingly perhaps, it was the telegraph messengers, courted by a new industrial union calling itself the American Communications Association (ACA), who helped bring about the legal end of the AWUE company union in the 1930s. Organizing efforts through World War II pitted the more radical ACA against the more conservative CTU; the ACA won victories in New York City (8,000 workers, including hundreds of messengers), but the CTU swept the rest of the nation’s telegraph sites (and the remaining 50,000 or so telegraph employees). However, winning the right to representation was in a way an empty victory for the telegraph workers: after its wartime bubble burst, the telegraph industry would enter

a slow but steady period of decline. After several attempts at modernization (and decades of labor attrition), Western Union, rechristened New Valley Corporation after selling its brand name, finally went bankrupt in the early 1990s. Yet, as Tom Standage illustrates, studying the “Victorian Internet” that was the telegraph may yet prove useful, especially in revealing (and revaluing) the hidden labor behind information and communication networks today.

GREGORY J. DOWNEY

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COMMUNIST PARTY

The Communist movement in the United States was founded when left-wing radicals split away from the American Socialist Party (SP) in 1919 to create their own organizations. The two Communist parties that first emerged out of the SP differed from moderate socialists over trade union and political tactics, and support for American involvement in World War I, but from the beginning the Communists defined themselves primarily as belonging to an international working-class movement that had originated with the Bolshevik revolution and was centered in Moscow. American Communists pledged to conform to the revolutionary program of the Communist International (Comintern), founded by Lenin in Moscow in March 1919. Although it was composed of representatives from Communist parties from around the world, until its dissolution in 1943, the Comintern was dominated by Russian Communists. Because of its revolutionary prestige and resources, the Comintern exercised great political influence on the American Communist movement. Directives from the Comintern, reinforced by its undercover representatives in the United States, compelled the first two American Communist parties to merge and create a legal political organization, the Workers' Party, in 1921.

A large majority of the early American Communist movement were immigrants, many of whom had belonged to the earlier “language federations” of the Socialist Party, including Finns, Russians, Letts, Ukrainians, Poles, and Hungarians. These groups faced intense nativist hostility throughout the 1920s. Immigrant radicals of all persuasions were subject to immediate deportation by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and had been arrested and detained by the hundreds during the Palmer Raids of 1919–1920. In the first decade and a half of its existence, the Communist movement faced intense official repression. Twenty of its leaders were arrested at its 1922 national convention. Justice Department and Bureau of Investigation agents worked with local police to circulate lists of Communists and affiliated radicals to trade unions in order to effect their expulsions.

The early Communists advocated “mass strikes,” and some claimed to see revolutionary potential in the unprecedented strike wave of 1919, but at first very few had connections with or practical knowledge of the organized labor movement. A survey by the party in 1922 found that of its membership of 5,000–6,000, only about 500 were native-born, and only 5% of the total were actively involved in trade union work. The founding manifestos of the early Communist movement expressed contempt for the American Federation of Labor (AFL), with its official model of craft-union voluntarism. Most Communists were sympathetic to the revolutionary industrial unionism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The IWW, more committed than the AFL to organizing immigrants, the unskilled, transients, and African-Americans, had generated large strikes and organizing campaigns in the period before World War I, but a large portion of its leadership was arrested and imprisoned during the war itself. William D. “Big Bill” Haywood, the personification of IWW militancy, fled to Moscow in 1921 to avoid a long prison sentence. The IWW was able to maintain only a tenuous or sporadic existence in working-class communities in the 1920s.

It was only after the Comintern's shift to a united front strategy after 1921 that the American party began to actively search for a route to influence within the American Federation of Labor, which had achieved huge increases in membership during World War I. This change in perspective in the early 1920s was consistent with the ideas of several influential syndicalists in the party, including James P. Cannon and Earl Browder, who were conscious of the weaknesses of the IWW and comprehended the militancy and radicalism that persisted within America's craft-conscious union tradition. Larger unions

such as the United Mine Workers (UMW), the International Association of Machinists, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers harbored significant left-socialist minorities that were deeply resentful of the labor-management cooperation plans, or “class collaboration,” practiced by much of America’s union leadership in the postwar era.

The party recruited William Z. Foster, a radical syndicalist who had helped initiate large AFL organizing campaigns in the meatpacking and steel industries in WWI. Foster attended the first Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions (Profintern) in Moscow in 1921. The head of the Profintern, Solomon Lozovsky, promised Foster and the small group of labor radicals he headed, the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), financial support. Lozovsky and Foster agreed that Communist activists, while at some unspecified point responsible to the political leadership of the party, should exercise a degree of tactical flexibility and independence in their efforts to exert influence within existing unions. The TUEL, with its cohort of militant but pragmatic and experienced labor organizers dedicated to “boring from within” the AFL, became the focus for Communist activities in the labor movement in the 1920s. The powerful Chicago Federation of Labor worked closely with the TUEL, and Eugene Debs offered his approval of its aims.

The main issue taken up by Communists in the labor movement in the early 1920s was “amalgamation.” This referred to ongoing (since before WWI) attempts by labor progressives and radicals to erase craft jurisdictional disputes and overhaul the structures of existing unions in order to make them more “industrial” in nature. By 1923, amalgamation resolutions, usually devoid of overtly Communist “line” or ideology, had been endorsed by hundreds of labor groups across the nation, including 16 state federations and 14 national unions. However, amalgamation was a cause that could only be taken up internally and provoked intense opposition among the officialdom. Anti-Communists also vigorously opposed the existence of Communist cells in the unions as a form of dual-unionism that ultimately undermined solidarity and effectiveness.

The Communists in the TUEL often considered themselves to be operating largely apart from the political apparatus of the party, and more “political” socialists like Charles Ruthenberg, Jay Lovestone, and Benjamin Gitlow openly opposed what they termed “Fosterism,” or the TUEL’s largely syndicalist emphasis on immediate demands or purely trade-union issues. The TUEL established active dissident cells in a large range of unions, including the railroad federations and shopmen’s unions, the International

Association of Machinists, the United Mine Workers, and the main clothing and garment workers’ unions.

The divisions between unionists and self-styled “political” Communists within the party were exacerbated as a result of controversy over labor party politics in 1923–1924. The Comintern intervened as well, demanding resolutions and tactics during this period that immensely complicated Communist unionists’ ability to maintain alliances with union progressives. The Communists ended up running their own candidates in opposition to the Progressive Party in the presidential election of 1924.

In 1926, Communists helped lead a large and violent strike of textile workers in Passaic and established a strong “Save the Union” movement in the United Mine Workers. However, by the late 1920s, the TUEL as an organization had been largely dissolved. Union officials relentlessly attacked the TUEL, portraying amalgamation (and any other cause promoted by dissidents in their unions) as a power grab by the Communists. Within the party itself, trade union activists were often attacked as “mere” syndicalists, and the “boring-from-within” rationale was criticized for its lack of attention to organizing the unorganized.

With many AFL unions moribund or ineffective by the late 1920s, the Communists, under orders from the Comintern in 1928–1929, organized a new federation of independent unions, the Trade Union Unity League. The TUUL created opportunities for Communist activists to organize in areas that had previously been neglected. The Communist-led National Miners’ Union, for instance, created a strong presence in the bituminous coalfields of western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio during the first years of the Depression, eventually leading a large strike in 1931 that included a large number of blacks who were unemployed or had been denied membership in the UMW. The new Communist unions that were formed in a number of industries beginning in 1929 achieved few tangible organizational or strike successes. However, by 1934, the year the TUUL was formally dissolved, Communist organizers had “colonized” a number of strategic auto, rubber, meatpacking, textile, and steel plants, and had made important progress in establishing a new type of Communist unionism, more suited to the organization of African-Americans, women, and mass-production workers.

The Great Depression offered a tremendous challenge to American Communists. The party achieved an unprecedented level of credibility in American culture, as illustrated, for instance, by the endorsement of the 1932 presidential campaign of William Z. Foster and James Ford by a number of prominent American writers and intellectuals, including Sidney

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Hook, Edmund Wilson, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, and Langston Hughes.

The labor movement, however, remained the most important focus for Communist organizing, and it was the influence that Communists gained in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s that provided them with their base of power in the political coalitions related to FDR and the New Deal. When John L. Lewis of the UMW broke with the leadership of the AFL in 1935 and created the CIO, he immediately turned to experienced Communist organizers to assist in solidifying and extending the gains of the new industrial union federation. Communists were vital in organizing the steel and automobile industries and were a crucial factor in carrying out what was perhaps the most important strike in American history, the 1937 sit-down in Flint, Michigan, that forced General Motors to recognize the United Auto Workers.

Communist unionists were often capable of flexible adaptation to local circumstances, and with noteworthy exceptions, were inclined to put the immediate demands of workers ahead of doctrinal shifts mandated by the Comintern. During the period of the CIO's formation, the Communist Party's popular front ideology coincided with its support of industrial unionism, antifascism, and alliance with New Deal and other progressive social forces. Communists played crucial roles in the formation of major CIO affiliates such as the United Auto Workers, the United Electrical Workers, the International Longshoremen's and Warehouse Union, and the Packinghouse Workers. They held various important positions of leadership in these unions, as well as in the Food and Tobacco Workers, the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, the Fur and Leather Workers, and the Transport Workers. Although Communist Party members constituted only approximately 1% of the membership of the CIO, by the end of WWII they exercised decisive influence in 14 unions, with an estimated membership of 1.4 million, with another 1.5 million workers belonging to unions divided between pro- and anti-Communist leadership (of approximately 6.2 million total CIO members). Many influential CIO unionists were active leftists who never belonged to the party but sympathized with Communist positions on most issues.

One of the Communist Party's most distinctive characteristics was its strong advocacy of economic and civil rights for African-Americans. The party's position in this respect developed partly out of changes mandated at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928. There, the policy emerged that American Communists should demand "Negro self-determination in the black belt," or a

separate nation in heavily black sections of the American South. Despite its provenance in the Comintern apparatus, the self-determination program opened up possibilities for mobilizing around explicitly racial issues. One effect was helping Communists establish outposts for organizing in the South in the 1930s; Communists were able to employ the self-determination slogan to effectively advance union and unemployed organizing in the Birmingham area, for instance. The party's defense of the Scottsboro boys, arrested in Alabama for a rape they did not commit, added to the status of the party in African-American communities. Communists were also active in dangerous campaigns for sharecroppers' unions. Anti-eviction actions and involvement in unemployment and poor relief campaigns attracted some blacks to the party.

In the labor movement, Communist organizers showed in a number of instances that they were capable of sacrificing principles of racial equality or integration in order to maintain solidarity with white majorities. However, when compared with the records of other CIO unions and organizers, Communists were in general known for their aggressiveness in defending the rights of black workers. This was often true in conflicts where Communists could have made easier advances by compromising with racists. Communist-influenced CIO affiliates such as the Mine, Mill, and Smelters Union and the Food and Tobacco Workers were noteworthy in this regard.

American Communists generally limited the role of women in party and union leadership. There were several noteworthy exceptions in the electrical workers, office workers, and needle-trades unions. In the Food and Tobacco Workers and Electrical Workers unions, with their large proportions of female members, Communists supported job protection and pay equity.

The question of whether the American Communist movement owed its character, accomplishments, and failures primarily to the Comintern and the directives of Soviet politicians, or whether it was a relatively independent political movement that responded primarily to social and economic conditions in the United States, retains its interest to historians of American politics. Much recent research and writing has emphasized the role of American Communists in transmitting strategic intelligence information to the Soviet Union, and maintains that the party was essentially a "Soviet world" dominated by the malign interests and ideology of the Soviet Union.

Although this interpretation tends to focus on only one particular area of Communist activity, it echoes a persistent theme in attacks on the party throughout its history. According to influential critics in the labor movement, Communists were ultimately unable to

represent the best interests of organized workers because of the party's strong adherence to Soviet political "line" and ideology. Several salient episodes in the party's history illustrate this argument.

In 1939, as a result of the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact, the American party suddenly shifted away from its earlier antifascist, pro-Roosevelt perspective and declared its neutrality toward what was now called an "imperialist war" in Europe. From 1939 to 1941, Communists were prominently involved in large strikes in American defense-related industries, allowing employers and their allies to exacerbate fears of "sabotage" of American preparedness efforts. However, these strikes arose out of indisputably local grievances, and during this period many Communist-led unions with defense contracts, including the longshoremen and electrical workers, did not strike.

Following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, Communist-influenced unions were particularly active in promoting unhindered production for the war effort, vigorously promoting the no-strike pledge and, in some cases, speedups and incentive pay plans. The party attacked the African-American unionist A. Philip Randolph's March on Washington campaign to achieve equal employment in defense industries because of its supposed potential to undermine workplace unity. Under General Secretary Earl Browder's expansive interpretation of the Soviet Union's wartime-alliance posture, the party advocated extension of the no-strike pledge into the postwar period. These positions were not detrimental to the CIO politically or to its tremendous growth in membership during the war. However, in the automobile industry in particular, the Communist pro-production policy would provide one basis for effective attacks on Communist unionists in the first years of the Cold War.

The Communist Party was powerfully affected by the change in U.S.-Soviet relations after World War II. The famous "Duclos letter" originated in Moscow in 1945. It strongly criticized Browder's projections of "class peace" in America in the postwar era and was the principal catalyst for an abrupt change in the party's leadership. Although dismaying to many, Browder's expulsion had little immediate effect on party membership as a whole.

The first years of the Cold War era provided the context for the re-emergence of highly effective anti-Communist forces in the labor movement. The party's tightly disciplined and secretive caucusing methods allowed its opponents to portray it as a devious and essentially undemocratic influence. Many New Deal progressives, including the "center" leadership of the CIO and its president, Philip Murray, were initially hopeful for a generally pro-Soviet

political atmosphere after World War II. However, as American foreign policy turned aggressively anti-Soviet, a range of criticisms of the party from church groups, the leadership of the AFL, and prominent unionists like Walter Reuther, elected president of the UAW in 1946, put heavy pressure on Communists and their allies. The Taft-Hartley Act, passed by the new Republican congress in 1947, contained a clause that required union officials to sign anti-Communist affidavits in order to participate in National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) deliberations.

In 1948, the American Communist leadership, responding to signals from Soviet sources, strongly pressured their union cadre to endorse the third-party presidential campaign of Henry Wallace. It is noteworthy that Communist leaders made their individual endorsements of Wallace nonbinding on their memberships. Wallace was a vigorous critic of Truman's foreign policy and developed little rank-and-file support. The anti-Wallace forces in the CIO ranged from principled anti-Stalinists to rank opportunists. The CIO leadership decided it could not tolerate an independent Communist political voice in its councils and unambiguously aligned with Truman and the emerging anti-Communist consensus. Following the 1948 elections, the CIO began a campaign of dismissals, "raiding" of locals, and expulsions of entire unions that permanently crippled the influence of Communists in the labor movement. By 1950, the CIO had expelled 11 unions representing between 17% and 20% of its total membership.

The expulsion of powerful Communist-led unions from the CIO had a dramatic effect on the American labor movement. CIO unions that were Communist-led or had a strong Communist presence before 1949 were in general more democratic in governance, less inclined to cede management prerogatives in their contracts, and more responsive to the racial grievances of their members than were unions without significant Communist influence. Consistent with the earliest syndicalist inclinations of American Communism, the party's organizers exhibited a predisposition to equate workers' "immediate" demands, and mobilization on the shop floor, with their movement's highest political purposes. The persecution of Communists contributed to the acceptance of precisely formalized labor-relations strategies developed by unions and corporate management after World War II. It cemented the CIO's political alliance with the Democratic Party, reducing its effectiveness as an independent political voice.

The Communist Party was further decimated in the 1950s by the wide-scale political repression of the Red Scare and McCarthyism. The revelation of the crimes of Stalin's police state at the Twentieth

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Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956 created intense disillusionment within the party and a steady decline in membership. The party's unwillingness to abandon principles of Leninist political organization caused an exodus of reformists, as did the Soviet repression of the Hungarian revolution of 1956. By 1958, the party's membership had fallen to approximately 3,000, from a high point of nearly 66,000 (with thousands of close supporters and sympathizers) in 1939. In later years, following party leader Gus Hall's support of an attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991, the Communist movement split between democratic reformers and hard-liners. At present, the Communist Party has ceased to exist as an influential political force on the American left.

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See also Browder, Earl; Foster, William Z.; Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Industrial Workers of the World; Socialist Party of America

COMPANY TOWNS

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, industrial capitalists and private corporations came into sharp conflict with the labor movement and portions of the general public throughout the United States over the issue of the nature and significance of

company towns. Although the term "company town" has sometimes been loosely applied to various settings, the classic company town was one in which the influence of a sole dominant employer, often the founder of the town, was such that it single-handedly determined the economic, political, and social life of the affected geographical area as well as the working and living conditions of its employees. Indeed, the very existence of company towns raised fundamental issues related to workers' rights, monopoly capitalism, civil liberties, and the meaning of citizenship.

The quality of employment, housing, and resources in company towns varied greatly; and not all were successful profit-making enterprises. Nevertheless, the very erection of these towns gave employers an unprecedented degree of control over their employees and their families, a degree of control that did not exist in independent towns or cities where multiple industries and companies co-existed. The dependence of working people on one single source for all the necessities of living, including their jobs, their wages, their working conditions, their housing, their utilities, their store supplies, and their medical care, was absolute. No one doubted where the source of real authority lay. Unions, independent worker organizations, credible business competition, an autonomous media, and critical governmental or public oversight were typically precluded from these environments. Companies were free to pay degrading wages in scrip rather than bona fide currency; to allow foremen to make arbitrary or dangerous demands at work; to require employees to shop only at company stores where they paid elevated prices; to discharge and blacklist workers for virtually any reason; to use private police forces and a spy system to preclude free assembly and free speech; to evict families and cut off store credit when workers engaged in strikes; and to dictate workers' choices at elections. Maintaining a pliant and nonunionized labor force in company towns meant keeping workers isolated from the American labor movement and ensuring that the towns themselves were immune from the broader democratic influences of the outside world.

The history of company towns is inextricably linked to the story of the rise, evolution, and eventual decline of industrial capitalist development in the United States. That history falls roughly into three eras: (1) from the early nineteenth century to the Civil War; (2) from the 1880s to the New Deal and World War II; and (3) from about 1950 to the early twenty-first century.

Company towns were relatively scarce in the early nineteenth century, when large-scale capitalist industry was local or regional. Many of those that did exist were products of the pioneering textile industry in

New England. Samuel Slater's erection of textile factories and the establishment of company towns such as Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in the 1790s set the precedent for the Boston Associates and other textile financial concerns to develop similar enterprises in Lowell, Lawrence, and elsewhere. The number and size of company towns dramatically increased after the Civil War, when industrial development expanded throughout the entire country. Many prominent Gilded Age mining, steel, textile, and railroad corporations established them during the heyday of their productive operations from about the 1880s to the New Deal and World War II. Subsequently, the rising power of the labor movement, the passage of New Deal reforms, and working people's access to greater mobility through the automobile led corporations to re-evaluate their policies and business strategies. Many began to sell off company houses and properties, and by the end of World War II, company towns in the United States were declining, disappearing, or re-emerging in modified forms. The shift to a post-industrial economy in recent decades has left much of the nation's former industrial heartland, including the company towns that lay within the "rust belt," economically devastated.

The primary reason industrial employers established company towns in the United States was to attract and retain a pliant, loyal, and docile work force whose productive labor would ensure substantial profits for the owners and shareholders. The directors of the large, powerful corporations based in New York or Philadelphia that conducted business on an international scale had broad business goals in mind when they drew up comprehensive plans for their towns. Many of those they erected were, of necessity, located in sparsely populated rural areas where labor was scarce. Mining companies, for example, had no choice but to set up their operations near the valuable mineral deposits they sought to extract, and textile companies dependent on abundant water power had to build their factories near rivers. In such instances, the ability to offer potential employees housing, credit, and accessible merchandise gave business enterprises a valuable tool for recruiting the needed labor force.

Also, competition for labor was often fierce during the period of industrial expansion before World War I, and unskilled and semiskilled laboring jobs were plentiful. The Berwind-White Coal Mining Corporation was only one of the many coal companies that used the resources of its company towns as an inducement for southern and eastern European immigrants to come to work for it rather than to go to work in the mines of one of its competitors. Once workers and their families settled in such company

towns, the irregular work of the mining industry, the payment of low wages, and compulsory company store credit made it difficult for the indebted workers—or their children, the company's future labor force—to migrate away. The establishment of company stores and company housing thus served the interests of the employers in many ways and suggests that their overall worth cannot be judged solely in narrow economic terms such as how much or how little profit a given store or housing project made.

Corporate Justifications and Workers' Protests

From the outset, the founders of company towns justified their creation of the towns in paternalistic, humanitarian, and altruistic terms while ignoring their own self-interested motivations and other key labor and civil rights issues. The early nineteenth-century textile magnates may have created good housing and been influenced by the reform impulse of the era or by the well-publicized utopian social experiments of Robert Owen and others in Europe and the United States, but the primary reason they created the towns was to make money, run a profitable business, and resolve the "labor problem," as they saw it, in their own terms. In a similar manner, throughout the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, gigantic coal and steel corporations and their supporters attempted to counter growing public criticism by describing their company stores, company houses, and company towns as contributions to the workers' "welfare" and evidence of the capitalists' "philanthropy."

Workers often ridiculed such claims. Throughout U.S. history, they frequently protested arbitrary company-town rule at the workplace and in the community at large. They quit jobs, migrated elsewhere, attempted to organize unions and other independent organizations, engaged in strikes, joined political parties, and lobbied state legislatures for relief. They had occasional successes. For example, hard coal miners who had long protested the existence and policies of company stores, which they called "pluck-me" stores, finally succeeded in 1891 in getting passage of a Pennsylvania state law that prohibited industrial employers from owning them. However, coal, steel, and textile corporations easily skirted the intent of the new law by merely incorporating their stores under a different name. The gap in power relations between the capitalist class interests and the labor movement was too great for workers to end the enormous corporate power inherent in company-town

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rule. Working people were successful in curbing the worst abuses of company-town rule only after the labor movement mobilized in the 1930s and made substantial change possible by securing passage in 1935 of the Wagner Act, which guaranteed workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. They publicized abuses that led to the abolition of private police systems and gained the enactment, on the state and federal levels, of other New Deal legislation that extended civil liberties to these regions and ensured workers greater economic and political rights.

It is probably not accidental that many of the nation's most important strikes, and many of the most infamous examples of labor violence, took place in such company towns as Homestead, Pullman, Lattimer, Lawrence, Ludlow, Windber, Honea Path, and Flint. Such conflicts undermined the contentions of industrial employers that these were "model" towns that had resolved the "labor problem." Indeed, they revealed that many working people considered their employers autocratic and their company towns "slave" towns. One of the major demands of nonunion miners who joined a national coal strike in 1922 was "to secure the rights of free Americans." Such strikes called public attention to serious issues inherent in company-town rule in a nominally democratic society. Foremost of these was the suppression of basic constitutional rights and civil liberties, a suppression that violated the rights of the working classes, middle classes, and all Americans.

Pullman, Illinois, stands out as the classic example of a company town that exemplified the differing perspectives of industrial capitalists, workers, the public, and the government. George M. Pullman, the wealthy owner of the Pullman Palace Car Company, one of the country's richest and most successful railroad car-building corporations, founded the town in 1880 as a profit-making business enterprise and as a means to solve the problem of growing labor unrest that became apparent after the railroad strikes of 1877. From the outset, the company, as sole property owner, had absolute authority throughout the well-built, attractive town. Pullman himself had instituted an elaborate spying system and prohibited unions, taverns, brothels, independent businesses, and other "outside" influences he deemed harmful.

Initially, the public heralded the "model" town and the founder's paternalism, but there was occasion to rethink such views after May 11, 1894, when Pullman workers went out on strike during the depression and the local work stoppage turned into one of the most important strikes and boycotts in the nation's history. Pullman workers cited their many grievances, including their lack of a voice at work or

in town, wage cuts, high rents, company stores, and their inability to form unions or exercise their constitutional rights. As one striker expressed it, "We are born in a Pullman house, fed from the Pullman shop, taught in the Pullman school, catechized in a Pullman church, and when we die we shall be buried in the Pullman cemetery and go to the Pullman hell." By contrast, George Pullman and company officers argued that property rights were sacred and inviolable; that workers had no legitimate rights but were, in effect, commodities subject only to the law of supply and demand; and that neither government nor any other third party had any right to tell a company how to run its business.

Although the Pullman workers and the American Railway Union, the fledgling industrial union that took up their cause, ultimately lost the strike, George Pullman, the notion of paternalism, and the myth of the "model" town lost, too. In 1898, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the town of Pullman was a company town and, therefore, incompatible with American democratic institutions. Because the railroad car company exercised a monopoly over both employment and town facilities, the court later ordered the company to sell off the town's properties and businesses.

Other states were not bound by the Illinois court decisions, however, and company towns continued to flourish in the twentieth century. For example, from the 1920s on, textile companies moved south, where they established many such towns. Company towns became an important issue during the New Deal. Eleanor Roosevelt, an ally of the labor movement, decried the dependent conditions of the workers she visited in various mining and other company towns in the 1930s, and it is significant to note that when a New Deal Democrat, Pennsylvania Governor George Earle, denounced company towns as symbols of "economic serfdom" in 1937, there were 1,200 such towns within that state alone.

Company towns were an integral feature of industrial capitalist development in the United States and a prime example of the inordinately unequal power relations that prevailed between business and labor throughout most of the nation's history. Reform of company towns became possible under the New Deal, but those reforms were limited, and the unequal gap that existed in power relations between the capitalist classes and working people in the early twenty-first century was arguably as great as it was before the New Deal. The alliance between business and government, the triumph of global capitalism, and the decline of the labor movement in the post-New Deal era left industrial workers such as those in Flint,

Michigan, or abandoned one-industry towns such as Homestead, Pennsylvania, in deep straits. Although classic company towns have declined in numbers, their legacies, their problems, and their modified versions live on under new circumstances. Meanwhile, none of the major contested issues of workers' rights, civil liberties, the viability of democracy, and the nature of capitalism, issues that lay at the center of the historic conflicts over company towns and subsequent assessments of their role in U.S. history, were resolved.

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- See also Anthracite Coal Strike (1902); Brophy, John; Congress of Industrial Organizations; De-industrialization; Gastonia Strike (1929); Hapgood, Powers; Homestead (1892); J. P. Stevens Campaign (1963–1980); LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee; Lawrence Strike (1912); Lowell Turnouts (1834, 1836); Ludlow Massacre (1914); Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894); Pullman, George Morimer; Sit-Down Strikes (1937); Steel and Iron; United Mine Workers of America; United Steelworkers of America; Welfare Capitalism**

COMPUTERS

Although computers became a pervasive part of daily life in the United States toward the end of the twentieth century, little has been written about the history of labor in the computer industry. More common are studies of technological innovation, the contributions of key individuals, and the consumption patterns for computers and related technologies. In most of these analyses, labor—particularly blue-collar labor—is an invisible or marginal factor.

Moreover, writing a labor history of the computer industry raises several difficulties. The sheer ubiquity of computers in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in the United States and the broad scope of the industry make it difficult to categorize and draw general conclusions about the labor being performed. Computing includes work in microelectronics manufacture, telecommunications, software publishing, and many other areas. In a 1986 study, the National Research Council divided the computer industry into categories: engineers, computer specialists (including computer scientists, programmers, and software engineers), technicians, operators, and production workers. However, these categories do not account for the large numbers of nontechnical workers in the computer industry, such as those in sales and administration. Growth in online commerce has further diversified the computer industry and blurred the boundaries of traditional labor classification. Because much of our knowledge of computer history derives from the surviving corporate literature, which depicts events and practices from the perspective of management, certain forms of labor are more prevalent in the literature than others.

Early History

Objections to computerization have often framed computers as the enemy of workers, automating their work and performing with greater speed and efficiency the tasks previously undertaken by humans. However, before 1945, the term “computer” referred to a human being, usually a woman. Human computers performed the tedious calculations that filled mathematical tables used for astronomy, maritime navigation, advanced mathematics, ballistics, and other applications during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the first part of the twentieth century.

In the nineteenth century, the mechanization of information processing paralleled industrialization. In 1821, the British mathematician and inventor Charles Babbage modeled his “difference engine,” a

machine designed to automate the process of producing mathematical tables, on the division of labor advocated by Adam Smith in the *Wealth of Nations* and the intellectual division of labor found in the human table-making “factories” such as those in Napoleon’s France. However, Babbage was also an economist best known by his peers for the book *On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures* (1832), which surveyed manufacturing processes of the period. Economics, manufacturing, and information processing came together in Babbage’s subsequent plans for a more general “analytic engine” (1856). Using the nineteenth-century textile mill as a model, Babbage expanded his design for the difference engine to create a more general machine that shared many characteristics found in modern computers, such as memory, the ability to accept programmed instructions, and a central processing unit that he aptly called a “mill.”

Across the Atlantic in the United States, Herman Hollerith, an engineer who had worked as a clerk for the U.S. Census Bureau, created the first tabulating machines to save census workers the daily drudgery of computing data by hand and to reduce the time needed to compile census results. With the introduction of tabulating machinery for the 1890 census, government clerks punched data for each U.S. resident onto a perforated card; Hollerith’s machinery then tabulated and sorted the information. Each clerk punched an average of seven hundred cards per day, and more than 80 clerks operated the tabulating and sorting machines, each clerk processing one thousand cards or more per hour. Hollerith’s Tabulating Machine Company (TMC), formed in 1896, was the forerunner of the computing giant International Business Machines (IBM).

Hollerith’s machines did not replace the use of human computers for more complicated projects, such as those directed by the U.S. military during the first part of the twentieth century. Human computers held a place of importance during World War II. Approximately two hundred women with university degrees in mathematics computed ballistics trajectories at the University of Pennsylvania’s Moore School as part of the war effort. When the Moore School finished building the first electronic computer, the ENIAC (electronic numerical integrator and computer), in 1945, many of these female computers became the first computer programmers.

In this period, computers, both human and machine, crunched numbers for scientific purposes. Computing was the exclusive domain of trained mathematicians, scientists, and engineers. This changed in the 1950s, when the computer became a data-processing machine marketed to and adopted by the business community.

J. Presper Eckert and John Mauchly, formerly of the Moore School faculty, formed one of the first computer businesses, Electronic Control Company, to sell the first commercial computer (UNIVAC), but IBM and about 30 other firms soon followed and developed their own machines for business applications. By the mid-1950s, IBM machines dominated the market.

The growth of commercial computing expanded the range of tasks performed by workers in the industry and changed the idea of what it meant to be a computer worker. IBM, for example, built a successful sales force based on sales quotas, commissions, and a strict dress code, which remained in place until the 1990s. All salesmen completed a comprehensive training program and were the cornerstone of IBM's marketing strategy. By the mid-1960s, IBM had nearly 250,000 employees, a figure that climbed to 400,000 by 1985. Not all were computer engineers. With a reputation for job security and a public image as a benevolently paternalistic company, IBM became a coveted place to work for white-collar, middle-class employees during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. However, IBM also depended upon a large infrastructure of technicians, clerical workers, administrative staff, training staff, middle managers, and janitorial workers, among others.

Changes in the computer market paralleled changes in the technology and manufacture of a computer's component parts. The first computers used vacuum tubes. Later models used transistors and, eventually, integrated circuits. The manufacture of a reliable component often required a separate set of techniques, tools, and environmental controls than those that led to the initial laboratory prototype. Bell Laboratories announced the invention of the transistor in 1948, but it was 1951 before the first transistors rolled off its assembly line at a Western Electric plant in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Because new developments within the industry occurred so rapidly, factories often doubled as laboratories for companies that wanted to be innovative and to manufacture these complex component technologies on a large scale. Western Electric, the manufacturing arm of Bell Laboratories, was a pioneer and employed a team of Bell Labs engineers charged with transforming laboratory inventions into reliable mass-produced goods. In this context, the historian Stuart W. Leslie observes, such "plants should be considered a new kind of laboratory, one devoted to process rather than product." Workers followed strict rules concerning clothing, hair, make-up, and the cleanliness of their workspace. In 1960, workers at the Allentown plant assembled transistors largely by hand, and women outnumbered men on the assembly line by a ratio of 7 to 1.

As a branch of Bell Labs, Western Electric sold transistors for telecommunications systems, not computers. However, its manufacturing practices set the standard for the growing semiconductor industry, which supplied the computer industry. Fairchild Semiconductor was one of several companies that adopted Western Electric's techniques, including clean room practices. Located on the San Francisco Peninsula, the area that would become known as Silicon Valley, Fairchild became a major source of silicon components for computers in the late 1950s, selling to IBM, among others. Fairchild pioneered new methods of manufacture such as photolithography, which improved transistor performance and reliability and later made possible the manufacture of integrated circuits. Like the Western Electric work force, Fairchild's consisted of semiskilled female workers as well as groups of engineers charged with increasing factory production capacities. Fairchild raised the standards for its clean rooms, dust-proofing and air-conditioning all assembly and processing areas and prohibiting employees from smoking on company premises. The firm also required workers to adhere to a strict set of manufacturing procedures outlined in lengthy company manuals.

In the mid-1960s, Fairchild cut its labor costs by moving the testing and assembly of its transistors and integrated circuits to Hong Kong, where unskilled laborers were paid 25 cents an hour instead of the \$2.80 per hour that Bay Area factory workers commanded. Other semiconductor firms, including Motorola, Texas Instruments, Pacific Semiconductor, and Hoffman Electronics, soon also sent work to Southeast Asia.

From 1960 to 1970, the semiconductor industry witnessed a period of dramatic growth, fueled in part by rising demand from the computer industry. In 1960, Fairchild had 1,400 employees on its payroll. Ten years later, it and its Bay Area spin-off companies employed about 12,000 people. Growing computer sales helped the semiconductor industry to thrive. One thousand computers were shipped in 1957, compared with sales of 18,700 computers in 1967, and many machines contained more than half a million transistors. In 1968, the year that two Fairchild founders, Robert Noyce and Gordon Moore, left to form Intel, Fairchild commanded 80% of the market for integrated circuits for computers. Its victory was short-lived. Intel's introduction of the microprocessor in the 1970s secured its supremacy into the twenty-first century.

The U.S. computer industry enjoyed continued growth throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In 1970, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that nearly 1.17 million people worked in the computer industry, a

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figure that grew to 1.6 million people by 1980. Men dominated the computer work force, particularly in the highest-paid engineering positions. Although many of the first computers were female, women and members of minority groups were, and continued to be, underrepresented in engineering and technical positions, disproportionately occupying many lower-paid clerical and factory jobs. A 1986 report from the National Research Council summed up the situation: "High tech may produce integrated circuits, but it does not necessarily produce an integrated work force or eliminate the female/male earnings differential."

Software and Labor

Despite the eventual disparities in pay and promotion for men and women in the computer industry, early computing machines created new areas and opportunities for female labor. Occupations such as computer programmer lacked a gender precedent, and women could fill such positions without challenging gender stereotypes. Programming was often considered an extension of clerical work, which made such jobs logical for female hires. However, the gender composition of the programming work force saw a significant shift during the 1950s. Men conducted the majority of programming work in the United States from then on. The historians Nathan Ensmenger and William Aspray link this demographic shift to the rise of business computing and the increased demand for programmers in industry, which quickly depleted the available pool of mathematically trained female computers and computer programmers.

According to Ensmenger and Aspray, U.S. companies began expressing fears of a programmer shortage as early as 1954, and this anxiety continued throughout the 1960s. At the same time, programmers experienced a professional identity crisis. Industry trade publications debated the skills, education, and abilities required to become a professional programmer. This was before the advent of most university computer science departments, so college-educated students who learned how to program in the 1960s did so informally, usually in a scientific setting. In most cases, these students wrote programs with little regard for their eventual application or the deadline for their completion, considerations at the heart of industry practice. Early programmers often described software writing as more art than science. This frustrated managers, who hoped to standardize programmers' qualifications and abilities and to structure the process of writing software.

As the 1960s progressed, professional computer societies formed and helped to professionalize those involved in software development. Hierarchies of work emerged within the software industry. University-educated systems analysts became the elite of the profession, with the greatest opportunities for advancing to management. Programmers, or "coders," received fewer opportunities for promotion, and their job descriptions required that they possess a technical degree. Software workers, like other white-collar members of the computer industry, did not organize or join unions.

In the 1970s, management focused on controlling the behavior of programmers rather than increasing their output or efficiency. In his 1977 book *Programmers and Managers*, the sociologist Philip Kraft wrote that management practices such as structured programming, modular programming, and the use of prepackaged software programs allowed companies to cut their labor costs by standardizing the work. By dividing software production into a set of smaller steps connected by a routine set of relationships, managers could make software workers interchangeable. These practices transformed programming into a less-skilled form of work and reduced the level of intellectual control that programmers had over software development. Kraft's Marxist-inspired conclusions are not universally accepted, but his work stands as one of the most thorough studies of the programming profession during the 1970s.

Men continued to hold most of the better-paid jobs in the software industry, including those in engineering and systems analysis. Women gravitated toward less-skilled keypunch and data-entry positions. According to the 1980 U.S. Census, women held 92% of all data-entry jobs, but only 22% of all computer scientists and 31% of all computer programmers were female. The percentage of women enrolled in U.S. university computer science programs declined after the 1980s, a phenomenon that social scientists, educators, and computer professionals cannot fully explain. Moreover, corporate practices of sending programming work to other countries negatively affected the employment prospects for U.S. programmers and contributed to an overall decline in computer science enrollments in the first part of the twenty-first century. In 2005, the U.S. Labor Department predicted the employment of U.S. programmers would continue to grow at around the same average rate as other occupations through the year 2012, with most growth occurring in the area of software publishing. However, in areas such as computer manufacturing, the U.S. Labor Department expects a 23.4% drop in the number of U.S. programmers needed through 2012, the second-largest projected decrease in the sector,

behind only electrical and electronic equipment assemblers.

The High-Tech Boom

The late 1970s and early 1980s witnessed a radical change in the computer industry. The personal computer, or PC, brought computers into the house as well as the office and made computer technology accessible to lay users, not just hobbyists or experts. This increased the number of workers in the industry and expanded computer industry work to include sales, tech support, product development, and administrative resources for these new markets.

Advances in electronic manufacturing technology also changed the character of labor in the computer industry during the 1980s. Some sectors, such as circuit board assembly, became automated. Demand for U.S. assemblers dropped dramatically, and companies sent most remaining work involving production and assembly of their circuit boards to foreign countries. Subcontractors handled the remaining circuit board assembly work in the United States and paid minimum wage to semiskilled production workers, many of whom were women, minorities, and illegal immigrants who faced routine exposure to hazardous chemicals and fumes.

The commercialization of the Internet in the mid-1990s connected computers in homes and businesses throughout the world and transformed them into a vast global network. This opened new options for work and commerce and fueled an Internet startup, or dot-com, boom in the late 1990s. According to the social theorist Manuel Castells, the 1990s marked the beginning of an information age defined by flexible labor, the individualization of work, and weaker labor movements. His critics argue that this assertion overemphasizes the impact of technology on labor and ignores labor's role in shaping technological change. However, the rapidity of change required workers to master new skills continuously in an industry also marked by high turnover and a lack of job security. Workers throughout the industry did not organize, and unions reported difficulties building membership because workers regularly change jobs, work is often outsourced, and there is no history of organized labor.

In Silicon Valley, the center of the high-tech boom, the numbers of temporary or subcontracted workers increased dramatically, as did the number of intermediary organizations such as temporary help firms, employment agencies, recruiters, and labor contractors. In California's Santa Clara County, home of

Silicon Valley, temporary workers rose from 1.6% to 3.5% of the area's total work force from 1984 to 1998. The geographer Chris Benner cites more telling statistics in *Work in the New Economy*. He writes that while overall employment in Santa Clara County declined by 2% between 1990 and 1994, employment with temporary agencies grew by 30%. Most workers employed by these agencies lacked union representation, although some temporary workers did secure victories against U.S. computer companies. In 2000, long-term temporary workers, or "permatemps," at Microsoft won a \$97 million federal lawsuit because the company excluded them from receiving benefits. A number of guilds emerged in the Silicon Valley area during the 1990s, but most acted as training or professional organizations and exerted little power over company regulations or working conditions.

The high-tech boom boosted employment in the computer and information technology sector, and unemployment rates for Silicon Valley were well below the national average from 1995 to 2000. Average payroll figures for salaried and hourly Silicon Valley workers were 84% higher than the national averages in 2000, which drastically inflated living costs in the Bay Area. However, there is some speculation that reported earnings in the industry were artificially inflated because so many of the lowest-paying jobs no longer existed in the United States. Also, the high salaries were offset by the long hours demanded by an industry in which 80-hour weeks were common and celebrated.

During the boom years, the dominant industry culture changed and promoted an image of young entrepreneurialism, quick wealth, and informality. Dress codes relaxed. Many companies strove to create a fun and flexible atmosphere for their employees that also encouraged them to work longer hours. Internet startups and well-established computer companies offered lucrative salaries to attract and retain highly educated engineers and computer scientists. Newspapers regularly ran stories about young employees in the high-tech sector who accrued millions of dollars in stock options before turning 30. Such stories sustained the mythology of the high-tech boom, but accounts of white-collar employees who held service and lower-level administrative and technical positions spoke of long hours, oppressive management, limited family time, deskilled work, and salaries incommensurate with the cost of living in Silicon Valley and other high-tech areas. When combined with criticism of environmental practices of high-tech processing plants during the 1980s and 1990s, which led to such problems as leaks of hazardous substances from underground storage tanks, the dumping of toxic sewage, and the regular exposure of blue-collar plant workers

to dangerous chemicals, the picture was much less than ideal. Although some white-collar professionals made significant sums during the high-tech boom, the distribution of wealth was far from equal, with white and Japanese-American men enjoying the highest salaries. One 1996 study of 33 high-tech firms in Silicon Valley found that whites composed 81% of managers. Only 6% of managers working in these firms were black or Hispanic.

After 2000, the industry experienced a downturn when the “dot-com bubble” burst. Many startup companies went bankrupt, venture capital monies dried up, stocks in high-tech companies lost part (if not all) of their value, and workers paid in stock options saw their net worth plummet. The end of the high-tech boom and increased offshore manufacturing, programming, and engineering exacerbated employment instability for workers in the U.S. computer industry.

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CONFERENCE FOR PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL ACTION

The Conference for Progressive Political Action (CPPA) was intended to form a broad political alliance of socialists, unions, and progressives. It was officially founded at a meeting held in Chicago in February 1922, though the idea of building such an alliance had been originally broached by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party in September 1921. This initial conference was called by the Railroad Brotherhoods and was attended by other unions, farmers’ organizations, and Progressive political organizations. It worked to promote the election of prolabor candidates to public office. It laid the seeds for the Progressive political party that arose most notably around the candidacy of Robert M. La Follette for president in 1924.

The central problem facing the CPPA was whether to act as a third political party. Many of its constituents envisioned the CPPA as an organization that would support prolabor or progressive candidates from the major parties, while others, especially from the Workers Party of America (a precursor to the Communist Party), pushed the CPPA to form a third party. Between its founding and 1924, the Conference for Progressive Political Action provided the administrative machinery and energy to try and build a prolabor political alliance that would include the AFL unions, socialists, and upper-middle-class progressives, and in doing so it built the skeleton of a third party without actually forming one.

This debate and attempts by the Workers Party to enter the organization led to early internal conflicts. At the CPPA’s second convention in Cleveland in December 1922, a number of Workers Party members who attempted to attend the conference were denied the right to do so on the grounds that their organization stood in opposition to the goals and ideas of the CPPA. Soon after, the Workers Party focused its energies on the Farmer Labor Party, and even organized the 1924 convention of the Farmer Labor Party to coincide with that of the CPPA. The Workers Party’s attacks on the CPPA as an organization that claimed sympathy for a labor party but did not actually want to build one did not prevent the CPPA from being attacked on the right by politicians who denounced it as a Communist front.

In September 1924, the CPPA met in Cleveland with the intention of endorsing either the Republican or the Democratic nominee for president. However, because the Democratic Party convention was so contentious, no Democratic candidate had yet been nominated. When the Wisconsin Republican Senator Robert M. La Follette offered to run, the Conference

for Progressive Political Action endorsed him. La Follette also secured the endorsement of the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party. Thus, the Conference represented the beginnings of an electoral alliance between progressives, labor, and socialists under the banner of the Progressive Party, the same banner used by Theodore Roosevelt in 1912.

La Follette attacked monopoly as the biggest problem facing the country. This was meant to appeal to farmers and to urban workers. In this as in all other respects, however, La Follette's platform was essentially a restatement of ideas dating back to the Populist era. La Follette had been a liberal senator and was quite popular in Wisconsin, but in his attempt to build an alliance that would include farmers, urban workers, and the liberal sections of the middle class, La Follette could not clearly express the demands of any group.

He received about one sixth of the votes for president, or 4,826,471 out of about 26 million. The Republicans won the election in a landslide. La Follette won Wisconsin and ran second to the Republicans throughout the Midwest, but fared poorly in the South and East. This movement faced numerous difficulties. First, in 1924, the United States was experiencing rapid economic growth and relative prosperity, despite the persistence of poverty for many. Second, the Conference for Progressive Political Action had very limited resources compared with the major parties. It lacked local organizations in most municipalities, did not run local candidates, and had very limited funds. Finally, the Progressive Party was attacked by conservatives as a radical front to telling effect, while its attempt to express the interests of such a wide range of groups prevented it from consolidating a base among either workers or farmers.

In the aftermath of the 1924 election, the CPPA held a Second National Convention in Chicago in February 1925. This convention was split between labor unionists, who wanted a lobbying group that would not form an independent party or run candidates; socialists, who wanted an independent labor party in the fashion of the British Labour Party that would allow organizations like the Socialist Party to affiliate; and liberals, who wanted a third party with traditional individual memberships modeled after the Democrats and Republicans. Immediately after this convention, the Socialist Party held a convention of its own and voted unanimously to withdraw from the CPPA, and the organization was disbanded. In June 1925, Robert La Follette passed away.

The CPPA was at the same time a foretaste of the coalition that was eventually built during the New Deal and the last gasp of the Progressive Era politics that had produced both the Socialist Party and the

Progressive Party of Theodore Roosevelt. The CPPA was formed in reaction to the conservative attacks on unions and progressive ideas that took place in the aftermath of World War I. This coalition of those under attack could not produce a strong enough consensus to paper over their deep differences. Nonetheless, the CPPA did show the possibility of uniting liberals, labor, and socialists around a program of reform.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Communist Party; Socialist Party of America

CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was born first as the Committee for Industrial Organization in the wake of the 1935 American Federation of Labor (AFL) convention, where proponents of industrial unionism were frustrated in their efforts to secure AFL support for a proposal to charter industrial unions in the mass-production industries. Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), passed on June 16, 1933, established workers' right to bargain collectively with their employers through representatives of their own choosing; workers had responded by organizing themselves locally and petitioning for admission to the craft union federation or its constituent unions. In the following year, the AFL signed nearly one million new members. But the AFL had then cherry-picked skilled workers from the industrial units, incorporating them into existing AFL craft unions; for the remaining multitudes of unskilled and semiskilled workers whose occupations fell outside traditional craft jurisdictions, the federation created "federal unions" under direct AFL control. This procedure fragmented the unity of newly organized workers, creating categories of discriminatory "Class B" membership for less-skilled workers and undermining strength in the industrial workplace. Tradition-bound AFL leaders' customary caution also clashed with the militancy of freshly organized workers, and disaffection soon prevailed. By late 1934, continued employer intransigence and the weak response of the AFL had exposed the flaws of

Section 7(a) and the inadequacies of AFL leadership. Discontent erupted in a wave of strikes (1,856 in 1934 alone), which were often violently suppressed. San Francisco longshoremen, Minneapolis truckers, and even the long-oppressed “lintheads” of the southern textile industry conducted legendary strikes, with ambiguous results.

The NIRA also revitalized certain key AFL unions. John L. Lewis’s United Mine Workers (UMW) had shrunk through the 1920s from nearly one-half million at the end of World War I to a mere 80,000 in 1932; the NIRA sparked a fire of organizing through the Appalachian coalfields, reigniting the miners’ fabled militancy. In the Northeast, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (ACWA) and the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) had been devastated by the Depression; now these traditionally militant, socialist-led unions launched successful fresh campaigns. By 1934, all three unions were alive with activity. Significantly, all three were also structurally industrial unions, and they were uniquely positioned within the AFL to respond favorably to the growing demands for industrial organization sweeping through the nation’s workplaces. Their leaders—Lewis of the Mineworkers, Sidney Hillman of the ACWA, and David Dubinsky of the ILGWU—argued that the AFL needed to adapt structurally to mass-production industries that cut across traditional craft lines. Their efforts blocked, Lewis, Hillman, and Dubinsky launched the Committee for Industrial Organizations on November 9, 1935. Ostensibly within the AFL, the Committee in fact functioned virtually autonomously from the beginning.

The fortuitous convergence of pressure from the ranks and receptive, well-placed leaders within the AFL set the stage for the most remarkable wave of organizing in U.S. labor history. The final component was the National Labor Relations Act, authored by Senator Robert Wagner (D-NY), which passed on July 5, 1935, and was reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in 1937. The Wagner Act replaced Section 7(a) of the NIRA, which had been ruled unconstitutional in May 1935. The new law expanded worker protections, outlawed employer anti-union practices, and created a three-member National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) with meaningful enforcement power. Most critically, the Act established mechanisms for conducting representation elections and required employers to bargain with winning unions. This new intrusion by the state was regarded with concern by some labor leaders, and Wagner’s impact has since been widely debated by historians; but there is little doubt that the Act became a critical tool for CIO organizing.

In November 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was re-elected with strong working-class support. Roosevelt had long coattails, sweeping pro-New Deal, prolabor Democrats into office at the local and state level. Suddenly, the political climate warmed toward the CIO’s agenda. With funding from the UMW, a cadre of zealous organizers (many of whom were communists), and the implicit blessing of the Roosevelt administration, the CIO took aim at the heart of the nonunion core industries, launching an extra-ordinary series of dramatic campaigns from 1936 through 1937. The Committee initiated some innovative techniques like the formation of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) in June 1936. SWOC bypassed the AFL’s moribund Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers (AA) to take on the powerful steel industry. Lewis appointed his associate, Philip Murray, to head the SWOC; Murray gladly enlisted the services of numerous left-wing organizers, who fanned out through steel communities from Pennsylvania to Illinois, urging steelworkers to take over AA locals and company unions and affiliate them with SWOC.

But it was the auto workers’ victories in the winter and spring of 1936–1937 that truly energized the movement. The critical event was the six-week sit-down strike by GM workers in Flint, Michigan. GM was the largest and most profitable U.S. corporation, the very epitome of twentieth-century corporate power. From December 29, 1936, until February 11, 1937, GM workers occupied Fisher Body One and several other key GM plants. The sit-down was widely supported and skillfully publicized. Community support was strong and creative. Women workers and strikers’ wives organized the famous Emergency Brigade that turned the tide in confrontations with police. The auto workers’ stunning victory came to symbolize CIO solidarity and militancy, galvanizing not only auto workers but all labor. Though the Supreme Court outlawed the tactic in *NLRB v. Fansteel Metallurgical Corp* (1939), for the moment the sit-down dramatically shifted the balance of power in labor conflicts, and the tactic proliferated through diverse industries. Following the GM success, the formidable U.S. Steel came to terms with Lewis and SWOC, without a strike, in March 1937. United Auto Workers (UAW) membership rose above 200,000 by the end of 1937; SWOC membership soared as well.

The fall of two great citadels of the open shop fired the imaginations of workers in and far beyond the industrial core, and throughout 1937–1938 they organized in droves. Often the organization of a large local plant would inspire a citywide movement organizing everyone from dry cleaners to newspaper reporters, and the struggles often produced an energetic

CIO culture involving men, women, and children in union-linked activities from strike support to baseball leagues to union glee clubs.

The CIO scurried to meet the clamor for organization. In some industries, like meatpacking, the CIO took the initiative, forming the Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee (PWOC) on the SWOC model. In others, workers organized themselves and then petitioned for CIO charters. In the northeastern electrical industry, for example, workers in individual plants in the great chains organized themselves, often led by communists, linked together to form the United Electrical Workers (UE), and then affiliated with the CIO. Rubber, chemical, food and tobacco workers, pulp and paper workers, California cannery workers, white-collar workers, public employees, and many, many more elected to organize. Nearly three million joined in 1937 alone.

CIO success in the early years put internal organization at the top of the agenda. The ad hoc structure of 1935 could not accommodate the national scope, industrial diversity, and sheer numbers of recruits that constituted the CIO by 1937. At the suggestion of John Brophy, who coordinated daily operations, leaders designed a more formal structure in the spring of 1937, creating regional, state, and local coordinating bodies modeled after the AFL's central labor councils and state federations. The CIO began to charter new industrial unions, and some revitalized AFL affiliates chose to join forces with the CIO. Finally, the Committee created Local Industrial Unions (LIUs) to accommodate workers in marginal occupations not affiliated with national unions.

Like the AFL's Federal unions, the LIUs were serviced directly by the CIO, but unlike the AFL, the CIO was determined to provide real, effective aid to the LIUs. Consequently, as the LIUs proliferated, so did the CIO's bureaucratic apparatus, creating multiple layers of staffers between the leadership in Washington and the rank and file in the shops. The new procedures mandated by the Wagner Act also had an impact on the growth of bureaucracy, putting a premium on the talents of lawyers and skilled negotiators and tending to suppress grassroots militancy.

The CIO's early successes were very impressive, but the Committee faced serious obstacles as well. GM capitulated, but Ford did not; U.S. Steel came to terms, but the large firms collectively known as "Little Steel" remained staunchly and violently anti-union. On Memorial Day, 1937, police killed 10 protesters outside Republic Steel in Chicago, and violence dampened union fervor elsewhere as well. Other problems arose from within labor's ranks. Factionalism disrupted several affiliates, including the important UAW. The CIO's success had also stung the AFL

into renewed activity, and sparks flew as the two groups competed for influence in numerous sites. By articulating a nearly parallel organizational apparatus, the CIO had signaled growing independence from the AFL. Dubinsky, unhappy about the increasing influence of communists and the CIO-AFL rift, led the ILGWU back into the AFL. Finally, the "Roosevelt Recession" of 1938-1939 severely undermined the fragile recovery of the mid-1930s, and the CIO's numerical strength began to evaporate as unemployment spiked again.

It was thus with some ambivalence that, in response to near-warfare with the AFL, the CIO decided to make official what had long been apparent: the Committee constituted a rival federation. On November 14, 1938, the CIO convened a constitutional convention in Pittsburgh, declared its independence, and changed its name to the Congress of Industrial Organizations, still "CIO." John L. Lewis became the federation's first president, serving until his growing isolationism led to a shocking rupture first with Roosevelt and then with the CIO in 1940. Hillman of the ACWA and Murray of SWOC served as vice presidents; Murray took over as president when Lewis left. The secretary was James B. Carey of the UE, the only representative of the new industrial union affiliates. Membership was said to be over 4 million; in truth, it was probably half of that. Financially, the CIO still depended on the UMW and ACWA; dues collection among the new affiliates was spotty at best, especially given widespread "Roosevelt Recession" unemployment.

War and Postwar

War of a different sort saved the CIO. The outbreak of World War II in 1939 led to frenzied rearmament in the United States, and for the first time in a decade, workers were in great demand. Conditions were soon ripe for the CIO to organize remaining holdouts in the core industries. By 1941, SWOC had broken Little Steel; Ford had fallen to the UAW; and Westinghouse had joined GE on the UE roster. Suddenly, CIO core unions were positioned to make real gains. But when the United States entered the war in December 1941, the CIO and AFL were pressured to endorse a "No Strike Pledge" for the duration, an act that effectively stripped labor of its most potent weapon.

To compensate, Roosevelt created the National War Labor Board (NWLB) in January 1942 as a venue to adjust wartime grievances, and the NWLB sweetened the pill by crafting a union security

provision called “maintenance of membership” that required workers in union shops to maintain their union membership for the life of the contract. The provision, coupled with the burgeoning war growth of U.S. industry, led to a dramatic expansion of CIO membership. The UAW alone grew from 165,000 to over one million; SWOC, now the United Steelworkers (USW), and UE mushroomed too. By 1945, the CIO claimed over 4.5 million members.

But WWII changed the CIO’s character. Commitment to the No Strike Pledge and the snail-paced deliberations of the NLRB enmeshed CIO leaders in an alliance with government that set them frequently at odds with frustrated rank and filers, many of them new to industry and to unions. CIO bureaucracy grew as what the historian David Brody called the “workplace rule of law” displaced direct action, and the creation of the CIO Political Action Committee (CIO-PAC) in 1943 cemented an alliance with the Democratic Party that effectively foreclosed the option of independent political action via a labor party, a notion popular with the CIO’s left wing.

Still, the CIO registered significant achievements during the war. With wages capped for the duration by the NLRB’s “Little Steel Formula,” negotiators instead made headway elsewhere. The 40-hour week with time and a half for overtime became prevalent. Wide wage differentials between skilled and unskilled workers and regional differentials narrowed. Unions won vacation provisions and other “fringe” benefits.

But perhaps the most significant CIO wartime achievement lay in the realm of race relations and, to a lesser extent, issues of gender. The CIO’s rhetoric of democratic inclusion was put to the test as women stepped into men’s jobs and African-American workers broke through employment barriers, aided by the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC). Racial tensions escalated in war industries and communities, sparking “hate strikes” and race riots. Historians have hotly debated the CIO’s commitment to racial equality, but the wartime crisis produced a strong CIO response. In Detroit, site of much racial violence, UAW president R. J. Thomas moved decisively to quash the 1943 hate strikes, upholding the firing of strikers who violated the union’s nondiscrimination clause, and the UAW took critical action to protect black citizens during the Detroit housing riots. In key CIO strongholds like auto, steel, and meatpacking, the wartime defense of minority rights along with the creation of a handful of daringly biracial unions in the Deep South laid the foundation for labor’s later alliance with the Civil Rights movement.

Women workers benefited from protections inherent in the new workplace “rule of law,” generally making wartime job gains, but these proved largely

ephemeral, as the gendered division of labor was swiftly reconstituted after the war. The exception was the left-wing UE, where women made significant progress. UE women broke into leadership ranks at all levels, and “women’s issues” were incorporated into the union’s agenda; both trends continued into peacetime.

The CIO emerged from World War II numerically strengthened, solidly entrenched in basic industry, but having lost, perhaps inevitably, its prewar élan. The center of gravity had moved from the rank and file in working-class communities to the bureaucracy in Washington, DC. The widened gulf between leaders and ranks became institutionalized. Even the extraordinary 1946 strikes, while venting the rank and file’s long-repressed frustrations, were remarkably efficient and well-organized, produced by a disciplined machine rather than a vibrant movement.

Nevertheless, labor’s new strength produced a powerful backlash. The 1946 midterm elections returned Republican majorities to both houses of Congress, and within months a plethora of antilabor bills had been distilled to the Taft-Hartley Act, passed over Truman’s veto in 1947. Taft-Hartley reversed the polarity of Wagner, enhancing management rights while scaling back those of labor. Most ominously, Title I, Section 9-h required union officials to sign affidavits certifying that they were not members of the Communist Party; noncompliance barred unions from access to NLRB machinery.

With the Cold War heating up, Section 9-h shattered the remnants of the uneasy wartime truce within the CIO’s left-center coalition. Anticommunist groups within affiliates gained greater legitimacy. Walter Reuther rode the anticommunism issue to the UAW presidency, and then used the affidavit to purge his communist opponents in the UAW and to launch raids against locals in noncomplying unions. Others followed suit, and an orgy of raiding commenced, absorbing energies that might have gone into new organizing. The UE, largest of the left-led unions, endured over 500 raids between 1947 and 1949, when its leaders finally capitulated and signed. Raids unraveled much of the cutting-edge work of CIO affiliates; in Alabama, for example, an overtly racist USW raid destroyed a key local of the biracial Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers in 1949.

The 1948 election provided the last straw. Hoping to reverse Taft-Hartley, CIO-PAC endorsed Truman and the Democrats; the communists supported Henry Wallace’s Progressive Party. In the aftermath, the CIO elected to purge all communists from the federation’s ranks. At the 1949 convention, the CIO voted to expel 11 unions, including the UE, with a combined membership of nearly one million.

The CIO emerged purified but with severely diminished momentum. The unfavorable political climate plus the expulsion of dedicated leftist organizers combined to doom “Operation Dixie,” the CIO’s highly touted campaign to organize the South. It was the last of the great organizing drives, and the CIO affiliates instead came to focus primarily on collective bargaining in already-organized sectors. Gains there were impressive in the 1950s: wages rose on average by 55%, and the strongest affiliates put together impressive “packages” of benefits, including pensions, vacations, health insurance, and even variants of a guaranteed wage. CIO-PAC developed into a powerful engine of research, publicity, and lobbying as activists worked to defend and extend the gains of the New Deal, even beyond CIO ranks. The goal seemed to be social democracy, through the back door.

The year 1952 provoked a new crisis when Republicans again took the presidency and both houses of Congress. That same year, Presidents Murray of the CIO and William Green of the AFL died, and leadership of the rivals devolved to a new generation lacking the visceral antipathy of their elders. The differences between the CIO and the AFL had largely evaporated: both were large, bureaucratic, and somewhat sclerotic organizations. Though the CIO still maintained a progressive veneer, the gulf had decidedly narrowed, and in 1953, the erstwhile rivals signed a no-raiding pact as a prelude to reunion. Merger negotiations provided that CIO affiliates would have a home in the new Industrial Union Department (IUD), to be headed by Walter Reuther; George Meany of the AFL would be president of the new federation. On December 5, 1955, the AFL-CIO held its first joint convention, and “Big Labor” was born.

Conclusion

The CIO’s 1955 reunion with the AFL has generally been viewed as evidence of its decline, and indeed, the industrial federation seemed to have reached an organizational impasse. The energizing fervor of the early days was long gone. By 1955, consolidation, not expansion, was the order of the day; the brash, creative organizers had given way to legions of lawyers and lobbyists, guiding labor’s program through thickets of bureaucratic regulation. Still, the CIO achievement was monumental. In its late-1930s heyday, the CIO provided an enduring model of principled, inclusive, militant organization powered by the energies of ordinary working men and women. As an institution in Jim Crow America, the CIO was unique in offering a frequently flawed but sometimes

inspiring vision of interracial cooperation and justice. Finally, the CIO had overcome the historically fierce resistance of powerful corporations and brought dignity, the rule of law, and dramatically improved conditions to millions of working people.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Anticomunism; Fair Employment Practice Committee; Lewis, John L.; National Industrial Recovery Act; National War Labor Board (WWII); Reuther, Walter; Taft-Hartley Act; World War II

CONSTRUCTION TRADES

The construction trades make up one of the United States’ oldest and largest industries. Throughout the nation’s history, construction workers have helped transform the national landscape by erecting private,

commercial, and government buildings and by providing the labor needed to construct bridges, dams, canals, roads, and highways. In addition, since the late nineteenth century, the construction trades' powerful labor unions have played an important role in the development of the American labor movement. Over the course of more than two centuries, the world of construction workers has continually remade itself in response to economic, technological, social, cultural, and political changes.

The Construction Trades and Work Culture

In the twenty-first century, the size and significance of the construction industry are matched by its complexity. Workers of all skill levels from more than 20 different trades make up the work force in the industry's three major segments: general building contractors (which includes residential, commercial, and industrial buildings); heavy construction contractors (which includes sewer systems, roads, highways, bridges, tunnels, and dams); and specialty trades contractors (which includes carpentry, masonry, plumbing, electrical work, painting, and heating and air-conditioning work). Contractors in each segment employ helpers, laborers, and apprentices, who perform tasks that require minimal training in order to assist skilled craftworkers. The latter category is vast in and of itself and consists of three general classifications: structural (including carpenters, operating engineers who operate construction machinery, bricklayers, cement masons, stonemasons, roofers, and iron workers who erect structural steel); finishing workers (including lathers, plasterers, marble setters, terrazzo workers, carpenters, ceiling installers, drywall workers, painters, glaziers, roofers, floor covering installers, and insulation workers); and mechanical workers (including plumbers, sprinkler fitters, pipefitters, electricians, sheet-metal workers, and heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration technicians). Entrance to these skilled trades requires years of vocational education and apprenticeship training, which typically includes both on-the-job and classroom instruction. Skilled building trades workers often go on to become specialty contractors themselves.

The decentralized, intermittent, and physically arduous nature of construction work has distinguished it from other major American industries and has been instrumental in shaping its history. A building project typically involves architects, developers, financiers, contractors, and construction trades workers—each of whom perform a vital function yet to an extent operate independently of one another. Much of the

skilled work performed on construction sites is loosely supervised, providing skilled workers with a sense of workplace autonomy. With this independence comes uncertainty. The itinerant nature of the construction industry also necessitates a casual labor market, in which workers are employed on a per-job basis lasting anywhere from a few months to several years. The boom-and-bust pattern of the building industry adds another layer of uncertainty to the construction worker's livelihood. Moreover, because much of the labor is performed outdoors, construction work is seasonal, and job opportunities diminish with the shorter days and poor weather conditions of winter. Thus, construction workers have to consistently confront the prospect of unemployment and rarely expect to have steady work for the entire year. Finally, work in the construction trades is physically demanding and can be hazardous. Building trades workers operate heavy and dangerous machinery, use heavy materials, brave perilous heights, and expose themselves to miserable weather conditions. Consequently, the construction industry ranks among the national leaders in work-related injuries and illness. This physical aspect of the work places heightened importance on workplace camaraderie and cooperation.

Until recently, these aspects of the construction trades have combined to create a distinct work culture that blended craft pride, masculinity, and whiteness. Because of the decentralized nature of the industry, skilled construction workers have historically identified more closely with their craft and/or union than with any particular contractor or employer. Building trades workers express their craft pride in the tools they carry, the jargon they use, the hard hats that protect their heads, and—until the twentieth century—in the clothes they wear (workers in different trades dressed in certain colors of coveralls). This craft pride has shaped a dual identity among construction workers—one that is both individual- and collective-oriented. Since the eighteenth century, skilled workers in the construction trades have placed a high value on individualism, which has in part been steeped in the prospect of becoming self-employed or, in some cases, an employer. On the other hand, workers in the construction trades have a long history of organization. Several forces have driven the collective impulse in the construction trades, but the most important have been to strengthen their bargaining power vis-à-vis employers, to provide support in the form of social and cultural services, and to exert control over the labor market through apprenticeship programs. More generally, craft organizations help to reinforce the collective identity of construction trades workers. Up until the first decades of the twentieth

century, craft associations were also organized along ethnic and racial lines, but over time this dissolved into a broader identity with their trade. According to Mark Erlich, a labor historian and a carpenter, the co-existence of an individual and collective consciousness has produced a form a craft unionism peculiar to the building trades.

The construction trades have also fostered a masculine identity, which has found expression in the common inclusion of the word “Brotherhood” in construction union nomenclature, fraternal rituals common to building craft organizations, the sexualized language workers use at the job site, and the risky behavior they exhibit. Significantly, masculinity in the building trades has been predicated upon, and has perpetuated, the virtual exclusion of women from the industry. As the historian Joshua Freeman has pointed out, masculine representations of construction workers—whether in the form of the respectable manliness of the late nineteenth-century artisan, the strong heroic builder of the 1920s and 1930s, or the macho, crude, and rowdy hardhat caricatured in post-World War II popular culture—have shaped the public’s image of the industry.

In addition to its male composition, the skilled-construction work force historically has been disproportionately white. The construction trades have always been notorious for nepotism, as craftsmen have preferred to pass along notices of job openings and apprenticeship opportunities by word of mouth to family, friends, and neighbors. In the North in particular, but also increasingly in the South after the 1890s, the skilled trades have traditionally been the domain of whites. And as craftsmen replenished their ranks through personal networks, they institutionalized racial exclusion by closing off opportunities to nonwhites. Thus, for much of its history, workers in the construction industry have existed in a gendered and racialized social world that linked the job site with the community. Only in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, as a result of union struggles and the social movements and reforms of the 1960s and 1970s, did the racial and gender barriers in the construction trades begin to collapse.

The Construction Trades from the Colonial Era to the Gilded Age

The construction trades experienced significant changes between the colonial era and the Gilded Age. At the beginning of this period, the construction industry consisted of a fraction of the number of trades that it does today. Most building tradesmen

during this period could generally be classified as carpenters, lathers, plasterers, painters, glaziers, bricklayers, masons, or stonecutters. Over time, however, technological developments transformed the industry by introducing new building materials, tools, and methods. In some cases, established trades were able to accommodate changes without much trouble. For example, during the twentieth century, lathers gradually made the transition from using wooden strips to using wire and metal mesh in constructing the framework for plaster walls and ceilings. On the other hand, new materials and building methods could pose a threat to established crafts. For example, throughout the colonial and early national periods, carpenters had performed a number of tasks on building projects, from constructing wooden frames to crafting doors, windows, stairs, trim, and mantels. This work was performed entirely on the job site and by hand. By the 1840s, however, this work was beginning to be done in factories and mills—where woodworking machinery steadily surpassed handwork in output and efficiency. The growth of a woodworking industry independent of the construction site would eventually become a major concern for the carpenters’ union in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Carpenters also had to confront the advent of new materials that replaced wood in building structures. The use of metal instead of wood for trim, sash, and doors in the early twentieth century resulted in intense jurisdictional battles between the carpenters’ union and the sheet-metal workers’ union (see below) and also compelled carpenters to increasingly learn how to work with materials other than wood.

The relationship between construction tradesmen and contractors also underwent important changes between the colonial period and the Gilded Age. Building tradesmen in colonial America borrowed from the European guild system in structuring their industry. Young apprentices were bound to master craftsmen until they learned the trade and reached adulthood. Upon completion of his term, an apprentice became a journeyman and could hire himself out freely, although many journeymen also found it advantageous to continue working for the same master. Ideally, a journeyman sought to become a master craftsman himself by obtaining enough capital to establish his own enterprise. In the early republic, the prospects for social mobility in the construction trades appeared favorable for the journeyman on the make. The high demand for houses and buildings during this period resulted in high wages and steady work and created opportunities for building tradesmen to profit from speculative building. Craft connections were vital in taking the step from journeyman

to an independent master craftsman. Master builders were often willing to assist apprentices and familiar journeymen in establishing their own shop. In addition, the more ambitious master craftsmen who engaged in speculative building could provide journeymen with valuable experience by subcontracting out large building projects.

Up until the third decade of the nineteenth century, the relationship among apprentices, journeymen, and master craftsmen maintained a sense of mutual interest and respect. Workers from all three ranks often worked side by side on building projects and were linked by the prospect, if not expectation, that an apprentice would eventually become a master craftsman. Moreover, all members of the construction trades were equally vulnerable to the boom-and-bust cycle of the industry. By the 1820s, however, a gulf had begun to emerge between master craftsmen—who assumed the mantle of contractors/employers—and journeymen/apprentices—who were increasingly coming to resemble employees. This development was manifest in a wave of strikes launched by construction journeymen in the 1820s and 1830s demanding a 10-hour workday. Boston carpenters went on strike in 1825 and 1832, and between 1833 and 1837 building tradesmen in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia went on strike 34 times. Although these protests were ultimately unsuccessful and were not fierce enough to fully disrupt the bond between apprentices, journeymen, and master craftsmen, they did signal a transformation in construction trades labor relations. Building tradesmen continued to organize throughout the antebellum period and after the Civil War. These protests were not confined to eastern urban centers. For example, carpenters in San Francisco went on strike for higher wages in 1849, 1853, and 1860. And in 1867, they formed The House Carpenters' Eight-Hour League, No.1 to fight for an eight-hour day.

The Rise and Fall of the Closed Shop: The Gilded Age to the Great Depression

By the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the construction industry was in the throes of profound changes. The birth of the modern skyscraper in 1885 punctuated the arrival of iron, steel, and reinforced concrete in the construction process. In addition, the emergence of indoor plumbing, electricity, elevators, and steam heating systems introduced newer trades to the industry. Amid these developments, tradesmen continued to organize on the local level and fight for better working conditions and higher wages. Yet gains won by local craft organizations could quickly

be offset by the influx of itinerant tradesmen from other parts of the country. Thus, building tradesmen sought to unite their crafts on the national level. This occurred first in the more established trades but quickly spread throughout the industry: stonemasons (1853); bricklayers (1867); carpenters (1881); plasterers (1882); painters (1887); sheet metal workers (1888); plumbers and steamfitters (1889); electrical workers (1891); operating engineers (1896); iron workers (1896); lathers (1899); elevator constructors (1901); and laborers and hod carriers (1903).

The building trades unions epitomized the organizing model that characterized the American Federation of Labor (AFL) during this period. Union members owed their allegiance to their particular craft first and foremost, and as a result they have been criticized throughout their history for insulating themselves from the broader working-class movement. In the 1930s, for example, building trades leaders opposed organizing industrial workers and fought off the Congress of Industrial Organizations' attempt to organize construction workers on an industrywide basis. Nevertheless, as craft unions became more organized, they formalized apprenticeship programs, regulated itinerant craftsmen, and employed business agents to oversee job sites. Also known as walking delegates, business agents policed the industry for their respective union and ensured that contractors hired dues-paying union tradesmen.

Construction tradesmen in this period also sought unity among workers in all of the building trades. The logic was simple: if striking workers in one trade could depend on workers in the other building trades to strike in sympathy, then the bargaining power of all construction unions would multiply. Collectively, building trades unions hoped that they could achieve a closed shop on each building job. This strategy promised to be more effective as building projects became more costly and contractors faced a heightened need to avoid delays or a loss of skilled craftsmen that an industrywide strike would entail. New York construction tradesmen launched the first such organization in 1884 when they formed the Board of Walking Delegates. Building trades councils were subsequently established in other cities and had an immediate impact. For example, in the four years after Chicago's building trades council was formed in 1890, the number of successful strikes rose to 85% from less than 50% between 1886 and 1890. San Francisco's building trades council, founded in 1896, extended its newfound strength and influence into the political sphere; the city's building tradesmen took control of the Union Labor Party in 1906, and Building Trades Council President Patrick H. McCarthy served one term as mayor of San Francisco

(1910–1912). Most important, building trades councils were instrumental in instituting the closed shop on construction jobs in cities across the country.

While construction tradesmen were forging tighter bonds of solidarity, other forces created divisions among the different trades that still persist to this day. Most important, the introduction of new building materials and methods created jurisdictional conflicts that local building trades councils were ill-equipped to adjudicate. Technological developments affected old and new trades alike. Carpenters battled sheet-metal workers over the right to install metal doors, window frames, and trim, which had once been made of wood and well within the carpenters' domain. With the introduction of reinforced concrete, bricklayers, plasterers, and cement finishers argued over who had jurisdiction to lay the concrete, while ironworkers, lathers, sheet-metal workers, and laborers disagreed over who should install metal reinforcing rods. Elevator constructors and electricians each claimed jurisdiction over the right to wire electric elevators, while hoisting engineers challenged elevator constructors' right to handle elevators after they were built. Finally, it was not always clear how workers using new tools and materials should be organized. For example, the plumbers' union claimed the right to organize steamfitters even though workers in that trade had organized their own union. Amid these competing jurisdictional claims, it was difficult for architects and contractors to determine which union should be doing which jobs on building sites. Consequently, at the turn of the century, building trades unions in cities such as New York and Chicago crippled local building projects through strikes resulting from inter-union conflict. The threat that jurisdictional disputes posed to both business ventures and solidarity among the construction trades aroused anti-union sentiment and inspired union leaders to craft a solution to the problem.

The first attempt to address these issues on a national level came in 1897, when local and national building trades leaders met in St. Louis and established the National Building Trades Council (NBTC). The organization concentrated on the local level and placed strength with the building trades councils, which alienated strong international unions such as the Bricklayers and Carpenters. In addition, the AFL disapproved of the NBTC because it placed too much power at the local level and was not affiliated with the AFL. Construction trades unions tried again in 1903 with the formation of the Structural Building Trades Alliance (SBTA). The SBTA also lived a contentious existence; it allowed rivalries to fester, proved incapable of enforcing decisions, and kept cool relations with the AFL. Finally, the SBTA was scrapped and

replaced by the Building Trades Department (BTD) in 1908. The BTD was chartered by the AFL and, unlike its predecessors, would pass the test of time (it still exists as the Building and Construction Trades Department). Despite its longevity, the BTD has also struggled with recalcitrant member organizations that have refused to concede jurisdiction when the Department has ruled against them. For example, the carpenters' union has either been expelled from or left the Department on several occasions (for example, in 2001) when it disagreed with the organization's actions. Nevertheless, after a rocky start, the Department has proved to be a valuable lobbying organization for the building trades and has managed to broker a modicum of peace among the industry's numerous unions.

In addition to settling jurisdictional disputes, building trades unions in the early twentieth century also vigilantly guarded against any threats to the closed shop. The formation of building trades councils in the late nineteenth century had been matched by similar associations among local contractors. In most cases, a significant number of contractors had risen from the ranks of tradesmen and had once belonged to unions themselves. As long as the closed shop did not disrupt building projects and interfere with profits, contractors were willing to tolerate a rival labor organization. But when contractor associations felt that building trades councils were abusing their power, as they did in Chicago in 1900, they challenged union power. For the most part, aside from cities like Los Angeles, where the closed shop did not take root, contractor associations and building trades councils were able to co-exist through the First World War.

The war itself brought another challenge to the closed shop in the construction industry. Building tradesmen were not of one mind as far as their opinions on the war itself, but as a whole they gave their labor to support their nation's war effort. And although the Baker-Gompers Agreement did not guarantee the closed shop, building tradesmen warily accepted its provisions for the eight-hour day, equal pay for equal work, and labor's right to organize and bargain collectively with workers if they agreed not to strike; some building tradesmen, most notably Carpenters' president Bill Hutcheson, objected to any agreement that did not ensure the closed shop. Ultimately, the war was a mixed bag for building tradesmen. In some cities, it slowed civilian construction projects and created a building slump. On the other hand, building trades workers obtained work on war-related projects—such as the construction of training camps and airfields. More important, construction unions were able to defend their prewar gains, and over the course

of the war, membership in building trades unions steadily increased. By 1920, 17.6% of the nation's unionized work force belonged to the construction trades.

The power that building trades unions had enjoyed in the first two decades of the twentieth century finally met its match in the 1920s. Across the country, the closed shop in construction fell victim to a concerted open-shop drive backed by the Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, National Erectors Association, large industrial employers, and local citizen committees. In advancing the American Plan, open-shop forces aroused public support for their cause by blaming high building costs on corrupt unions and the contractors who submitted to union demands. Construction unions, always hindered by their internal divisions, were unable to mount a successful defense. And even in union strongholds like San Francisco and Chicago, the open shop prevailed.

Another Rise and Fall of Union Strength in Construction: The Great Depression to the Present

The open-shop battles of the 1920s quickly became an afterthought during the 1930s. In the first years of the Great Depression, private construction declined precipitously, and by 1933, seven out of 10 building tradesmen were unemployed. As did workers in other sectors in the economy, construction tradesmen looked to the state to create jobs for skilled craftsmen. As a result, the 1930s marked a turning point in the relationship between the construction trades and the federal government. Much to the disapproval of the general public and workers excluded from organized labor, building trades unions fought to ensure that union tradesmen would be hired on Public Works Administration and Works Progress Administration construction projects and insisted that union conditions would be enforced on those jobs. The BTU stepped up its lobbying efforts in order to persuade the Roosevelt administration to pass legislation that would be favorable to the building trades. The most important piece of legislation, the Davis-Bacon Act, was actually passed toward the end of Herbert Hoover's presidency. Also known as the Prevailing Wage Act, the law protected workers from outside competition by requiring contractors to pay tradesmen no less than local prevailing wage standards.

The construction trades continued to benefit from government spending during World War II and the postwar decades. Throughout the war, the federal

government invested heavily in the construction of wartime housing and war industry facilities, and unionized building tradesmen were on hand to perform the work. In the postwar period, construction tradesmen continued to profit from Cold War national defense spending, from the government's investment in national infrastructure in the 1950s, and from the 1960s building boom. With most of this work going to union labor, building trades unions' ability to control the labor market ensured that their members would be well paid.

Despite their dependence on federal spending in the postwar period, building trades unions also worried about increased state intervention in industry affairs. The Taft-Hartley Act's prohibition of the closed shop, secondary boycotts, and jurisdictional strikes was a major blow to union strength in the construction industry. The building trades were also hurt in 1957 by the Senate Select Committee, chaired by Arkansas Senator John McClellan, to investigate corruption in the labor movement. The hearings mainly targeted the Teamsters, but the Operating Engineers and Carpenters were also accused of improprieties such as the misuse of union funds, rigging union elections, and bribery. As a result, building trades unions suffered another setback in the court of public opinion and were subjected to the restrictions imposed by the Landrum-Griffin Act.

In the 1960s, the federal government also took steps to open up the construction trades to minorities and women. Since the World War I Great Migration, African-Americans had protested the exclusionary policies of building trades unions. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, blacks, particularly those in the South, had worked as skilled craftsmen—and had firmly established themselves in the carpentry and bricklaying trades in particular. By the middle of the twentieth century, however, most blacks could find only lower-end work as building laborers and hod carriers. Decades of protests culminated in the modern Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, which finally spurred the government to action. The Philadelphia Plan, implemented in 1969, required contractors to set targets and timetables for the hiring of minority workers on federally funded projects. In 1971, the Philadelphia Plan was amended to include women, and the government set further hiring goals for women in 1977.

The greatest challenge to union strength in the construction trades since the 1960s came from the combined impact of a large, well-funded, anti-union movement and a slumping building economy. In 1969, union and nonunion contractors joined with some of the nation's largest corporations (U.S. Steel, Monsanto, and the Ford Motor Company, among

others) to found the Construction Users Anti-Inflation Roundtable (CUAIR), which reorganized as the Business Roundtable in 1972. The Roundtable blamed organized labor for the inflation and high construction costs of the 1960s, and they sought to strengthen contractors' bargaining power by weakening prolabor legislation (such as the Davis-Bacon Act) and employing nonunion construction workers. At the same time, the postwar construction boom that had kept building trades workers employed at high wages on defense, highway, and housing projects dried up in the 1970s. Just as troublesome for building trades unions was their inability to gain a foothold in private residential construction, which also undermined skill requirements through the growing use of prefabricated materials. As a result, even though the building industry recovered in the late 1980s and 1990s, the percentage of unionized construction workers dropped by approximately 50% since 1970.

The world of construction workers continues to change. Federal laws and the rise of nonunion labor have facilitated the entrance of nonwhites and women into the trades. So too, however, have building trades unions. In order to maintain their place in the industry, unions are making more concerted efforts to organize the unorganized. And as they have for over a century, building trades unions continue to forge solidarity amid contentious jurisdictional disputes.

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See also Apprenticeship; Davis-Bacon Act; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; International Union of Operating Engineers; Laborers' International Union of North America; Landrum-Griffin Act (1959); McClellan Committee Hearings; National War Labor Board (WWI); National War Labor Board (WWII); Philadelphia Plan; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

CONVICT LABOR IN THE NEW SOUTH

The convict lease—a system of prison administration whereby a state leased its prisoners to a private individual or company for a number of specified years—was not a postbellum or a southern innovation. But it was during that time and in that place that the practice acquired its notorious reputation. The postbellum South is partly defined by images of felons dressed in striped prison garb, laboring on penal farms (a uniquely southern institution) and in dangerous, hot, and unhealthy conditions, whether in southern turpentine, phosphate, or coal mines. Yet these enduring images obscure the halting process through which the convict lease emerged as the foremost method of southern prison administration. Both parties bore responsibility for the lease; as the historian Edward Ayers notes in *Vengeance and Justice*, Presidential Reconstruction, Congressional Reconstruction, and the era of Democratic counter-revolution all "passed without any obvious watershed in the South's penal system" (Ayers, p. 190).

Convict leasing in the postbellum South took one of two basic forms. Under the contract system, as Mark Carleton notes in his book, *Politics and Punishment*,

the states leased the labor of their prison inmates, but not actual convicts. In theory, state officials remained liable for feeding, clothing, and guarding the prisoners. South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia all adopted this system of prison management by the 1880s. The convict lease, by contrast, enabled private companies to work prisoners outside the walls of the penitentiary; in return for this greater latitude, they acquired the responsibility of providing their charges with food and health care. All the other southern states adopted this more privatized system (Carleton, p. 22).

The origins of the convict lease rested in the substantial indebtedness of southern states during the post-Civil War period, along with the destroyed or tenuous condition of state penitentiaries following the war. A Tennessee warden criticized its central penitentiary, as Karin Shapiro recalled in her *A New South Rebellion*, as “old and dilapidated, damp and cheerless” (Shapiro, p. 54). Limited state funds with which to rebuild or upgrade state penitentiaries, coupled with a rapidly growing prison population of mostly black inmates, led the states to seek alternative forms of prison management. During the late 1860s and early 1870s, the resulting convict leases had short time frames and consisted of individuals or companies that hired a group of convicts to work within the prison walls to make such goods as harnesses or saddles. Other lessees sought prisoners to work on their sugar cane and cotton farms or in railroad construction. Few of these early state leases were particularly remunerative to the southern states, but as Carleton showed in his history of Louisiana’s penal system, the arrangements relieved state governments of what one official called an “expensive luxury”—the need to manage the prisons and to provide food and shelter (Carleton, pp. 9, 42). During the 1870s, however, convicts became omnipresent along railroad routes, while prison leases became ever more economically significant to states and companies alike. By the 1880s and 1890s, the states with the most convicts—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee—had turned to mining companies to house and work prisoners, and so southern convicts increasingly found themselves engaged in far-flung operations under the sole care of private companies. The former slave states had essentially given up all responsibility for the feeding, housing, clothing, and care of their prison inmates.

The financial benefits of the convict lease system to the southern states proved to be considerable. The states saved annual maintenance and transportation costs, estimated at around \$250,000 by Tennessee’s governor in 1891. He further predicted that a new penitentiary would cost taxpayers roughly \$300,000 and take two years to build. In an economic environment in which governments favored low taxes and

fiscal prudence, legislators valued such savings. Over time, convict leases also substantially boosted state revenues. Alabama and Tennessee, the states with the most remunerative prison contracts, each received \$100,000 per annum from 1880s onward. Shapiro quotes Tennessee’s governor as praising the lease as “successful,” “relieving [the state] of all business risk and expense, and paying a surplus into the treasury” (Shapiro, p. 53). According to Mancini’s review of convict leasing in the American South, by 1898, Alabama received a whopping 73% of its total revenue of nearly \$388,000 from the hire of its convicts (Mancini, p. 112). Other southern states, such as Georgia, Mississippi, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Kentucky, also received significant sums from their lessees, ranging between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year. Compared with northern prisons in which the inmates worked within the prison walls, the profits garnered from leasing out southern convicts were noteworthy. According to Ayers’s calculations, prisons that did not use the lease system earned 32% of their costs, while those that hired convicts to work outside their walls generated income that exceeded prison-related expenditures by 267% (Ayers, p. 196).

The convict lease simultaneously proved highly satisfactory to southern lessees such as coal companies. Coal producers first began employing convict laborers because, as their corporate managers repeatedly reiterated, the South lacked a sufficient pool of free laborers willing to enter the mines, especially at wages they were prepared to pay. Although many southern laborers still had access to agricultural pursuits in the late 1860s and early 1870s, this option lessened considerably as the decade wore on. But as Alex Lichtenstein has shown, by then the South’s leading coal companies—such as the Pratt mines in Birmingham; the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company (TCIR) in Tracy City, Tennessee; the Knoxville Iron Company in Coal Creek, Tennessee; and the Dade Coal mines in northwest Georgia—all used convicts to mine coal and smelt coke, and all had many reasons to be satisfied with their labor management decisions (Lichtenstein, p. 22). Roughly 27,000 convicts labored in the postbellum South at any one time. But it was less their absolute numbers that were significant than their placement in the key nascent industries of coal mining and iron production.

Though convict productivity was generally lower than that of free miners, the lease provided a steady supply of laborers to these emerging industries. Moreover, the South’s leading coal companies all found that the use of convict laborers initially slashed their wage bills. The fees the companies paid to the state, together with the costs of taking care of the prisoners, ranged from 60 cents to one dollar per prisoner per

day—one quarter to one half of the daily earnings of free laborers. Moreover, the presence of convicts kept the earnings of free miners static in real terms over the two decades from 1870 to 1890. Wages earned by miners in Tennessee, for example, dropped from about four dollars a day to under two dollars a day, paralleling a general decline in nineteenth-century prices. Convict lessees also repeatedly found that the presence of unfree miners constrained the ability of free miners to bargain for higher wages or better working conditions. Indeed, during periods of union organizing or labor agitation, the companies proved able to withstand demands for higher wages or better working conditions by threatening to lay off their free workers. They knew they could use convicts to mine enough coal to keep the coke ovens going. The coal barons viewed convict labor as a “club” they could hold over their free miners, correctly calculating that the miners would be reluctant to strike, since company managers could readily replace them with convict laborers. In addition, when the demand for coal lessened during the hot summer months and other periods of economic weakness, the coal companies invariably laid off their free miners, keeping the cheaper convicts at work.

If coal companies used the option of convict labor as a labor-management tool, coal miners sought to eliminate this threat. Mine workers, profoundly cognizant of the effect of convict laborers on their bargaining positions, initiated 21 strikes between 1871 and 1900 against the entry of convict laborers in the mines. The vast majority of these strikes failed. Partly as a result of the convict lease system, the union movement developed shallow roots in the post-Civil War South.

The convicts who labored in the mines and on the farms and railroads of the South were primarily young and unskilled African-American men. Often convicted of trivial offenses, such as the theft of a fence rail or a chicken, these men generally received sentences of one to six years. The social composition of the postbellum South’s prison inmates contrasted starkly with that of the pre-Civil War years. Prior to the war, most prisoners were white, had committed serious felonies, and lived in urban centers. African-American slaves who confronted allegations of infringing plantation rules or state laws usually were punished by their masters, out of the purview of state officials. Subject to state courts following their emancipation, black freedmen soon found themselves falling foul of misdemeanor laws and caught up in the justice system. Once convicted, these young black men often received sentences disproportionate to the ostensible crimes they committed and then found themselves working in convict camps dotted around

the South. Cities and towns continued to account for the majority of prison inmates, but postbellum rural areas sent an ever-greater number of felons to the state prisons.

Although historians of the southern convict lease system have generally concluded that convicts typically arrived in the state’s prisons as a result of petty pilfering increasingly punished by the state as criminal theft, one scholar, Mary Ellen Curtin, has argued that many convicted criminals in postbellum Alabama faced punishment because of efforts by African-Americans to push the social, political, and economic limits of their newfound freedom. In her book *Black Prisoners and Their World, Alabama, 1865–1900*, Curtin shows that state officials employed the law to direct black farmers’ economic activity to white-owned country stores. Those who frequented “dead-falls”—informal, after-hour markets that furnished supplies to African-American farmers—often faced larceny charges. She additionally suggests that many blacks pursued their own court cases, charging fellow African-Americans with wrongdoing. In so doing, Curtin argued that they viewed the law as yet another vehicle by which they could express their recently acquired citizenship.

Whatever the route into the South’s criminal justice system, the majority of its inmates were black men convicted for petty offenses, and they soon found themselves laboring on the South’s penal farms and its turpentine, phosphate, and coal mines. White men, who typically fell foul of the law only if they had committed a serious crime, such as murder, generally stayed within the walls of the old penitentiaries along with those men too sick or old for hard labor. Women prisoners, who constituted only about 7% of the inmate population, also remained in central prisons, where they made prison clothes and prepared food.

Circumstances at postbellum southern convict camps varied, depending on the kindness of an individual manager and the financial well-being of his company. Some states even set minimum legal standards, though lessees rarely observed them. Moreover, many lessees subleased convicts to third parties, attenuating the state’s control even further. Despite variations, convict laborers almost invariably endured horrific living conditions. Shapiro recounts an 1893 visit by a seven-man Tennessee legislative committee to the convict camp in Coal Creek, who found that the stockade consisted of “three box houses or wings”—too small for the number of men it housed and “unsanitary in the extreme.” Two men slept to a bed “made of rough plank in a continuous row.” The bedding was “filthy to an extreme degree,” covered in “grease, grime, and coal dust.” The food

was no better, apparently “not up to the standard required by law, either in quantity or quality, variety, or method of preparation” (Shapiro, pp. 65–66). Abysmally high death rates further suggest the harshness of the prisoners’ circumstances. Mancini observes that in the 1880s, 10% to 15% of Mississippi inmates died during their incarceration (Mancini, p. 139).

Everywhere in the postbellum South, work became the *sine qua non* of the convicts’ lives. They toiled for long hours in hot, dangerous conditions. Although the era’s prison reformers assumed that hard labor offered a road to rehabilitation through the inculcation of habits of “diligence” and “temperance,” the convict lessees cared little or nothing about the physical or psychological well-being of the convicts. Relentless, backbreaking labor was good for the company profits. As convict lessees tried to extract the maximum amount of labor from their unfree laborers, however, the inmates invariably resisted whenever possible. In the coal mines, resistance generally involved shooting the coal to bits, loading coal cars with unusable slate, and shirking work, oftentimes by feigning illness. An 1894 article in the mining industry’s trade journal, cited by Shapiro, bemoaned that convict-mined coal resulted in “badly laid track, badly set props...coal not mined at all, but simply shot to pieces, and finally, loaded up with all the slate, sulfur and other refuse at hand that would help fill up the requisite number of cars for the task” (Shapiro, p. 69). Although convict “trustees” and prison guards sought to induce proper mining techniques and a substantial output from the convicts, the latter had few incentives to accede to these demands. In the time-honored fashion of compelling labor from people who have little incentive to work hard, the guards resorted to both sticks and carrots—whippings alongside small incentives, such as offering small bonuses for mining more tons than one’s individual allotment. Yet, as the prison record books make clear, these methods often had fairly limited results. Many convicts resisted work demands, choosing punishment over exploitation.

Faced with such horrendous living and working conditions, and a fearsome death toll, surviving prisoners could only hope that their situations might improve through escape, reduction of sentences for “good behavior,” or a gubernatorial pardon. Each of these events occurred with some regularity, offering prisoners some hope of avoiding death at the mines. Statistics varied considerably from state to state and over the course of the postbellum period. In mid-1870s Georgia, according to Ayers, almost half the inmates escaped during their incarceration; in 1880s Tennessee this proportion reached just 8% (Ayers, p. 201). Substantial numbers of prisoners also received

reduced sentences or pardons, a phenomenon that suggests that the southern states used these mechanisms to shorten long sentences for inconsequential crimes.

Boxes and boxes of southern governors’ papers are filled with petitions for pardon. These appeals for clemency offer fascinating glimpses into notions of culpability and responsibility in the New South, as well as the social mores of justice in this period. If a convict had been drunk when he committed a crime, injured or killed a person known to be a notorious villain, had perpetrated an offense while defending his own honor or that of a woman he loved, or could plausibly claim to be too young or too ignorant to understand the implications of his actions, a petition for pardon often had a good chance of success. The hardship that befell a family following the arrest of the head of family was also a well-worn theme in these appeals.

Prison petitions additionally suggest a great deal about the nature of social hierarchy and race relations in postbellum southern communities. Petitions were often accompanied by dozens of signatures, not just of family members, but also of local notables, judges, jurors, and previous or current employees. Poor black petitioners did well to secure the assistance of these kinds of people, and local elites readily offered such support. They did so to make sure that the criminal justice system retained a personal character, one that tied poor blacks to their paternalistic largesse. Some members of the elite may have offered their support to elicit a sense of obligation from the African-American community, or to remind themselves of their exalted position in southern society. Yet others probably truly believed that justice and redemption were best served by personalizing it.

Government failure did not end here. The relationships between government officials and convict lessees were subject to abuse and corruption. Accusations of bribery dogged the convict lease system, with corrupt government officials and convict lessees in most states acquiring the appellation of a “penitentiary ring,” or in the words of Edward Ayers, a kind of “mutual aid society” (Ayers, p. 195). Beyond corruption and a failed criminal justice system, the convict lease further poisoned relationships between southern blacks and whites. The naked distortions of the criminal justice system, the horrendous conditions in which convicts found themselves, the high mortality rates, and the relentless public images of stripe-clothed prisoners pushed to the breaking point all did much to remind African-Americans of the inequities of racism in the postbellum South and beyond.

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See also **New South**

COOPERATION

With the advance of the market revolution in the early nineteenth-century, American labor reformers confronted the seemingly interminable problems of wage labor and high prices with a new idea. Rather than engage in a permanent battle over wages and working conditions, workers, they argued, should own and operate their own cooperative workshops and factories. Instead of dealing with middlemen who needlessly raised the prices of necessary goods, workers should own their own cooperative stores. This strategy, known as “cooperation,” was first endorsed by the labor movement in the 1830s and continued to grow in popularity until interest peaked during the Gilded Age under the aegis of the Knights of Labor. After the decline of the Knights in the 1890s, the interest of organized workers in cooperation waned and only sporadically re-emerged, most notably in the volatile years after World War I.

The idea that workers could end wage labor and their exploitation by middlemen through economic institutions of their own design was a powerful lure for many nineteenth-century trade unionists steeped in the political ideals of republicanism and the producer ethos of the skilled male worker. At the same time, cooperation’s appeal to working men and women rested in its often perceived practicality. Labor reformers believed that cooperatives would readily succeed in the marketplace and stabilize community life for workers in an unstable industrializing economy. Cooperation was both utopian in its goal to

supplant “competitive” capitalism and create what advocates called a “cooperative republic” and practical in its design to meet the immediate needs of its constituents. Cooperators were practical utopians.

Cooperation before the Civil War

During the 1830s, cooperation appeared as a new departure for the emergent labor movement. In 1836, the National Trades’ Union proposed cooperation as a way to end strikes permanently. In 1845, the Working Men’s Protective Union in Boston established a network of cooperatively owned stores and consumer buying clubs. Within two years, member wage earners had established 40 Protective Union associations in the states of Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. By the late 1850s, members throughout New England, New York, and Canada purchased a variety of goods in over 800 Union “divisions.”

During the 1840s and 1850s, skilled workers established a number of cooperative factories and workshops. Iron molders opened foundries in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Shoemakers started shops in Lynn, Pittsburgh, and New York City. In Boston, tailors set up a cooperative shop; bakers, shirt sewers, and hat finishers did the same in New York. In this latter city, German tailors and cabinet-makers were inspired to cooperate by the movement in their home country. Much of this activity was also supported and nurtured again by Fourierists. They advanced cooperative workshops as a major step toward their own plan of social reconstruction.

The cooperatives established by unions in the 1830s, the numerous Protective Union stores, and the craftsmen’s cooperatives of the 1840s and 1850s could not sustain themselves amidst the economic and political turmoil of the era. The first American labor movement was, in fact, destroyed, along with its experiments in cooperation, by the panic of 1837. The Protective Unions experienced debilitating internal conflicts, intense competition from other retail stores, and disruption from the onset of civil war. The early efforts of cooperative production among skilled men also suffered from an unstable economy and wartime upheaval.

Postwar Re-Emergence

Despite its pre-Civil War decline, cooperation continued to appeal to American workers. As the

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labor movement re-emerged in the 1860s, cooperation particularly excited the movement's new leadership. In Philadelphia, the center of much union activity during these years, a group of immigrants from England established the Union Cooperative Association No. 1. This relatively insignificant grocery attracted the attention and gained the membership of pre-eminent leaders of the labor movement, such as William Sylvis, the president of the Iron Molders' Union, Jonathan Fincher, the labor reform newspaper editor, and John Samuel, the Wilshire-born union activist, cooperator, and future Knights of Labor executive. The Union Cooperative Association was one of the first Rochdale-inspired cooperatives in the United States, and labor leaders saw it as an ideal model for emulation by American workers everywhere.

The Rochdale method of cooperation was developed by a group of weavers, known as the Rochdale Pioneers, in England in the 1840s. The method proved extra-ordinarily successful, and word of this success spread among American workers. By 1863, Rochdale advocates attained considerable influence within the labor movement. Under the Rochdale system, a cooperative store allowed its stockholders one vote regardless of the number of shares held by any individual. Shareholders received a fixed dividend of no more than 5% on their investment. Stores did not extend credit to their members and sold all goods for cash at market prices, with the profits returned to members in proportion to their purchases. According to John Samuel, approximately 100 cooperative stores, many operating under these principles, opened for business during the decade of the Civil War. During the depression of the 1870s, the Sovereigns of Industry, a labor reform organization advocating the establishment of cooperative stores, adopted the Rochdale system. Its 450 local councils in New England and the Middle and Central states each had a purchasing club or store based on this system. A decade later, the Knights of Labor supplanted the Sovereigns, and the Knights' local assemblies operated an unknown number of consumer cooperatives possibly totaling in the thousands.

The workers who endorsed Rochdale stores in most cases also promoted the establishment of producer cooperatives. They often conceived of the cooperative store as a means to accumulate capital for a factory or workshop. Shoe workers and molders were the two most prominent trades involved in cooperative activity, and their respective unions, the Knights of St. Crispin and the Iron Molders' Union, were strong supporters. Between 1866 and 1876, shoe workers operated at least 40 shoe factories and molders at least 36 foundries. Both trades established numerous cooperative stores. In addition, other

workers including miners, carpenters, machinists, cigar makers, printers, bakers, coach makers, collar makers, shipwrights, nailers, ship carpenters and caulkers, glassblowers, hatters, boilermakers, plumbers, and iron rollers organized cooperative workshops. In the quarter-century following the Civil War, at least 500 cooperative factories, workshops, and mines opened for business. A majority of these enterprises commenced business in the mid-1880s.

Despite the support of important leaders in the labor movement, and the emphatic support of the Knights of Labor and its General Master Workman Terrence Powderly, national unions launched very few cooperative enterprises of their own. In fact, the role of the Knights' national organization in cooperation was limited by its general assembly's inability to agree upon an effective program. The Knights' most important centralized efforts at cooperation occurred in 1884, when they purchased a coal mine in Cannelburg, Indiana, and in 1886 when they invested in a wagon factory in Homer, New York. In both cases, the Knights operated their enterprises through their national executive board, which proved distant, difficult, and unwieldy. Both enterprises eventually failed.

In the 1870s and 1880s, cooperators achieved much greater success on a local level, where they formed cooperatives often during or after a strike. The rapid growth of the Knights of Labor inspired in many members a growing confidence that a cooperative future was possible. Consequently, local and district assemblies of the Knights sponsored, and at times collaborated, in the formation of many of these cooperatives. The most noted and successful efforts of this kind occurred in Minneapolis, Minnesota, among barrel makers, who formed an important adjunct industry to the city's large and powerful flour mills. By 1887, 62% of the 593 working barrel makers in the city operated seven barrel cooperatives and dominated the industry. They also opened a cooperative store and inspired the formation of at least 15 other cooperative businesses in Minneapolis, including a laundry owned and operated by women. The labor press heralded this success as a model for workers to learn from and emulate.

Why Cooperate?

Workers established cooperatives in this period for a variety of different reasons, some visionary and others practical. Behind cooperation's most radical tendencies was the view of wage labor as inimical to a democratic republic. Workers could only receive the

full value of their labor, they argued, and act as fully independent citizens if they operated their own democratic businesses and did away with work for wages. More practically, skilled workers cooperated often to preserve their craft skills and guarantee trade union standards. Working men might also open a cooperative to preserve their status as family breadwinners and exclude women from the workplace. Most cooperators, however, strove to build autonomous democratic institutions, whether they were producer or consumer cooperatives, in order to create stable community lives.

Failure of the Dream

While a handful of cooperatives lasted for years, most, including those in Minneapolis, failed in a relatively brief period of time. The reasons usually cited by contemporaries for failure included inadequate capital resources and managerial experience, hard economic times, opposition from competing grocers or manufacturers, lack of knowledge, and inadequate legal protection for cooperatives as businesses. While these all rang true, other factors contributed to failure as well. Cooperators established their businesses primarily to stabilize their work, family, and community lives. This made their capital investments less responsive and more vulnerable than their competitors' to changing economic conditions. Internal discord between skilled and less-skilled workers could also cause operational problems. In addition, cooperators often required the support of organized labor to provide markets for their goods and for much needed capital. The principal source of such support during the 1880s was the Knights of Labor. When the Knights rapidly lost membership at the end of the decade, that source evaporated. The decline of the Knights also deflated the widespread enthusiasm for cooperation erstwhile members of the movement possessed.

As the institutional support for cooperation dissipated, labor movement cooperators moved in at least two new directions. Some joined socialist organizations, such as the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth and the Social Democracy of America. Others participated along with academics and middle-class reformers in a cooperative movement independent of any labor organization. The labor movement itself did not reject cooperation entirely but assumed a much less active and more ambivalent role than in earlier years.

In the 1890s, the American Federation of Labor replaced the Knights of Labor as the dominant national labor organization in the United States.

It assumed a practical stance toward cooperation, rejecting the emancipatory vision associated with the Knights. The AFL believed that consumer cooperation could be a useful tool for trade unionists, and it maintained this position throughout much of the twentieth century. It only halfheartedly supported producer cooperatives. Yet this did not preclude a moment when cooperation would again inspire a grander vision of social transformation among organized workers.

During and immediately after World War I, the AFL endorsed a resurgent consumer cooperative movement around the country. In Seattle, this renewed enthusiasm took a particularly radical form. Following the general strike of 1919 in the city, Seattle's workers joined *en masse* two chains of consumer cooperatives as well as a few producer enterprises. As workers did during the Gilded Age, they hoped to eliminate middlemen, lower prices, and build economic institutions of their own design. Their ultimate goal, as expressed by their local union leadership, was to create a cooperative commonwealth through a peaceful evolutionary process, eventually crowding out privately owned enterprises entirely. Despite widespread enthusiasm and visionary leadership, the depression of the early 1920s overwhelmed these businesses. By 1922, the cooperatives of Seattle had completely collapsed.

The Meaning of Cooperation: Debate among Historians

Though cooperation played an important role in the labor movements of the nineteenth century, it has rarely received full scrutiny from historians. The first historians of cooperation in the 1880s were the most thorough chroniclers of the movement's early years. They wrote approvingly of cooperation as an important but nonideological aspect of the burgeoning labor movement. Workers, in their view, were simply acting pragmatically to solve their various labor problems through self-help measures. John Commons and the historians influenced by the Wisconsin School of labor history argued differently. To them cooperation expressed the ideological, middle-class, and backward-looking nature of the labor movement of the nineteenth century, soon rejected, appropriately, by the practical trade unionism of the American Federation of Labor.

This interpretation generally held sway until the 1970s when historians reassessed the nature of American working-class history. Central to their re-interpretation was the rediscovery of a class consciousness among American workers in the nineteenth

century rooted in a working-class interpretation of republicanism. Cooperation fit in this new view as an expression of republicanism's most radical demand for an economic independence incompatible with American industrial capitalism. However, it has also been argued that cooperation was less defined than this view of a radicalized republicanism might suggest. Cooperators, in fact, held only a vague and ill-formed understanding of the producer's place in a republic. Outside of the Rochdale system, cooperators had no fixed guidelines or rules for building cooperatives; and when they established their stores and factories, they often promoted notions of democracy permeated by traditional hierarchies of gender, skill, and race. Cooperation in this view was both an expression of republican independence and a place where the very meaning of that independence was fought over, reinforced, and transformed. This helps explain the fate of cooperation at the end of the century. When cooperatives in the 1880s failed, they did so, in part, because they were themselves a source of conflict. And that failure to emancipate wage laborers surely disillusioned thousands of working men and women about the emancipatory potential of both cooperation and a labor movement based on the ideals of republican independence.

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CORONA, BERT (MAY 29, 1918– FEBRUARY 15, 2001) Activist for Mexican and Mexican-American Rights

Humberto (Bert) Corona was a tireless labor and community activist who devoted much of his life to the needs of Mexican immigrants. Corona was born in El Paso, Texas, in 1918. His father, Noé, served in Pancho Villa's Division of the North during the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) and advocated local autonomy for rural folk, whom he believed had the right to arm themselves in defense of their interests, enshrined in the Mexican Constitution of 1857. His mother, Margarita, also supported the democratic ideals of the Revolution. Unlike Noé, she was a Protestant, came from a wealthy family, and had obtained a high-level bilingual education through congregational instructors, at the behest of her mother, Ynes, a practicing medical doctor. Meeting after a battle during which Ynes treated several of Noé's men, the couple later married, and at various times lived on either side of the border. In 1924, while living in Chihuahua, Noé and a group of political activists were assassinated. This left a long-lasting impact on Bert, who believed his father to have been a champion of social justice. After Noé's death, Margarita and Ynes moved the family to El Segundo Barrio of El Paso, which had become a refuge for Mexican revolutionaries. In El Segundo, Bert listened to revolutionary tales stressing struggle, sacrifice, and justice.

In addition to this unorthodox education, Corona attended Protestant educational services in El Paso and then later enrolled in Harwood Boys School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. There, he partook in a student-led strike against corporal punishment and historical lessons concerning the Revolution. During the Great Depression, Corona attended El Paso High School, where he joined a study group that discussed fascism, socialism, the Russian Revolution, and the writings of Thorsten Veblen, Upton Sinclair, and Lincoln Steffens. He then began attending the

meetings of the *Sociedad Anarcho-Sindicalista*, a group of Mexican laborers who were followers of the anarcho-syndicalist Ricardo Flores Magon. In 1936, Corona moved to Los Angeles after obtaining a basketball work assistance scholarship at the University of Southern California (USC). At USC, Corona joined the Non-Org Movement, a college organization composed of lower-middle- and working-class youth, who often had participated in the Civilian Conservation Corps. The Non-Org fought for university services such as student housing and expressed political support for Republican Spain, the National Labor Relations Act, and other New Deal programs. Through a series of conferences sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Association, Corona and other Mexican students, social workers, and teachers formed the Mexican-American Movement (MAM), which focused on combating discrimination in education, employment, and recreational services. Although MAM disintegrated during the Second World War, between 1938 and 1940, the organization left a positive impact on many Latinas/os, who remained politically active throughout their lives.

Through a USC work assistantship, Corona secured employment at the Brunswig Drug Company. At Brunswig, the Longshoremen's Association, which would be renamed the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) after it affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1937, recruited Corona to picket the transportation of nonunion-affiliated merchandise within L.A. In the fall of 1937, Corona helped form Local 26 of the ILWU, was elected recording secretary, and began organizing workers. In this role, he was mentored by Lloyd Seeliger, a seasoned labor organizer who had joined the International Workers of the World (IWW) at age 13. Seeliger invited Bert to attend labor and political functions and introduced him to the Communist Party of the United States' *Daily People's World*, which covered labor events, strikes, and debates between unions. Describing himself as a progressive who leaned toward the socialist ideology of Lincoln Steffens, Corona always maintained that he had never joined the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA). Yet, over the course of his life, Corona developed close friendships with a number of communists and worked with unions associated with the CPUSA. Perhaps as a result of these affiliations or his undisclosed membership, the Federal Bureau of Investigation believed Corona to have been a member of the CPUSA from 1940 to 1945. In any event, during the 1930s Corona helped organize 95% of the workers at Brunswig and in his spare time worked to unionize other industries. In 1939, Corona

dropped out of the USC and devoted himself completely to the CIO. By 1941, Local 26 had over six thousand members, Corona was elected president of the local; after being fired from Brunswig during a botched slowdown action, he was immediately hired as a full-time organizer by Harry Bridges, the president of the ILWU.

As a full-time CIO unionist, Corona organized the waste material industry, which employed many Jewish and Mexican female laborers. By meeting the workers' particular linguistic needs (Yiddish and Spanish), drawing on family networks, and organizing cultural events to generate solidarity, Corona was very successful. Through the CIO, Corona befriended Luisa Moreno, a Guatemalan immigrant who worked for the Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) and was then the only Latina/o officer of the California state CIO. Moreno had just formed the Committee on Spanish-Speaking Workers, which focused on the needs of Latina/os within the CIO but also worked with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Urban League in a few broader Civil Rights struggles. Corona later worked with *El Congreso Nacional del Pueblo de Habla Espanola (El Congreso)*, an organization created by Moreno and furthered by activists such as Josefina Fierro and Eduardo Quevedo. *El Congreso* combated discrimination and police brutality and sought to expand the educational and employment opportunities of Spanish-speaking people. While organizations such as the League of United Latin American Citizens drew sharp distinctions between the interests of Mexicans who held U.S. citizenship and Mexican nationals, *El Congreso* sought to defend the interests of all Latin Americans, regardless of citizenship. Consequently, *El Congreso* organized numerous Mexican immigrants into the CIO. While the organization dissolved during WWII, several of its founders were later harassed politically during the Cold War. As a result of the passage of the McCarran-Walter Act in 1952, which sanctioned the deportation of immigrants and naturalized citizens considered "subversive," many Latina/o immigrant activists who had built *El Congreso*, including Moreno and Fierro, went into exile to avoid persecution.

In 1941, Corona married Blanche Taff, a middle-class woman of Polish-Jewish descent. The couple met during a unionizing campaign at North American Aviation, during which Blanche participated as a member of the Democratic Youth Federation, an organization of young, militant Jewish-American students who supported unions and the New Deal. Bert and Blanche married, had three children, and on occasion, worked together in the CIO and antidiscrimination

activities. After Pearl Harbor, Corona enlisted in the Army Air Corps, but due to his labor and CPUSA affiliations, he was labeled a possible subversive and was never allowed into combat. After completing his military service, in 1945, Corona moved to the Bay Area in California and became involved in electoral politics. He worked with the Independent Progressive Party, which endorsed former Vice President Henry Wallace for the 1948 presidential election. Corona then joined the Community Service Organization (CSO), a predominantly Mexican-American group that concentrated on voter registration drives in order to expand Latina/o representation in California politics. The CSO spearheaded Edward Roybal's election to the L.A. City Council and later mobilized Mexican-Americans to vote for progressive political candidates such as Byron Rumford and Lionel Wilson, African-Americans who ran for state assembly and municipal judgeship positions. During the 1950s, Corona became the northern California regional director of the *Asociacion Nacional Mexico-Americana* (ANMA). Corona was attracted to ANMA because it was created by the Mexican membership of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers; the ILWU; the UCA-PAWA; and the Furniture Workers Union. Furthermore, Corona applauded ANMA's commitment to defend the civil rights and culture of Mexican people. During the 1950s, ANMA provided institutional support to laborers involved in various strikes, such as the Salt of the Earth strike and bracero stoppages.

During the 1960s, Corona worked as a labor organizer for the National Maritime Union and as a political recruiter for the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA), which mobilized Mexicans to obtain U.S. citizenship and to vote for political candidates such as Lyndon B. Johnson in the 1964 presidential election, for Pat Brown in the 1966 gubernatorial election of California, and for Robert F. Kennedy in the 1968 presidential campaign. While Corona often worked in a variety of causes, including antiwar protests during the Vietnam War, and joined forces with incredibly diverse activists and organizations, such as César Chávez and the United Farm Workers Union, Reis Lopez Tijerina and the *Alianza*, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales and the Crusade for Justice, and disparate groups that were part of the Chicano Power Movement, in 1968, Corona moved back to L.A. and decided to devote himself to organizing Latin American undocumented immigrants. In L.A., Corona established a chapter of the *Hermandad Mexicana Nacional* (*Hermandad*), an organization formed in 1951 by Phil and Albert Usquiano, two trade unionists who created the group to protect the legal rights of Mexican immigrants. Through the *Hermandad*, Corona labored to provide all Spanish-speaking

immigrants with legal counseling, citizenship and English-language classes, and cultural activities, and formed broad-based community coalitions to lobby officials in Washington in regard to immigration legislation. Organizing Latina/o immigrants along the lines of the family unit, the *Hermandad* grew to over 30,000 members. After participating in numerous labor and political struggles, at the age of 82 in 2001, Bert Corona passed away.

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See also **Bridges, Harry Renton; Chávez, César Estrada; Cold War; Communist Party; Industrial Workers of the World; International Longshoremen's Association; McCarran-Walter Act (1952); Mexican and Mexican-American Workers; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Vietnam War**

COXEY'S ARMY

In 1894, in the midst of a severe economic depression, people across the United States had a vivid lesson in the efforts of labor and financial reformers to increase the amount of federal government intervention in the economy. From March through May, they read and sometimes watched as at least a thousand people tried to take part in the first march on Washington. Led by Jacob Coxey, a business owner and Populist from Ohio, and Carl Browne, a labor activist from California, these protesters sought to attack the rampant unemployment that affected directly many of the marchers and to loosen the money supply. The demand was for the federal government to support road building and other improvements by towns, cities, and counties. Workers on these projects would receive a minimum wage of \$1.50 a day, almost 80% above the standard for the period. The projects would be financed by no-interest loans to the local governments; in other words, by the federal government issuing more money. For people with debts or the

need to borrow, the result would be lower interest rates. Supporters came from the unemployed, labor activists, Populists, and financial reformers. But the proposals and the method of marching directly to the Capitol did not receive universal support from even these groups and were scarcely considered by Congress or the president.

The mixture of attention and disdain reflected sustained questions about the methods and goals of the labor movement in the 1890s in the United States. Some labor activists questioned whether it made sense to appeal for any help from Washington, when the federal government often took an active role in breaking up strikes and in creating policies that protected business. Indeed, federal troops were authorized to stop a train that some supporters of Coxeys' Army had seized in Montana; the ensuing battle resulted in two deaths. Such violence fueled the opposition to this cause among most mainstream politicians. Both Democratic and Republican leaders had many reasons to dislike this proposal. Republicans, closely aligned with the interests of large business owners and some established unions, preferred to use taxes on imports to respond to economic changes. Democrats, with a more economically diverse constituency, feared the growth of the national government as a threat to the powers of the states and individuals. Regardless of party, most politicians of the time believed that the appropriate response to an economic crisis was to cut their spending as their revenues fell. For these reasons, there was barely any sustained debate of the demands of Coxeys' Army in Washington.

Nevertheless, Coxeys' Army demands and methods were not that different from many reformers, both within and outside the organized labor movement. Their proposal called for jobs, not relief. Though their figure for the minimum daily wage was high, it still fit with similar calls by social welfare reformers and labor activists for a family wage. And like other economic reformers of the time, supporters of Coxeys' Army understood that federal policy—especially deficit spending and a looser money supply—could have a fundamental effect on the broader economy of the nation. Finally, in mobilizing the poor to demand changes, Coxeys and Browne had many counterparts in the vibrant labor and social reform culture of the late 1880s and 1890s. Though newspaper reporters dubbed them Coxeys' Army, their official name was the Commonwealth of Christ, reflecting their belief in the connections between Christianity and economic equality.

Their method of demanding change by going directly to the nation's capital also had parallels with other labor actions of the time, but was unique and untested. Direct demands on local government were

commonplace, and some protests focused on state government. In the 1870s, Browne had been an activist with the Workingmen's Party in San Francisco. The party mobilized workers in the city through sustained protests and an electoral campaign that resulted in their control of the city's government. Bolstered by this success, the party tried to build a national movement. Later, in 1893, Browne watched as unemployed workers in Chicago besieged the City Hall with demands for work. Yet, taking to the streets of a familiar locality was quite different than orchestrating a national march to Washington.

In contrast to these local protests in known spaces, Coxeys' Army faced logistical, political, and symbolic unknowns. For the 300 supporters who left Ohio with Coxeys and Browne on foot on March 26, the nearly 700 miles of marching was difficult. They camped; they foraged for food; and they were threatened by local authorities. For other supporters, traveling from as far west as California and as far north of Boston, the question was how to reach Washington by May 1, 1894. Some hopped trains; one group that included the author Jack London took leaky barges down Midwestern rivers. Not all of these groups made it to Washington for the May 1 march and protest.

The right of the participants to march in Washington was also highly contested for political and symbolic reasons. City authorities, working in concert with federal officials, initially proposed arresting all marchers as vagrants. When that option was dismissed, they turned to strictly regulating the nature of the march. The city authorities granted permission to march down Pennsylvania Avenue but refused the right of the protestors to go to the Capitol Building itself. The Capitol grounds, mainstream politicians declared, deserved protection from such disruptions. Congress needed peace and quiet to deliberate. Populist representatives and senators objected strenuously; they noted the raucous behavior of both elected politicians and lobbyists in the Capitol, and the arbitrary enforcement of this ban.

Nevertheless, on May 1, Coxeys' Army, made up of nearly 1,000 marchers, marched in ranks down Pennsylvania Avenue. Thousands of interested Washingtonians and a huge contingent of police watched with interest; some observers cheered regularly. When Coxeys and Browne deliberately broke the prohibition on entering the Capitol grounds, they were arrested. Eventually, they served 20 days in jail on the dubious charge of walking on the grass. Supporters of their efforts continued to camp around the nation's capital over the summer of 1894. But the Pullman Strike drew attention from their efforts, and eventually the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia authorities forced them to depart. Still,

COXEY'S ARMY

Coxey's and Browne's vision of the right of the people to use the Capitol on behalf of their causes gradually became an accepted political tool for protests of national policy. Labor activists remembered Coxey's Army when they took part in the veteran's Bonus Army of 1932, the Negro March on Washington in 1941, the civil rights marches of the 1950s and 1960s, and the Solidarity protests of the 1980s.

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See also **Kearney, Denis; Living Wage; March on Washington Movement; Poor People's Campaign; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894); Unemployment**

CRIPPLE CREEK STRIKES

Two strikes of the Western Federation of Miners (WFM) bracketed a decade of union power in Colorado's Cripple Creek District in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The six-mile-square gold-mining district southwest of Colorado Springs took its name from the largest town and supply center. Nine smaller communities—Anaconda, Elkton, Victor, Lawrence, Goldfield, Independence, Altman, Cameron, and Gillet—clustered around the mines and mills. The labor movement and the local economy revolved around gold mining. Gold was discovered in Cripple Creek in 1890. By 1900, miners dug over \$20 million from 475 producing mines that supported a local population of some 32,000.

The first Cripple Creek strike, in 1894, secured the eight-hour day, the \$3 minimum daily wage, and the right to union membership for the District's miners. Their victory anchored a labor movement that had, by 1902, organized a majority of all workers. Organized labor's power extended from the mines and workplaces to various aspects of social, cultural, and political life. The unions hosted balls, smokers, picnics, political debates, and the annual Fourth of July and Labor Day celebrations. They provided health care, insurance, and sick benefits, buried dead members, or shipped their bodies out of the District for burial. They promoted working-class education,

operated reading rooms, and from 1899 to 1903, published *The Victor and Cripple Creek Daily Press*, the masthead of which proudly announced: "The Only Daily Newspaper Owned by Organized Workingmen." Nine WFM locals grounded this vibrant labor community, in a district where six of 10 men worked in mining, and 80% of the population was working class.

The decade of union power ended with the second Cripple Creek strike, one of a series of conflicts in Colorado coal and hardrock mining known collectively as the "Colorado Labor Wars" of 1903–1904. The two Cripple Creek strikes were linked by competition among mine owners as they integrated the local mining industry and contests between capital and labor to control working conditions in industrial mining. In both strikes, the power of the state proved pivotal.

The 1894 Strike

The first Cripple Creek strike occurred in circumstances far from auspicious for labor. The repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act closed silver mines throughout the Mountain West in 1893, throwing thousands of miners out of work just as an economic depression swelled the ranks of unemployed. Miners and mining capital moved to the new gold camp. Two major ownership groups, one led by J. J. Hagerman and the other led by David Moffat and Eben Smith, were laying tracks to connect the District's mines to its mills in Colorado City and Florence. With a surplus of skilled labor and the railroads not yet completed, it appeared a good time to establish owners' control.

For western hardrock miners, it was time to organize. They met in Butte, Montana, on May 15, 1893, to found the Western Federation of Miners. District miners did not attend but asked Colorado WFM organizer Alexander McIntosh for help. McIntosh organized a WFM local in Altman, and then deputized John Calderwood, who organized locals in Victor, Anaconda, and Cripple Creek. Calderwood stayed to lead the union through the first strike.

The first WFM local, Altman Free Coinage No. 19, was founded August 20, 1893, three days after Hagerman's Isabella mine announced it would lengthen the work day from eight hours to 10. The miners refused to work, and the mine temporarily rescinded the order, but the stage was set for the 1894 strike, which concerned hours and wages. Some mines worked eight hours, some nine or 10. The union sought a uniform eight-hour day and a \$3 minimum

daily wage. A number of mines that were allied with the Hagerman or Smith-Moffat interests announced that on February 1 they would enforce 10-hour shifts. After offers to compromise failed, on February 7, 1894, the miners struck all mines that worked over eight hours. The strike involved fewer than half of the mines, and less than a fourth of the working miners, about half of whom already worked eight hours for \$3.

Divisions among owners influenced the outcome. Some held firm for nine or 10 hours; some quickly settled with the union; some threatened a wage cut to \$2.50 for an eight-hour day. Calderwood negotiated a special agreement with W. S. Stratton and James Burns, two of the few working-class men who had struck it rich in the District. Their mines paid \$3.25 for a nine-hour day shift, and \$3 for an eight-hour night shift, an agreement that held until 1896 when they switched to eight hours.

The progress of railroad construction influenced divisions among employers. Mine owners with substantial railroad interests held to nine or 10 hours, content to close their mines or stockpile ore until the railroads arrived to reduce shipping costs.

Another crucial factor was an exercise of state power atypical in western labor conflicts. The mine owners controlled the county government, but Governor Davis Waite, a Populist, supported the strikers. From March through May 1894, local officials, many of them WFM members, faced off against an army of El Paso County sheriff's deputies, who in turn were checked by the state militia. Twice Waite dispatched troops: briefly in March, after Altman officials detained and disarmed six deputies sent to guard the Victor Mine, and in June, after the strike was settled, to disband an army of sheriff's deputies.

By April, 28 mines worked eight-hour shifts, in addition to Burns's Portland and Stratton's Independence; only seven were idled by the strike. In mid-May, Bowers swore in some 1,200 deputies, paid and armed by mine owners, and sent nearly 200 to occupy mines near Victor as the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad (F&CC) approached. Fearing attack, the strikers entrenched themselves near Altman on Bull Hill. On May 24, they met the deputies near Victor, surrounded the nonunion Strong Mine and its guard of armed deputies, and allegedly blew up the shaft house. Who was responsible remained a subject of local debate. The next day, a striker and a deputy were killed and two men wounded in a confrontation between miners and deputies. Six strikers were jailed. On May 26, Governor Waite asked the strikers to lay down their arms and demanded that Bowers's deputy sheriffs disperse because they constituted an illegal army, usurping the powers of the governor. The

same day, the F&CC reached Victor and the mines the deputies had occupied.

Both sides moved to settle. The miners appointed Waite their sole arbitrator. On June 4, he negotiated with Hagerman and Moffat, the only significant hold-outs. As the tracks reached their mines, both conceded the \$3 day and eight hours, and promised not to discriminate against union members.

Bowers then advanced on Bull Hill with his 1,200 deputies. Waite sent the state militia and finally threatened martial law to force the deputies to disband. Sheriff Bowers arrested several hundred men for strike-related offenses. Ultimately, only four strikers were convicted, and the Colorado Supreme Court reversed one conviction. Jackson Rhines served six months in county jail for assault. Robert Lyons and Nicholas Tully were sentenced to six and eight years, respectively, for blowing up the Strong Mine, but A. W. McIntire, a Republican who succeeded Waite as Governor, pardoned both. The miners considered Tully, Lyons, and Rhines heroes convicted by antiunion Colorado Springs juries.

Building from the strike victory, the WFM supported the organizing and demands of other workers, using a combination of consumer boycotts and social pressure. If those tactics failed, a number of brief strikes proved effective in getting employers to negotiate. That decade of success informed union strategy as the second strike began.

The 1903–1904 Strike

Competition among owners again proved significant in the second strike, as did state power. Stratton's moderating influence ended with his death in 1902, and younger anti-union owners, led by Charles Tutt, Spencer Penrose, Charles MacNeill, and A. E. Carlton, expanded their holdings. Tutt, Penrose, and MacNeill's United States Reduction and Refining Company (USR&R) was rivaled by the Portland Gold Mining Company, headed by James Burns. The second strike began in August 1902, with the organization of a WFM local at three Colorado City mills: the Portland, Telluride, and USR&R's Standard.

The WFM was an industrial union, committed to organizing all workers in the mining industry to match owners' integrated control of mines, mills, and railroads. Thus, the miners considered it their issue when USR&R fired 42 men identified by a Pinkerton detective as union members. In February 1903, the union requested their reinstatement, a daily wage increase from \$1.80 to \$2.25, and the right to union membership. USR&R refused to bargain; the millmen

CRIPPLE CREEK STRIKES

struck, and the strike spread to the Portland and Telluride when they, too, denied union recognition. The companies asked a willing sheriff and governor for protection.

Republican James H. Peabody, who belonged to the anti-union Citizens' Alliance, won the 1902 gubernatorial race by a plurality. During his two-year term, Peabody sent troops to strikes throughout Colorado's mills, hardrock mines, and coalfields. The local issues in each strike differed; each escalated as anti-union owners mobilized state support.

As the adjutant general of the National Guard, Peabody appointed Sherman Bell, the manager of the District's Smith-Moffat interests, and ordered him to guard the mills. The WFM then threatened to strike all mines that shipped to the unfair mills. The Portland and Telluride settled, the Standard refused to budge, and on March 17, the WFM struck all mines that shipped to USR&R.

The strike dragged on for 15 months, punctuated by violence, military occupation, and jockeying for control among owners. The union held back as USR&R promised to re-instate some of the fired mill workers. By July, the Portland and Telluride worked an eight-hour day for a \$2.25 minimum wage; the Standard paid \$1.80. Hoping to force other owners to pressure the Standard, on August 8, Cripple Creek District Union No. 1 struck all mines that shipped to Colorado City. The Portland settled and remained open as a union shop.

The Standard Mill closed due to lack of ore on September 2. The same day, mine owners asked Peabody for troops. Over the objections of local authorities, Peabody sent one thousand National Guard troops on September 4, the costs covered by the mine owners at 4% interest. Using the vague legal justification of "qualified martial law," troops seized the work force of the pro-union *Victor Record*, charged union leaders with two failed train-wrecking attempts, and refused to surrender them to civil authorities.

On November 21, an explosive device killed two men at the Smith-Moffat Vindicator Mine, located in the middle of the main military camp. Citing the attempted train wrecking and the Vindicator explosion, Peabody asserted that Teller County was in a state of insurrection and rebellion and declared martial law on December 4.

On January 26, 15 miners fell to their deaths when faulty machinery severed the cable hauling them to the surface of a nonunion mine. The coroner's jury blamed negligent management; the union blamed incompetent nonunion labor, and the Mine Owners Association (MOA) charged that the union had tampered with machinery that again lay within the main

militia encampment. Peabody announced that peace and good order had been restored and suspended martial law on February 2. Later that month, a jury from outside the District acquitted the men accused of attempted train wrecking, given evidence that MOA detectives had staged the incidents.

The struggle continued in economic arenas. The MOA had successfully pressured some mines to fire union workers, and on March 10 instituted a permit system to blacklist WFM members. Cripple Creek merchants had cut off credit to strikers, so the WFM opened four cooperative stores. Each side claimed it was winning.

The tragic end began at 2:15 a.m. on June 6. An explosion ripped through the platform of the Independence F&CC depot, killing 13 nonunion miners coming off shift from Carlton's Findley Mine. Within hours, mine owners and the local Citizens' Alliance forced elected officials to resign, seized control of the local government, provoked a riot, and ransacked the union halls and cooperative stores. A re-activated militia deported over 200 union leaders to Kansas and New Mexico; hundreds of others fled or were "whitecapped" out as the MOA banned union labor from the District. The militia closed the Portland Mine, and an anti-union faction took over the company. In November, MOA gun thugs intimidated voters by killing two union poll watchers. Although the strike was not officially called off until 1907, the aftermath of the Independence depot explosion crushed the Cripple Creek labor movement.

Two years later, Harry Orchard accused an "inner circle" of the WFM of hiring him to murder former Idaho Governor Frank Steunenberg on December 30, 1905, and of paying him to set the bombs at the Vindicator Mine and Independence Depot. WFM leaders William D. Haywood, Charles Moyer, and George Pettibone were kidnapped to stand trial in Idaho. Although Haywood was acquitted, and charges against Moyer and Pettibone were dismissed, who paid Orchard remained historically contested. The outcome in Cripple Creek influenced the WFM to help found the Industrial Workers of the World in 1905. Both strikes wrote significant chapters in the struggle for control of industrial hardrock mining.

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CROATIANS

Between 1880 and World War I, an average of 500,000 immigrants arrived in the United States annually. Most of them came from southern, eastern, and central Europe, drawn to U.S. industry's demand for unskilled labor. Former peasants, farm laborers, and casual workers, predominantly men at first, became miners, steel workers, packinghouse workers, and the like. As they adjusted to life in industrial America, many of them participated in the nascent labor movement of the 1910s–1930s, a labor movement that struggled with the increasing ethnic and racial diversity of the working class, the re-organization of production under the influences of Taylorism and Fordism, the emergence of a mass consumer culture, and the rising power of the corporate and industrial elite. Within the heart of this experience were Croatian immigrants and, as time went on, their children.

Croatians came to the United States as they responded to the social forces that transformed the lives of millions of peasants and oppressed minorities throughout southern, central, and eastern Europe. In the 1870s and 1880s, economic and social changes had begun to shake the centralized authority of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, disrupting everyday life and putting political freedom on the historical agenda from the Dalmatian coast to the mountains of Bosnia and Hercegovina. Some launched new political movements for independence, democracy, and even socialism, while others left in pursuit of economic opportunities abroad. Nearly half a million, mostly young men, emigrated between 1905 and 1914, heading to Canada and Australia, as well as the United States. Seeking unskilled jobs in the rapidly expanding mass industries, they settled in the heavily industrialized cities of Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Chicago and the smaller industrial towns around these

cities; the industrial frontier of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Montana; and the coal towns of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, and Colorado.

While most of the immigrants arrived thinking of themselves as people from specific provinces—Licani, Slavonians, Dalmatians, Hercegovinians, among others—they would forge a new “Croatian” identity in the diaspora. Some had been influenced, before leaving, by the romantic nationalism that had developed within some of the Croatian provinces. Some sought broader bases for ethnic fraternal benefit societies. Since most of them had found low-paying, dangerous, unskilled work, they needed to provide for themselves and their families in case of injuries or even death. They quickly realized that the larger the base for a mutual benefit organization the better. By the early twentieth century, predominantly local societies had begun to flow into national organizations, first the National Croatian Society in 1897 and then an expanded Croatian Fraternal Union (CFU) in 1924. These organizations themselves promoted a new “Croatian” identity to attract members; and they produced newspapers, poetry, visual art, drama, music, dance, and political ideologies to reinforce this new self-conception. They also provided connections to ongoing political movements in the home country, which was a matter of considerable concern to many of the immigrants.

This new identity, new consciousness, continued to be transformed in response to international influences (the emergence of an independent Yugoslavia in the aftermath of World War I), national pressures (the disruption of new immigration occasioned by the laws of 1923 and 1924, on the one hand, and the concerted campaign to “Americanize” immigrants and their children, on the other), industrial and class experiences (the re-organization of production under the impact of Taylorism and Fordism), the recomposition of the working class (relations among immigrants and the great wave of African-American migration), and the intervention of activists (promoters of ethnic fraternalism, political organizers for homeland movements, trade union advocates, and socialists and communists). Croatian immigrant workers and their children who followed them into the same industries joined the CFU, contributed to political movements geared toward the homeland, and demonstrated an increased interest in the labor movement in the United States.

This reached a climax in the mid-1930s. The Great Depression put new pressures on Croatian and Croatian-American workers. They faced layoffs, reduced work weeks, wage cuts, speedups, and deteriorating working conditions. The New Deal offered them new hopes, ideas, and connections, as they

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joined political organizations and campaigns, made new alliances with other ethnic workers and even African-Americans, and experienced a level of involvement and empowerment that was inspiring and encouraging. When new unions, industrial unions, emerged within mass production industries, and their organizers produced literature in Croatian, spoke at CFU lodge meetings, participated in Croatian social and cultural events, and even hired Croatian and Croatian-American organizers, the floodgates opened. Tens of thousands of Croatians and Croatian-Americans joined the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, the United Auto Workers, the Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee, and other new union formations, mostly affiliated with the CIO, and some were even elected officers of the new local unions.

Like other immigrant and ethnic groups in this period, Croatians and Croatian-Americans remade themselves as American workers, drawing on their own particular cultural and political heritages, their experiences of exploitation and empowerment in the United States, their new relationships with other immigrants and ethnic workers, and their dreams of justice and political freedom for their homeland and a better life for their children and grandchildren in the United States. This mix, different in its particulars yet similar in its contours for each southern, central, and eastern European immigrant group in this period of U.S. history, enriched the labor movement and gave it much of its body. Croatian immigrant workers made an important contribution to the larger story of labor in the United States.

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CUBANS

The ebbs and flows of Cuban immigrants to the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fluctuated in tandem with the international market for tobacco products and the development of the cigar industry in particular. Although Cubans lived in the United States prior to the American Civil War (1861–1865), estimates of their numbers do not exceed one thousand, and they were not centered in distinct communities. By the mid-1870s, Cuban communities developed in New York, New Orleans, and Key West. Large-scale Cuban immigration to the United States in the nineteenth century can be traced to two intertwined factors: political and economic. The political factor revolved around the Civil War and the first Cuban War of Independence or Ten Years' War (1868–1878). The economic factor primarily concerned the tariffs that arose in the United States as a result of the Panic of 1857 and the Civil War.

Cigars were highly prized and enjoyed luxury items for the growing bourgeois populations of Europe and the United States during the early- to mid-nineteenth century. Cuban cigars were considered the world's finest due to the quality of the tobacco and the skill of the workers. Small-scale cigar manufacturing facilities were present in Key West, Florida, by the 1830s, and small Cuban communities developed in tandem. The close proximity of Key West to the commercial center of Havana and the tobacco regions of western Cuba provided an ideal setting for cigar production. The short distance from Florida to Cuba combined with friendly diplomatic relations between the United States and Spain allowed workers relatively easy access to labor markets on both sides of the Florida Straits.

The Panic of 1857 and the American Civil War impeded the cigar trade as tariffs on finished goods rose, while tariffs on raw materials remained unchanged. Cuban immigration to Key West was also impacted negatively by the war. As Havana's cigar industry began to feel the effects of the tariffs, a few manufacturers contemplated developing facilities in Key West and western Florida. Large numbers of unemployed workers emigrated to Key West in search of work. Most professionals emigrated to the northeastern cities of the United States—New York, Philadelphia, and Boston—while the wealthiest patricians settled in Europe.

In 1869, the second year of the war, the Spanish cigar manufacturer Vicente Martínez Ybor established his *El Principe de Gales* factory in Key West. Within a decade, Key West emerged as the major manufacturing cigar production center in the United States. Within a year, defeated working-class insurgents found a new home in southern Florida, and Key West also emerged as a major hotbed of Cuban activism. Adhering to various forms of Proudhonian mutualism in the early 1860s, by the 1880s workers organizations in Cuba adopted a more confrontational stance associated with the collectivism of Russian anarchist Michael Bakunin. What developed in the United States was a unique intersection of anarchist internationalism and Cuban nationalism.

Greatly influenced by—if not being members of—radical Cuban labor organizations in Cuba, Cuban immigrants developed a unique set of workplace institutions unknown in any other industry. Perhaps the most unique was the presence of a lector, or reader, in the cigar factory. Lectors read a variety of material—current events in newspapers, political propaganda, serialized novels—and were chosen and paid by the workers themselves.

By the mid-1880s, work disruptions in Key West's cigar industry became commonplace. Facing regular labor stoppages, several manufacturers sought a new location for their factories. Martínez Ybor purchased a 40-acre tract of land east of Tampa in 1885, and Ybor City was founded the following year. Other manufacturers followed his lead, and Ybor City became the new cigar mecca of the United States. Like other factory owners of the time, Ybor envisioned Ybor City as a paternalist company town. Workers were offered the opportunity to purchase their own homes at interest rates uncommon in Western company towns. Many workers gladly took advantage of the offer. Workers also settled with their families, either bringing wives and children from Cuba or marrying within the two growing south Florida Cuban émigré communities.

In addition to anarchism and workplace activism, Cuban independence also figured prominently in the goals and aspirations of the Cuban émigrés, whether upper class, middle class or working class. Cuban revolutionary leader José Martí made a series of visits to Key West and Tampa in early 1892. By the end of the year, during a visit to Tampa, he announced the creation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party (PRC), dedicated to Cuban independence.

The Cigar Makers International Union (CMIU) leader Samuel Gompers and other American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders realized the difficulties the CMIU faced from a Spanish-speaking population tempered by militant and radical labor activism. The

AFL and CMIU leadership also recognized that any popular movement overthrowing Spanish rule would wipe out the legal restrictions in Cuba against labor organizations. In short, the CMIU supported separatism in the hopes that an American version of craft unionism would develop in Cuba. Gompers met with PRC leadership, including Martí, and the anarchist Ramón Rivero felt significantly threatened to found the *Federación Cuba de Obreros* to combat the influence of the CMIU. Gompers would become head of the AFL in 1886.

Key West and Ybor City were not the only cities with sizable populations of Cubans and Cuban workers. New York City was the home to a sizable working-class community as well as an intellectual center and home to Cuba's landowning elite and professional and merchant classes. By July 1894, the *Cigar Makers Official Journal* recorded approximately three thousand cigar factories in New York City. Cigar factories varied in size from the *chinchal* (artisanal workshop) to the *fábrica* (factory) and everything between. The sociologist Lisandro Pérez notes that a key difference between the cigar industry in Ybor City/Key West and New York City is that Cubans dominated the cigar trade in south Florida while in New York they were apparently outnumbered by at least six other nationality groups. Another dissimilarity with Key West and Ybor City was that the vast majority of working-class Cubans were men. Living conditions varied, but most did not have the opportunity to rent, let alone own, the single-family dwellings common among their fellows in southern Florida. Most shared a room with three or four other men.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, cigar rolling in Cuban émigré communities was largely the domain of white males. White women and Afro-Cubans were incorporated into other aspects of the cigar production process. In New York City, the most expensive cigars were typically rolled by *Peninsulares* (Spaniards), while *Creoles* (Europeans born in Cuba) dominated the profession in Tampa and Key West. Banders, strippers or stemmers (workers who removed the center stems from tobacco leaves), casers, and bunchers were almost exclusively Creole. These jobs were the least paying and least prestigious in the cigar rolling hierarchy. At the bottom of the occupational ladder were women and unskilled Cubans, most of them Afro-Cubans and in some rare cases in Ybor City, local Afro-Americans. These tasks did not involve working directly with tobacco but were menial tasks such as sweeping and hauling.

Within the cigar industry in Cuba and south Florida, jobs were segregated more often by sex than by race. In the mid- to late 1800s, black, white, mulatto,

and quadron men mingled on cigar benches while their wives and daughters worked side by side in the stemming rooms. Photographs of workers in Ybor City factories in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries capture the multiracial and multicolored labor force that fueled cigar production and distinguished these manufacturing worksites from others in the New South.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Cuban women worked directly with tobacco as strippers and cigarette makers. White Cuban working-class women often worked inside the home, although in rare cases some rolled cigars or made cigarettes in small workshops or factories. Over time, more Cuban women entered the larger tobacco factories. In addition to coming close to monopolizing tobacco stemming, women banded and tubed the cigars.

A commonality shared by Cuban cigar makers in New York City and south Florida, in addition to being educated and radicalized on the shop floor through the lecturers, was that the cigar makers also had ample opportunity for developing bonds of solidarity in their communities. Cultural societies and a large number of workers' cooperatives worked out of these centers. A variety of political, economic, social, and philosophical views were discussed, although ideological divisions were common. Every night of the week, one could find working-class speakers airing their views, with the active participation of the public.

After the labor disputes in the émigré working-class communities in 1885 and 1886, anarchists influenced by the particular version of Spanish anarcho-collectivism that was increasingly in vogue in Cuba began to lead the Cuban cigar makers' unions in New York City, Key West, and Ybor City. Émigré Cuban workers managed to establish trade unions with strong ties to those inside Cuba. Cuban labor organizations had attempted to coordinate the activities of Cuban workers in the United States and sought the cooperation of the Knights of Labor, but the main links maintained by these workers were with the labor movement in Cuba. Also, the fact that leaders of the Knights of Labor sided with the prosecution during the trial of the Haymarket anarchists no doubt alienated Cuban workers from this union.

Cuba's second war of independence (1895–1898) and the Spanish-American War (1898) provided further disruptions to the cigar industry. When war erupted in 1895, Cuban anarchists in the émigré communities and on the island engaged in the armed struggle. In this war, the goal for the cigar makers was greater than independence—it was global social revolution. What differentiated the struggle in 1895 from all the previous wars against Spain was the

acknowledgment that inequality was the effect of the Cuban social system, not a by-product of Spanish colonial rule.

U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War meant that the Cuban anarchists' dream of global proletarian revolution was thwarted. It also meant that Cuba's tobacco industry—in particular, the Island's plantations—was soon dominated by U.S. tobacco concerns. In the early 1900s, the American Tobacco Corporation (ATC) consolidated control of the most productive tobacco farms, thereby establishing a global monopoly of tobacco cultivation, production, and distribution. Once ATC had total control of the Cuban tobacco market and outsourced production in the United States, Cuban workers left the island in record numbers. The Library of Congress estimates that between 50,000 and 100,000 Cubans moved between Havana and south Florida each year during the first decades of the twentieth century.

By the 1930s, technical advances and mechanization in the industry had dramatic impacts on the cigar industry and Cuban migration patterns. Machine operators, including women, made the skilled male hand-rollers superfluous. Furthermore, the discovery of mild Virginia tobacco, combined with a shift in consumer tastes—and commercial marketing—toward cigarettes, was the death knell of tobacco farming for countries like Cuba known for producing strong, dark tobacco. The North American cigar labor market was decimated, and the migration of Cuban cigar workers slowed to a trickle.

However, the number of political refugees increased under the regime of dictator Fulgencio Batista (1933–1944; 1952–1959) and again dramatically after the ascendancy of Fidel Castro's revolution in 1959. The early exiles tended to be white elites and professionals, while subsequent emigrants were small entrepreneurs, artists, and workers, including Afro-Cubans. Peter Cattán notes that the actual number of Cuban workers in the United States has been decreasing since 1980 due to slow population growth attributable, in large measure, to the Cuban government's restrictions on immigration. The largest Cuban communities in the United States today are the Miami and New York City metropolitan areas.

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See also **Cigar Makers International Union**

CULTURE, WORKING-CLASS

Working-class culture is a complex and contested concept, whether viewed from the perspective of historians who have studied it or from the groups to whose "culture" the phrase seems to refer. Among historians of the U.S. working class, analyses foregrounding the "cultural" dimensions of workers' work, home, and/or leisure lives remain controversial (though such analyses are not as "new" as some of their proponents or critics suppose). The study of working-class culture necessarily expands the focus

on union organization that the generation of historians who first institutionalized "labor history" placed at the center of their project, and also calls into question the centrality to workers' lives of the material and power struggles centered in the workplace that were the focus of later generations of historians. While practitioners of working-class cultural history argue that this expansion of focus more accurately represents the range of actual concerns of workers and their communities, others question the historical significance of studies not focused on workplace and political conflicts aimed at transforming oppressive class relations.

Even assuming its validity as a focus of working-class history, "working-class culture" is a vast and internally divided topic. In its modern anthropological sense, after all, "culture" covers an immense terrain. As applied to the lives of workers, this terrain potentially encompasses workplace skills and routines, political convictions ranging from revolutionary radicalism to nationalistic patriotism (albeit not always for the workers' current country of residence), domestic arrangements, gender relations, religious belief (and related institutionalized rituals and lay practices), ethnic identities and the cultural practices associated with them (including language, family structure, foodways, music, spoken and written narrative and verse, arts and crafts, religion, along with a variety of transnational affiliations), and engagement with an expanding range of commercial cultural forms (theater, dance halls, radio, recorded music, movies, television, newspapers, books), participation in consumer culture, navigations and understandings of space and region, and constructions of divisions of race, ethnicity, and gender as well as class acquired from a variety of sources, to name only some of the topics that have engaged historians of working-class experience. A tall order for any single study—indeed it is common for scholarship in the field to be faulted for missing some dimension of its subjects' cultural world—this range of potential subject matter also invites scrutiny as to the relevance of its various dimensions to the dynamics of class identity or agency that are usually important to labor and working-class history. More perplexing, still, may be the ways in which the inclusive anthropological notion of culture, though in many ways more amenable to the egalitarian spirit of much labor and working-class history than more hierarchical literary or "high" cultural traditions, poses some knotty conceptual dilemmas of its own for the projects of working-class historians.

A key problem with the anthropological notion of culture is its assumption of unity within "the culture" under study. Though many anthropologists themselves now question this assumption—revising it to

make sense of increasingly mobile cultural identities that cross the borders containing the place-bound cultures analyzed within the ethnographic tradition that produced it—its dilemmas remain for the many disciplines informed by anthropology’s widely influential concepts. For scholars examining working-class history, distinctions of race, ethnicity, and gender, most prominently, as well as a host of other divisions complicate any efforts to comprehend working-class culture as an actual or potential “whole.” In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, race and ethnicity were especially important fault lines within the study of working-class culture, which historians saw as an in which racially indeterminate “new immigrants” of the turn of the twentieth century came to embrace the privileges of “whiteness,” and sometimes to bridge or dismantle them.

Whatever the dilemmas posed by anthropological notions of culture, historians interested in the problems, perspectives, and interests of working-class people tend to be decidedly less friendly to concepts of culture that derive from scholarly traditions of literary criticism or intellectual history. Historians studying people whose own organizational and political cultures often emphasized how economic divisions rooted in material life shaped and curtailed their own aspirations look with understandable suspicion on the “cultural” or “linguistic” turn. They associated it with a literary history that highlighted discursively constructed cultural categories beyond which determinations of material life or experience remain obscure. They may also resent insinuations that social-scientific methods of analysis render them obtuse to textual constructions of documents they examine for a bedrock of fact. Even so, the methods of textual scrutiny and “discursive” analysis associated with the “cultural turn” have proved useful to working-class historians interested in the intellectual categories that shaped many of the governmental, social-scientific, legal, and scientific sources on which historians rely to reconstruct working-class lives. Combined with efforts to interpret working-class appropriations and reconfigurations of such categories, such studies yield insights into plebeian participation in cultural traditions that would otherwise remain the preserve of historians of more elite and powerful groups.

Battles between “documentary” social historians and “textual” cultural historians have given way to cross-disciplinary efforts to make sense of the capital, labor, and cultural flows in an era of fast-paced global production. A concurrent turn toward the analysis of empire and colonialism and their significance for constructions of a range of social categories within imperial nations, including class, has set challenging new cultural questions on the agendas of working-class

historians, from the global mapping of class identities to the imperial hierarchies implicated in workers’ political and popular culture. Recognizing that a short encyclopedia entry can scarcely do justice to the broad field of “working-class culture” either in this scholarship or in the past, the remainder of this essay addresses some key areas of innovation and debate over the decades since “culture” became an indispensable dimension of scholarship on the U.S. working class.

Cultures of Labor, Organization, and Working-Class Experience

Since the 1960s, scholars who focus on workers’ “culture” as an object of historical analysis have seen themselves as broadening the terrain of labor and working-class history beyond the organizational and economic focus of earlier generations of labor historians. But many of their most important insights into the cultural dimensions of workers’ lives—their beliefs, values, language, stories—have actually focused on the very topics of workplace skills and experience, labor organizations that aim to shape the job from below, and political action that takes such aims into realms of electoral and revolutionary action that absorbed the attention of labor historians from the early twentieth century on. Conceptualized and analyzed as workers’ culture, these dimensions of workers’ lives as expressions of working-class cultural expression and intellectual life, these shop-floor and organizational dimensions of workers’ lives, turn out to have wide significance beyond the domains of factory and union.

Though not the first scholarship on U.S. working populations to do so, Herbert Gutman’s classic “Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America” articulated with particularly resounding effects the importance of “culture,” in the anthropological sense, to studies of work and workers in the United States. In this essay, Gutman pointed to burgeoning nineteenth-century factories as sites of particularly profound cultural conflicts between employers’ expectations and the cultural aspirations and practices workers brought from rural backgrounds and artisanal pasts to new forms of industrial employment. Religious convictions, traditional habits of work, nostalgia for outdoor work, among other cultural constructions, all posed challenges to the rigors of industrial labor. A companion piece in the collection named after Gutman’s influential article emphasized the importance of class divisions, forged at the workplace and expressed in working-class organization, to

the wider culture of Protestant religious practices and values of sobriety and self-control that had been attributed predominantly to middle-class clergy, reformers, and parishioners.

Over the next 20 years, his example inspired and provoked a range of scholarship that looked to emerging factory experiences and the struggles, organizations, and politics they provoked in order to understand the sources of wider shifts in “national” culture, particularly in the nineteenth century. Artisanal journeymen who found their status as craftsmen degraded by the shift to wage labor became the architects of a working-class republicanism that claimed for workers the republican ideals of independence and virtue associated with a more elite revolutionary generation; immigrant heirs to the European class struggles of 1848 transplanted class-inflected concepts of liberty to antislavery organizations; even women workers, often slighted in histories that attended to the cultural constructions emanating from not only predominantly male but also masculinist constructions of working-class values and political culture, defiantly engaged middle-class gendered ideals of domesticity and femininity in their encounters with work, charitable, judicial, and political authorities, male and female. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, historians of maritime labor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as Marcus Rediker, have mined the Atlantic, cross-racial world of sailors to find shipboard languages, narratives, and struggles that contributed strong plebeian voices to the intellectual history of eighteenth-century revolution.

Studies of workers’ contributions to broad national and transnational cultural currents have necessarily also broadened the “culture” of workers’ organizations themselves beyond the issues of wages and contracts that occupied earlier generations of labor history scholars. From shipyard locals, whose contracts enshrined the ideals of leisure and cultural development associated with shorter hours, to Knights of Labor assemblies that drew on the rituals of secret fraternal societies to instill and maintain a sense of the dignity of craft, even across craft, gender, and racial lines, nineteenth-century workers extended the efforts of their organizations to the realm of culture. Iron and garment workers of the late nineteenth century, as David Montgomery has shown, fashioned out of their workplace lives ideals of mutualism that their unions enunciated and pressed into American reform and political debates. Radical political organizations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also expressed values forged on the job, translating individualist traditions of sobriety and independence into a socialist register, providing the communities of discourse in which working-class intellectuals could

concoct new theories of mobilization and education, and establishing written and public venues for the performance of the music, poetry, and narrative that emerged from struggles over control at the workplace.

But the nexus of working-class organization and culture was not tied only to the job, as many studies of work and community have demonstrated. Labor historians concerned with workers’ culture have also shown the vital importance of neighborhoods and households, saloons and churches, parish priests and local entrepreneurs, immigrant organizations and foreign language newspapers to the values and aspirations realized through union organization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In some cases, certain ethnic identities came to infuse multiple dimensions of working-class culture for other ethnic groups, as when Irish-Americans came to dominate many of the labor as well as the parish, drinking, theatrical, and political cultures encountered by Eastern and Southern European newcomers to the United States in the late nineteenth century. Combining some of the complicating themes addressed below, historians like Lizabeth Cohen have also insisted on new media of commercial and consumer culture, such as radio, movies, and chain stores, as venues that both reinforced and bridged the ethnically diverse cultures of unorganized workers in ways that prepared the way for the appeal of mass industrial unions in the 1930s. These unions, in turn, spawned what Michael Denning recognizes in the 1930s and after as a “laboring” of U.S. culture at large, as culture “high” and “popular” became infused with a range of concerns that linked the CIO, the pan-ethnic cultures of many of its members, the internationalist ideals of radical antifascism, and demands for and provisions of the incipient welfare state associated with New Deal programs. Promising in its appeal to the multiple cultural roots of “everybody who’s nobody,” as Paul Robeson sang it in “Ballad for Americans,” this labored culture also fractured over the very boundaries implicit in the organizational and governmental programs on which it thrived.

Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

That splintering had much to do with the fissures of race, ethnicity, and gender that many historians of working-class experience have emphasized as limits to the mutualism expressed by the organizational cultures described above. The very ethnic traditions, organizations, and neighborhoods that served as resources for working-class organizations and their ideals of solidarity also proved to be obstacles to the

solidarities some radicals and organizers assumed to be natural expressions of shared class oppressions and struggles. Ethnic solidarity and tradition—as well as religious and nationalistic allegiances that accompanied them—often provided access to the economic security that labor organizations and their historians associate with the shared culture of work, thus demonstrating that the shared values of “working-class culture” had itself to be produced out of a range of competing affiliations.

Some ethnic boundaries were more readily bridged by a shared “working-class culture” than others. An important strain of working-class cultural history examines the ways in which some racialized ethnicities have been systematically subordinated as successive waves of immigrant populations constructed working-class cultural institutions—and more amorphous spaces of working-class cultural affiliation—out of the lineaments of white privilege. In the works of David Roediger and Alexander Saxton, the hoary nineteenth-century ideals of manly independence and republican virtue that wage laborers translated into working-class terms made sense only in tortuous distinction to slave labor and the reviled African-Americans associated with it. Both in popular venues like minstrelsy—one of the first forms of public culture performed for distinctively working-class audiences—and in political and organizational mobilizations, wage workers demonstrated an ambivalent identification with and ridicule of African-Americans that inflected the cultures of working-class identity and organization henceforth. While some critics complain that this rendering of the white racialization of working-class culture in the United States obscures the social and economic sources of racial division in favor of undocumented psychological and symbolic categories, focus on the cultural work of white privilege has produced important insights into the role of working-class culture and institutions as crucibles of racial identity. The identification of race as a key problem not only for elite intellectual theorists of biological difference but also for union locals and socialist parties has also focused attention on these venues as important sites for innovative conceptualizations of racial differences and solidarities. A further theme in working-class cultural studies attuned to issues of race and ethnicity is to reclaim the cultures of solidarity produced by African-American, Asian-American, Latina/o and other racialized workers. This scholarship has emphasized the sources of working-class culture in long and dispersed traditions of anti-racial protest and also emphasized the significance of the “hidden transcripts” of everyday interchanges, jokes, and stories as sources of more substantial challenges to racial and economic injustice.

The gendered identities and experiences of both women and men as workers within the industrial workplaces that have absorbed much of the attention of labor historians and in the broader communities that housed, fed, and entertained them also complicate renditions of a single shared working-class culture. The very conception of working-class dignity associated with such cultures was gendered in ways that excluded women from participating in its rituals of manliness, and focused these rituals on the cultivation of particular versions of masculine identity that had racial and ethnic boundaries of their own. Moreover, the dignity of labor pursued in the cultures of working-class organization was often defined against dependency associated with women’s status in nineteenth-century households. Working-class women themselves shouldered a range of labors within and outside the household that sustained working-class cultures without being celebrated within them. When they did venture into wage labor, they were often shunned from the fraternities of working-class solidarities. For all these reasons, the study of women workers, and more broadly of gender within working-class culture, has necessarily reshaped the boundaries of workplace and institutions within which the historical cultures of workers as a class have often been sought: taking that study to tenements, porches, strike kitchens, breadlines, gossip columns, and fashion debates. As the availability of consumer goods at lower prices gradually replaced some of the household production women contributed to working-class households, moreover, their status as “consumers,” and their relations to women who often staffed the proliferating sites of consumer culture, challenged the producerist themes prominent in the culture of working-class organization. Often bringing commercially inspired definitions of style onto the picket lines, such women—and not a few men, like the well-dressed pachucos of postwar working-class racial tensions—traced the complex nexus of working-class and popular culture.

Popular Cultural Spaces and Leisure

The commercial origins of workers’ popular cultural pursuits have posed special dilemmas for the study of an identifiably working-class culture. While working people have patronized, labored in, shaped, and rendered popular a range of influential forms of commercial forms, the sometimes ephemeral and escapist character of such expressions render them questionable vehicles of “class” identities. An important vein of scholarship on U.S. working-class culture points to

the “working-class accents,” to borrow Michael Denning’s phrase, in commercial cultural fare ranging from dime novels to vaudeville theater to movies to television. As important, they have shown that commercial culture is a terrain on which the fault lines of a presumptively shared “class” culture are probed and negotiated: where “hillbilly” music encounters African-American blues, homosocial worlds of working-class men experiment on dance floors with new relations to women, and so on. The results do not always or even usually make for shared class-specific values bridging such divides, as popular culture is as important a source of divisive self-constructions as it is a venue for expressing and exploring cross-racial or

gender-bending class solidarities. More challenging still, perhaps, are the studies of working-class engagement with popular culture that remind us of the role that the enticements to abundance, self-expression, and frivolity associated with commercial and popular culture might play in a cultural tradition often associated with solidarities formulated around scarcity, mutuality, and hard work. Opening on to a wide range of studies of workers at play, such themes stretch definitions of the “will” contained in the mid-nineteenth-century anthem to a working-class mutuality that looked beyond the cultures of work itself: “eight hours for what we will.”

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DANBURY HATTERS CASE: *LOEWE v. LAWLOR* (1908, 1915)

Loewe v. Lawlor, the 1908 U.S. Supreme Court case (with a ratification of the related financial judgment in 1915), is one of the most notorious anti-union judicial decisions in American history. In what became known as the “Danbury Hatters’ case,” the Supreme Court struck a blow against labor by subjecting individual unionists engaged in a secondary boycott to financial penalties for their violations of antitrust law.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Americans were attempting to come to grips with a variety of novel forms of large organizations, particularly new corporate behemoths that threatened to monopolize fields ranging from tobacco to oil. The foundational piece of national legislation meant to restrain the power of large corporations was the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890. The intent of this law was to prohibit corporate restraint of trade in interstate commerce. As the twentieth century dawned however, employers faced with the increasing power of unions realized that courts might be sympathetic to using the Sherman Act to restrain similar combinations organized by workers.

Local as well as national conditions were critical to the eventual resolution of the case that became *Loewe v. Lawlor*, which dragged on for a decade and a half. In 1902, workers affiliated with the American Federation of Labor’s (AFL’s) United Hatters of North America struck the shop of Dietrich Loewe, a small manufacturer in the hat capital of Danbury, Connecticut, as part of an industrywide organizing effort.

When Loewe broke off negotiations, the union launched a national boycott of his products.

Supported by the American Anti-Boycott Association, an association of small Connecticut proprietors, Loewe retaliated with a lawsuit that ultimately landed in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1907. The following year, the Supreme Court ruled, in a unanimous decision written by Chief Justice Melville Fuller, in favor of Loewe. The court held most generally that unions were indeed subject to antitrust legislation and that they would not be allowed to restrain interstate trade. In particular, the court declared illegal the union’s secondary boycott. Such boycotts were meant to pressure companies not involved in an immediate conflict between workers and an employer not to purchase nonunion or “unfair” products. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 declared secondary boycotts illegal, although unions have earned certain rights to picket informationally about unfair goods.

Along with their formal ruling, the Supreme Court sent the case back to the federal district court, with the trial beginning in 1909. At issue was whether Loewe could seize as damages the assets not just of the poor and unincorporated union itself, but of all individual union members involved even in the most indirect way in the strike or boycott. The judge and jury found in favor of Loewe, and a second trial in 1912 brought an even larger financial settlement for the hat manufacturer. The U.S. Supreme Court, in a decision written by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, subsequently upheld the lower courts in the 1915 ruling of *Lowler v. Loewe*. Nearly 200 members of

the United Hatters—most of whom had not worked for Loewe or even had knowledge of the boycott—then had their property attached. The threatened loss of their homes led the AFL to proclaim a 1916 Hatters’ Day to raise funds. After many attempts to fight the judgment, the union finally in 1917 paid Loewe \$234,192 in damages. Ironically, while the larger battle over who had legal responsibility for union actions played itself out, Loewe apparently remained on good terms with local unionists—even those who suffered under the court’s financial judgment. Many apparently recognized that such small proprietors would indeed have suffered irreparable financial harm by following these particular union wages and rules.

The Clayton Act of 1914 promised some relief to unions from antitrust prosecutions, but injunctions continued to cripple many organizing efforts. And in the end, *Loewe v. Lawlor* can hardly be viewed as anything but an almost-crippling blow to the organization of labor. Still, even the arguments made on behalf of Loewe did offer some glimmer of hope that the legal environment of the Progressive Era would provide increasingly legitimacy to workers’ organizing, moving unions from illegal conspiracies that business elites wished to stamp out completely to accepted actors in a pluralist political economy oriented around the rights of groups, and not just those of sovereign individuals.

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DAVIS, LEON (1906–1992) Hospital Workers’ Union

Leon Julius Davis, longtime leader of Hospital Workers’ Union, Local 1199, was a pioneer in hospital worker organizing and also a shrewd survivor within the “lefting” of the American labor movement. Born to a family of religious Jews in Pinsk, a peasant village

near Brest-Litovsk in what was then White Russia, on November 21, 1907, Davis migrated to the United States in 1921 and attended the Columbia School of Pharmacy (1927–1929), leaving to become a drugstore clerk and an activist for the Trade Union Unity League, the labor organizing arm of the Communist party. In 1932, he was a founder of the Pharmacists’ Union of Greater New York and remained an organizer when the union became Local 1199 of the Retail Clerks International (American Federation of Labor [AFL]) in 1936.

Within a year, however, Davis’s organization had disaffiliated with the AFL and participated in the founding of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union (RWDSU-CIO), with which Local 1199 subsequently affiliated and in which Davis became an international vice-president in 1955. In 1969, Davis was elected president of Local 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, while retaining presidency of Local 1199, the New York Drug and Hospital Union, a post which he had held for the previous two decades.

Davis retired from both positions in 1982, only to see his union suffer a period of prolonged internal turmoil. He died in Queens, New York, following his second heart attack in 1992. A crowded memorial service in Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall featured eulogies from Coretta Scott King and New York City Mayor David Dinkins, as well as many long-time union brothers and sisters.

Under President Davis’s leadership (and with the assistance of key colleagues Elliott Godoff, Moe Foner, and Jessie Olson), Local 1199 mixed political idealism with a hard, pragmatic edge. Even as a small drugstore union, Local 1199 displayed a distinctive spirit. For one, interracial and interethnic solidarity proved an essential ingredient of drugstore unionism. Partially as a response to an anti-Semitic quota system affecting medical schools, Jews dominated the pharmacist trade in New York City, even as porters and stockmen were predominantly black. In 1937, the union launched a successful campaign in Harlem, beginning with open-air meetings of the unemployed and ending with strike threats, to secure jobs for black pharmacists and to promote the invisible porters to the position of “soda men.” In response, when the union faced a fierce attack from both anti-Communist governmental probes and rival Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) locals in 1948, black Harlem pharmacists stepped in to protect 1199’s jurisdiction. Another important principle was militant, industrial unionism. What began as a pharmacists’ organization not only quickly incorporated the less-skilled drugstore employees into its ranks but also developed a creative, participatory approach to organizing.

In 1957, as Local 1199 emerged from a decade of defensive, jurisdictional battles with a small but secure base of 6,000 NYC drugstore members, Davis searched for a new organizing challenge. Connecting with Elliott Godoff, a hospital organizer refugee from the left-wing—and by then defunct—United Public Workers of America, Davis led his union into a new and grand adventure into the giant, nonprofit hospital sector of the city and beyond. Beginning with Montefiore Hospital in 1958 and continuing with a significant breakthrough following the nation's first major hospital strike in 1959, Local 1199 transformed itself from a bit player to a major figure within the city's labor and political firmament.

By the 1960s, Davis and what was now District 1199 began to fan out throughout the country to organize health care workers in all sections of the health care industry, from hospitals and nursing homes to mental health clinics. The growth and organization of the hospital workers' union, however, was more than just a labor union struggle, since Davis and 1199 members used their organized strength to demand social and economic changes for all workers. Adopting the slogan "Union Power-Soul Power," Davis joined forces with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference in a new spirit of labor movement building. At the height of civil rights (and later anti-Vietnam War and women's rights) struggles, 1199ers were visibly out front, with Davis regularly leading a black, brown, and white coalition in the streets as well as at ballot boxes on a never-ending host of progressive campaigns. An extended confrontation with nearly 1,000 arrests, for example, accompanied Local 1199-B's ultimately stymied campaign in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1969.

LEON FINK

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See also **New York City Hospital Strike (1959)**

DAVIS, RICHARD L. (DECEMBER 24, 1863–JANUARY 15, 1900) National Executive Board of the United Mine Workers of America

In 1896, Richard L. Davis became the first African-American to be elected a member of the National

Executive Board of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), a position he held for two years. Although historians have lavished attention on the scores of letters he wrote during the 1890s to the *United Mine Workers Journal*, they have put little effort into reconstructing Davis's socio-economic background. Through the letters, scholars have assessed the extent to which the UMWA lived up to its constitutional commitment to interracial organizing, as well as the union's treatment of black workers and its willingness and ability to curb the racist actions of rank and file white miners. The result of all this attention has been a sharp debate among labor historians over the possibilities and limits of interracial unionism in the Gilded Age and Jim Crow United States. Writing amid the Civil Rights movement in the late 1960s, Herbert Gutman's examination of Davis's letters led him to argue that even in the Jim Crow era, black and white miners could achieve labor solidarity. Herbert Hill offered a stinging rebuke amid the political polarization of the Reagan years, stressing the limits of interracial fellowship. Hill contended that the UMWA failed to achieve its promise of solidarity and equitable treatment of black and white workers, and that the union failed to monitor and control the racism of white workers, who exhibited little real commitment to organizing across the color line.

Born on December 24, 1863, in Roanoke, Virginia, Davis began his working life at age eight in a tobacco factory, a job he held for nine years. Eventually dismayed by poor wages and working conditions, he sought employment as a coal miner. For a year or so, he drifted through West Virginia's Kanawha and New River regions, arriving in the Hocking River Valley town of Rendville, Ohio, sometime during 1882. Soon thereafter he joined the segregated "colored" Knights of Labor Local 1935, which had just been formed that year. By the mid-1880s, Davis already evinced a strong desire to bring all of Rendville's African-American miners into the union. As Charles Nelson recounts in "A Story of Rendville," Davis soon became active in labor organizing, sending a letter to the Knights of Labor's national leader, Terence Powderly, that proclaimed, "We [L.A. 1935] will never relinquish our work until the bulk of our brethren are brought within the folds of our noble order."

When the Knights began to wane in the late 1880s and early 1890s, Davis lost no time in joining the newly formed UMWA. He attended its founding as a delegate in 1890 and served on the executive board of District 6 until his election to the national executive board six years later. As a roving labor organizer, Davis spent his time organizing new locals, settling disputes between miners and their employers—usually over pay and working conditions—and negotiating

arrangements between white and black workers. Racial disputes among miners typically concerned the equitable distributions of work and supervisory positions in the mines. Most of Davis's work was based in Ohio, but special assignments took him to western Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Alabama. His rich and compelling letters written to the *UMWJ*, which he wrote during his travels as an organizer, reveal much about him and his aspirations, as well as about the difficulties he faced in Ohio and elsewhere. Davis evinced a steadfast commitment to working people and their institutions. But he was never starry-eyed about this commitment. He constantly found himself chiding black mineworkers for wanting to organize separately, lambasting white unionists for treating their fellow black workers unfairly, and holding the union to account for failing to live up to its espoused promises. These failings irked Davis and added to the difficulties he faced negotiating decent wages and fair working conditions during the economically tough 1890s.

In addition to the considerable commitments Davis made to the miners of Hocking Valley, he sank familial and political roots in Rendville. In 1887, he married Mary Bailey, and she and Davis had two daughters together. Like her husband, Mary was literate, and both their daughters attended school in Rendville. Long after Davis's premature death in 1900, Mary and the two children continued to call Rendville home, with Mary earning a living by dressmaking and by taking in boarders. Besides raising a family in Rendville, Mary's husband exhibited political commitments to Ohio's Republican party. He lent his support to congressional candidates with a commitment to labor and shared platforms with gubernatorial candidates and state senators to commemorate Labor Day.

We do not know why Davis merely passed through Kanawha and the New River Region of West Virginia, but when he reached Rendville, he found work as a coal miner and almost certainly, a receptive community as well. As a coal miner, he attained the respected position of checkweighman—the person who recorded the weight of the coal the miner's mined. Since coal companies paid miners according to the amount of the coal they dug from the earth, this position determined the miners' wages. He also likely found a community of fellow black citizens who attained considerable prominence in the community, whether as politicians, proprietors, or professionals. At times, these men chose to act as a black community but at other times, aligned with their white neighbors. How they chose to exercise their political and organizational will depended on the particular issue

at hand. To secure the election of political candidates favorable to labor issues, blacks and whites lent their voices jointly to campaigns. To prevent a rumored lynching, the black community informed local white police officers that retribution would follow should the authorities permit such an affront to justice.

Following the depression of the 1890s and the re-opening of a mine at which Davis had labored for many years, he found himself blacklisted and unable to secure work. Why Rendville coal operators blacklisted Davis remains unclear, but the effect was to leave him in difficult economic circumstances. Davis pleaded with the UMWA, the organization that he had served so ably, to assist him with work or financial assistance in this time of great need. The union failed him. At the time of his death on January 15, 1900, he was still not working as a miner, though some reports suggest that he may have become a village constable. The cause of Davis's untimely death remains murky, with some accounts suggesting he died of typhoid after catching it from contaminated well water. Other reports suggest he died of pneumonia. Whatever the cause, Rendville and its working people had lost a staunch advocate, and the United States one of its first black industrial labor organizers.

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DAVIS-BACON ACT

When enacted on March 3, 1931, the Davis-Bacon Act, also known as the Prevailing Wage Law, became the nation's first federal law to secure a minimum wage for nongovernment workers. In short, the law requires contractors working on federal or federally assisted building projects to pay workers no less than the local prevailing wage rates for each trade.

Prior to the 1960s, the Davis-Bacon Act inspired little controversy. Amid the economic crisis of the Great Depression, the act was an easy sell for Congressman Robert Bacon (Republican, NY) and Senator James Davis (Republican, PA). The American Federation of Labor's (AFL's) Building Trades Department lobbied hard for the legislation, but they were joined by others outside of the house of labor. Most notably, contractors who had entered into agreements with local building trades unions sought protection from outside contractors who employed cheap, nonunion labor. In general, supporters of the Davis-Bacon Act hoped that it would bring a degree of order to an unpredictable industry at a time when the living conditions of the working class were rapidly deteriorating.

For the remainder of the Depression and throughout World War II, the Davis-Bacon Act determined wages on all federally funded construction projects (including WPA, PWA, and defense projects). Numerous states followed by passing "Little Davis-Bacon Acts" to cover state-funded projects (although several states had already enacted prevailing wage laws prior to 1931). During the postwar period, the Building Trades Department fought to preserve the prevailing wage system and to extend its coverage to include federally assisted projects. These efforts bore fruit, and as a result building trades unions positioned themselves to profit handsomely from postwar government construction. The 1956 interstate highway bill included a prevailing wage provision, and in 1964, Congress amended the Federal Airport Act and the National Housing Act to work in accordance with the Davis-Bacon Act. Also in 1964, Congress amended the act to include fringe benefits, such as health and life insurance, and vacation and holiday pay.

The government's postwar spending in defense and heavy construction, coupled with the 1960s construction boom, fostered union strength and rewarded building trades workers in the form of steady employment and high wages. This prosperity in turn generated a backlash. In 1971, rising wages coupled with a flurry of strike activity in the construction industry prompted President Richard Nixon to suspend the Davis-Bacon Act for one month. More threatening than the Nixon administration's attempts to curb inflation and to stabilize the industry, however, was

the formation of a movement to challenge the power of building trades unions.

In 1969, union and nonunion contractors joined with some of the nation's largest corporations (U.S. Steel, Monsanto, and the Ford Motor Company, among others) to found the Construction Users Anti-Inflation Roundtable (CUAIR), which reorganized as the Business Roundtable in 1972, to strengthen contractors' bargaining power. Since members of the Roundtable blamed rising construction costs on union wage rates and benefits, the Davis-Bacon Act was a natural target. The prevailing wage system may have served a purpose during the economic crisis of the 1930s, they argued, but in the 1960s the law handcuffed the economy by inhibiting the growth of the nonunion sector of the construction industry and by causing inflation to spiral out of control. In addition, opponents of the law claimed that in practice it was inefficient, arbitrary, and poorly administered. Since an amendment to the act in 1935, the Department of Labor has been responsible for determining the prevailing wage for a given locality (in the law's original form, that responsibility was assumed by contractors and contracting agencies). Opponents of the law have contended that the Department of Labor lacks the resources to meet the task of conducting accurate wage surveys in thousands of localities for thousands of construction projects each year. Instead, critics have charged that the DOL tends to make union rate the *de facto* prevailing wage (supporters of the act have countered that less than half of wage determinants match union scales).

Throughout the 1970s, the Roundtable, the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), and other open-shop organizations attacked the Davis-Bacon Act with a combination of publicity and legislative lobbying. In addition to spending \$1.2 million to run its own series in *Reader's Digest* in 1975, the Roundtable financed several academic studies that buttressed its call for the repeal of federal and state prevailing wage laws. Their efforts were buoyed in 1979, when the federal government's General Accounting Office condemned the law in a report decisively titled *The Davis-Bacon Act Should be Repealed*. Ideally, the Roundtable and ABC hoped that they could convince Congress to repeal the act. But alternatively they supported legislation that would restrict its reach by removing certain projects from the Department of Labor's jurisdiction and by attaching provisions to appropriation bills that would limit the act's applicability.

Their efforts notwithstanding, open-shop campaigns to repeal or amend the Davis-Bacon Act have been unsuccessful (although several state prevailing wage laws were repealed in the late 1970s and early

1980s). This is in large part because of the ability of building trades unions, which frequently feud with one another, to unite in defense of the law. Organized labor has considered prevailing wage laws vital to the maintenance of a quality standard of living for construction workers. Union solidarity on the issue was manifest in the activities of the Building Trades Department (BTD). To counter the Roundtable's publicity campaign, the BTD established the Center to Protect Workers' Rights (CPWR) in 1979. One immediate task of the CPWR was to fund scholarly research, free from anti-union bias, on the inflationary impact of the Davis-Bacon Act. Armed with these articles and other research materials prepared by the CPWR, the BTD waged a spirited lobbying campaign of their own. With the support of the Department of Labor, which has generally supported the Davis-Bacon Act, organized labor was able to prevent open-shop forces from gaining the support they needed in Congress.

On the other hand, by 1990, the open-shop movement had begun to retreat from its aggressive stance. For one, the inflationary period of the 1960s had passed. Also construction unions no longer held the upper hand in collective bargaining. Whereas 80% of the industry's workforce was unionized in 1969, only 35% carried union cards in 1990. Nevertheless, the Republican party continues to try to weaken the Davis-Bacon Act. In 2005, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, President George W. Bush attempted to suspend the act in those parts of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi devastated by the hurricane. However, he withdrew his suspension after his action met with intense political opposition.

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DAY, DOROTHY (1897–1980) Catholic Labor Activist

Bohemian, radical activist, journalist, charity worker, and devout Catholic, Dorothy Day founded the

Catholic Worker newspaper and the movement it inspired.

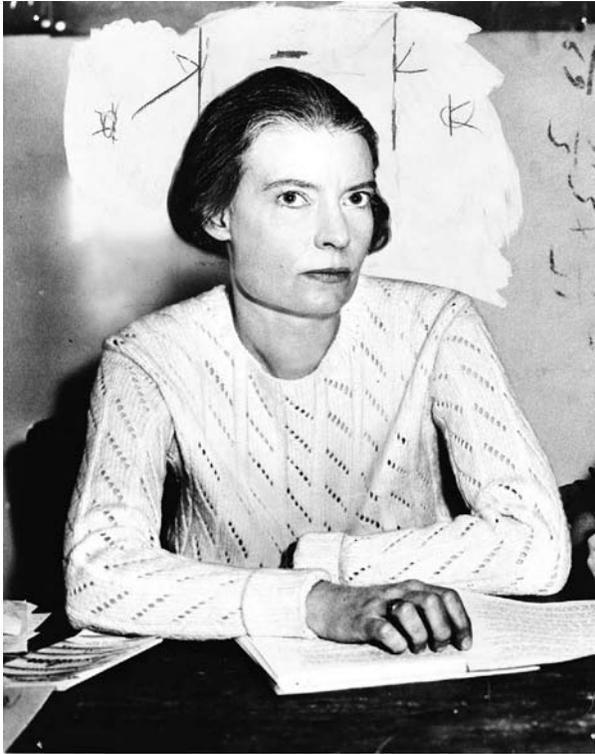
Raised in a respectable middle-class household in San Francisco and Chicago, Day rebelled against the culture of her upbringing and became involved in a socialist organization at the University of Illinois. After two years in Urbana, she went to New York, where she embraced the world of early twentieth-century Greenwich Village: literary, radical, and religiously agnostic. She wrote first for a socialist daily, the *New York Call*, then for a Marxist magazine, the *Masses*. Her social circle included many prominent writers and editors of the day, including Max Eastman, John Dos Passos, Malcolm Cowley, Allen Tate, Caroline Gordon, Hart Crane, and Eugene O'Neill.

The birth of her daughter in 1926 crystallized a developing religious sense, and Day had the girl baptized in the Catholic church; Day herself became Catholic the following year. She dedicated her life to her daughter and to the working class of New York City.

Conversant with, and sympathetic to, the socialist and Communist strains of thought to which she was exposed, Day nonetheless charted a different course, one more compatible with the Catholic faith to which she was newly wedded. She was confirmed in her tendencies by the preaching of an eccentric French philosopher, Peter Maurin, whom she met in 1932. Maurin, newly arrived in the United States, taught a brand of personalist philosophy that was at once devoutly Catholic and profoundly radical. He advocated abolition of the wage system but envisioned it occurring through a return to agriculture rather than through worker ownership of industry. Day absorbed his thought and sought to put it into practice.

Convinced of the evils of both the state and capitalism, Day applied herself to undermining both. She started a newspaper, the *Catholic Worker*, the first issue of which appeared on May Day, 1933. Sold at a penny a copy, it was intended not to make a profit, but to inspire working people to bring about a society that reflected the principles of cooperation and sharing rather than competition and profit making. It also aimed to bring to workers a friendly face of Catholicism, to attract those who were inclined to dismiss the church as a force for the status quo.

Day was not content to limit her work to the publishing world, where her efforts on behalf of workers might remain at a distance from their plight. She sought also to remedy the ills of society directly through "houses of hospitality." Similar in some ways to the settlement house movement headed by Jane Addams, the Catholic Worker houses that Day and her increasing number of followers organized were



Dorothy Day, half-length portrait, seated at desk, facing right. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-111099].

open to the indigent, the homeless, or to anyone who needed lodging. Residents were expected to participate in the work of the movement, from housework to printing and distributing the *Catholic Worker*. Inspired by the teaching of Day and Maurin, Catholic Workers also founded communal farms.

In the context of a late 1930s breakdown of initial Catholic consensus in favor of the New Deal, the Catholic Worker movement became more controversial within the church. No one questioned Day's personal morality or standing in the church (she vocally defended the church's moral teachings), but her unorthodox methods attracted some criticism. For one, her mission operated outside the traditional structure of Catholic charity, outside even the purview of Catholic clergy. Increasing Catholic (and broader American) fears of radicalism and communism also called into question an organization that frequently cooperated with such elements.

In the early days of the movement, Day and Maurin had disagreed over the issue of organized labor. Maurin opposed union organization as a capitulation to the modern industrial system, while Day and most Catholic Workers actively supported the labor movement. The Association of Catholic Trade

Unionists (ACTU) grew out of a meeting that occurred at the Catholic Worker headquarters in New York.

By the late 1930s, however, Day had become disillusioned with the trajectory of American unions. Her paper began criticizing the ACTU and organized labor for sacrificing the spiritual end of a radical transformation of work in favor of the more materialistic goals of higher pay and better working conditions. The difference led to a break between the New York Catholic Worker, led by Day, and the ACTU, led by former Catholic Worker, John Cort.

Another point of contention was Day's unbending pacifism, which became increasingly notable as the United States prepared for and entered World War II. The issue provoked another break in the movement in 1940, as the Chicago Workers, led by John Cogley, decided that Christian commitment to the working class was compatible with American military action against fascism.

The Catholic Worker movement was then probably at its apex. The paper reached its highest circulation in 1940 at 185,000. It lost 100,000 subscriptions (many of them bulk requests from Catholic pastors) during the war because its pacifist stance contradicted the strongly prowar views of many of its readers. In the more prosperous, less radical 1940s and 1950s, moreover, workers were more likely to identify with mainstream unions than with Day's iconoclastic, communitarian movement.

The *Catholic Worker*, nonetheless, is still published, and Catholic Worker houses operate in many urban centers around the United States. In 1959, she again provoked controversy among Catholics and others with her positive assessment of Fidel Castro's Cuban Revolution. Day's protests against air-raid drills in New York landed her in jail in the 1950s, and she joined anti-Vietnam demonstrations in the 1960s and 1970s. Meanwhile, she continued to manage the New York house of hospitality and traveled the country to frequent speaking engagements. Still a controversial figure within the Catholic church, Day is nonetheless widely revered, and her cause for canonization as a saint has been introduced.

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See also **Association of Catholic Trade Unionists**

DEBS, EUGENE V. (1855–1926)
Cofounder, American Railway Union; Leader,
Socialist Party of America

Eugene V. Debs, the nation's most prominent socialist by the early twentieth century, was born into a middle-class family in Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1855. Despite the pleas of his parents to remain in school, Debs became a paint scraper for a local railroad. He then tramped around the Midwest looking for a job as a railroad fireman. Returning to Terre Haute in the mid-1870s, Debs attended an organizing meeting of the International Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen (BLF). He was elected recording secretary of the new local and thus began his trade union career.

Debs firmly believed that a balance between labor and capital could be achieved, each one recognizing the worth of the other. The year 1885 was a dramatic one for Debs, since it began his turn away from a collaborative relation with railroad management to a more adversarial one. To counter the threatening power of the railroad corporations, Debs floated the idea of creating a federated council of the railroad brotherhoods. The federation principle was one that held enormous symbolic value for Debs. It was perceived as a unified response to railroad power. His basic argument was that the federation would ensure fewer strikes because employers would think twice before combating their workers.

Spurring Debs on was a record of defeated railroad strikes. Other than the weight of owner resistance, it was the propensity of the railroad brotherhoods to scab on one another that effectively defeated the strikes. But the established railroad brotherhoods rejected Debs's idea of a federation. Correspondingly in 1893, Debs took the dramatic and fateful step of helping to form the American Railway Union (ARU). The principles differed markedly from the federation idea, however. The organizers wanted to accept all white railroad workers into the ARU. Importantly, African-Americans were not invited to join. Bringing together all white railroad workers under one umbrella would counter the railroads' power. Debs had clearly embraced the ideal of industrial unionism.

Daily, hundreds of railroad workers signed up for the ARU, and Debs was hard-pressed to keep up with the organizing calls and speeches demanded. Within weeks after a successful strike against the Great Northern Railroad, the ARU had grown to 150,000 members, dwarfing the combined membership of the railroad brotherhoods. For Debs, caution was the key. He tried mightily to remind the members that they should avoid unnecessary entanglements that might severely test the youthful ARU. Unfortunately for Debs and the ARU, such advice was ignored during a strike of Pullman car workers.

Just outside of Chicago, George Pullman had created a company town that bore his name. Manufacturing luxury passenger cars, the Pullman Company controlled much of the workers' lives. While the system was grudgingly accepted by the Pullman workers, after the economic downturn of 1893–1894 saw cuts in wages but no accompanying cut in costs, the workers demanded that the pay cuts be rescinded. Pullman refused and fired those who had tried to obtain an audience with him to discuss the cuts. In response, the workers went on strike.

The strikers called on the ARU for support. Debs was comfortable in providing money and giving speeches on their behalf, but just as he feared, the ARU was dragged into a momentous confrontation against the combined weight of the railroad capital. As the boycott spread, those ARU members who refused to operate trains with attached Pullman cars were dismissed. In turn, the workforces struck in protest. Very quickly the boycott was transformed into a strike. Correspondingly, the owners turned to the federal government for help, approaching Richard Olney, the U.S. Attorney General, for support.

Olney obliged by obtaining a sweeping federal injunction. Debs and other leaders were specifically enjoined from issuing both instructions and funds to the ARU strikers. In effect, the purpose was to strangle the strike. Debs initially ignored the injunction but soon found himself under arrest. Debs was joined by six other ARU leaders. With the leadership of the ARU neutralized, the strike effectively came to an end. Debs and his associates appealed their conviction but were sentenced to 6 months in prison.

The strike had been a disaster for the ARU. Thousands of ARU members were summarily dismissed and blacklisted from railroad employment. The defeat also confirmed Debs's hostile attitude toward the federal government. Its intimate relationship with railroad owners, and its readiness to apply injunctive law against the ARU, confirmed Debs's belief of the essential corruptness of the established political parties. The strike defeat opened the road

for Debs to begin his socialist career. Debs joined others in forming the Socialist Party of America (SPA). Debs's socialism was a unique blend of American radicalism and vulgar Marxist principles. Debs girded himself for the 1908 presidential election. A special train (Red Special) was commissioned to take the 52-year-old Debs on a campaign tour that included over 34 states. Debs gave his all in trying to convince the audiences to vote the socialist ticket. Talking for hours, his impact on the listeners was generally profound. Cynical audience members were won over by his charm and magnetism. Unfortunately, the SPA's 1908 showing was deeply disappointing. Although gaining votes in the southwest, the ticket only increased its vote tally by a mere 18,000 votes to 420,000. Buoying Debs, however, were important socialist gains at the municipal level. Socialists mayors had been elected in Schenectady and Milwaukee, and Victor Berger had been elected to Congress. Just as vital was the increasing membership in the SPA. The 1912 election confirmed the growth of the SPA and that its message was being adopted by increasing numbers of voters. Overall, Debs polled 900,000 votes, 6% of the total vote.

The years 1913–1917 were eventful in turning Debs's attention away from domestic affairs to that of the international arena. As President Woodrow Wilson stepped up his preparedness program for involving the United States in the war, Debs acted in kind. Once President Wilson obtained a declaration of war in April 1917, the SPA convened to respond. The SPA came out forcefully against the war. Within weeks of the declaration of war, the forces of reaction threw their full weight against those judged to be disloyal. Socialist newspapers were closed down, and party offices ransacked. Nurturing this oppressive atmosphere was the passage of two legislative acts, the Espionage and Sedition acts. In sum, these acts acted as breaks on any form of criticism of government action during the war, whether it was of condescension or of general policy.

Debs was horrified by the turn of events during 1917. His lecture tours had been canceled, and the suppression of the socialist press ensured that his voice could not get out. Debs became depressed by his collapsing world. Socialists were literally being hunted down by either government agents or vigilantes, and the socialist press had been destroyed. It was perhaps the scale of the repression that dampened Debs's spirit, as well as his deteriorating health.

In 1918, when Debs was 63, friends and colleagues were in jail, and the socialist vision of eventual success seemed a distant dream. Debs decided to join his comrades in prison. In early June he gave several speeches outlining his opposition to the war but was

frustrated by no response by either federal or state authorities. His dream would be realized, however, with his June 16, speech in Canton, Ohio.

Twelve hundred people were packed into the hall, as were government agents and stenographers. Debs attacked the notion that the United States was a democracy: "They tell us that we live in a great free republic; that our institutions are democratic; that we are a free and self-governing people. This is too much; even for a joke." To prove his point, he then spoke out on the persecution of hundreds of socialists and Wobblies wasting away in prison. Then specifically he announced, "The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives."

The stenographic record was given to the U.S. Attorney's office in Cleveland. Two weeks later, an indictment was handed down that Debs had violated the Espionage Act, and he was arrested on June 30, 1918. The trial was set for September 9, 1918, and Debs and his battery of lawyers were prepared. As the prosecution brought in its witnesses, the defense offered little in the way of cross-examination. The strategy was clear, Debs had no intention of disputing any of the facts of the case; that is, they would not deny that Debs had spoken out against the war and U.S. government policy. The point was that Debs had every right to say what he did; it was purely an issue of freedom of speech. After the prosecution witnesses had finished their testimony, Debs took the stand in his own defense. Using examples of George Washington, Samuel Adams, and Abraham Lincoln, Debs argued that it was an American tradition to oppose unjust government policies that ushered in autocracy. So while admitting he had opposed the government's declaration and running of the war, he merely argued it reflected a common American tradition of resistance to oppression.

Not surprisingly, the jury found Debs guilty of the conspiracy charges. Debs's lawyers immediately appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. On March 10, 1919, the Court denied the appeal by arguing that Debs had deliberately tried to obstruct wartime recruitment. On April 13, 1919, Debs began his first day in federal prison in Moundville, Ohio. Debs was asked once again to stand for election in 1920 as the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) candidate; he reluctantly agreed. The campaign re-invigorated Debs, but the results were deeply disappointing. Nearly gaining one million votes, the percentage had dropped from 6% to 3%. Still the result was remarkable. The year 1920 saw the height of the Red Scare, with its

accompanying ransacking of socialist and Communist offices and arrests of leaders and followers alike.

With the election of Warren Harding, the push for a pardon for Debs began in earnest. Eventually, a halfway measure of amnesty was offered. Debs was not happy with the decision. True, he gained his freedom, as did 23 other political prisoners, but many other left-wing radicals were left in prison. On December 26, 1921, he was released and whisked to Washington, D.C., for a private audience with President Harding.

By 1926, Debs was ill and exhausted. His trademark enthusiasm had deserted him, leaving audience members wondering what had happened to the once-dynamic leader. He increasingly checked himself into sanatoriums, suffering from exhaustion. After a trip to Bermuda in 1926 (his first trip abroad), he caught a cold on the return voyage. Months of rest could not revive Debs's energy, and after a heart attack, he lapsed into a coma. On October 20, 1926, Debs died. There was a huge outpouring of sorrow once the news became public.

Throughout his early life, Debs grappled with questions of trade union principles and socialist ideology. The common thread was his immense compassion for working people. Once committed to the socialist ideal of creating an alternative to the rank injustices of capitalist encroachment, he never wavered. Debs led a particularly long and dramatic life. His legacy included the formation of a vital trade union movement and a socialist party that thundered its way across the American political landscape.

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See also **American Railway Union**

DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION

Originally coined in its modern usage in 1982 by economists Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, de-industrialization denotes the removal or substantial reduction of manufacturing activity in a region or country. In the twenty-first century, the term is used variously to describe: a process that inevitably happens in advanced economies and is a net positive for those economies; a disaster akin to a hurricane for regions and countries when and where it happens; or a result of a mistaken economic policy that (either accidentally or intentionally) reduces wages, working conditions, and living standards in a “race to the bottom.” The meaning of de-industrialization has been and is still contested terrain.

What is contested is the general importance of manufacturing to a modern economy and whether, despite the pain experienced by laid-off workers and abandoned communities, de-industrialization is inevitable and necessary to positive economic growth.

A loose “periodization” frames much popular understanding of de-industrialization. In this frame, the United States and other advanced countries have moved from an agrarian to an industrial to a postindustrial service society. As a broad description of the past two or three hundred years, this frame is not inaccurate in pointing to fundamental shifts in the relative importance of three kinds of basic economic activity. But insofar as it suggests that manufacturing is now unimportant, this basic way of defining our society as postindustrial misses many of the contested issues involved with de-industrialization.

Manufacturing *is* relatively less important to our economy and society than it used to be, just as agriculture is. But few economists or other scholars think that means that making and growing things is no longer fundamentally important to our or any other economy. At the end of the twentieth century, total manufacturing output was actually larger in the United States than it was in 1960, when we were uniformly described as an advanced industrial society. As a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), however, manufacturing had declined since then from nearly 30% to less than 15%. Even in 1960, services accounted for a majority of GDP (nearly 60%), but by the end of the century it had risen to nearly 80%.

The relative decline in manufacturing employment is even steeper. Though in 2000, there were about 2 million more factory jobs than there had been in 1955, manufacturing's share of total employment had fallen from nearly one-third to less than one-seventh during that time. Thus, even when manufacturing jobs were still increasing into the 1970s, service-sector jobs were growing much faster, moving from a bare

majority of total employment in 1960 to more than 80%. (Service-sector jobs cover a wide variety of occupations from teachers, managers, doctors, and lawyers on the higher income end to janitors, child-care workers, waitresses, and hotel maids on the low end, with truck drivers and airline workers mostly in the middle.)

As Rowthorn and Ramaswamy show in their report for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the relative rise of the service sector versus manufacturing is common among all advanced industrial countries since at least 1960. But this relative decline is not what is usually meant by de-industrialization. As long as manufacturing activity, whether measured by output or jobs, is still growing or at least not declining substantially, there is not yet de-industrialization. A country or region may be moving from an industrial to a postindustrial society without de-industrialization occurring at all.

National De-Industrialization

De-industrialization did not begin for the United States as a whole until 1977, when manufacturing employment peaked at 19.6 million jobs. Though there had been ups and downs before then, particularly during the Great Depression of the 1930s, factory jobs had been increasing fairly steadily through the late nineteenth century, beginning the twentieth century with about 5 million and quadrupling by 1977.

The period from 1977 to 1986, during which the worst economic recession since the 1930s occurred, saw a dramatic period of plant closings in what began to be called the Rust Belt in the Northeast and Great Lakes, as well as through the Great Plains and into California. This is when the term was originally coined, but de-industrialization was largely a regional phenomenon at that time. As the national economy recovered in the late 1980s, manufacturing employment briefly reached 19 million again in 1988 before beginning a longer, steadier decline to just over 17 million by the year 2000. By then, it seemed to many that the period of de-industrialization had ended, as new industries in electronics and pharmaceuticals had begun growing even as such traditional industries as steel, auto, and rubber continued to decline. The relatively mild recession with which the twenty-first century began, however, initiated a new round of manufacturing job losses. By 2003, manufacturing employment had dropped to 14.5 million. Thus, the quarter century from 1977 to 2003 saw the loss of more than one-quarter of U.S. factory jobs. This is de-industrialization at the national

level, and we are still in the middle (or possibly at the beginning) of this process.

The decline in total manufacturing output is not nearly so dramatic as the decline in employment, a real (inflation-adjusted) loss of a little more than 3% from 1977 to 2003, as measured by the dollar value of shipments. This discrepancy between a 25% loss in jobs and a 3% loss in output is the result of very large increases in manufacturing productivity since the 1980s. The reasons for these large gains in productivity are complex, including industry restructurings around investments in new (often computer-controlled) machinery; shifts to such industries as pharmaceuticals and electronics; and old-fashioned “labor speed-up,” based on the dramatic loss of union power in manufacturing during this period.

Thus, as with agriculture before it, manufacturing remains an essential economic activity in the United States, producing about as much as it ever has. But after growing, often dramatically, for more than two centuries, output has leveled off, and employment is declining steadily and substantially at the national level.

Regional De-Industrialization

Regional de-industrialization, on the other hand, is a more dramatic and much more traumatic phenomenon, since the period from 1977 to the mid-1980s saw what one steelworker leader described as a “creeping holocaust” through the Northeast and midwestern manufacturing belt. Steel towns like Lackawanna in New York; Bethlehem, Johnstown, Homestead, and McKeesport in Pennsylvania; Cleveland, Youngstown, and Steubenville in Ohio; Chicago in Illinois; and Geneva in Utah lost all or almost all of their mills and the hundreds of thousands of jobs they provided. Auto assembly plants were closed in the same states and in Michigan and California, and auto parts factories—making everything from valves to windshield wipers—shut down after 50 years or more of driving the local economies of dozens of towns and cities in the Rust Belt and elsewhere. Plants making radios and televisions, tires, elevators, textiles and clothing, paper products, farm equipment, and machine tools were shut down. A major part of what had been the heart of the post-World War II U.S. industrial economy disappeared in less than a decade.

The ripple effects of this rapid de-industrialization of the U.S. industrial heartland were devastating to scores of communities. The loss of jobs meant the loss of consumer-spending power for everything

from department stores to barber shops, auto dealerships to restaurants and grocery stores. It also meant a declining tax base with which to fund public education, fire and police departments, and other public services, which often deteriorated dramatically. Some of these communities have recovered or semi-recovered in the past 20 years. Many have not. Many had adjusted to lower standards of living, declining populations, and reduced public services and seemed on the upswing during the late 1990s' economic boom, only to see what turned out to be temporary gains washed away in the economic recession and stagnation of the early twenty-first century.

Most of the communities devastated by de-industrialization in the late 1970s and early 1980s suffered it as they would a natural disaster, waiting for it to end and then cleaning up as best they could. But some fought to save specific plants and mobilized across communities and industries to mount pressure for a national effort at re-industrialization. These "fight backs," usually led by union-community coalitions, were mostly unsuccessful. Though many succeeded in retaining specific plants for a while longer (in several cases, for decades longer), the possibility of a concerted industrial policy by the federal government to save and grow manufacturing jobs disappeared during that time. The methodologies developed by the anti-shutdown movement, then, have been further refined since, often with the help of local and state governments, but the rich debate about the possibility of re-industrializing had largely been put aside by the time a second round of de-industrialization began in the early years of this century.

Fighting Back?

The main lesson from the antishutdown movement during the initial period of de-industrialization is that while many plant closings are inevitable due to economic conditions, many plants can be saved by changes in ownership (including partial or full employee ownership), new business strategies, enlisting the participation of workers in managing production, and using local and state government financing authority to obtain private investment in new technology. Saving existing plants and attracting new ones has often also involved concessions in wages and work rules by labor unions and economic development subsidies from local governments, not all of which have been worthwhile in terms of jobs saved or gained. But clearly at the local level, de-industrialization is not completely analogous to an earthquake or tornado. Industrial retention and attraction are now standard

parts of most state and local government economic development activities.

At a national level however, the primary view is that de-industrialization in general and any individual plant closing in particular are likely both inevitable and a long-term positive for the economy as a whole. The closing of factories, it is pointed out, is as old as the industrial revolution itself. Many of the first Pittsburgh-area iron mills in the nineteenth century were shut down as they were replaced with newer, much larger steel mills on the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers. Likewise, the opening of Ford Motor Company's River Rouge complex outside Detroit displaced workers from earlier Ford plants in the Detroit area. Indeed, the rise and fall of entire industrial regions is nothing new to the last quarter of the twentieth century. One of the original iron-making regions of western Pennsylvania, for example, was in the Juniata Valley, an area well east of Pittsburgh that has long been a bucolic landscape with little remaining evidence of its industrial past. Likewise, Titusville, where oil was first discovered, has not produced any oil for more than a century. The dynamism of capitalism's "creative destruction" requires the competitive fury of new plants replacing old ones and new industries rising as old ones decline. Today, this same process goes on, as biogenetic drugs replace more traditional remedies even as the pharmaceutical industry as a whole grows like auto and steel in their heydays.

For government to intervene in this process in efforts to preserve some industries and plants while nurturing others, called industrial policy in the 1980s, would interfere in the natural workings of a free market and would result in less overall economic growth, and thus less economic activity and fewer jobs, not more. Besides, the argument goes, from a national perspective, the Rust Belt's industrial loss was the Sun Belt's gain, as many factories and their jobs migrated South and as new, smaller facilities based on new technology, like steel minimills, were more expeditiously dispersed throughout the country instead of being concentrated in just a few areas.

Opposed to this view is one that sees a large part of de-industrialization as unnecessary and wasteful, allowed, if not caused, by government economic policies that misunderstand the dynamics of a mature industrial economy. The overall effects of de-industrialization, this view holds, are much larger than the long string of devastated factory towns and neighborhoods. They include a quarter-century's decline in real wages for the 80% of the private-sector workforce that is defined as production and nonsupervisory workers, the loss of health insurance and pensions for growing millions of workers, and the steady deterioration of working conditions in offices and stores

as well as in factories. Some see this as a conscious policy begun in the 1970s to break the power of union workers, thereby making all workers more manageable. But most see it as a necessary result of conservative economic policies that counsel increasing reliance on the free market unrestrained by government interference. This is exactly the wrong approach, according to this view, to any mature industry, which once it is in place represents an investment not only in capital equipment, but also in worker skills and public infrastructure that should not be discarded lightly. Government supervision of the market process is all the more necessary once relative profit rates decline, as they inevitably do in the mature phase of any industry.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, various re-industrialization programs were put forward not only by unions and labor-community coalitions like the Tri-State Conference on Steel (in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia) and the Oakland (California) Plant Closures Project, but by investment bankers like Felix Rosalyn and even *Business Week* in special issues in June of 1980 and 1981. Though different in the roles they prescribed for various levels of government, all saw strategic public investments as required not necessarily to save particular factories, but to preserve productive equipment, work cultures and skills, and public infrastructure that with a little help could have had a future. By the late 1980s, this was “the road not taken,” but it has been sustained in other venues in opposition to so-called free trade agreements and even an early twenty-first century re-industrialization program called the Apollo Alliance for Good Jobs and Clean Energy. Apollo Alliance proposes a \$100 billion government investment fund over 10 years to nurture emerging industries in such alternative energy sources as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal; and in hybrid cars; more efficient appliances; wind turbines; high-performance buildings; high-speed rail and other public transportation. Building on current competitive advantages enjoyed by U.S. manufacturing, the Apollo Alliance envisions a program of public investment that would lead to energy independence, a dramatically cleaner environment, and three million new manufacturing jobs.

It may make sense to describe the United States as a postindustrial society, but de-industrialization is likely to remain contested terrain. Just as government agricultural policy has remained an area of contention in all industrial and postindustrial societies, the issue will continue to be whether passively to accept the impartial workings of the free market or whether as citizens in a democracy to require our government to pursue better outcomes than the unaided market is likely to provide. If de-industrialization is inevitable,

then all a democratic society can do is minister to those harmed by the process. If it is not inevitable or not entirely inevitable, then the issue is not simply about what to do for the injured, but what to do to stop, reverse, or retard the de-industrializing.

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DELANO GRAPE STRIKE (1965–1970)

The Delano Grape strike in California ushered in a new era of unionization of farm workers. Poorly paid, living in substandard housing, subjected to intolerable working conditions, with no political or economic base to advocate for their concerns, agricultural workers were among the most exploited segments of the American labor force. Although attempts to organize farm laborers had occurred throughout the twentieth century, these initiatives were characterized by outbreaks of militancy, limited government responses to ameliorate circumstances, ruthless actions to crush organization by corporate agriculture, and the ultimate defeat of union drives. This protest, unlike previous uprisings, drew strength from a vigorous civil rights movement and the use of the philosophy of nonviolence successfully employed by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Of critical significance was the emergence of local leadership that was able to inspire solaridarity on the part of the multicultural and seasonal workforce. The movement also benefited from the repeal of the *bracero* (guest worker) program, which had undermined past efforts through the availability of plentiful labor from Mexico.

The Delano strike eventually led to the development of the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), the first enduring union to organize agricultural laborers successfully.

Although the Delano strike is generally associated with the emergence of the charismatic César Chávez, it was actually initiated by the American Federation of Labor (AFL)-Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)-affiliated Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), a predominately Filipino local, led by Larry Itliong and Ben Guines. The strike first erupted in the Coachella Valley in the southern part of the state. In early spring 1965, grape growers offered domestic Filipino workers \$1.25 an hour and 10 cents a box for field packing. This amount was below \$1.40, the prevailing per hour wage set for *bracero* workers by Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz. The AWOC went on strike for the higher rate. Refused access to *bracero* labor, the growers quickly capitulated to workers' demands. When the grape harvest moved to central California, growers there offered \$1.20 an hour and 15 cents a box, setting the stage for another confrontation. The AWOC leadership approached the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), headed by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, whose membership worked along side the Filipinos at many of the same vineyards, for their support.

More than 2,000 NFWA members enthusiastically joined over 1,000 Filipino AWOC strikers. During the early stages of the strike, it became apparent that the NFWA had stronger support and backing, and the two groups merged into the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) with Chávez as the director, assisted by Itliong. Even with a stable leadership, the union faced the daunting task of challenging the overwhelming power and influence of agribusiness. Although workers eagerly took to the picket lines, it was clear a protracted strike would be insufficient to prevail against the vast resources of corporate agriculture. With the coffers of the union strained, notwithstanding substantial pledges of financial support from United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther, who visited Delano, and AFL-CIO President George Meany, Chávez and his team devised a broader plan to place the struggle before the public nationwide. The union leadership issued direct appeals to students, church groups, civil rights activists, and urban unions to support a boycott. Donations and volunteers poured in.

Initial actions focused on picketing of the San Francisco docks, where members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's union refused to load grapes. But soon the strategy evolved to the boycott of individual brands and then to the entire

grape industry. By the fourth year of the strike, UFWOC boycott offices existed in over 40 major cities, and smaller communities hosted active boycott committees. Student volunteers and striking farm workers and their families staffed the operations in spaces offered by unions, churches, and other sympathetic groups. Such grassroots efforts along with marches, masses, vigils, nonviolent demonstrations, and fasts by Chávez kept the union's cause before the public, aided by favorable accounts in the mainstream, national press. Television news programs along with magazines like *Look*, *Saturday Evening Post*, the *New Yorker*, and *Business Week* covered the strike and boycotts. *Time* featured Chávez on its cover in 1969. Supportive politicians came to the defense of the union. Early in the strike, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, a member of the Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor, brought important publicity to the farm workers' cause when the committee conducted hearings in Delano.

As in the past, agribusiness mobilized their extensive resources to thwart the union's campaign. In the early stages of the dispute, growers resorted to their conventional tactics of evicting strikers from their labor camps. They used intimidation by hiring armed guards, displaying guns, covering pickets with sulphur intended for vines, and assaulting protestors. Repeating a standard practice, owners recruited strike-breakers to replace their lost workforce. Accustomed to the traditional support from local courts, growers won injunctions that limited the number of pickets. Siding with influential agribusiness, local law enforcement detained pickets, engaged in mass arrests, and overlooked grower harassment of picketers. Agribusiness also relied on the policies of the Farm Placement Bureau and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to support its position. Growers invited rival unions to organize their workers in order to forestall unionization by the UFWOC.

Despite this bitter opposition, the union persisted. The first crack in the united front of agribusiness came with Schenley Industries and its 5,000-acre wine-grape vineyard. The large company already had contracts with unions in other sectors of its business. The union focused its boycott on Schenley's other highly visible products, such as Cutty Sark. Fearful of damaging its liquor sales and its positive labor relations image, Schenley agreed to negotiate. The 1966 contract stipulated a \$1.75 per hour wage. Perhaps the most telling concession was the replacement of the despised labor contractor system with the union hiring hall. Other wineries followed Schenley's lead. The UFWOC signed contracts with Almaden, Paul Masson, Gallo, Christian Brothers, and others.

However, table-grape growers, such as the DiGiorgio Corporation, held out. After succumbing to pressures to hold secret-ballot elections, the company invited the teamsters to organize its work force in order to derail the union's effort. After the UFWOC won, DiGiorgio undermined the contract through evasion, obstruction, and noncompliance. Denied a successor clause, the UFWOC lost the contract when DiGiorgio sold its holdings in 1968. Encouraged by these developments, the industry refused to bargain. California agribusiness banded together in a coalition to finance a two-million-dollar public relations campaign to protest the union, attacking it as subversive. In the face of this intransigence, the UFWOC abandoned its tactic of focusing on one company at a time in favor of an industrywide approach.

For two more years, the union pressed its case. The final breakthrough came in 1970, when the UFWOC won three-year contracts with growers first in the Coachella Valley and then in the Delano area. With these contracts, the union covered 85% of the table-grape industry. Wages ranged from \$1.75–\$1.80 per hour and 25 cents per box piece rate, with also a stipulation of annual raises. Strict pesticide regulations protected workers. Growers contributed to the union health plan and to a pension fund for retired and disabled workers. The union hiring hall replaced the labor contractor system, and a formal worker grievance procedure was established. Working conditions improved with such provisions as rest breaks, cool drinking water, and sanitation facilities in the fields. Although the union would face serious challenges from agribusiness in the future, the five-year struggle achieved an historic victory. The UFWOC had established its legitimacy as a union and a political force. It had also succeeded in permanently altering the traditional power relations between farm workers and agribusiness.

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See also Agricultural Labor Relations Act; Chávez, César; Huerta, Dolores; United Farm Workers’ Union

DELEON, DANIEL (DECEMBER 14, 1852–MAY 11, 1914) Socialist Labor Party Leader

Daniel DeLeon was a well-known socialist and labor leader active in the United States. He was especially known through his association with the Socialist Labor party (SLP).

DeLeon was born on the Dutch-owned island of Curacao, which is just off the coast of Venezuela. His parents were Salomon and Sarah, who were Dutch Jews. DeLeon received his education in Europe, where he pursued the study of medicine and languages during the 1860s and early 1870s. In 1874, he immigrated to the United States, where he then took up a position as a schoolteacher in New York. He soon began studying law at Columbia University (then Columbia College). After graduating, DeLeon won two prestigious prizes for his essays *Constitutional History and Constitutional Law* and *International Law*. After a short stint practicing law in Texas, he returned to Columbia, serving the school as a lecturer on International law.

In 1882, DeLeon married Sarah Lobo before returning to New York, where he was then practicing law. In 1883, his first son, Solon, was born, with a second son born the following year.

While at Columbia, DeLeon started involving himself in reform movements. He especially took to Edward Bellamy, Henry George, and the Knights of Labor (KOL). Bellamy is best known for his utopian socialist novel, *Looking Backward*, the KOL for its stance on industrial unionism, and George for his "single-tax" platform. DeLeon would eventually join the KOL in 1888.

DeLeon was becoming active in politics as well. In the presidential election of 1884, he openly supported the candidacy of Grover Cleveland, as well as that of the United Labor party, for whom George was the New York mayoral candidate in 1886. It was through his work supporting George that DeLeon became more involved with both socialist and labor

reformers. But DeLeon's growing belief in socialism would have a detrimental effect on his position at Columbia. He was denied tenure by Columbia, mostly due to his increasing socialism, and DeLeon would resign from the school.

Sarah DeLeon passed away in 1887 from an infection brought on by a premature birth, shortly followed by the death of their youngest son. In 1892, DeLeon married his second wife, Bertha Canary, whom he met in Kansas while on a speaking tour for the Socialist Labor Party (SLP). Bertha was a former teacher herself and would give birth to five children during the marriage.

In 1890, DeLeon joined the SLP, and began to serve the party as a speaker and a writer. He rose quickly in the party. In 1891, he was appointed the assistant editor of the party's English-language journal *The People*, a paper to which he would become editor in 1892 after the current editor, Lucien Sanial, resigned due to failing eyesight. DeLeon would maintain this position until his death.

DeLeon would also translate works of Karl Marx, and other radical thinkers, into English. When DeLeon first joined the SLP, it was not as cohesive a party as it could have been and was in fact criticized by Marx's partner, Frederick Engels, because of the group's ethnic composition, which was virtually all German immigrants. Through translating radical works, DeLeon helped to shape the SLP into a Marxist party. DeLeon also drew on his experiences in the KOL. It was by blending Marx with his views of the American economic system that enabled DeLeon to shape the SLP. Like many others, DeLeon felt that capitalism had outlived its usefulness. Unlike many radicals, DeLeon favored a peaceful type of revolution through electoral and parliamentary means, and educating the public on economic and political matters.

DeLeon incorporated his views several important lectures that he hoped would enlighten his audiences. The series included *Reform or Revolution* (1896), *What Means This Strike?* (1898), *The Burning Question of Trades Unionism* (1904), and *Socialist Reconstruction of Society* (1905). These lectures would later be published together under the title *Socialist Landmarks*. Other works by DeLeon also analyzed the role of Marxism to history and society. *As to Politics, Abolition of Poverty, Two Pages from Roman History*, and *Fifteen Questions about Socialism* all discussed ways in which socialism could be used to replace capitalism.

In 1895, DeLeon broke with the KOL and affiliated with a new, radical organization, the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance (STLA), a group that achieved little by way of concrete organizational success. The STLA, with a heavily German membership, promoted not only the socialist agenda, but hoped to

compete against the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in organizing workers.

While DeLeon helped to shape the SLP and spread its message of socialism, he was not without his detractors. Eugene V. Debs, the leader of the Socialist Party of America (SP), thought DeLeon was too dogmatic. In 1905, DeLeon took part in the formation of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in Chicago, along with other radicals, such as Debs and Mother Jones. Three years later, however, the IWW expelled DeLeon over ideological differences.

As a way to reward DeLeon for his translating work, especially the Eugene Sue novel *Mysteries of the People*, the SLP collected just over one thousand dollars for DeLeon, and along with a half-acre of land they acquired, gave these gifts to him. Using some additional borrowed funds, DeLeon built a house and moved in his family. However, during early 1914, DeLeon grew ill and was eventually bedridden. He was admitted to Mount Sinai hospital in New York City, where he had an infection of the heart muscles. Since there were no known cures for his illness at the time, DeLeon became comatose and died on May 11, 1914.

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See also Debs, Eugene V.; Industrial Workers of the World

DELLUMS, C. L. (JANUARY 1900– DECEMBER 8, 1989) Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

Born in January 1900 in Corsicana, Texas, C. L. Dellums moved to Oakland, California, in 1924 with

the hopes of attending law school at the University of California. Shortly after arriving, however, his life took an unexpected turn when he took a job with the Pullman Company. Working as a Pullman porter, Dellums became good friends with Morris “Dad” Moore, a cantankerous retired porter in his late seventies. Moore had become an enthusiastic follower of A. Philip Randolph after three porters invited the publisher of the black monthly magazine the *Messenger* to lead a new porters’ union in 1925. Dellums was also impressed with the inchoate union’s leader. Although he had been in the Bay Area only a short time, Dellums had plenty of first-hand knowledge of the long hours, low wages, and harsh working conditions that a job with the Pullman Company entailed. Willing to risk company reprisals, he joined Moore in organizing the Oakland local of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP).

Dellums was well-suited for the task. He considered himself the son of a slave (his father was born about two months before Texas ratified the Thirteenth Amendment), had witnessed racial injustice in his native Texas, and was disturbed on discovering the extent of racial discrimination on the West Coast. Having taught school in Texas for four years, Dellums was also an effective orator. And when push came to shove, he did not hesitate to back up his words with his fists and powerful 6-foot frame.

Dellums’ dynamic leadership would help make Oakland a BSCP stronghold. But the fight against Pullman, leadership came with a price. After he helped form the Oakland local of the BSCP in 1926, the Pullman Company rewarded his efforts by firing him from his job, a fate that would befall hundreds of other organizers. His short career as a porter having ended, Dellums survived with the help of donations from his fellow porters and was able to work for the union full time. In 1928, he became secretary-treasurer of the Oakland local and became president on Dad Moore’s death in 1930. At the first BSCP national convention in 1929, he became one of seven vice-presidents. From his positions of leadership in the national union and the Oakland local, Dellums helped lead the fledgling union in its fight for recognition, which finally came in 1937.

As Dellums battled Pullman, he also became a leading activist in west Oakland, the city’s working-class African-American community. In addition to his position within the BSCP, he was an active member of both the Alameda County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Alameda County Central Labor Council. Through these organizations, he linked labor and civil rights organizations as he worked to improve living and working conditions for his neighbors during the

Great Depression and World War II. In the late 1930s, he spearheaded a coalition comprised of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), Labor’s Non Partisan League, and the League of Women Voters in securing federal funds for the construction of low-income public housing in Oakland. At the same time, he led a campaign against the discriminatory hiring practices of the Key System, a transportation network that linked the East Bay and San Francisco. He helped bring the case before the World War II Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), which ruled against the company and its union.

In the years before World War II, Dellums also sought to secure jobs for blacks through his involvement in the National Youth Administration (NYA). Dellums was instrumental in shaping NYA policy in the Bay Area and helped make it the most successful New Deal Agency in terms of supplying jobs for African-Americans in California. Dellums was one of three blacks to serve on the NYA California State Advisory Committee. He viewed this position as an opportunity to improve the state’s race relations, and he used his influence to strengthen the agency within the state and to push for increased black employment in the defense industry. In 1941, Dellums joined seven other African-Americans on a newly established black statewide advisory committee, a subcommittee designed to extend the reach of the NYA to provide for more extensive job training and permanent job placement for black—and eventually other minority—youths.

In the decade following World War II, Dellums reached the height of his political influence in the East Bay and California more generally. He remained a BSCP vice-president and became chairman of the NAACP West Coast regional office on its inception in 1944. Moreover, his work with Randolph and the BSCP and his experiences in black Oakland’s prewar and wartime struggles left an indelible mark on his postwar activism, which was inspired by his faith that the labor movement, civil rights movement, and Democratic party liberalism could reinforce each other to bring about positive social change. His role in forging a statewide labor-civil rights coalition was instrumental in the revitalization of California’s Democratic party in the postwar period (his nephew, Ronald Dellums, would become an influential Democratic congressman).

During the 1950s, Dellums directed most of his political energy toward the creation of a state fair employment practices (FEP) law. Although the wartime federal agency turned out to be something of a paper tiger, Dellums hoped that an effective statewide commission would provide a valuable weapon in the fight against employment discrimination and in creating a stronger, more inclusive labor movement.

The movement for an FEP law was initially limited to NAACP leaders and African-American legislators Gus Hawkins and Byron Rumford. In 1952, however, Dellums and other NAACP leaders enlisted leaders of the state American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), along with a handful of civil rights organizations, into the cause. Their efforts bore fruit in 1959, when Democratic Governor Edmund “Pat” Brown signed the state FEP law. Dellums was immediately appointed to the new committee, where he would serve for the next 26 years.

All the while, Dellums continued his leadership within the BSCP. Pursuant to a pre-arranged agreement among the union’s founding members as to the line of succession, Dellums replaced Randolph as the union’s president when the leader left the post in 1968. By that time, Pullman porters were a dying breed, and the union’s membership was in sharp decline. Its future in doubt, Dellums tried in vain to sustain the BSCP as an independent union. However, in 1978, economic realities forced the union to merge with the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks.

Dellums died of a heart attack in his West Oakland home on December 8, 1989.

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See also **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Randolph, A. Philip**

DELMARVA POULTRY JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Faced with declining membership, a hostile political climate, and diminished social legitimacy, unions during the last three decades have attempted to fashion more favorable circumstances for organizing and collective bargaining by developing alliances with

community groups and religious organizations. The Delmarva Poultry Justice Alliance (DPJA) is an important example of these phenomena. As an innovative labor-community coalition seeking to influence the corporate behavior of the poultry industry, it has won widespread attention for its efforts on behalf of growers who raise chickens, the workers who prepare them for consumption, and the communities where poultry facilities are located.

The Delmarva peninsula encompasses the state of Delaware and the 11 eastern shore counties of Maryland and Virginia, and some of the country’s largest and most powerful poultry producers, most notably Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods, have a substantial presence there. The Delmarva poultry industry has been highly resistant to union penetration, with less than 20% of its workers under union contracts. The industry’s competitive need to promote cost cutting and efficiency has resulted in low wages and onerous working conditions for most poultry workers, near poverty-level wages for the growers who raise chickens for the large processors, and charges of environmental damage caused by careless disposal of the waste generated in chicken processing.

The DPJA was launched in 1995 by the Reverend Jim Lewis, an Episcopal priest with a background in social activism. Lewis carefully assembled various constituencies affected by the poultry industry—growers, catchers, processors, environmentalists, civil rights activists, church people—and after a two-year dialogue, participants agreed in 1997 to form an organization, the DPJA. The parties agreed that the new organization would be rooted in a specific set of ethical commitments: protecting the environment; producing safe, healthy food; and promoting fair treatment for workers and growers. With these commitments in mind, the DPJA sought to draw attention to the labor and environmental practices of the industry and create a grassroots movement that would press for more responsible corporate behavior.

Already a member of the DPJA, the United Food and Commercial Workers’ Union (UFCW) became more deeply involved in the alliance after a wildcat strike at a processing plant following the dismissal of a union member who was an undocumented worker. Prodded by other members of the alliance and realizing that it had not been fully responsive to the needs of its immigrant members, the union began a concerted program to reach out to its mostly Latino membership. This effort led to closer collaboration with DPJA in some significant initiatives that directly challenged the power and authority of the Delmarva poultry industry and gained national attention.

One of the alliance’s most notable achievements has been its work assisting the UFCW in organizing

chicken catchers, a group of mostly African-American men who capture broilers and load them for transportation to processing plants. Perdue Farms had declared its catchers “independent contractors” in order to avoid paying them benefits and overtime. Along with the UFCW, DPJA pressed the Clinton administration to launch what became known as its “poultry initiative” to investigate wage and hour violations in the industry. Subsequently, the alliance supported a successful lawsuit against Perdue charging violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and state wage and hour laws. The alliance also provided critical support for the UFCW’s successful organizing campaigns among catchers at several Delmarva facilities. These victories in 2000 and 2001 marked the first time in Perdue’s history that unions had won National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)-sponsored representation elections. As was the case with the lawsuit against Perdue, DPJA and the UFCW had demonstrated that it was possible for poultry workers to take on the industry successfully through a combination of grassroots mobilization, government intervention, and the glare of media attention.

The future potential of labor-community alliances will hinge on their ability to develop stronger grassroots involvement among their constituents, offer a compelling vision of what constitutes the good of the community, and gain sufficient power to bargain on their agendas. The brief but compelling experience of the DPJA suggests that well-conceived labor-community partnerships offer the union movement a powerful opportunity to reclaim its moral authority as a respected advocate for the public good.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The establishment of a cabinet-level Department of Labor in 1913 was the culmination of a 50-year effort by organized labor to establish an official working-class presence in the federal government. Public Law 426-62: An Act to create a Department of Labor, states, “The purpose of the Department of Labor shall be to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment.” Over the next 90 years, the department, rather than serving as a working-class presence in the president’s cabinet, developed into a bureaucracy regulating the bounds of American labor relations.

As originally established, the Department of Labor consisted of four bureaus: the Bureau of Immigration, the Bureau of Naturalization, the Children’s Bureau, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. President Woodrow Wilson appointed William B. Wilson as the first secretary of the Department of Labor. One portion of the act creating the Department of Labor stated “That the Secretary of Labor shall have power to act as mediator and to appoint commissioners of conciliation in labor disputes whenever in his judgment the interests of industrial peace may require it to be done....” The U.S. entry into World War I on April 6, 1917, coincided with an unprecedented strike wave within the United States. The mounting pressure of disputes during the war transformed Secretary Wilson’s *ad hoc* conciliation efforts into the formal creation of the United States Conciliation Service in 1917.

Other agencies were also created to meet the exigencies of war labor problems. In an attempt to rationalize the government’s labor relations machinery, President Woodrow Wilson issued an executive order creating the War Labor Administration (WLA), to be directed by Labor Secretary William Wilson.

The creation of the National War Labor Board (NWLB), which served as a “supreme court” for labor relations during World War I, was a key development within the WLA. The NWLB transformed American labor management relations from a private one to a semiprivate one, setting a powerful historical precedent. For while the board outlawed strikes and lockouts for the duration of the war, at the same time it recognized the right of workers to organize and the principle of the 8-hour day, and promulgated the idea that workers were entitled to a living wage. From 1917–1919, union membership grew from around 3 million members to 5 million members. The NWLB set precedent in other ways, however, in that it

established a center of government regulation of collective bargaining outside the Department of Labor.

The elections of 1918, a Republican party landslide, presaged a return to the normalcy of the 1920s. Labor began to lose power as the U.S. demobilized after the armistice ending World War I in November 1918, and during the next few years, the labor machinery set up by the government during World War I was dismantled. By the end of 1919, the NWLB was no longer in existence. Funds for the United States Employment Service (USES), which helped place 5 million workers during World War I, were slashed, and the number of cases handled by the United States Conciliation Service dropped from the 1,780 handled in 1919 to 370 in 1922.

The primary concern of the new secretary of labor, John J. Davis, was immigration control. In 1921 and 1924, the Congress passed, and Presidents Coolidge and Harding signed, laws restricting immigration. More than 800,000 immigrants came to the United States in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1921. The new immigration laws reduced the number of immigrants legally admitted to the United States from areas other than Mexico and British North America to 354,000 under the 1921 law, and to 164,000 under the 1924 law. Seventy-five percent of the Department of Labor's personnel were dedicated to the enforcement of immigration law. Although the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conciliation Service, and USES continued to operate, Secretary of Labor Davis did not play a major role in the cabinet, as reflected by a letter Davis wrote to President Coolidge in 1924, in which he stated, "Being at the tail end of the Cabinet, after all the others have taken up their questions with you, I somehow feel that I ought not to take up more of your time."

The Great Depression, which began in 1929 and was a phenomenon of unprecedented magnitude, ended Republican dominance of American politics. Twenty-five to thirty-five of the workforce was out of work. By March 1933, payrolls had nosedived to about one-third of what they had been in 1926. In an effort to protect wage levels from collapse, President Hoover's secretary of labor, William N. Doak, and newly elected Pennsylvania Senator and former Labor Secretary James J. Davis worked together to pass the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931, which established the requirement for paying "prevailing wages" on public works projects.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president in 1932, and he appointed Frances Perkins secretary of labor in March 1933. Perkins was trained as a social worker, and she had worked in settlement houses such as Hull-House. She held many important state labor-related jobs under New York Governors

Franklin Roosevelt and Al Smith. Secretary Perkins' background greatly effected her administration of the Department of Labor and would set the course for the future development of the department. Against a background of labor strife, Perkins' style of leadership was seen by labor leaders (and some labor historians) as ineffectual. While holding a strong belief in the right of unions to organize, Perkins saw collective bargaining as a way to raise conditions of employment above minimum, government-imposed standards of employment.

Thus, while Secretary Perkins was not a primary mover behind the establishment of the National Labor Relations Board established by the Wagner Act, or the National War Labor Board of World War II, she was a leader in the passage of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, which re-invigorated the USES as an employment agency; the Social Security Act in 1935, which established a pension system for all American workers; and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which established a federal minimum wage. In addition, the establishment of the Division of Labor Standards in 1934 as a service agency to promote, through voluntary means, improved conditions of work, was reflective of Secretary Perkins' approach to labor problems and reflects to some degree the approach of the department today.

It was World War II that effectively ended the Depression in the early 1940s. Perkins remained secretary of labor until June 30, 1945, resigning after 12 years, the longest period of service for any labor secretary. During World War II, however, the department was eclipsed by other federal wartime labor agencies, such as the War Manpower Commission and the second National War Labor Board. In addition, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the largest component of the Labor Department, was transferred to the Department of Justice in 1940.

After the death of President Roosevelt, Vice-President Harry S. Truman succeeded to the presidency and appointed former Senator Lewis B. Schwellenbach of Washington State as secretary of labor. Secretary Schwellenbach faced several tough issues on his assumption of office on July 1, 1945. In part due to postwar "strike weariness," Republicans again gained control of the Congress in 1946. In 1947, Congress passed the Taft Hartley Act over President Truman's veto. The act included provisions for cooling-off periods and outlawed the closed shop. Perhaps most important to the Department of Labor, Taft-Hartley removed the U.S. Conciliation Service from the department and made the new Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service an independent agency. Congressional appropriations for the Department of Labor were cut dramatically.

President Truman appointed Maurice Tobin as secretary of labor after Secretary Schwollenbach's death in June 1948. Tobin was made responsible for wartime labor supply after the eruption of the Korean War in 1950 and created the Defense Manpower Administration. As a result of the department's new responsibilities, much of the funding taken away from the Department of Labor was restored. In addition, reflecting continuing U.S. interests in foreign affairs after World War II, Tobin continued to build the department's international responsibilities begun by Schwollenbach, including active participation in the International Labor Organization.

Labor historians often refer to gradual establishment of postwar corporate consensus or corporate liberalism in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Based somewhat on the ideas of economist John Maynard Keynes, corporate liberalism was a system where employers and labor leaders increasingly shared the same goals, building a kind of day-to-day cooperation between company and union, guaranteeing economic stability, and protecting the rights of workers through nondisruptive collective action. Wages and benefits, rather than social reform, became the chief concern of unions.

President Dwight David Eisenhower, elected president in 1952, appointed Martin P. Durkin, a former steamfitters apprentice and a leader in the plumbers' union, as secretary of labor in January 1953, but a failure to amend the Taft-Hartley Act and Durkin's feeling of isolation within Eisenhower's cabinet led to his resignation in September 1953. Eisenhower then appointed James P. Mitchell as labor secretary in October 1953.

Secretary Mitchell, a former labor relations executive in the retail industry and a manpower expert for the Department of Army during World War II, was the first of three secretaries of labor who would establish the modern department's identity. By establishing Department of Labor hegemony over most Eisenhower administration functions relating to labor, increasing the level of professionalism within the agency, and effectively setting up the administration of the Landrum-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) of 1959 (better known as the Landrum-Griffin), which subjected the internal affairs of unions to detailed government regulation, Secretary Mitchell firmly established the Department of Labor within the new "corporate consensus." In addition, known as the "social conscious" of the Eisenhower administration, Mitchell brought official attention, if not effective action, to the fight against employment discrimination and the plight of migrant workers.

On December 15, 1960, shortly after he had been elected president, John F. Kennedy nominated

Arthur J. Goldberg to be secretary of labor. Goldberg had a long career in organized labor, formerly serving as general counsel for the American Federation of Labor (AFL)–Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Among Goldberg's accomplishments during his brief tenure was convincing President Kennedy to appoint a presidential committee on equal employment opportunity and increasing the number of minority employees to 30% of the department's workforce. A proponent of mediation and conciliation, Goldberg helped settle a major steel strike in 1961, as well as a strike of the Metropolitan Opera Company. Looking back on his tenure just more than 25 years later, Goldberg claimed that more labor legislation was enacted from 1961–1962 than was previously enacted under any other secretary of labor. Among these legislative successes was the enactment of the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962. From 1962–1972, 2 million individuals were enrolled in MDTA programs.

In August 1962, President Kennedy appointed Secretary Goldberg to the United States Supreme Court and replaced him in September with Willard Wirtz, Goldberg's undersecretary of labor. Wirtz, a former Northwestern University law professor who had served on the World War II Wage Stabilization board and who later had been recognized as a leading labor arbitrator, served both President Kennedy and President Lyndon B. Johnson until January 1969.

Wirtz led the department during a period of unprecedented federal government activism not seen since the 1930s. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA) was the centerpiece of the War on Poverty, which in turn was a major thrust of the Great Society legislative agenda of the Johnson administration. The EOA was passed in August 1964, and established the Office of Economic Opportunity, directed by Sargent Shriver, who served until 1969.

Although the new EOA programs were established outside Department of Labor, Wirtz believed that the department provided "a regiment for the war on poverty." Internally, Wirtz led the Department of Labor as it coordinated the department's burgeoning training and education programs, establishing for instance the Manpower Administration (MA) in February 1963. The MA included not only the Bureau of Employment Security and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, but also the recently established Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training (OMAT). During the Nixon administration, EOA was dismantled, and the MA absorbed the most important of the defunct agency's jobs programs—the Neighborhood Youth Corps and Job Corps. In addition, following passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, an Office of Federal Contract Compliance was established to see

that contractors were not discriminating against their employees.

In 1968, disagreements with President Johnson over a proposed reorganization of the Department of Labor and with the administration's Vietnam policy nearly led to Wirtz's resignation, but he ultimately served out his term. He was the last of three secretaries of labor who served a total of 16 years, providing the department with a much-needed opportunity to consolidate and strengthen its bureaucratic structure. During the next 16 years, there were to be nine labor secretaries.

After Richard Nixon was elected president, he selected George P. Shultz, dean of the Graduate School of Business at the University of Chicago, as his first secretary of labor in January 1969. An important economic adviser to the president, Schultz helped draft plans for many of the Nixon administration's domestic programs, including federal revenue sharing.

Internally, Secretary Schultz sought to organize a comprehensive manpower system within the department as it absorbed such EOA programs as the Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps. His tenure as labor secretary is perhaps best known, however, for his support of the Philadelphia plan, an attempt to end job discrimination in the construction industry by establishing goals for black employment on federal construction projects. Developed over many years within the Department of Labor, the plan required Philadelphia construction companies with federal contracts to hire minority workers. The Philadelphia plan was bitterly resented, however, by craft unions within the AFL-CIO. The Philadelphia plan, established in other areas of the country, morphed into Hometown plans, agreements among local contractors, unions, community-based organizations, and contracting agencies to work together to identify minority and female workers, prepare them for employment, and assist in their placement in jobs available in the federal contractor workforce.

Secretary Schultz was appointed as director of the new Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in June 1970, and Under Secretary James D. Hodgson was named by President Nixon as his replacement on July 2, 1970. Hodgson had previously served as vice-president for industrial relations at Lockheed Corporation. Hodgson's proudest accomplishment as secretary was the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Act of 1970, setting standards of on-the-job safety and health for 60 million workers. An outgrowth of many years of gradually increasing state and federal regulation of workplace safety regulations, the bill greatly expanded the department's regulatory activities. No longer

simply a voluntary organization, as was the Department of Labor Standards, OSHA federal inspectors found violations in 80% of the 9,300 workplaces inspected during the first 6 months of operation after the law went into effect.

During Hodgson's tenure, unemployment increased from 4.7% to about 6% in 1972. During this period of recession, the Department of Labor administered the first new public employment program since the 1930s under the Emergency Employment Act of 1971, which provided 170,000 public-service jobs. As a public spokesperson for an administration not popular with a union constituency, however, Hodgson was subject to considerable attack, especially by AFL-CIO President George Meany. Shortly after President Nixon's reelection, Hodgson resigned.

He was replaced by Peter J. Brennan, a lifelong Democrat who began his career as a painter, and eventually became president of the New York State Building and Construction Trades Council. Brennan, brought to Nixon's attention by his support of the president's Vietnam policies, became secretary on January 31, 1973. During his tenure, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) passed in 1973. CETA used "revenue sharing" to transfer funding decision-making authority for vocational-training programs (including stipends for trainees) as well as for public-service employment to local government. Also passed during Brennan's term of office was the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) of 1974, which gave the department a major role in the regulation of pension or welfare benefit plans for their employees. In addition to reporting requirements on the fiduciaries, certain employers and plan administrators fund an insurance system to protect some benefits, with premiums paid to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC).

Brennan served under President Nixon and later Ford after Nixon's resignation. Brennan resigned in February 1975, and was replaced by John T. Dunlop. An economics professor at Harvard University, Dunlop had worked for the Bureau of Labor Statistics under Frances Parkman and had known each secretary of labor since Parkman. He also served as director of the Cost of Living Council, which administered price and wage controls implemented in 1971.

Secretary Dunlop believed in a strong collective-bargaining system, informal mediation, and cooperative problem solving. He was concerned with the growth of the number of regulatory programs administered by the Labor Department, which had grown from 40 in 1960, to 134 in 1975, and was also concerned about limitations on bringing about social change through legal compulsion.

Developing labor standards under Section 13 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act, Dunlop advocated “negotiated rulemaking,” convening labor and management representatives to seek agreement on standards to be issued into the Federal Register for comments and subsequent issuance. Negotiated rulemaking has grown as a form of establishing federal regulations and is extensively used by the Environmental Protection Agency and other federal agencies.

Dunlop resigned from his position as secretary of labor in January 1976 over President Ford’s veto of the Common Situs Picketing bill that would have allowed a striking union to picket all contractors at a construction site. Dunlop had worked to pass a bill he believed acceptable, and Ford’s veto, Dunlop believed, was a fatal blow to his credibility as secretary of the Department of Labor.

Ford replaced Dunlop with William J. Usery, Jr., in February 1976. Active in the International Association of Machinists, Secretary Usery served as assistant secretary of labor for labor-management relations from 1969–1973, and in February 1973, was named director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, eventually replacing Dunlop after his resignation. During his short tenure as secretary, Usery helped to bring about resolutions to a long-running rubber industry strike and a potentially crippling truck strike. After his election to the presidency in 1976, Jimmy Carter appointed Ray Marshall as secretary of labor in January 1977. Marshall had taught at the University of Texas for many years and published many books and scholarly articles on race and labor.

Secretary Marshall cited several accomplishments that he was particularly proud of during his term in the White House. During his tenure, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act was passed in 1977, and Marshall set up the Mine Safety and Health Administration to administer the act. He sought to strengthen OSHA, placing it under the leadership of Dr. Eula Bingham, who worked to simplify OSHA regulations and concentrate on problems known to exist in the workplace. Under his stewardship, the budget of Comprehensive Employment and Training Administration (CETA) was increased to \$8 billion, and the number of public-service jobs increased from 310,000 in 1976, to a peak of 725,000 in 1978.

Primarily due to a lethal combination of “stagflation” and a perceived ineptness in foreign policy exacerbated by the Iranian hostage crisis, President Carter was not re-elected for a second term. Ronald Reagan became president in January 1981, and appointed Raymond J. Donovan, a vice-president in charge of labor relations for the Schiavone Construction Company. Donovan sought to support the

Reagan administration’s goal of bringing regulatory relief to American business.

Discretionary spending in the Department of Labor was slashed by 60%, and department, employment fell 21%. Within the department, the new OSHA administration adopted a regulatory approach that emphasized voluntary compliance. The CETA funding was cut from \$8 billion to \$3.7 billion, largely through the elimination of public-service jobs. In 1982, Congress replaced CETA, which was expiring, with the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The new law gave the states more control over how they distributed vocational-training funds and ended federal funding for public-service employment programs. In March 1985, Secretary Donovan, under indictment on charges of grand larceny in connection with the building of a New York City subway project, resigned.

Over the next 20 years, seven individuals, five of whom were women, would serve as secretary of labor. Under those secretaries, major emphasis was placed on managerial efficiency of the Department of Labor’s bureaucratic structure, an emphasis on less rigorous enforcement on departmental regulations, and job training.

Secretary Donovan was replaced by William Emerson Brock, who became secretary of labor in April 1985. Brock, a former Tennessee senator, worked to increase the efficiency of the Department of Labor. Under Brock, OSHA explored mediated rule making, instituted a Secretary’s Management System to track and assure the meeting of departmental goals, and initiated a Workforce in the Year 2000 project to make plans to meet future skilled labor needs. Secretary Brock left office in October 1987, and was replaced by Ann Dore McLaughlin, formerly assistant secretary of the treasury and under secretary of the interior. Serving in the final two years of the Reagan administration, Secretary McLaughlin stressed economic growth as a job-creating mechanism and advocated nongovernmental action to help resolve the dueling demands of family and work life.

In January 1989, President George Bush appointed Elizabeth Hanford Dole to be labor secretary. Secretary Dole had a long career of government service, including a stint as secretary of transportation under President Reagan. Under her leadership, the Department of Labor instituted a Glass Ceiling initiative to reduce barriers for women and minorities in corporations. In addition, the minimum wage was raised but was accompanied by an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which provided for a special subminimum youth-training wage, much opposed by organized labor.

After serving as secretary for not quite 2 years, Dole resigned to become president of the American

Red Cross. President Bush then appointed Lynn Morley Martin to be secretary in February 1991. Secretary Martin, a former high school economics teacher who later served 11 years in the U.S. House of Representatives, continued much of the work begun by Dole, formally establishing a Glass Ceiling Commission and developing programs to improve the delivery of employment programs.

Robert B. Reich was appointed secretary of labor by President Clinton in January 1993. Secretary Reich, formerly a professor at Harvard University, had served with the policy-planning staff of the Federal Trade Commission and as an assistant to the solicitor general in the Ford administration. An enthusiastic advocate for labor in the cabinet, Reich focused on developing skills-building programs to assist American workers. For instance, the School to Work Opportunity Act of 1994 sought to expand apprenticeship programs and employer internships, integrating academic study with work world experiences. He also was instrumental in passing the Family Leave Act, which allowed workers leave from work due to the birth or adoption of a child or to take care of an ill family member.

At the same time, however, Reich oversaw the streamlining of the Department of Labor, during which the Department of Labor staff was reduced by 1,000 employees. The political goal of balancing the budget outweighed Reich's other interests, such as addressing the growing gap between rich and poor. Secretary Reich resigned after President Clinton's re-election and was replaced by Alexis Margaret Herman in April 1997. Secretary Herman served previously as director of the Women's Bureau. Herman continued to administer the skills-building program of Reich, as well as orienting the department to implement the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which increased the emphasis on the need to move welfare recipients from welfare to work.

After his election in 2000, President George W. Bush appointed Elaine L. Chao as secretary of labor in January 2001. Prior to her appointment, Chao served as director of the Peace Corps and deputy secretary at the U.S. Department of Transportation, as well as a fellow at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. Under Chao, the department updated the white-collar exemption of the Fair Labor Standards Act, an update that was in general opposed by organized labor, and the 2002 discretionary budget of the department was cut by 9%. Secretary Chao also oversees the Department Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. As of November 2005, Secretary Chao has been the longest serving secretary of labor since Secretary Wirtz left office in January 1969.

The U.S. Department of Labor FY 2003–2008 Strategic Plan September 2003 states, “The Department of Labor promotes the welfare of job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States by improving working conditions, expanding opportunities for training and profitable employment, protecting retirement and health care benefits, helping employers find workers, strengthening free collective bargaining, and tracking changes in employment, prices, and other national economic measurements.” The specificity of the department's mission statement reflects the development over 90-plus years of government bureaucratic regulation of American labor. It reflects a department that is perhaps far less representative, and far more regulative, of American labor than the original advocates of a Department of Labor envisioned.

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DILLINGHAM COMMISSION

In the 400 years since Europeans began a campaign to colonize North America, the labor of migrant peoples has propelled the phenomenal economic growth of these two continents. For the majority of our history as a nation, immigration to the United States remained almost wholly unrestricted; the first official ban on any immigrant group came in 1882, in the form of the Chinese Exclusion Act. However over the following four decades, Congress repeatedly sought to keep out undesirable groups. Gathering support among many Americans, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), restrictionism reached its zenith in 1921 and 1924 with the passage of the Quota Act and its follow-up, the Immigration Restriction (or Johnson-Reid) Act. These laws created, and later tightened, a system of quotas based on national origins. The Johnson-Reid Act designed these annual immigration quotas to reduce dramatically the volume of fearsome "new immigrants" (from southern and eastern Europe) in favor of old-stock immigrants whose homelands included Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia. Before Congress agreed to recast so dramatically this country's immigration policy, members investigated the immigration problem through the work of the Dillingham Commission.

What happened in the early part of the twentieth century to shift the mood of the country in favor of immigration restriction? By the early 1910s, the American melting pot—revered for its ability to absorb and recast ethnic identity—had received a noticeably different infusion into its native cultural stock. A profound shift in immigration patterns had occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as southern and eastern Europe now provided the majority of immigrants to the United States, where northern and western Europe had previously. Concern over these unmeltable ethnics mounted in an intellectual climate dominated by a rigid biological understanding of race. Additional pressure came from organized labor as skilled workers rallied against the downward force that they felt immigrant low-wage workers were exerting on wages and working standards. The bulging industrial cities of the turn of the last century attracted millions of migrants annually, many of whom relied on informal informational networks and returning migrants to decide where to live and work in the United States. By the early twentieth century, industrial unionism had built a presence in urban factories; as waves of mostly poor peasants from Europe continued to land on U.S. shores. Native-born people in the trade union movement (including pioneer labor historian John R. Commons) worried about the effect that a constant supply of cheap labor would have on the skilled workingman.

At this time, both public pressure and private concern motivated legislators to act purposefully to shape the movement of people to the United States. The first attempt at restriction of European immigration came in 1907, in the form of a mandatory literacy test (the favored provision of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge's Immigration Restriction League), the successful completion of which was necessary for admittance. That year the literacy test failed to pass into law, and President Theodore Roosevelt responded by appointing a commission of legislators, academics, and private citizens to investigate the condition of immigrants and suggest further governmental action. Named in honor of its chairman, Senator William P. Dillingham of Vermont, the Dillingham Commission's mandate charged it to "make full inquiry, examination, and investigation, by subcommittee or otherwise, into the subject of immigration." In the heightened climate of controversy that gave rise to its existence, the commission conducted its work in private and did not hold any public hearings nor publish its data for almost four years.

Despite its public silence, the Dillingham Commission was diligent in its investigation and finally produced a response by 1911: forty-one volumes of

reports, statistics, recommendations, and assessments on the subject of immigration and its relationship to American economy and society. Almost three-quarters of the report focused exclusively on the role of immigrants in American industry. Other volumes covered a variety of topics; four books examined immigrant charitable institutions and the employment, intelligence, and physical characteristics of the native-born children of immigrants, as well as the propensity of immigrant women to reproduce. Members of the Dillingham Commission were also interested in the history of federal and state legislation pertaining to immigration. Throughout the report, the various authors compiled a mountain of statistics in order to compare how immigrants lived and worked across generations and in other parts of the world. As documents created in response to a specific socio-economic question, that of the impact of immigrants on U.S. culture and the economy, the prodigious output of the commission is a valuable tool to study immigrant workers at a time when over 20% of the U.S. population was foreign-born.

Many immigration historians have placed the Dillingham Commission at the beginning of the formal legislative road to immigration restriction, which was fully achieved in 1924. According to this interpretation, the Dillingham Commission Report provided a scientific argument for immigration restriction. But while the congressional members of the Dillingham Commission looked at immigration as “primarily an economic problem,” the hundreds of field researchers and mostly nameless authors (the notable exceptions being economists Jett Lauck and Jeremiah Jenks, and the father of modern anthropology, Franz Boas) who compiled the report’s other 40 volumes offered few opinions. Ultimately, Senator Dillingham’s summary (Volume 1, *Abstracts of Reports*) manipulated and largely ignored the findings of the other 40 volumes in order to argue the need for immigration restriction. Viewed in its entirety, the material collected by the Dillingham Commission describes very specifically how immigrants lived and worked across the United States during a decade when over 8.8 million immigrants entered the United States (a volume not surpassed until the 1990s).

Immigration to the United States from Europe decreased dramatically after 1924; whether this was the result of the Johnson-Reid Act or a byproduct of shifting labor markets and migration streams in post-World War I Europe is debatable. Either way, immigration restrictionists declared the quota system a success, and industrial unionism continued to gain clout among Americanized workers. Ironically, the state likely played a minor role in determining migration patterns, since economic forces exerted greater

control. Thus, the significance of the Dillingham Commission in labor history rests on the depth and breadth of its monumental study, which helps to document the historically changing role that immigrants and their children played in the twentieth-century workplace.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Commons, John Rogers

DIRECTORS GUILD OF AMERICA

Directors formed what is now called the Directors Guild of America (DGA) at the beginning of 1935, two years after writers and actors had unionized. Unlike writers and actors, the directors chose not to affiliate with any national labor organization, preferring to keep their independence. From the beginning, they established a tradition of strong member control for the group: None of the elected officers is paid, and the executive director serves at the pleasure of the all-volunteer governing board.

Before applying for recognition to the National Labor Relations Board in 1938, the directors reached out to include assistant directors in their group. Nonetheless, in the early years the DGA was sometimes characterized as a gentleman’s club made up of rich men. Such a portrait of directors as a group of highly privileged individuals however was somewhat misleading, for the livelihood of many of them was hardly secure. In 1930, about half were unemployed.

This least unionlike of unions has amassed an enviable record of achievements over the years.

These include such traditional union issues as minimum salaries, improved working conditions, residuals (a form of royalty payments), and health and retirement benefits. The guild's only strike, a very brief one in 1987, was over residuals. Under President Robert Aldrich in the early 1970s, the guild vastly expanded its staff so that it could effectively manage its ambitious programs, collecting residuals from the studios and producers on behalf of its members and administering its health and pension plans with monies from members' dues and studio contributions. By 1996, when membership had reached 10,000, annual residual payments handled by the guild had grown to over \$100 million, while pension and health plan assets topped \$1 billion.

As successful as the DGA has been in negotiating these bread-and-butter labor issues, however, they have not been the organization's primary concern. Instead, the group has followed a policy of yoking such issues to a visionary creative-rights agenda. The DGA's creative-rights agenda was largely developed by Frank Capra, one of the shaping forces in the guild's formation. Capra continued to assert a powerful influence over the organization's creative rights policy until the 1960s, occupying a variety of positions, both official and unofficial, over the years. Under Capra's leadership, guild members won the right to adequate time for preparation and rehearsal before the actual shooting of a film begins and the right to supervise directors' cuts on the productions they helm. Beginning in 1986, the DGA also spearheaded the drive to halt the colorization of black-and-white movies. Most important to the guild's creative-rights itinerary is Capra's slogan "one man, one film." To this end, the group oversees all directorial credits so that only one director is officially recognized on any given production even when more than one have been involved.

Creative-rights issues have led to bitter acrimony between the DGA and the Writers Guild over the years. The DGA rules stipulate that writers are not permitted on movie sets. The writers have been further enraged by the DGA's tacit endorsement of the so-called "possessory credit" ("a film by ——" or "a ——— film"). The writers claim that such a credit belies the group nature of moviemaking and is granted indiscriminately to directors of all stripes. In 2003, the directors attempted to soothe the writers' ire by creating guidelines aimed at limiting the use of such credits, but the issue remains a sensitive one between the two guilds.

The Red Scare during the late 1940s and early 1950s ushered in the DGA's only major crisis. Two of its members, Herbert Biberman and Edward Dmytryk, were part of the Hollywood Ten jailed for

refusing to "name names" of fellow Communist sympathizers to the House Un-American Activities Committee. Then in 1950, Guild bigwig Cecil B. DeMille, responding to the pressure the House Committee was putting on Hollywood labor, attempted to oust then-Guild President Joseph L. Mankiewicz because Mankiewicz had refused to force DGA members sign an oath of loyalty to the U.S. government. After a fractious 7-hour special meeting at the Beverly Hills Hotel, the group rallied in support of Mankiewicz. However, the re-instated guild president reversed himself a few days later, sending a letter to all DGA members asking them to sign the disputed loyalty oath. The other talent guilds soon followed suit.

During the 1950s, the guild fell on hard times, and membership languished. However, during this decade, the DGA won jurisdictional rights over television. Its merger with the New York-based Radio and Television Directors Guild in 1960 further strengthened its base. In 1964, the guild established a New York office in addition to its headquarters in Los Angeles. That same year, the DGA began a training program for assistant directors, and in the years that followed, it added numerous other educational and outreach programs designed to benefit its members and promote the cause of directors within the industry and among the public at large. By 2004, DGA membership included directors of movies, television, radio, and commercials, along with unit managers, who had been admitted to the guild in 1964.

Beginning in the 1980s, the DGA became active on issues of diversity, sponsoring mentoring and networking programs for women and minority member as well as mounting legal battles against discrimination at the studios. The guild also began collecting and publicizing data on the employment of female and minority directors in the industry. It was the first of the Hollywood labor groups to become active on these issues. By the turn of the century, however, these programs had produced little in the way of results. The number of female and minority guild members employed as directors continued to be negligible. Moreover, it took until 2002 for the guild itself to elect a female president, Martha Coolidge, and by 2006, the group had yet to elect a president who represented a minority group.

As the DGA moved into the twenty-first century, two new concerns faced it. The studios were refusing to share the significant profits accruing from the burgeoning market in DVDs by increasing residual payments to the unions. In addition, runaway productions were taking advantage of cheap foreign workers in the place of more expensive union labor. Both of these issues represent a growing concern for the actors and writers as well as the directors. As a result, the three

groups have mounted cooperative efforts to win gains for their members.

The global, technologically sophisticated marketplace of the twenty-first century has brought other issues to the fore for the DGA as well. Recognizing the reality of modern internationalized movie-making practices, the DGA has sought to form alliances with other directors' groups around the world. However, this effort has at times been hampered by the resentment felt by directors in other nations toward the stranglehold Hollywood frequently has on their home markets. Meanwhile, the guild's commitment to keeping its members up to date on matters of professional interest faces ever-more daunting tests as filmmaking moves into the digital era, in which technological imperatives and industry practices are evolving at an ever-more dizzying pace. But there is little doubt that the guild will prove equal to this challenge as it has to all others. In a time when the strength of most unions is ebbing, mentions of the DGA in the Hollywood trade press are routinely preceded by the word "powerful." That power has served the group well in the past and is likely to continue to do so in the future.

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DISFRANCHISEMENT

From 1890–1908, every state of the former Confederacy rewrote or amended its constitution to deprive around two million African-American men of the right to vote, a right they had obtained 30 or so years earlier during Reconstruction. Along with virtually all of the African-American men, hundreds of thousands of poor and illiterate white men also lost their voting rights.

Disfranchisement was a draconian movement unprecedented in the modern history of representative government; it took away the guaranteed right to vote

from at least one-fourth of the eligible electorate. The United States was therefore out of step with every other democratizing nation in the modern era when expansion of the suffrage, rather than its contraction, was the overall trend. Not until 1965 and the passage of the Voting Rights Act were these rights restored to blacks, a century after their initial acquisition.

Outcome

This reactionary development, which amounted to nothing less than the final stage in the counter-revolution against Reconstruction, had a decisive impact on the political system of the southern states. It destroyed the Republican party and what was left of the Populist party, and it eliminated from the polity millions of voters who could not meet the new requirements for voting. These qualifications consisted primarily of evidence of continuous residence in one place, ability to read, and payment of an annual poll tax. They were not especially severe, but they proved sufficiently onerous, as their proponents well knew, to prohibit almost all black men and a large segment of white men from qualifying to vote. In effect, landless tenants and sharecroppers in the countryside as well as most working people in the cities were disfranchised. Those blacks who were disfranchised by the new requirements as well as the few who could meet them were then barred from what soon became the real election, the nominating primary of the Democratic party. And this was achieved through either state legislation or party rules that restricted participation to whites only, thereby creating an institution known as the white primary.

The political system that resulted from these changes was called the "solid South." It possessed three general features. First, it was a one-party system with the Democratic party pre-eminent and its dominance undisputed in all but a few of the upper southern states, such as Tennessee and North Carolina, where the mountain regions still generated a competing Republican presence. Second, the electorate was severely restricted. It was limited to whites, and only those among them who could meet the voting requirements, namely, the better off and the middling sorts. Essentially, the electorate was purged of most of the men who were laborers whether they lived and worked in cities or on farms and plantations.

And the third feature of the solid South was the vastly disproportionate influence and power its members wielded in the national Democratic party and in Congress. Because the South was solidly Democratic and because its Congressmen, once elected, were very

difficult to unseat, since there was no Republican opposition in the general election, the region's Democrats were able to guarantee victories in the southern states to Democratic presidential candidates, and they were also able to use their incumbency and seniority in the Senate and House of Representatives to control committees and influence legislation. Of most concern to them was legislation likely to upset the region's system of white racial dominance on which disfranchisement and the solid South were based. Worrisome but less threatening than antidiscrimination measures were laws that benefited labor and endangered the South's ability to hold workers under tight control and keep wages low, a comparative advantage the region's political and economic leaders strove vigorously to preserve. Their efforts ran into considerable opposition, however, in the 1940s and 1950s, after the Second New Deal, when the Democratic party became closely aligned with organized labor, now more assertive after the formation of the Congress of Industrialized Organizations (CIO), as well as with the interests of working people in the northern cities.

Origins

The solid South was the direct political consequence of disfranchisement. And the maintenance of white supremacy as well as the control of labor and the exploitation of working people comprised the broader economic and social order it was intended to protect and sustain. But what was the cause of disfranchisement? Who were its initiators, and what were their intentions? Historians always have to beware of the logical fallacy of deriving intention from outcome and thereby overlooking what has, in recent years, been described as unintended consequences. But in this case, intention and outcome were directly correlated. The disfranchisers were remarkably successful. Indeed, the outcome proved to be even more favorable than they had hoped. They obtained everything they wanted, and then some. Dominance over the South's politics and therefore over its recently emancipated black population was the disfranchisers' objective. But once they gained control over the political system, they discovered the enormous leverage this power and unity gave them within the nation at large through the Democratic party and the organizational structure of Congress. Because of this unanticipated bonus, southern Democrats were able to consolidate their regional power further by using their national influence to protect what they believed to be the region's interests against the growing

criticism, even hostility, of the rest of the nation that arose after World War II.

The movement to end black voting emerged in the 1890s, a turbulent decade in American political history when farmers in the South and West were experiencing severe economic distress that neither of the two major parties seemed able to respond to. In the South, a new and more assertive farmers' organization, the Farmers' Alliance, had arisen in the late 1880s, and it mobilized small-to-middling farmers, mainly whites but also blacks to some extent. Soon the alliance entered the political arena and played a large role in forming the People's party, or Populists, who challenged the Democrats, either as a third party or more dangerously, through fusion arrangements with the Republicans. In every state, the Democrats faced serious insurgencies, none more so than in North Carolina and Louisiana, where Populist-Republican fusion produced anti-Democratic electoral majorities, and in North Carolina, where Republican managed to win control of state government from 1894–1898.

The initiative for disfranchisement was spurred by a sense of urgency at the prospect of a resurgent republicanism and of an opposition broadened and invigorated by populism. But the concern behind disfranchisement preceded the crisis of the 1890s. Ever since the end of Reconstruction, when they had succeeded in overthrowing the Republican-controlled governments one by one, Democrats had been frustrated by the large number of blacks who still had the right to vote. Their numbers constituted a direct threat to Democratic ascendancy in black-majority districts, while elsewhere they remained a bloc of voters whom the Democrats could not reach and win. Unwilling to accept the legitimacy of blacks' right to vote and participate in the political process, Democrats used physical violence in order to deter blacks from voting altogether, or they resorted to ballot box fraud by tampering with the ballots cast by black voters so that they ended up in the Democrats' boxes.

In the 1890s, the Democrats arrived at the decision to eliminate the black vote altogether rather than continue to engage in electoral activities that, despite their effectiveness, were nevertheless humiliating, tiresome, and patently illegal. And this change of strategy became more urgent and necessary with the growing turbulence and insurgency in the region's politics. Beginning with Mississippi in 1890, before the Populist party had even formed, the movement got under way as the southern states either called a constitutional convention or ratified constitutional amendments for the purpose of eliminating black voters by introducing new voting requirements that almost all blacks could not meet. Conventions were held in Mississippi (1890), South Carolina (1895), Louisiana

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(1898), and Alabama and Virginia (1901), while constitutional amendments were enacted and then ratified in Tennessee (1890), Florida (1889), Arkansas (1892), North Carolina (1900), Texas (1902), and Georgia (1908). The initiators of disfranchisement were all Democrats, for this was fundamentally a partisan maneuver. Even though different interest groups and factions within the party led off the move to disfranchise and even though serious debates arose during the entire process, the conventions were overwhelmingly Democratic in composition, and the entire operation, whether by constitutional convention or amendment, was carried through by the party leadership, and not by the rank and file.

Loophole Clauses

The most problematic aspect of this process was the need to comply with the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1870 during Reconstruction, which forbade denial of the right to vote “on grounds of race, color, or previous condition of servitude,” a clear prohibition against disfranchising blacks alone. The restrictions on voting were therefore based on grounds other than race—residence, literacy, tax payments, and so forth. Naturally enough, these kinds of requirements would eliminate many whites as well. Therefore, each state concocted a loophole clause to enable whites to vote if they took advantage of it. These clauses were criticized vigorously by the Democratic press at the time because they were so obviously fraudulent that they would taint what many considered a cleaning-up of a deeply corrupt electoral system and would also expose the party to ridicule. The grandfather clause allowed people to vote whose immediate ancestors had possessed the right to vote before 1867, which happened to be the very year in which blacks had first obtained the vote. The other device that emerged was the understanding clause, which permitted men to vote who could pass a test given by the registrar that showed they understood a particular clause or section of the state constitution. Both of these exceptions were clearly intended to be discriminatory and fraudulent. And they reveal conclusively that getting rid of the black vote was the overriding objective of disfranchisement.

Interestingly, few whites took advantage of this special offer. Exactly why they did not remains speculative. Perhaps they found the need to appear before a registrar and admit one’s illiteracy and poverty too humiliating to undergo. Or perhaps they did not care enough about losing the vote to take the trouble to go

through the procedure. Whatever the reason, they passed up the opportunity to register and participate. And this was a cause of some surprise to the Democrats, who had gone to great lengths to include these loopholes for the benefit of whites who would not meet the new strictures. Nevertheless, they took no action to get these whites to register, and they expressed little concern that they would lose the vote.

While blacks were undoubtedly the target of disfranchisement, the Democratic leadership evidently considered that disadvantaged whites were expendable as voters. Their loss was a by-product of disfranchisement, but not an entirely unwelcome one. Although indisputably secondary to race, the class dimension seems nonetheless to have been an aspect of the maneuver. The southern Democrats were obsessed about race, but they were also worried about class.

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See also African Americans; Civil War and Reconstruction; Slave Trade

DOCK AND COTTON COUNCIL

The Dock and Cotton Council (D&CC) was organized on the waterfront in New Orleans in October 1901. It represented all of the screw men, longshoremen, teamsters, coal wheelers, steamboat hands, cotton scale hands, weighers, and yardmen, black and white alike. While member unions were organized along strictly segregated lines, the council took its strength from a biracial leadership that drew delegates from every member union. The council president always came from the ranks of the strongest labor organization on the waterfront, the white-cotton screw men, and the secretary came from the black longshoremen, one of the oldest and most numerically significant organized groups. The council’s vice-president also usually came from the black longshoremen. Because of the mostly unskilled nature of

their work, the waterfront workers of all trades and both races recognized that they must join together in order to control the labor supply. They also benefited from the leadership of the elite cotton screw men, who were called the aristocrats of the levee because their particular skills were in such high demand. Hence, the council appeared in a segregated city where all of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) unions were divided by race. Away from the docks, the AFL chartered two separate central labor councils for the two races, but the integrated D&CC represented all of the dockworkers. After the fall of 1902, the council mandated equal work sharing between the races, though the union whites still controlled the best jobs.

As the workers' biracial alliance remained solid over the next several years, labor conflict continued to characterize relations between employer and workers. The first real test of the council came in 1907, when the shippers instituted a brutal speed-up directed primarily against the highly skilled screw men. After several days of protests, the council called for a general strike. When over nine thousand workers from all skill levels responded in perfect racial solidarity, they completely shut down the docks. After 10 days, the shippers asked for arbitration. As was their standard practice, the dockers sent an integrated set of delegates to negotiate a permanent settlement for the council at the conference table.

The poststrike conferences in 1907 and 1908 were enlivened by the resistance of the employer representatives to the integrated delegation of workers. Nonetheless, a five-year contract that specified fair wage rates and decent work rules resulted from the negotiations. As Eric Arnesen notes, "The hatchet was buried" in early May of 1908, and labor peace prevailed along the New Orleans wharves for over a decade. The shippers even came to praise the D&CC as a kind of partner they could count on to deliver a reliable labor force. Likewise, the leaders of the council made job security their over-riding concern in exchange for decent wages and working conditions. During this time, all of the members of the D&CC were finally part of labor's privileged elite. They belonged to the national AFL but remained united across racial lines because they all belonged to the council. It was truly a remarkable alliance, a unique product that was just as much time-based as it was on the strength of craftsmen whose skills were nearing obsolescence.

In the next 15 years, increasing technology gave more power to the employers. When a high-speed cotton press became widely available after World War I, it made the shippers much less beholden to the cotton screw men. In addition changing demographics weakened the council. As the number of black screw men and longshoremen continued to

increase dramatically, the new demographics rendered equal work sharing inherently discriminatory.

Racial conflict was not the direct cause of the collapse of the council, however, because a more immediate threat came against the screw men, their elite work rules and more literally, their jobs. The D&CC held solid through the labor skirmishes of 1921 and 1922, but in 1923, the entire waterfront union coalition fell apart following a devastating strike.

During contract renewal negotiations in 1923, the screw men threatened to strike because the shippers refused to incorporate the old work rules into the proposed new contracts. Many white longshoremen supported them. The majority of African-Americans, however, were reluctant to go along because they feared a strike might fail. When the issue came to a vote, less than 20% of black longshoremen supported the strike that was being pushed so hard by a minority of the whites. Inexplicably, the strike still won approval that September, and 1300 men walked off the wharves, black and white going out in apparent solidarity.

The shippers and their agents refused to negotiate with the men or recognize the strike. Instead, they revived an old mechanism to hire strikebreakers. Called the shape-up, it was a system that prevailed in most other American ports but was not widely used in New Orleans since at least the 1880s because the organized workers would not allow it. In 1923, when the shippers imported hundreds of strikebreakers to cross the picket lines, the new recruits came together at designated "shaping places" where foremen hired individual men for a single day's work. As a result, the shippers never had to negotiate with the experienced strikers because they quickly trained a whole new labor pool. Meantime, they took their case against the D&CC into federal court, where a judge issued an injunction prohibiting the strikers from interfering with commerce on the docks. Armed with that court order, the shippers forced the pickets to quit the strike without a settlement. There was not only no contract left on the table, but for way too many of the strikers, no job. That was the end of the D&CC, though the New Orleans International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) managed to stay alive—just barely.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Injunctions; International Longshoremen's Association**

DOMESTIC SERVICE

A dichotomy between the domestic realm, considered the provenance of women, and the market, deemed the domain of men, has had powerful labor market effects throughout American history, relegating women to lower paying, undesirable jobs at the margins of the paid workforce and complicating efforts at government reform and shop-floor organizing. Distinctions based on race, class, and caste have strengthened these prescriptions, relegating poor women, immigrant women, and women of color to the lowest rung of the ladder of paid employment, that is, to domestic service. From before the founding of the republic to the 1940s, more American women workers labored in the private homes of other Americans than worked in any other job. The degradation of domestic workers (including their presumed laziness, sexual availability, and inherent servitude) has served metaphorically and in practical terms as a foil for the pristine, white, middle-class American woman.

Female domination of any job category rightly sends up red flags to students of labor history. According to census figures, from 1870–1930, almost 90% of domestic servants were women. (Historians consider this a considerable undercount based on the inclusion of male porters in the domestic servant job category.) Whether servants, maids, cooks, housekeepers, laundresses or nannies, through the ages U.S. domestic workers have managed all aspects of social reproduction for those who could afford to hire them. In turn, the wages paid to domestic workers have provided indispensable economic support to these women, both native-born and immigrant, and their own families. And yet, since it requires no formal education, offers no possibility of promotion, pays notoriously badly, and leaves workers vulnerable to sexual and other kinds of exploitation by employers, domestic labor has always been among the lowest status and least desirable jobs available to women.

Few who have worked as domestics have written about their experiences, but journalistic accounts and oral histories emphasize social isolation as one of the most punishing features of domestic service. Atomization has wrought economic as well as psychological implications: Unions, historically male and manufacturing-oriented, never put sufficient effort into organizing domestics to overcome these barriers. At the same time, domestic workers have been excluded from almost all government labor regulation—whether concerned with safety, wages and hours, retirement, or the right to organize. For these reasons, the case can be made that no other category of free labor has left workers as vulnerable to the wiles of individual employers or the vicissitudes of the economy as domestic labor.

Some historians consider the early republic the “golden age of domestic service” when a fresh democratic ethos blunted social distinctions between mistresses and their domestic servants. In rural communities, young, native-born women aided in the home production of clothes, food, and such necessities as soap. In towns in the North and center of the country, young women, fresh off ships from Scandinavia, Ireland, and Germany, became American in the homes of their employers. On the West Coast, an influx of Chinese men and women dominated the field. But as the home shifted from a site of production to a locus of consumption, the domestic servant found her role shifting from an apprentice to family life to a mere expression of the will of her mistress or master.

During the mid-to-late nineteenth century, race and gender remained the principal axes of social organization and the primary determinants of who worked for whom and in what capacity. By 1855, 25% of the almost one million Irish girls and women in New York City worked as domestics. Driven from their native land by successive waves of famine, by age 14, 60% of Irish females no longer lived with their own families. “Bridget,” the derogatory nickname Protestant employers assigned their Irish household help, faced anti-Catholic sentiment as well as general disdain for her character. Immigrant and native-born girls who found live-in work an ill fit with married life and motherhood could shift their dependency, relying on their husbands’ wages; poorly paid piecework like hat braiding, which they could take into their homes; or a job in a mill or factory.

Approximately half a million free African-Americans lived in northern cities like Philadelphia, Boston, and New York by 1860. At least half of the women labored as domestics. Because African-American men earned significantly less than their white counterparts, even for the same work, African-American women

had no choice but to continue working after marriage and the birth of their own children, making working mothers a fixture of African-American family life. By 1900, in New York City, 31% of African-American women worked for a wage, as compared to 4% of white women.

In the South, by contrast, domination of domestic service by African-American women was unchallenged. Even the poorest white woman turned her nose up at the idea of work in another white person's home. Moreover, prevailing wages for the job were so low that all but the most impoverished white families could afford to employ an African-American woman to cook, do washing, and help mind children. While almost any other kinds of work might have been preferable, free African-Americans found their options severely limited by black codes, local regulations that imposed occupational barriers and curfews on African-Americans, limiting the kinds of paid work available to them. In 1808 and 1836, for example, the city council of the District of Columbia approved such legislation. The prevalence of such racist laws wrought predictable results even in the upper South. By the 1890s, regardless of their abilities and experience, most African-Americans worked in low and unskilled trades.

After Emancipation, African-American women who trekked North shattered the existing mold of domestic service by insisting on day-work rather than live-in situations. By World War II, what had been a predominantly white, live-in occupation had gradually become a day job dominated by African-Americans. Although day workers might lose money on the new arrangement—needing to pay room and board out of the same meager wage they received when they lived-in—they strongly preferred living apart from their employers, being assured at least some time off and their own sliver of private physical space.

Forces of urbanization and industrialization also changed the experience of domestic service. Compulsory education extended new options to girls. Fresh labor market opportunities attracted others. Qualified women leapt at the chance to take clerical or retail work or to become teachers. Relative to other types of paid work, domestic service began to diminish. An Irish woman in her early twenties who had left domestic employment to work in a commercial laundry preferred her new job, finding it “no harder, giving more time after work hours, and being better paid.”

Private domestic service remained the single largest job category for women until the 1950 census. Labor and feminist movements made remarkably few inroads in the sector, leaving intact its essentially

feudal structure. Suffragist Charlotte Perkins Gilman envisioned cooperative household arrangements that would alleviate the isolation and stigma of housework while freeing women to engage in other pursuits. While this remained a pipedream, Progressive Era reformers did win legislation prohibiting child labor and in some states, establishing protective legislation controlling the hours of women's work. Yet domestic labor itself remained a peripheral concern. Such feminist leaders as Alice Paul of the National Women's party foreshadowed the blind spots of the feminist movement of the 1960s, which would also be dominated by middle-class white women, when she rejected appeals for inclusion by domestic workers, instead concentrating on the status of teachers, clerical workers, saleswomen, and wealthier women financially dependent on their husbands. Paul deflected such appeals by noting that the problems facing domestic service were fundamentally racial—not tied to sex.

Organized labor proved slightly more receptive to overtures by domestic servants. At various times, the Knights of Labor, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Young Women's Christian Association each recognized associations of domestic workers. Household workers locals could be found in Tulsa and Lawton, Oklahoma, in Richmond, Virginia, in Mobile, Alabama, and in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and other large towns at various moments throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When 3,000 laundresses, cooks, and maids organized a strike in Atlanta in the 1880s, the city council crushed the strike, imposing a \$25 fee on the strikers (the same amount charged to business owners) and jailing some of the movement's organizers. In the face of strong-arm tactics, momentum proved difficult to sustain. A brief resurgence of organizing among domestics during World War I produced 10 locals of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) nationwide by 1920. By 1923, however, none remained. Perhaps even more than other female workers, domestics faced resistance from traditional male unions as well as from the middle-class establishment, male and female. Combined with the abundance of an unskilled labor force, the low status of the workers, their isolation from one another, and the personalized nature of the relationship between the domestic and her employers, the obstacles proved overwhelming.

In the absence of formal contract negotiations, immigrant and native-born domestic workers developed their own strategies for expressing work-related grievances—short of quitting, which meant risking economic destitution for their families. Within the seven-day workweek, such opportunities abounded.

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To make their jobs livable, they experimented with tardiness, absenteeism, petty theft, and outright sabotage. Employers tended to dismiss such behaviors as endemic to the employees' race or ethnicity, waxing elegiac about the servant problem.

While it is hard to imagine a category of workers in greater need of an economic safety net, domestic workers were specifically excluded from the regulation and protection extended to workers in other industries during the New Deal. Leaders of sympathetic organizations, such as the YWCA, lent their efforts to worker-led letter-writing campaigns, urging lawmakers to include domestic work in the National Recovery Administration and the Fair Labor Standards Act. Ultimately, they were excluded from both. Lawmakers saw little cause for controversy: The private nature of domestic employment rendered impractical the administration and enforcement of such reforms as overtime pay, a limited workweek, and a guaranteed minimum wage. Practical complications aside, traditional paternalism was the root cause of their resistance. By excluding domestic servants from unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and old-age insurance, members of Congress intensified employers' control.

For a sense of just how many people made their living at domestic service, a survey conducted by the future Nobel economist Joseph Stigler in 1939 found that as many Americans worked in domestic service as were employed in coal mines, automobile manufacturing, and railroads combined. At the same time, the composition of the domestic workforce was shifting. By 1940, 47% of the women who performed domestic work in private homes were nonwhite, while nonwhite women accounted, on average, for only 14% of other categories of worker. The influx of immigrants and their comparatively unproblematic acceptance by white Americans in other sectors had reduced their proportionate employment in domestic service. Mobilization of the home front during World War II marked the last significant exodus of women from the domestic service sector. However, the post-war expulsion of women from well-paying war jobs was even more severe for blacks, increasing their representation in private household service. By 1944, African-American women did over 60% of such work.

A second burst of organized feminism in the 1960s once again raised popular consciousness about the rights of women but again failed to reckon with the layers of oppression that burdened poor women of color, that is, the women most likely to work as domestics. While this movement dramatically changed the way many working women thought about themselves and their work, the middle- and upper-class white

women who led the movement failed to detect that for women trapped in domestic service and other feminized wage labor, employment was the cause of their suffering, not the answer to it. An intense focus on a woman's right to paid work ignored the central concerns of domestic workers and other low-wage workers who already worked for pay.

By the second half of the twentieth century, the nonwhite cleaning lady and nanny had become fixtures of the American labor market. During the 1970s, federal lawmakers extended labor legislation (such as the Fair Labor Standards Act [FLSA]) to such workers. However, the reduction in hours per employer has meant that most domestics now work in more than one household—sometimes more than one per day—and often do so off-the-books. Reliable statistics are difficult to find, but high-profile “nannygate” scandals have exposed the tendency of private employers not to declare their household employees for tax purposes, thus leaving domestic workers outside the formal labor market and ineligible for benefits that under current federal law they might now rightly claim.

As educated American women have blazed into the professions and the business world, they and their families have deepened their dependence on a class of housekeepers and nannies. African-American women are still disproportionately represented, but today's domestic workers are also increasingly nonwhite immigrant women who remit a portion of their wages to their families in their countries of origin—often poor nations with weak economies and heavy debt burdens to the United States and the rest of the West. Moreover, in the atmosphere of homeland security that engulfed the nation after the attacks of September 2001, fear of deportation (for themselves or their loved ones), now mingles with historical fears of exploitation among members of the domestic workforce.

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DOMINANCE AND INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZED LABOR: 1940s

If the 1930s were the seedtime for the modern labor movement, then the 1940s constitute the harvest years when organized labor blossomed and bore fruit. During the decade, unions reached their apex of power and influence in American society. For this brief historical moment, they were a significant progressive force shaping politics, society, and the economy. Unions were integral cogs in the wheels of the New Deal state, and in some cases labor leaders themselves became powerbrokers with the ability to make presidents. But at the moment of its apogee, organized labor discovered its grip on American politics fleeting and its authority in the economy and the society rather illusory. Unions ended the decade far weaker and more vulnerable than they began it.

The Great Depression of the 1930s and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal had helped to spark the organizational drives that reversed labor unions' precipitous decline during the Republican-dominated 1920s. However, it was the coming of the Second World War that created the conditions for unprecedented growth, scarcely imaginable during the doldrums of the Great Depression. Take the shipbuilding industry as an example. In 1920, the major shipyards built almost 3.5 million deadweight tons of new shipping. In the final year of President Herbert Hoover's administration, that yearly output had plummeted to 355,771, and in 1935, the Great Depression's nadir, only 49,000 tons of new shipping were launched. Late in the New Deal, President Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to foster growth in the shipbuilding industry by requisitioning new ships for the Merchant Marine and the United States Navy. The initial plan to revive this sick industry was to contract 50 ships a year for 10 years. The outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 vastly accelerated and expanded FDR's timetable. By 1940, Roosevelt's government was ordering 200 ships a year, and that number grew substantially. At the war's height in 1944, over 20 million tons were launched in that single year. The beneficiaries of this wartime boom were of course the military brass, the shipyard owners, and the laborers who built the ships. Because closed-shop contracts were so common in shipyards, nearly all shipbuilding workers belonged to a union. Most but not all were affiliated with an international of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). For instance, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers dominated in many yards. But other smaller AFL unions, such as the blacksmiths, the metal polishers, and the stove workers also did exceedingly well during the early 1940s.

Similar patterns existed elsewhere. For example, the construction industry experienced an unprecedented recovery in the early 1940s. The Great Depression had all but stopped private construction both for homeowners and for businesses. The worst year was 1935, when at no point was the unemployment rate for construction workers under 45%. Such New Deal work programs as the Works Progress Administration helped a little, but jobs were scarce, and wages remained low for the entire 1930s. Some advances were made. In 1939, in Los Angeles, city leaders arranged for new construction loans totaling \$33 million in order to restart the city's lagging building industry. That development was Lilliputian compared to the money the federal government spent on construction immediately before and during the Second World War. For example, the Roosevelt administration spent more than \$33 million on a single U.S. Marine base in San Diego, where union workers belonging to the AFL built a new training station, a hospital, an air station, an armory, and defense housing. And again it was unions that reaped the benefit from this new war-spurred growth.

In general terms, because of the economy's revitalization, the 1940s saw union penetration in the American economy like never before. In 1930, there were roughly 49 million workers in the labor force. Only about 3.5 million, or 7% belonged to a union. In 1940, the U.S. labor force was comprised of 53 million workers, 17% were in unions. The wartime peak in union numbers came in 1945, when there were almost 15 million unionists working. They amounted to about a quarter to a third of the labor force. In some areas, such as airplane manufacturing, lumbering, and shipbuilding, that percentage was much higher. Significantly, union growth kept pace with the expansion of the labor force after the Second World War. In the decade's last year, the total number of workers was nearly 64 million, and union workers represented about 23%. It was a decline from the war years, but the numbers of workers in unions did not return to the levels of the late 1920s or early 1930s.

The sensational increase in the size and numbers of unions in the 1940s was matched by a similar rise in their political power and social influence. Even by 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was drawing union leaders into the preparations for defense. Simply, FDR needed their technical expertise, their ability to mobilize and train workers, and their cooperation for harmonious labor relations. Unions were the key to a smooth conversion to war production. In shipbuilding for example, a number of sticky problems had arisen after the federal government began

to order dozens of new naval vessels in early 1940. There were labor and material shortages as well as strikes as unions sought to bargain for equitable wage and overtime rules. By January 1941, these roadblocks to production were quickly becoming a major impediment to the re-arming of the United States. At this critical juncture, the AFL's Metal Trades Department, led by the fiery John Frey, hammered out a solution. During a general meeting of the department, Frey and other leaders from the boilermakers and other metal unions devised a stabilization agreement. For shipbuilding, the nation was divided into four regional production zones governed by stabilization boards made up of employers, unionists, and federal officials. These boards determined wages and helped ensure efficient production. Unions also pledged not to strike during the defense emergency. Employers promised not to lock their unions out of the shipyards. Disputes were to be handled by federal mediation boards, and not job actions of any kind. For unionists, the trade-off was very beneficial. For the duration, shipyard owners recognized their unions, agreed to bargain collectively, and granted them the closed shop. The agreement was so groundbreaking and useful that nearly all other major wartime industries, such as airplane manufacturing, used this stabilization program first proposed by the AFL's Metal Trades Department.

The agreement fashioned by the Metal Trades department and the shipbuilders was reflective of a new—albeit short-lived—spirit of labor-business-government cooperation. Even before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, labor unions were becoming an important part of the overall management of the defense effort. However, in the deadly raid's aftermath, President Roosevelt made sure that labor was represented in every major war agency. The Office of War Production, for example, had the Congress of Industrialized Organizations' (CIO's) indomitable Sidney Hillman as its cochair. Furthermore, both the AFL and CIO had representation on the National War Labor Board (NWLB), which was FDR's main agency to settle wage, working-conditions, and benefit disputes between unions and employers during the war. Despite being under constant criticism from politicians, employers, and unions, the NWLB was an effective administrative tool for creating labor peace. This reconciliation between feuding parties in the American economy briefly stretched to include the two labor federations. Both the AFL and CIO had been warring since 1935. With the Second World War clearly on the horizon, President Roosevelt had sought to heal the breach between them. Well into the war, peace was within reach, although in the end neither the AFL nor the CIO was ready to

commit to a singular and unified American labor movement.

Regardless, the early 1940s was an exceptional period for American labor unions. They had grown in size and numbers scarcely imaginable just 10 years earlier. Moreover, they were now a staple part of American politics, particularly liberal politics. Both the CIO and the AFL had transformed themselves under the new realities of the New Deal. By the early 1940s, union leaders were making the most of their newly found political power. For instance, in 1943, Hillman and other CIO leaders formed the Political Action Committee (PAC) to support President Franklin Roosevelt's bid for an unprecedented four terms in office. The Congress's PAC indeed had an impact on the election, and it became a model for future interest groups that sought to influence American elections.

Unionists' leverage in politics was not confined to voting. In the 1940s, labor unions developed an agenda to recast economic relationships and national-spending priorities. The greatest fear of all workers, both organized and unorganized, was that after the war, the Great Depression would return. In fact, many senior labor economists, such as the AFL's Boris Shishkin, predicted even higher rates of unemployment in the late 1940s than had been the case in the mid-1930s. To insulate and to inoculate workers from the violent throes of postwar reconversion, the AFL and CIO developed a detailed blueprint to ensure prosperity. It involved three major ideas: full employment, national health care, and civil rights.

Full employment was the buzzword of the mid-1940s. The idea centered on the notion that the federal government with the assistance of corporate and union leaders could foster economic growth through careful planning and the use of pump-priming spending in recession times. The intellectual roots of full employment extended back into the early days of the New Deal when such social and economic planners as Harold Ickes had used Roosevelt's alphabet agencies not only to create economically significant and consequential public-works programs, but also to form federal planning boards to spark further reform. The last such board, the National Resource Planning Board (NRPB), had issued several influential reports during the Second World War, but its *Security, Work, and Relief Policies* (1942) was path-breaking. The NRPB called for comprehensive and thoughtful social programs and economic planning to create permanent affluence in the United States. Full employment was possible, liberals argued, with proper forethought and effective use of the vast resources of the federal government. The leaders of the AFL and CIO latched onto the notion of full employment. To them, the

hook was the ways in which planners thought full employment might be achieved. Many economists, such as Alvin H. Hansen, argued that with federal investment in highways and new construction, particularly in housing and urban renewal, full employment would be easily realized. American workers knew that there had been very little new building for private or commercial use since the late 1920s. It was easy for them to see their own interests in full employment.

Similarly, the working class was drawn to another postwar liberal idea: national health insurance. The idea had received serious thought during the 1930s. In the 1940s, the big labor federations began to push for it. For example, at its 1944 Post-War Forum, the AFL adopted the stance that the federal government ought to foster a national system of health insurance so that all workers would have access to quality medical care when ill as well as wellness checkups when not. Additionally, the AFL backed proposals to lessen the chances of needing medical assistance. For example, the federation leaders agreed with the NRPB that children of the working poor should have access to free lunches. Similarly, they approved of plans to improve the insurance systems that govern industrial accidents, strengthening the carrot-and-stick scheme that encouraged employers to create safe working environments.

These ideas were not based on abstract theory. Rather, workers' calls for better medical and health insurance systems were a reaction to the experiences of the Great Depression and the Second World War. During the 1930s, there was a marked decline in the overall health of the working class. The causes were as obvious then as now. And the young and the elderly bore the brunt of the health-related problems as a result of malnourishment. Although the food crisis of the Great Depression lessened significantly during the 1940s, there were still new challenges. During the Second World War, industrial accidents and injuries rose considerably. In fact, for the first two years of the United States' direct involvement in the war, the shopfloor was more dangerous than the front lines. More Americans died and were maimed in factories than in combat until the end of 1943. On average each year, from 1941–1945, over 2 million wartime workers were killed or seriously injured laboring for the arsenal of democracy. When one considers the vast numbers of military casualties in addition to the industrial ones, the United States experienced an enormous health crisis in the 1940s. Workers and veterans wanted the federal government to help provide health care, assistance, and insurance in order to gain access to the best medicine available.

Finally, unions used their political power in the 1940s to press for the expansion of civil rights for all

Americans. One unionist in particular labored mightily and indefatigably to improve the lives of black and other minority workers: A. Philip Randolph, the president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (AFL). At the start of a defense preparedness program in 1940, Randolph began pressuring the federal government to do something to stop the rampant discrimination against African-Americans. The situation had become quite desperate, and it was a national problem. Minority workers were barred from 50% to 90% of all defense-related jobs in every region of the country. Not only was this an affront to U.S. democratic beliefs, but it was also a security, economic, and military liability in the age of total war. Regardless, it took Randolph's pledge of a march on Washington to protest employment bias in the war industries to force President Roosevelt to act. In exchange for Randolph's promise to call off the march, in June 1941, FDR issued Executive Order 8802, which banned job discrimination in the federal government and in defense factories. Although the order and the agency set up to enforce it, the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC), had a limited impact, the precedent was nonetheless set. And after the war, both the AFL and CIO continued to press for a permanent FEPC and the establishment of civil rights in other areas of American life, albeit with varying commitment. The CIO was nearly always stronger on civil rights issues than the AFL.

This far-reaching postwar agenda was organized labor's attempt to make hay from those seeds sown during the early New Deal. Working-class leaders had every reason to be optimistic that their goals would be realized. Both the AFL and CIO were significant forces in American politics. Not only had the federations influenced the 1944 presidential election, but representatives of both groups had also participated and shaped the wartime bureaucracy and government. Organized labor also had the numbers, especially by the mid-1940s, when union membership was at its historic peak. And finally, union leaders believed that they had the general support of Americans, since they had contributed mightily to the "arsenal of democracy," to the Allied victory over fascism. But this sanguine, confident outlook proved misplaced. Organized labor was neither as strong nor as influential as it seemed. By the end of the decade, American workers were on the defensive; thus, power dwindling at the dawn of the Cold War set up a decades-long decline.

Organized labor's efforts to reshape the United States began before the end of the Second World War and centered on voting booths, conference tables, and picket lines. During the 1944 presidential election, unionists had backed Franklin Roosevelt's

four freedoms, particularly the notion to eliminate want. Additionally, union leaders met many times at various conferences, including ones with the leaders of business, to hammer out a postwar blueprint to establish full employment, national health insurance, and civil rights. Frustrations both with the politics and with negotiations with employers led to a dramatic increase in the number of strikes from 1944–1946. Although history books tend to emphasize the strike wave of 1946, workers started protesting low wages and insufficient benefits years earlier. In 1943, twice as many workers were involved in strikes as the year before. There were nearly 3,800 strikes in 1943 and almost 5,000 in 1944. In 1945, there were 4,750 work stoppages and in 1946, 5,000 involving 4.6 million workers. At its crest, the 1945–1946 strike wave was larger than the famous 1919 strikes. Generally, unionists fought for cost-of-living adjustments; increased benefits, such as health care; and improved working conditions. They also sought to realize their postwar agenda. The most famous example was the United Automobile Workers' (UAW's) strike against General Motors. Union President Walter Reuther not only demanded a wage and benefit hike but also called on GM to "open the books." In other words, the UAW wanted to share in the governance and management of the corporation. In a pattern that played out frequently in 1945 and 1946, the union lost the strike, making only marginal gains. Strikes led by the United Mine Workers and the United Steelworkers met similar fates. The failures of the postwar strikes presaged larger, more devastating defeats for organized labor in the 1940s and beyond.

Several things conspired to sap American workers of their power in politics and society during the latter part of the 1940s. First and foremost were the divisions and diversions in American politics and within the labor movement generally. Beginning as soon as the Second World War ended, a conflict between the United States and the U.S.S.R. ensued. This Cold War in which the two main belligerents never met *tête-à-tête* transformed world and domestic politics and priorities. In postwar America, arguing for an expansion of the New Deal to provide jobs to the unemployed, to ensure national health care, and civil rights smacked of communism to the political right, many of whom held the reigns of power in Washington, D.C., and in many states and cities. They worked to stop labor's postwar agenda in its tracks. National health insurance legislation failed, as did nearly all civil rights initiatives. In 1946, Congress did pass a full-employment bill, but it was so watered down that it barely had any meaning or impact on American workers. Making matters worse, in 1947, Congress passed—over President Harry S. Truman's

veto—the Taft-Hartley Act, a series of amendments to the 1935 Wagner Act designed severely to restrict the political and economic power of labor unions.

These political cleavages that resulted in legislative setbacks were mirrored inside organized labor. Both the AFL and CIO struggled over the issues of anti-communism and support of American foreign policy. In the end both federations purged their memberships of the avowed radical Left. As a result, some of the most dedicated unionists for issues like civil rights were booted out of the labor movement. As a result, organized labor's social agenda and organizing aspirations went unrealized. Moreover, although by the mid-1940s, labor leaders were generally supportive of civil rights reform, not all were. During the famous Operation Dixie when the CIO sought to organize unorganized factory workers the South, union leaders failed to take a strong enough stand on civil rights, a fact that contributed to the operation's demise. The AFL and later the AFL-CIO had its racial problems, too. Clashes at conventions over the issues of fair employment, for example, were frequent and quite telling of the resistance of white unionists to support the struggles of African-American workers. Perhaps nothing demonstrated this more than the infamous 1959 AFL-CIO Convention. After Randolph, still the head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and an AFL-CIO vice-president, introduced a resolution that called for the expulsion of unions that discriminated against blacks, none other than the president of the AFL-CIO, George Meany, shouted Randolph down, cursing at him and viciously exclaiming, "Who the hell appointed you the guardian of all Negroes." During the 1940s, and well into the 1950s, the AFL-CIO offered only a tentative and quite limited program for black workers inside and outside the labor movement. As a result, African-Americans generally did not look to labor unions to provide solutions to their most pressing problems. And they were not alone.

Despite their large numbers, by the end of the 1940s, the labor movement was having trouble gaining new recruits. Part of the problem was that many of the new wartime unionists had not joined freely, but they had to become members of the AFL or CIO because the local had a closed-shop agreement with the employer. These arrangements often created resentments—especially with people who were unaccustomed to the labor movement. In any event, all of these problems—the legislative defeats, the political schisms outside and inside the labor movement, and the problem of recruiting new members—which at the time perhaps did not seem so significant, did set organized labor and the American working class in general down a bleaker path. Just two decades later,

many of the wage, benefit, and political gains made during the 1940s were in serious jeopardy. Looking back six decades later, the 1940s appear as a moment of missed opportunities and spoiled chances.

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DONAHUE, THOMAS (1928–) President, AFL-CIO

Thomas Reilly Donahue was the third president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL)-Congress of Industrialized Organizations (CIO), from August to October 1995. Donahue became president when dissident members of the AFL-CIO's executive committee pressured Lane Kirkland to resign from the position. Donahue, who had been the secretary-treasurer of the federation since 1979, and a close friend and associate of Kirkland, was selected by the executive committee to fill Kirkland's term of office until elections could be held at the October AFL-CIO convention. At the convention, however, Donahue was defeated during the first contested election in AFL-CIO history by his long-time friend, John Sweeney, the head of the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU).

Donahue was born in 1928 in the Bronx, New York, to a family of Irish Catholics. He served in the U.S. Navy as a seaman from 1945–1946, and

after his discharge, he earned a B.A. from Manhattan College in Labor Relations in 1949 and an LL.B from Fordham School of Law in 1956. After leaving college, Donahue began a lifetime association with the labor movement, beginning with a position as an organizer for the Retail Clerks' International Union. In 1949, Donahue joined the staff of the Building Service Employees' International Union (BSEIU), the union in which he would remain until he joined George Meany's staff at the national AFL-CIO in 1973. During his career with BSEIU (and after it changed its name, SEIU), Donahue held a variety of positions, beginning with Education Director for New York's Local 32B and extending all the way through the first vice-presidency, which he held from 1971–1973. Donahue also held a number of important government appointments. In 1957, he was selected to serve as the labor program coordinator for Radio Free Europe, and from 1967–1969, he served as the assistant secretary of labor for Labor-Management Relations under President Lyndon Johnson.

When Lane Kirkland became AFL-CIO president in 1979 after Meany's retirement, Donahue became the federation's secretary-treasurer, a position he held until his elevation to the presidency in 1995. As secretary-treasurer, Donahue was a strong supporter of Kirkland and his policies, including Kirkland's anti-communism and his desire to free Eastern Europe from Soviet control. This closeness to Kirkland became a detriment when the leaders of many of the federation's largest unions joined together in a New Voices coalition in 1995 with the goal of radically transforming the AFL-CIO. The New Voices coalition, led by SEIU president John Sweeney and United Mine Worker's (UMW) president Rich Trumka, had a number of criticisms of federation policy under Kirkland. Most importantly, Sweeney's allies felt that the federation should take a more active hand in organizing nonunion workers. Whereas Kirkland (and Meany before him) believed that organizing was primarily the responsibility of individual international unions, Sweeney wanted the AFL-CIO to devote 30% of its budget to supporting organizing drives. In addition, the New Voices coalition felt that Kirkland had devoted too much attention to international affairs, particularly his anti-Communist work in Poland. Finally, the dissident faction laid the blame for the Republican landslide of 1994 and the passage of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) at Kirkland's feet.

While Kirkland and Donahue retained the loyalty of the majority of unions in the federation, Sweeney and the New Voices coalition controlled the AFL-CIO's largest unions, ensuring that they would be able to win any disputed elections at the annual

convention. Donahue and Sweeney both engaged in a spirited campaign running up to the convention, including a number of debates between the two candidates. Ironically, the two men were not only close friends, but also in agreement on almost all of the issues that supposedly divided their coalitions. Both supported an increased focus on organizing, and both supported expanding the executive committee of the AFL-CIO to include more women and minorities. Sweeney, however, took consistently more militant positions on these and other issues. When it became apparent that Sweeney controlled the most delegates at the convention, Donahue stepped aside, and Sweeney became the fourth president of the AFL-CIO.

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“DON’T BUY WHERE YOU CAN’T WORK” CAMPAIGNS

From the late 1920s to the late 1940s, African-Americans created Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns, employing consumer boycotts and picket lines to force white-owned companies in segregated black neighborhoods to hire black workers. Picketers in the campaigns carried signs reading, “Buy Where You Can Work! No Negroes Employed Here!” or similar messages. The campaigns grew out of African-American consumers’ long-standing grievances against the increasing numbers of white-owned chain stores that cropped up in segregated, urban, black neighborhoods. Consumer boycotts appealed to African-Americans with a wide range of political and ideological positions. Black business leaders, for example, relished the opportunity to increase black consumers’ buying power and raise the racial consciousness of their buying decisions. Similarly, the New Negroes who emerged from the Harlem Renaissance period saw consumer boycotts as effective means to act on African-Americans’ self-dependence. Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns directly opened hundreds of jobs for un- or underemployed black workers, while many stores changed their hiring practices in order to avoid becoming targets of jobs campaigns. By the late 1940s, African-Americans commonly held clerical and sales positions in black neighborhoods.

Boycott movements occurred in at least 35 cities throughout the nation but emerged most often in northern cities where the World War I era African-American migrants gathered and created significant

centers of consumer power. In 1929 and 1930, A. C. MacNeal and Joseph D. Bibb, editors of the African-American newspaper, the *Chicago Whip*, publicized the efforts of a small group picketing a local grocery store. Although this was not the first such consumer boycott, it was the first Don’t Spend Your Money Where You Can’t Work campaign to capture national attention. After winning jobs at the grocery store, the Chicago movement embarked on a more ambitious struggle against Woolworth chain stores, winning approximately 300 jobs for black workers. From 1930–1941, numerous groups created similar efforts in such cities as Toledo and Cleveland, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; New York, New York; Washington, D.C.; and Baltimore, Maryland. Boycott movements emerged even in a few southern cities, such as Richmond and Newport News, Virginia, although such direct-action techniques were possible only where not precluded by the threat of retaliatory violence.

Large, segregated, urban African-American communities during the Great Depression were fertile ground for Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns. By the beginning of the Depression, African-Americans had been migrating to southern and northern cities in great numbers for almost three decades. Migrants represented a large consumer market. Unlike earlier communities of European immigrants, large, segregated African-American neighborhoods depended on numerous white-owned retail chain stores, which became the jobs campaigns’ favorite targets. At the same time, urban African-Americans also forged the civic, media, and political networks that enabled direct-action campaigns. In addition, the Depression created widespread desperation and popular support for militant struggles for economic improvement.

Although Depression Era African-American urban communities created numerous consumer-based jobs campaigns, most Don’t Buy where You Can’t Work campaigns did not receive mass support. The Chicago campaign of 1929 and 1930, for example, depended on paid picketers and failed to win the backing of the city’s most important black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender*. The campaign therefore disintegrated when the *Chicago Whip* folded in bankruptcy and employers secured a court injunction against the picket lines. The most successful movements relied on the backing of popular local black newspapers. The 1934 campaign in Harlem and Cleveland’s Future Outlook League—both of which built mass community support—benefited greatly from the publicity provided by the *New York Age* and the *Cleveland Call & Post*. For the most part, however, Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns suffered from the impression that they benefited a relative few

workers, generally caused violence, and trampled on employers’ rights to make hiring decisions. In addition, unlike the interracial industrial union movement of the 1930s and 1940s or the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, race-conscious Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns did not generally win a significant number of white supporters.

For many people concerned with the lack of buying power in African-American communities, and frustrated with the obvious shortage of black faces behind the counters of white-owned stores, Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns represented distinctive alternatives to the many other examples of unemployed, labor, and civil rights organizing of the 1930s. Consumer boycotts benefited from the fact that their appeal often crossed customary divisions within black communities. The symbolic importance and potential for upward mobility black clerks in black neighborhoods represented appealed to middle-, working-class, and poor African-Americans. Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns also confronted color prejudice by demanding that stores hire dark-skinned African-Americans. In addition, women and men often marched alongside each other in the same direct-action movements. Middle- and working-class women, in particular, played an especially important role. As the managers of household economies, African-American women created the networks that made consumer boycotts effective.

Contemporaries on the right and left criticized Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns. White business owners, politicians, and media outlets undercut popular support for the campaigns by claiming that picketers used violent intimidation against employers, although it was generally unclear whether the violence resulted from the actions of pickets, employers, the police, or bystanders. Conservative critics also secured court injunctions against picket lines by arguing that the boycott movements violated what they saw as employers’ inviolable rights to control hiring decisions. Left-leaning critics dismissed consumer-based campaigns for different reasons. They argued that consumer boycotts were bourgeois movements that would benefit only a few people who secured white-collar positions. In addition, especially before the Popular Front period, Communist leaders argued that race-conscious boycotts would divide white and black workers.

Until 1938, court injunctions against picket lines comprised the most important barriers to Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns. The 1932 Norris-LaGuardia Act sanctioned picketing in legal labor disputes, but lower court and appellate court judges

decided that protests against racially discriminatory hiring practices were not legal labor disputes. This changed when Washington, D.C.’s New Negro Alliance faced an injunction against its pickets against the Sanitary Grocery Company’s stores; the alliance brought its case to the Supreme Court. In the majority opinion in *New Negro Alliance v. Sanitary Grocery Co.* (1938), Justice Owen J. Roberts expanded the definition of a legal labor dispute to include cases in which the disputes “arise with respect to discrimination in terms and conditions of employment based upon differences of race or color.”

In the wake of the New Negro Alliance decision, a renaissance of Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns spread across the country. The New Negro Alliance won jobs for black workers with local department stores and breweries in Washington, D.C. Harlem’s Greater New York Coordinating Committee, led by Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, secured an agreement with the local chamber of commerce that all retail stores in the area would increase the proportion of African-American white-collar workers. In Chicago, the Negro Labor Relations League and the Chicago Urban League’s Council of Negro Organizations led a successful campaign to secure driver-salesmen jobs for black men with local dairies. The St. Louis Clerks’ Circle, in cooperation with the local Urban League branch, won hundreds of white-collar jobs for black workers. Cleveland’s Future Outlook League created what was perhaps the most dynamic movement in the wake of the New Negro Alliance decision.

Historians disagree on the question of how Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns fit into the long history of nonviolent direct action in the African-American freedom struggle. Some scholars have looked at the campaigns as part of the long continuous history of nonviolent militancy stretching from resistance to slave owners, boycotts of discriminatory schools and transit systems in the early twentieth century, consumer boycotts in the 1930s, and nonviolent direct action of the 1950s and 1960s. In contrast, historians August Meier and Elliott Rudwick have convincingly argued that the Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns are the best illustrations of discontinuity in the history of African-American nonviolent resistance to racial oppression. There is no easy way to draw a link between Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns and later movements to desegregate public accommodations in predominately white neighborhoods. In addition, despite the fact that both used nonviolent pickets and focused on retail businesses, the 1930s consumer boycott movements had little in common with the civil rights movements

of the 1950s and 1960s. The later movements’ ability to mobilize mass interracial support, their thoroughly articulated commitment to nonviolent resistance based on Christian morality, and their focus on integration and legal rights distinguish these predecessors from Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work campaigns. During the 1960s, Operation Breadbasket, under the leadership of Reverend Jesse Jackson, revived economic boycotts against large-scale retail establishments in Chicago. This incarnation of consumer boycotts, however, occurred after the civil rights’ victories of the mid-1960s, when African-American political movements began to shift their focus from legal rights to economic power, and from integration to nationalism.

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See also **Future Outlook League of Cleveland; Norris-LaGuardia Federal Anti-Injunction Act**

DORR WAR

The colony of Rhode Island, founded in 1636 by Roger Williams, was an oasis of religious and political freedom in New England. Although nearby settlements coveted the diminutive area, Williams and especially Newport physician John Clarke secured a liberal charter in 1663 from King Charles II, son of the slain monarch executed during the Puritan revolution in England. The document actually encouraged Rhode Island to experiment with religious toleration and representative democracy in the face of neighboring Puritan orthodoxy and the religious fratricide that recently ripped the mother country. The charter empowered the Rhode Island General Assembly to determine voting rights. These early legislators tied the franchise to land ownership, empowering most residents in this agricultural area.

After the American Revolution grafted some of the Ocean State’s liberal tradition into the nation’s new polity, Rhode Island engineered the country’s industrial revolution at Slater’s Mill in Pawtucket in 1790. In the ensuing half-century, native-born citizens and immigrants flocked to the expanding textile industry that paid workers, including children, in hard currency. As pioneering factory laborers abandoned farms, they also lost the land that allowed them to reach the \$134 threshold to vote. By 1840, almost 60% of adult white males did not own enough property to qualify to cast a ballot.

Nor could they serve on a jury, initiate legal action, or participate in other civic functions. Nonetheless, they still had to pay taxes and perform militia and fire brigade service. The state degenerated into a declining democracy, governed by an ancient English parchment. The King Charles Charter, once a blueprint for enlightened and tolerant government, now accomplished the opposite of its original intent.

Furthermore, Rhode Island’s earliest rural towns enjoyed greater representation in the legislature despite dwindling populations and paltry tax payments while the new industrial cities suffered from underrepresentation while paying the lion’s share of financial assessments. The tiny municipality of Middletown, for example, with a population of 1300 sent four delegates to the general assembly while the capital city of Providence with 23 thousand inhabitants had the same number of representatives. Adding insult to injury, the eldest sons of eligible voters could cast a ballot under the antique provisions of primogeniture that harked back to medieval Europe and outlasted the American Revolution.

Numerous attempts at constitutional change in the first two generations of the nineteenth century failed despite a powerful alliance between skilled workers

and some of Rhode Island's elite, most notably Thomas Wilson Dorr, a Harvard-educated lawyer imbued with the democratic passion of the Founding Fathers not to be taxed without democratic representation. The aristocratic Dorr championed the rights of the handful of pre-famine Irish-Catholic immigrants who became a flashpoint in the Yankee backlash to reform. On a personal level, he also supported voting privileges for African-Americans, a stand that his followers narrowly defeated as too provocative in a constellation of already radical proposals.

In the face of the state's ruling class—a group of about 8,000 freemen in a population of about 100 thousand—Dorr brilliantly orchestrated the passage of a People's Constitution in 1841. In a scrupulously documented three-day election, the forces of change allowed both freemen who could already vote as well as those who would be empowered under Dorr's proposed liberal provisions. In a stunning victory, Dorr and his followers won a clear majority from both sets of voters who endorsed a new constitution that did away with most financial qualifications.

The political leadership of the ruling opposition (the Whigs)—unwilling to recognize the legitimacy of the extralegal election—organized their forces into the Law and Order party and prepared a multifaceted reaction, especially on the judicial and military front. They finally offered some reform measures of their own (although they had fought all such measures prior to the reform election) while at the same time the state Supreme Court accused the Dorr juggernaut of treason against the state. Lines had hardened since the astonishing victory of the People's Constitution. The Law and Order party fanned the flames of class warfare and prejudice against the state's small Irish immigrant population in order to unite its own conservative Yankee base. The local press, stalwarts of the status quo, forcefully attacked the radical nature of the reforms. The state militia prepared to mobilize.

Scheduled elections in the spring of 1842 pitted moderate Democrats against the ruling Whigs, who won handily. However, Dorr's backers scheduled another extralegal vote at the same time and chose Dorr as the state's chief executive along with a slate of delegates. Rhode Island now had two sets of governors and legislators.

Dorr, Rhode Island's inadvertent leader, threw caution to the wind and led his forces in an inconclusive midnight attack on the state arsenal in May 1842. Ironically, some of Dorr's own patrician relatives defended the armory. Another battle followed in the northern part of the state as textile workers and other laborers continued to back Dorr while his more genteel supporters left the fold as events turned

violent. The Law and Order group unleashed the militia and, in a remarkable and creative tactic, attracted the state's African-American population into their ranks by guaranteeing them the right to vote. One local congressman remarked that his constituents would rather see blacks vote than the despised Irish.

In a mopping-up operation, the state militia arrested several hundred "Dorrites," including the working-class leader, Seth Luther, as well as Dorr. Sentenced to life imprisonment in 1844, he was pardoned several years later but died of poor health in 1854. Issues from the relatively bloodless insurrection landed in the United States Supreme Court, initiated a thousand-page indictment of Law and Order rule by Congressional Democrats, and became a part of the 1844 Democratic presidential election that featured the slogan, "Polk, Dallas, and Dorr." Although the forces of Law and Order instituted some of Dorr's reform package, especially for native-born citizens, vestiges of voter restraints lasted late into the twentieth century. An immediate outcome of the conflict enfranchised hundreds of black voters for supporting the conservative forces while Irish-Americans, and later immigrants, remained the most disenfranchised caste outside the southern states.

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See also **Luther, Seth**

DRUM, FRUM, ELRUM

In 1968, black autoworkers in Detroit began to organize militant, race-based revolutionary unions that openly proclaimed a black Marxist-Leninist position. *DRUM* (Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement), *FRUM* (Ford Revolutionary Union Movement), and *ELRUM* (Eldon Avenue Revolutionary Union Movement) were the largest and most active of the affiliated unions. Founding members of the revolutionary union movement included John Watson, Ken Cockrel, Mike Hamlin, Luke Tripp, General Baker, Chuck Wooten, and Ernest Allen. Former Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Black Panther party organizer James Forman joined the group later as well. In early 1969, The League of

Revolutionary Black Workers was established to coordinate the policies, strategy, and activities of the various revolutionary unions.

Following the July 1967 uprising, black auto workers began meeting for discussions in caucus-style assemblies at the Dodge Main plant (Hamtramck assembly plant). The *Inner City Voice*, a radical black newspaper, also began to appear in publication in Detroit's ghettos in September of the same year. In May of the following year, the paper's editors united with nine black workers at Dodge Main to form DRUM. DRUM was organized in the immediate aftermath of a spontaneous, interracial wildcat strike by 4,000 workers at Dodge Main on May 2, 1968. Seven workers were fired (five black, two white), while all but two (both black) were eventually rehired. Following the strike and firings, DRUM began publishing a weekly newsletter entitled *drum*. The first issue was devoted to an assessment of the recent strike and argued that it was caused by a production speed-up from 49 to 58 units per hour. In addition, the newsletter highlighted the double standard with which the striking black workers were treated and attacked Chrysler for racist labor practices. Subsequent newsletters expanded on the union's positions and explained why a new structure outside of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union was necessary. DRUM noted that black workers represented 60% of the laborers at Dodge Main, worked in unsafe and unclean conditions, and were the target of racist procedures within both the plant and the union hall. The DRUM consistently argued that UAW leadership failed to address the grievances of black workers sufficiently. It therefore felt that black autoworkers should have a separate contract and be able to conduct direct negotiations with Chrysler. Relations between DRUM and the UAW deteriorated further when the UAW publicly endorsed the Detroit Police Department's annual field day celebration. Most white members and leaders of the UAW regarded DRUM as extremist and worried it would splinter the unionized Dodge workforce.

The DRUM organized a series of rallies and wildcat strikes against Chrysler in the summer and fall of 1968 that succeeded in attracting more members but failed to produce concrete improvements. After a mass rally on October 24, 1968, at Chrysler's Highland Park headquarters drained DRUM's treasury, the group attempted to raise both funds and the revolutionary consciousness of workers through a fund-raising raffle on November 17 in which the prizes were an M-1 rifle, a shotgun, and a bag of groceries.

The DRUM was also known for maintaining a confrontational posture toward those within the black community whose activities were seen as

inconsistent with DRUM policies. In its first newsletter, DRUM editors identified particular black workers within Chrysler plants who worked closely with management or refused to strike as "Uncle Toms." Likewise, when the Detroit chapter of the Urban League held a luncheon at the Statler-Hilton Hotel in November 1968 to present equal-opportunity employment awards to Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors, uninvited DRUM workers wearing heavily soiled work clothes created a disruption by parading through the formal luncheon with protest signs.

The DRUM activities during 1968 inspired other black autoworkers in Detroit to establish their own revolutionary unions. The FRUM and ELRUM, both organized in November of 1968, were the most prominent. Others included Mack Stamping (MARUM), Forge (FORUM), Jefferson Ave. (JARUM), Cadillac (CADRUM), Chrysler (CHRYRUM), Mount Road Engine (MERUM), as well as two nonauto affiliates, United Parcel Service (UPRUM) and Detroit News (NEWRUM). The ELRUM was especially problematic for Chrysler because the Eldon Avenue plant was Chrysler's only gear and axle plant, making the company vulnerable to a strategic shut-down. In fact, when ELRUM completely shut down plant production with its first wildcat strike on January 27, 1969, Chrysler responded by firing 26 striking workers. Although most fired workers were eventually rehired, the president of ELRUM, Fred Holsey, was not. The ELRUM strike was significant for two reasons. First, a higher percentage of black workers took part than in previous actions; and second, black workers represented an even larger proportion of the labor force at the Eldon Ave. plant than at the Hamtramck assembly plant. In 1970, ELRUM initiated two more wildcat strikes. In April, ELRUM workers maintained a three-day strike to protest the firing of John Scott, a worker accused of threatening to beat a foreman with a pinion gear in self-defense. As a result of the strike, Scott was rehired, and the foreman was removed from his position. In addition, a wildcat strike against unsafe working conditions at the Eldon Ave. plant occurred in May when jitney operator Gary Thompson was killed in a job-related accident.

The Revolutionary Union Movement (RUM) in Detroit gradually faded out of existence as a result of internal dissension. A major split emerged in 1970 between revolutionary Black Nationalist workers and Marxist-Leninist organizers and intellectuals. In addition, the RUM organizations faced consistent opposition from management, local and international UAW leadership, and law enforcement agencies. Because of the flexible and transitory nature of the RUM organizations, an accurate count of RUM membership is not possible. However, it is clear that

thousands of black workers took part in RUM, and it inspired wildcat strikes and other organizing activities. Judging from newsletter distribution, tens of thousands of black workers across the nation were sympathetic to RUM efforts. The RUM model spread beyond Detroit's auto plants throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s. Affiliated revolutionary unions were organized in New Jersey's and Georgia's auto plants; within New York's, San Francisco's, and Chicago's transit systems; among members of the U.S. Steelworkers union and the Building Service Employees International; and even inside the American Federation of Teachers.

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See also **The League of Revolutionary Black Workers**

DUAL UNIONISM

Labor-opposition groups faced a chronic paradox. The characteristic form of workers' organization under capitalism, unions, gathered individuals together on the basis of shared interests and grievances, contributing perhaps in the process to a heightened sense of working-class solidarity. Activists who established competing, dual unions were apt to be branded traitors sowing seeds of division. Often, to leave the established union and to start a new organization in competition with it was to cut oneself off from the heart of the working-class community and to abandon what appeared to be the natural base for the creation of a radical movement. Yet labor unions were reformist by nature, designed not to transform society but to win limited concessions from employers. American Federation of Labor (AFL) and other unions were often inhospitable environments dominated by conservative, white, male business unionists inclined to inhibit or repress whatever radical potential workers might display. This tension between the vital role of unions in working-class life and the difficulty many radical activists had in working within them lies at the heart of the history of dual unionism in the United States.

The basis for dual unions might be racial or ethnic as well as political. Anarchists established separate union federations in Chicago, New York, and other cities during the 1880s. A revolutionary principle was involved. In building this movement, anarchists hoped to harness the power of the unions to destroy the capitalist state, undermine private property, and build a libertarian society. But the constituent organizations that formed these new federations were most frequently dual ethnic unions based in German, Czech, and other recent-immigrant communities. Feeling unwelcome in the mainstream unions, the immigrants organized their own, which tended to be far more radical than craft union counterparts. Also in the 1880s, "trade assemblies" of the Knights of Labor, with its expansive labor reform ideology, overlapped and sometimes competed with craft unions in the same industries. Black workers, particularly in the World War I and 1920s era, sometimes chartered new organizations outside of the AFL and the railroad brotherhoods when the existing unions insisted on maintaining the color line.

There was an implicit radical logic in the actions of the anarchists, and later the socialists, in constructing such separate radical movements; the business unionists seemed not only disinterested but often hostile to change. But there is no doubt that their actions frequently led to splits even among the radicals themselves and further alienated them from the mainstream unions. When the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) launched the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance (STLA) in 1895, the move failed to win not only most unionists, but even some of the party's own members who preferred to remain in the AFL to contest for power in what was already a mass organization. The split caused within the SLP over the issue of dual unionism helps to explain the appearance of the Socialist Party of America (SP) in 1901. Most SP members preferred to join existing unions and work within the AFL. The failure of groups like the STLA and the relative strength of socialist influence in the AFL around the turn of the century suggest the wisdom perhaps of the SP argument.

By far the most famous organization to embrace the principle of dual unionism, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) won considerable strength among diverse groups of unorganized workers between its birth in 1905 and its eclipse during the 1920s. Anarchosyndicalists, the Wobblies envisioned a new federation of revolutionary industrial unions, each one organizing all of the workers in its respective industry regardless of skill, race, nationality, sex, or politics. The decision to obliterate the color line was striking in an era of rampant segregation and discrimination in which many AFL and railroad unions

specifically barred African-Americans, Chinese, and other workers of color. Wobbly activists provided charismatic leadership for a whole series of mass strikes by immigrant men and women in the textile, steel, auto, and other industries from 1909–1913. Although the AFL employed the term dual unionism often in its attacks on the IWW, some of these IWW unions did not compete directly with existing mainstream unions. In some cases, they organized in industries where no unions of any description existed, as in their efforts to build agricultural unions in the World War I era. In other cases, they were not really competing because they organized among despised immigrant, Asian, and black workers where the AFL unions were making no efforts themselves. Even where they did not compete directly with AFL unions, however, the IWW projected a far more inclusive and militant model of unionism and in this sense threatened the vested business unions. In part because they were facing enormous odds, however, IWW organizations tended to be fleeting. Most were either destroyed in employer and government counterattacks or simply withered away by the early twenties.

Coming directly out of the IWW, William Z. Foster and his Syndicalist League of North America (SLNA) developed an alternative to dual unionism based in part on the French syndicalist model. Foster argued that rather than abandon the mainstream unions, activists must transform them into revolutionary weapons through a process he called “boring from within.” A militant minority within each of the unions would agitate for a more aggressive line and for the organization of the unorganized. Although neither the SLNA nor a later organization, the International Trade Union Educational League, ever grew substantially, the group of syndicalists around Foster played important roles in the World War I organizing drives, which seemed to demonstrate the effectiveness of working within existing unions. The concept of boring from within won even greater acclaim when it was embraced by Lenin and his new Red International of Labor Unions in 1921.

Although originally inclined toward dual unions and shrill attacks on the AFL, the new Communist movement abandoned any plan to integrate with the IWW and firmly rejected the dual-union strategy from 1921–1928. In the process, the movement enjoyed some success. Employing Foster’s Trade Union Educational League (TUEL) as a base, Communist unionists and their allies organized oppositional groups within several important unions, though the league’s members were subject to constant expulsions, particularly in the mining and needle trades industries. These expulsions and a new turn in Communist trade union policy provided the basis for a new

dual-union initiative in late 1928—the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL). The new league established revolutionary unions in several industries where they competed directly with existing AFL organizations, notably in mining, metalworking, and the garment and auto industries. The TUUL organizations led a series of spectacular strikes in 1929 and the early 1930s, facing considerable violence from employers’ forces, vigilantes, and police.

When it was liquidated with the appearance of the new Popular Front line in 1935, many of the TUUL’s activists emerged as organizers in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Organizers for this new federation of industrial unions competed in some cases with weak, existing AFL unions in basic industry and in other cases led drives where no unions existed at all. In bitter conflicts between the two federations, AFL organizers often leveled the dual-union charge at the new CIO. The rivalry ended only with the expulsion of the CIO’s left-wing unions in 1949, and the merger of the two federations in 1955. In order to undermine the left-wing unions, the CIO chartered a series of dual unions that competed with them, often successfully, in the 1950s.

Given frequent tension between conservative leaderships and rank and file activists, the danger of competing breakaway unions was always present. One of the most spectacular and violent of these conflicts involved the struggle between the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and the Progressive Miners of America (PMA), established in 1932 by radicals in Illinois District 12. The breakaway union competed directly with the UMWA for membership, occasioning considerable violence in the Illinois coalfields throughout the 1930s, and it declined only gradually after the UMWA returned to the AFL in 1946.

With newer industrial unions more open to unskilled, women, and minority workers and rank-and-file movements scoring notable successes in the late 1960s and 1970s, breakaway unions were less common in the postwar era. By the end of the twentieth century, with the labor movement under attack and in decline, union mergers were far more typical. The notion of launching new unions in such an inhospitable climate was undoubtedly a daunting prospect.

Dual unions never won most workers to a radical union program. Yet anarchist, IWW, syndicalist, Communist, and other radical organizers played important roles in organizing the unskilled, women, and minority workers excluded by the mainstream unions. In the process, they pioneered new forms of organization and new strategies and kept alive an alternative vision of the labor movement as a vehicle for social change.

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DUBINSKY, DAVID (1892–1982) President, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

An influential American trade union leader and official who served as president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) from 1932–1966. Dubinsky (originally Dobniewski) was born in Brest-Litovsk in Russian Poland on February 22, 1892, the youngest of six children in an impoverished Jewish family. His father moved the family to Lodz where he operated a bakery and where at age 11 David began his working life. At 14, Dubinsky joined a bakers union affiliated with the German Jewish Workers' Union—or the Bund—an ideological organization consisting mainly of Jews in Eastern Europe and Russia. The union advocated global socialism. Dubinsky was soon arrested and imprisoned by the Russian Czar's police. Though he was to be exiled to Siberia, Dubinsky managed to escape and secured passage to the United States, where he entered New York on New Year's Day, 1911.

Dubinsky apprenticed as a fabric cutter in New York's bustling apparel trade and joined the prestigious Local 10—the cutters' union affiliate—of the ILGWU. At age 29, he was elected head of the local

and soon rose to be an officer in the ILGWU, served as union secretary-treasurer, then president from 1932 until his retirement in 1966. At the outset of his term as president, the ILGWU had been decimated by the industrial slowdown precipitated by the Great Depression. The union was also nearly bankrupt from dwindling membership and an internal struggle between Communist and moderate forces. Denouncing Stalinist-led unionists, Dubinsky allied the ILGWU with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and advocated the democratic reform of industrial capitalism to ameliorate poverty, human suffering, and fairer treatment of workers. He served as a vice-president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the first garment workers' union president to serve on the labor federation's executive council, and he led the union in joining the Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO). Dubinsky was also influential in securing the American labor movement's affiliation with the International Labor Organization—a dramatic policy shift that replaced American labor's isolationist history with a broader agenda of international worker solidarity. However, when the AFL suspended the CIO unions (1936), Dubinsky resigned from the federation. At the same time, he opposed the establishment of the CIO on a permanent independent basis, and in 1938 he also broke with it, thus making the ILGWU independent until 1940, when it reaffiliated with the AFL. In 1936, he was one of the founders of the American Labor Party in New York. When it fell under Communist influence, he resigned and played a key role in founding the Liberal Party. In 1945, he again became a vice-president and member of the executive council of the AFL, retaining the position after it merged with the CIO in 1955. His efforts at ousting corrupt union leaders culminated in the new ethics standards adopted by the AFL-CIO in 1957.

Along with such influential labor leaders as John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, George Meany, and Philip Murray, Dubinsky played a central role in building the American labor movement and advocating on behalf of workers. A firm believer in social unionism and economic justice, Dubinsky and other ILGWU leaders—men and women—successfully negotiated employer contributions to a health and welfare fund, a member pension fund, vacation time, and equitable compensation. From the late 1930s–1950s, Dubinsky led strong organizing campaigns to unionize apparel manufacturers who had begun to locate outside of the metropolitan New York area in search of cheaper, nonunion labor. Dubinsky was among few pioneering labor leaders and unionists who foresaw the threat from the movement of capital ever in search of cheaper labor (a threat that would be global by the end of the twentieth century). Such

manufacturers were known as “runaway” factories and usually secured contracts to produce goods for New York-based jobbers. Yet they typically paid workers a fraction of what unionized New York workers earned, ignored minimum-wage and maximum-hour laws, and skirted statutory mandates when it came to workers’ compensation, workplace safety, and child labor. Dubinsky saw to the establishment of union locals and affiliates in locales that were increasingly popular in runaway factories, including Scranton and Hazleton, Pennsylvania; and locales in upstate New York and New England.

Dubinsky was also influential in establishing cultural and social institutions that served ILGWU members’ needs. These included a New York-based union leadership school; a Labor Stage for worker-based performing arts; the ILGWU’s vacation and education resort, Unity House, in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania; a union-owned radio station; and he was influential in establishing union-operated health care centers in key apparel-making hubs, including Manhattan, and Allentown and Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The ILGWU also constructed housing for member-retirees in New York.

With a membership that approached one-half million by the 1960s, the ILGWU had grown to be one of the most powerful labor institutions in the United States. Dubinsky ensured the union’s role in local, state, and national politics by aligning it with influential and progressive Democratic politicians and policymakers. The ILGWU proved to be an influential lobbyist in the U.S. Congress, with various presidential administrations, and in state capitols around the nation but especially in the industrial Northeast. The union was a natural ally of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson and progressive legislators at the state and national levels.

Retiring as president in 1966, Dubinsky assumed the role of director of the ILGWU’s Retiree Services Department where he served until 1981. He continued to provide advice and counsel to the ILGWU, the AFL-CIO, and the labor movement. Dubinsky passed away on September 17, 1982 in New York. He was inducted into Labor’s Hall of Fame in January 1994.

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See also **International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union**

DU BOIS, W. E. B. (FEBRUARY 23, 1868–AUGUST 27, 1963)

African-American Activist and Author

Probably the most prominent African-American intellectual in American history, W. E. B. Du Bois wrote many works on labor and working-class issues in his voluminous publications. His 95 years took him on an ideological odyssey, from Gilded Age *laissez faire* liberalism, through twentieth-century progressivism and liberalism, ending up as a Communist expatriate.

Du Bois was born in Great Barrington, in western Massachusetts. A precocious student, he was the first black graduate of his integrated high school and attended Fisk University in Tennessee, thence transferring to Harvard. He earned his B.A. and M.A. there and after two years at the University of Berlin, a Ph.D. He began to teach at Wilberforce University and worked as a teacher and writer, along with his political activism, for the rest of his life. His education was both wide and deep, with training in classics, history, and economics. In 1896, he married Nina Gomer. The couple had two children—Burghardt (who died at the age of three) and Yolande.

Du Bois’s early views on labor and political economy were quite conventional. Like most of the educated middle class, black and white, Du Bois held classical liberal, or *laissez faire*, opinions. He described himself as favoring free trade and good government along with other Mugwump reformers of the 1880s. He decried the violent labor unrest of the Gilded Age and approved of the Haymarket executions. While in graduate school in Berlin, he outlined a novel in which an African-American entrepreneur’s business was destroyed by his white workers at about the same time as the Pullman strike. On the other hand, Du Bois admired Prussian state socialism while studying in Berlin and sketched another novel whose protagonist was a socialist. He found himself in the great battle between classical and historical schools in the university’s department of economics and later claimed that he considered himself a socialist while in Berlin. He had lauded Bismarck in his



Dr. W. E. B. DuBois. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ggbain-07435].

Fisk University commencement address and wore the Kaiser's goatee and mustache for his entire life.

His early sociological studies were also consonant with the liberal ethic of individual responsibility, self-control, self-help, and the Victorian moral code. In the *Philadelphia Negro* (1899), a path-breaking depiction of the city's black population, he condemned white prejudice and discrimination but emphasized the need for black responsibility and maintained his faith in free enterprise and economic competition. It sometimes sounded as if Du Bois were, in the phrase of a later generation, "blaming the victim." He also encouraged blacks to show greater interest in business and called for "Negro Businessmen's Leagues," an idea that Booker T. Washington turned into the National Negro Business League.

Though he later made his mark as the main opponent of Booker T. Washington, the two were quite close in the 1890s. Du Bois congratulated Washington on his "Atlanta Compromise" address, in which he urged blacks to defer demands for political and social equality and focus on economic progress, calling it "a word fitly spoken." "Here might be the basis of a real settlement between whites and blacks in the South," he wrote. Du Bois repeatedly considered working under Washington at the Tuskegee Institute. Their different opinions on education—Du Bois stressing liberal training for the elite, Washington industrial

and vocational schooling for the masses—have also been exaggerated. Their estrangement was largely due to Du Bois's independent spirit, which recoiled against the centralized control that Washington exercised through the "Tuskegee machine."

Du Bois's later radicalism, and his propensity to revise the story of his life in his numerous autobiographies, has obscured his early conservatism. Around the turn of the century, Du Bois was beginning to work with black leaders who would come to break with Washington. One of these organizations was Alexander Crummell's American Negro Academy, an attempt to form a black professional society, as opposed to Tuskegee's focus on practical, vocational, industrial education. Du Bois presented a paper to the academy in 1897 entitled "The Conservation of Races." In it he criticized the individualism and assimilationism dominant among American Negroes and hoped that they would recognize and preserve their distinct cultural gifts. Their "spiritual, psychological" nature would "soften the whiteness of the Teutonic today," Du Bois wrote. "We are that people whose subtle sense of sound has given America its only American music, its only American fairy tales, its only touch of pathos and humor amid its mad money-getting plutocracy." Throughout his life, Du Bois would try to advocate a system in which blacks could retain their distinct identity and yet contribute fully to a white-majority society. Neither separatism nor assimilation but pluralism was his goal.

Thus, both his views on race and labor exhibited the characteristic "double consciousness" that Du Bois described in the *Souls of Black Folk*. In the early twentieth century, as he openly broke with Washington, Du Bois grew closer to white progressives and socialists.

Many of these dissidents came together in the Niagara Movement of 1905. Its "Declaration of Principles" stated, "We hold up for public execration the conduct of two opposite classes of men: The practice among employers of importing ignorant Negro-American laborers in emergencies, and then affording them neither protection nor permanent employment; and the practice of labor unions in proscribing and boycotting and oppressing thousands of their fellow-toilers, simply because they are black."

Like many progressives, Du Bois was profoundly ambivalent about organized labor. His early liberalism still shone through the rising socialism of these decades. His two works that addressed black labor most closely, *the Negro Artisan* (1902) and *the Negro American Artisan* (1912), were extremely critical of organized labor. His 1909 address to the National Negro Committee (a forerunner to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)

expressed liberal labor principles in showing how white workers sought to eliminate black competition and used government power to do so. He carried this analysis into the *Crisis*, the NAACP monthly that he edited. "So long as union labor fights for humanity, its mission is divine," he wrote. "But when it fights for a clique of Americans, Irish [,] or German monopolists who have cornered or are trying to corner the market in a certain type of service, and are seeking to sell that service at a premium, while other competent workmen starve, they deserve themselves the starvation which they plan for their darker and poorer fellows." Too often he saw the latter as the nature of the American labor movement. Though he supported Woodrow Wilson in 1912 (the year after briefly joining the Socialist party), Du Bois's economic philosophy was socialist by World War I.

But he was unable to accept the socialist explanation for discrimination in organized labor—that employers fomented racial discord in order to frustrate proletarian solidarity. He saw too many cases in which white workers excluded and discriminated against blacks for their own advantage to believe that the race problem would resolve itself once capitalism was abolished. He was also skeptical about programs that emphasized race consciousness too much, such as Marcus Garvey's Back to Africa movement or the Communist party's calls for a separate African-American state in the black belt of the South.

Du Bois surmised that although white workers were more easily exploited under segregation, they enjoyed a "social and psychological wage" due to their superior social status. This insight, adumbrated in the cultural approach of his "Conservation of Races" essay, has been invoked in recent years by cultural studies theorists who describe the "construction of whiteness." His suspicion of left-wing alternatives to the trade-unionist AFL also followed from his belief that race consciousness was not simply a by-product of class struggle. He wrote after the 1917 race riot in East St. Louis, which was largely a reaction to the migration of black workers into that city, that "there is absolutely no hope of justice for an American of Negro descent" under AFL leadership. Ten years later, when the AFL lobbied for legislation to curb the use of injunctions in labor disputes, Du Bois told the NAACP leadership that these generally anti-union devices had often benefited black workers.

By the time that organized labor began to gain political power under the New Deal, Du Bois was moving in a retrograde direction. His response to the severe privation and unemployment of the Great Depression was to emphasize black economic cooperation. Race consciousness had always been a part of Du Bois thinking, and it returned in the 1930s, in a

way similar to that of his great antagonists, Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey. Du Bois' argument that blacks could turn segregation to their own advantage—that there could be "segregation without discrimination"—led to his resignation from the NAACP in 1934.

Du Bois returned to full-time teaching and writing at Atlanta University. His Marxian views on American labor can be seen in his monumental 1935 book, *Black Reconstruction in America*. Du Bois had been arguing for a new view of Reconstruction, stressing the role played by African-Americans in it and the positive results that it achieved, for decades. In this book, he described how the slaves helped to win their own freedom by refusing to work, in what he described as the first general strike in American history. He also praised the active role that the Reconstruction governments played in the political economy. Slowly, this black- and labor-centered revisionist view of Reconstruction gained power in the academy and has been the dominant one since the 1960s. Applying the sociological methods that he had pioneered at the turn of the century, Du Bois prepared the ground for a new generation of social historians in the 1960s, who explored American society "from the bottom up."

Du Bois became increasingly alienated from American politics and turned radical in the last third of his life. He returned briefly to the NAACP in 1944 as their director of special research but soon left again as the rift between him and Walter White widened. He turned his attention increasingly to world affairs. He was impressed by the success that the Japanese showed in ousting European colonial powers from Asia, despite their brutal treatment of Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, Indonesians, and others. His affinity for the Soviet Union grew, especially after his second marriage to Shirley Graham in 1951. In Leninist fashion, he saw the problems of African-Americans as part of a global phenomenon whereby European capital exploited the resources and labor of the colored Third World. He supported Stalin throughout the Cold War. He was unsuccessfully prosecuted for serving as an officer of the Peace Information Center, a Soviet propaganda organization. Finally, in 1961, Du Bois joined the U.S. Communist party and moved to Ghana. Most historians and biographers avert their eyes at these last years in which he supported regimes unarguably more repressive than the Jim Crow South and focus on his earlier and otherwise illustrious career. He died in Ghana in 1963, the day before the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was held in Washington, D.C.

Du Bois's long and prolific career thus contains a multitude of significant ideas. Nobody struggled

longer to understand the roles that race and class play in American and world civilization. These problems and his work will surely continue to compel the attention of intellectuals of future generations.

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DUNLOP COMMISSION

The Dunlop Commission was established by the Clinton administration in March 1993, and was formally known as the Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations. It was known as the Dunlop Commission because John T. Dunlop, a Harvard University professor and prominent mediator who was labor secretary in the Ford administration, chaired it. The commission was established by the Clinton administration under the auspices of Labor Secretary Robert Reich and Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown. Reich had been a noted labor economist and academic prior to his appointment as labor secretary by President Clinton. The commission was created in response to the 1992 Electromation decision issued by the National Labor Relations Board. The board ruled in that decision that some labor-management cooperation mechanisms violated Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act. The Dunlop Commission was an effort to create a new compromise between labor and management by offering organized labor easier union recognition, while also offering business new methods of promoting labor-management cooperation.

The commission pursued three main objectives. The first was to determine what new methods or institutions should be encouraged or required to enhance workplace productivity through labor management co-operation and employee involvement. The second was to identify what changes should be made in the present legal framework and practices of

collective bargaining to enhance cooperative behavior, improve productivity, and reduce conflict and delay. The third was to examine what should be done to increase the extent to which workplace problems are directly resolved by the parties themselves rather than through state and federal courts and regulatory bodies. These seemingly innocuous objectives aroused a range of responses from commentator across the political spectrum.

The commission conducted a number of hearings, with 11 held in Washington and an additional six meetings held around the United States. It heard presentations from 354 witnesses and accumulated 3,858 pages of transcripts. The report that the commission produced reviewed the changing environment of worker-management relations, employee participation, and labor-management cooperation in American workplaces; worker representation and collective bargaining; and employment regulation, litigation, and dispute resolution. The favorable response of the labor movement to the report and the business community's largely negative response were based on the report's recommendations.

The report identified many changes in the American economy, including a decline in long-term productivity, the impact of technology on the workplace, stagnant real hourly compensation, and a growing division between full-time and part-time employment. A decline in collective bargaining and fewer strikes and lockouts were also discussed. The report suggested that the American economy could not continue on the route that it was proceeding and mentioned the growing bifurcation of the workforce as a particularly significant issue.

Several trends in the workplace were identified in the commission's report. Employee participation was identified as a growing, partially diffused development across the United States. It was further suggested that from 40 to 50 million workers would like to participate in decisions on the job if they had the opportunity to do so. Labor and management expressed differing views about the role of employee participation on the workplace. Union representatives argued before the commission that they viewed employee participation as an opportunity to improve both productivity and workplace democracy and viewed independent representation as necessary to achieve these objectives. Management saw employee participation as part of the work process, and felt that effective worker representation could be achieved in both unionized and nonunionized workplaces. While long-term employee participation in the workplace could lead to improved economic performance, the report noted that historical and contemporary evidence indicated the fragility of employee-participation structures. A number of

issues were identified as barriers to implementing a viable employee-participation plan.

The report identified several flaws in the labor relations system in the United States. The number of National Labor Relations board elections for union certification had fallen in recent years, and representation elections were identified as conflictual activities for workers, companies, and unions. Workers who exercised their legal rights under the National Labor Relations Act faced the possibility of discharge or unfair discrimination for exercising those rights. Approximately one-third of workplaces that vote for union representation did not conclude a collective agreement, and the report further noted that there was a negative side to American labor relations in which employers facing an organizing drive violated the rights of workers wishing to organize.

The various changes in the economy, the workplace, and in the labor relations system were also linked to a complex legal framework. The report noted that the number of federal laws governing the workplace had grown significantly since the 1960s, with the Department of Labor solely responsible for enforcing these laws. A large increase in litigation related to the workplace had led to a backlog for the Department of Labor agencies responsible for administering the various labor laws. The report identified over reliance on civil courts as a problem with resolving workplace disputes. The use of other methods of dispute resolution in other countries, such as tripartite employment courts, was noted, and the commission suggested the possibility of the United States introducing such methods.

The Dunlop Commission was part of a select number of similar commissions and committees in twentieth-century American history. Four Congressional commissions on labor-management relations had been established in the twentieth-century: The 1898–1901 U.S. Industrial Relations Commission, the 1912–1915 U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations, the 1936–1940 LaFollette Committee, and the 1957–1960

McClellan Committee. Presidential commissions were established in 1919 by President Wilson and in 1945 by President Truman. A further two labor-management committees were established by President Johnson in the mid-1960s and by President Ford in 1975. The Dunlop Commission was thus part of an important sequence of commissions and committees established by Congress and the president for the purpose of examining labor-management relations.

The commission ultimately could not establish a basis for a compromise between labor and business that would balance the need for easier union recognition and better labor-management cooperation. Business was uninterested in accepting measures that would strengthen unions in return for new schemes for labor-management cooperation. The failure of the commission to meet this objective represented broader difficulties with creating a basis for a national consensus on labor-management relations in the late twentieth century. This difficulty with reaching a consensus also occurred as the American workforce experienced the changes described in the commission's report, including economic restructuring, increased job insecurity, and growing demographic change. The creation of the Dunlop Commission did, however, mean that the executive branch of the federal government was prepared to make an effort to address these changes in order to determine how workplace policy in the United States should be shaped in the future

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EDUCATION, LABOR

Labor education programs in the United States have been characterized by three basic assumptions: That workers' interests are best served through alternative, independent working-class educational institutions; that education is key to political development and organizational strength; and that individual worker students bring a formal knowledge of the workplace and of the broader world that create a special pedagogical environment. Despite these common views, the workers' education movement in the United States has been marked by considerable variation in terms of goals, funding, pedagogy, and political commitment. With programs ranging from craft-centered guilds and mechanics' institutes to schools representing the full assortment of labor philosophies from Marxist and progressive politics to religious-based, feminist- and union-sponsored colleges dedicated to everything from organizing, social conservatism, and reform to public speaking and vocational advancement, the goals of labor education represent a spectrum for understanding the ideas that have shaped labor in the United States. Often the sights of important pedagogical experiments, worker-centered schools and their curriculums, impacted broader developments in American education, such as the expansion of adult education programs and evening division courses, especially in the post-1945 period. This dynamic blend of function and innovation makes these educational programs one of the labor movement's greatest contributions to American cultural history.

Early Precedents of Labor Education in the United States

Traditions of labor education were first transplanted to the United States from Europe in the colonial period through the establishment of craft guilds. Overseeing apprenticeships for young male craft workers, guilds served important social needs and welfare functions while also providing a more general education in reading and civics. Similar associations arose to represent artisans in the mechanical arts, and by the 1830s, mechanics' institutes were important features of a new urban culture, providing educational opportunities for a mostly male clientele through establishment of reading rooms and libraries, public lecture programs, and formal schools that offered a range of classes focused primarily in the sciences. The most successful of these schools was Philadelphia's Franklin Institute. Founded in 1824, it maintained a permanent faculty that offered courses in technology and business, while sponsoring annual competitions for aspiring engineers. Mechanics' institutes continued earlier guild traditions stressing social harmony between master craftsmen and younger apprentices, while emphasizing individualistic values that placed hard work and upward mobility as central tenants of a uniquely American character.

With industrial expansion in the early nineteenth century, and the corresponding sharpening of class interests, alternative views of labor education soon emerged. Early labor activists, such as Frances

Wright and Robert Dale Owen, called for the establishment of a nonsectarian, national public education system to foster democratic civic values and social equality. Yet the development of state-sponsored education at the primary and secondary levels focused primarily on socializing workers into accepting the capitalist values of their employers. Additionally most workers had limited access to formal education, with the majority of youth discontinuing school at an early age to enter the industrial workforce. Many workers continued to seek education in informal ways. In response workers and their associations inaugurated new types of worker-controlled schools outside of the mainstream educational system. Increased European immigration, particularly from Germany and Eastern Europe, energized this new development in labor education in the post-Civil War period. Independent schools, usually conducted in the evening or on Sundays, played important roles in an alternative workers' culture, stressing collective, political, and workplace goals. German groups, such as the *Arbeiter-Verin*, provided coherence for immigrant workers and adapted European political commitments to the American environment. Similar schools were prevalent in most immigrant communities, with classes sponsored in the 1890s and early 1900s in New York City by the United Hebrew Trades (UHT) and in Duluth, Minnesota, by the Finnish People's College. Many of these programs also stressed the involvement of women as both teachers and students, marking a break from earlier traditions.

One of the defining characteristics of the labor schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was their emphasis on political education. In this effort there was a marked shift away from the mechanical arts toward the humanities, with curriculums focusing on history, political organization, sociology, and the law. Seeing education as key to forging a mass movement, labor schools played prominent roles in radical political strategies. From the 1880s on, socialist parties of all types actively supported independent educational efforts. Foremost among these was New York City's Rand School of Social Science. Founded in 1906, the Rand School, like most labor colleges, catered to a part-time student body, with a peer-centered curriculum that focused on question-and-answer sessions and reading groups rather than lecture methods. One of the most successful labor programs in the twentieth century, the school was in operation for almost 50 years, and its history marked by themes shared by many labor colleges of this era. Although always committed to socialist change, the school's faculty and students often disagreed on strategy, with outside attempts by various leftist groups to direct the curriculum sometimes

exacerbating the infighting. The Rand School of Social Science's open embrace of Marxist ideology also brought on government surveillance and repression, resulting in its eventual demise in the 1950s.

Further to the left, the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) also adopted a rigorous program of labor education. Communist activists in the 1920s and 1930s paid close attention to all independent and union-sponsored workers' schools, infiltrating many programs to steer them toward more revolutionary goals. The CPUSA also initiated a variety of educational efforts aimed not only at adults, but at adolescents and children through such programs as the Young Pioneer's summer youth camps that provided a utopian environment where youths participated in programs that included dance, music, sports, and theater within a cooperative setting. In the 1940s, New York City's Jefferson School of Social Science emerged as the central school for the party's national network of labor schools. Like the Rand School of Social Science, the Jefferson School faced severe government repression through its years of existence and eventually disbanded in 1956.

Labor colleges across the political spectrum adapted innovative pedagogies, a hallmark of the workers' education movement. Many of these developments drew on the ideas of progressive education that emerged in the United States in the early twentieth century. Centered on the theories of John Dewey and other innovators, progressive education sought a more collaborative classroom model, de-emphasizing formal lectures and stressing group discussions and interaction. For the most part, labor school faculty came from the working class, with many courses taught by trade unionists with experience in organizing and strike campaigns, newspaper editing, collective bargaining, and political strategy. Besides these organic intellectuals, labor education efforts were also supported by university-trained teachers in history, sociology, and the legal profession, who advanced the cause of labor by offering their expertise in the classroom.

Women played an important role in implementing new ideas in labor education settings. Jane Addams's early experiments at Hull-House in Chicago was a model for many similar programs, with urban settlements offering classes in nutrition, childcare, consumer habits, and English language instruction. These experiments in urban education helped inform broader experiments in the field of labor education. In 1914, the National Women's Trade Union League formed the Training School for Women Workers in Chicago. This groundbreaking program introduced women to a range of practical skills useful in union work, such as journalism and public speaking. From

this additional programs for women appeared, including the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry. Formed in the summer of 1921 at Bryn Mawr College outside Philadelphia, this residential program stressed women's role in bringing about social harmony, reflecting a middle-class uplift ideology that distanced it from more radical curriculums. Bryn Mawr's director Hilda W. Smith, a social worker and veteran of the suffragist movement, would emerge as an important leader within labor education for over a generation.

Trade Unions and Workers' Education

Organized labor has played a fundamental role in shaping the history of labor education in the United States. As part of its earliest organizing efforts in the 1870s, the National Labor Union established reading rooms and libraries in chapters across the country, with identical efforts embraced by the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The International Ladies' Garments Workers' Union (ILGWU) pioneered union sponsorship of workers' education, formally establishing an education department to oversee an expanded program in 1914. Modeled after the schools of the United Hebrew Trades, the ILGWU program implemented courses in trade unionism and the humanities while also organizing such cultural activities as museum trips and concerts. In the 1920s, the AFL officially recognized the importance of labor education by advocating resources to adopting education departments in local unions. This move also reflected the AFL's wariness about the radical political agenda that marked many labor schools of the era. Through the 1920s and 1930s, AFL unions adapted educational programs, with noteworthy sections in the National Maritime Union of America and the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen. The AFL's union of local government workers, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) was active in workers' education, sponsoring summer training seminars and a large education and research center that focused on government reform and the promotion of civil service initiatives.

The 1920s saw the emergence of a number of independent labor colleges. Perhaps the most influential of this era was Brookwood Labor College, located in Katonah, New York. Brookwood's early curriculum was influenced by its director, A. J. Muste, a former labor official who turned to education as a way of furthering the cause of labor at a time of

organizational decline. Unique as a residential program, Muste implemented a standard two-year course load that combined book learning in a nonhierarchical classroom setting along with a wide range of extracurricular activities, such as debate clubs, music, and theater. The school did have formal links to organized labor, with its staff represented by the American Federation of Teachers, Workers' Education Local 189, which pioneered in promoting the workers' education movement across the United States. Brookwood Labor College provided an educational experience for hundreds of graduates who eventually emerged as leaders of a revived labor movement in the 1930s.

One of the most important developments in labor education in the 1920s was the establishment of two agencies dedicated to the promotion of workers' education on a national scale. Founded in 1921, the Workers' Education Bureau of America served as an informational clearinghouse for labor education, organizing forums around the country and assisting local programs. The American Labor Education Service (ALES), established five years later, had a similar agenda, functioning as a general advisory service and providing information for education directors through the publication and distribution of labor education pamphlets, biographies of leaders, and books on U.S. labor history. The ALES also provided field services for existing labor education programs and encouraged new ones through the organizing of regional and local conferences and the publication of a national registry of workers' education teachers.

Organized labor's membership growth in the New Deal period saw a parallel expansion in workers' education programs. The Workers' Education Bureau of America and ALES, along with AFT Workers' Education Local 189 oversaw the rising popularity of these classes by sponsoring the adoption of a federal project for labor education with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration's Emergency Education Program. Organized by Smith in 1934, the Emergency Education Program trained approximately 1,700 teachers in a series of six-week courses offered at university and college campuses across the United States. The first federally funded teacher program in U.S. history, the initiative shared similar experiences with labor education programs through the twentieth century, with competing labor and political groups contesting the agency's objectives. Like other New Deal cultural initiatives, the Emergency Education Program was criticized for fostering politically leftist views and was eventually abandoned. Official government support of labor education continued however through the Labor Education Service Branch. Under direction of the Department

of Labor, this branch was officially nonpartisan, performing as a distributor of information and research services while fostering voluntary programs that stressed union responsibilities in collective-bargaining agreements.

Besides union-supported educational workshops, the New Deal and World War II periods are noteworthy for the development of worker-based education in all regions of the nation. Schools were established in the Far West, including the California Labor School in San Francisco and such southern institutions as the Georgia People's School, the Southern School for Workers in the South, and the residential program at Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee. A variety of religious-based labor schools also appeared. Pendle Hill, established by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in 1930 in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, had a regional reputation for its seminars and summer programs based on the Brookwood model. Catholic labor colleges also marked the educational landscape. Stressing a belief in social justice while advocating antiradical political objectives, such schools as the Xavier Labor School in New York and the Comey Institute in Philadelphia emerged as models for similar experiments around the country. Some of these programs, such as the courses run by LaSalle College's Brother Alfred, also introduced arbitration associations that proved important in settling labor disputes well into the post-war period.

Within the house of labor in the 1930s and 1940s, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) embraced the concept of labor education more fully than the AFL, incorporating education into its major organizing campaigns. More importantly it saw the function of education as a tool in the broader transformation of American institutions. Through its Education and Research Department, the CIO served all of its international unions, providing important information concerning the national economy and the political objectives of the labor movement. In this way, by educating leadership and members, the CIO could promote an economic program that could be advanced by informed advocates in community forums across the country. The United Auto Workers (UAW) was the most active union within the CIO in its embrace of labor education, reflecting the social unionism of its leader Walter Reuther, a graduate of Brookwood Labor College. Throughout his years as UAW head, Reuther advanced the idea of union-sponsored education courses as a key aspect of an engaged trade unionism. Under his direction, the union eventually established the UAW Family Education Center, located in Black Lake, Michigan, as a yearlong education and recreation center.

College- and University-Based Labor Education Programs

The relationship between labor and institutions of higher learning was well-established early in the twentieth century, with successful experiments at Bryn Mawr College and numerous other colleges and universities. These links were strengthened in the post-1945 period. Several reasons account for the turn toward university- and college-based worker education programs in this era. The success of labor programs at universities, especially through the federal programs of the 1930s, showed administrators the financial benefit of providing continued course offerings to nontraditional students. This coupled with the new veterans' education benefits sponsored through the G.I. Bill paved the way for increased interest in labor-oriented adult education in the United States. Changes in labor's relation to the state also shifted its educational prerogatives by the postwar period. New Deal legal reforms created a new federally mandated collective bargaining order in American industry that called for the training of labor experts to facilitate workplace agreements and to oversee labor peace. Both business and labor interests took advantage of new labor management programs that were initiated across the nation. Finally McCarthy period government suppression of politically leftist labor schools shifted the priorities of labor education away from oppositional agendas toward more mainstream political goals.

Although numerous universities had been active in promoting labor education, the University of Wisconsin at Madison developed the most respected program linking higher academics to the cause of progressive labor. Steered by John R. Commons, an economist who had allied with radical causes in his early career, Wisconsin was a center for labor theorists and intellectuals in the years before World War I. The political climate at Madison was fostered by the university's relationship with Governor Robert M. LaFollette, who actively sought faculty input as he crafted reforms that reshaped the state's workplace policies. The program at Wisconsin provided education not just for academics allied to labor's cause, but to average union members through the School for Workers, which remains the oldest running university-based labor education program in North America. Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations continued this model, often seen as the foremost post-1945 professional labor program in the United States. Established as the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations by the New York state legislature in 1945, the school was sponsored to help

improve labor relations in the state. The only four-year undergraduate institute in the United States that offers a labor management BA, Cornell's labor relations school has been active in supporting union-friendly programs by placing experienced union activists on its faculty and by offering seminars on such topics as steward training and organizing. Similar programs have been implemented in hundreds of colleges and universities across the United States, often in alliance with union education departments.

The stronger alliance between organized labor and higher education in the post-1945 period reflects a corresponding decline in class-consciousness among American workers. The disappearance of alternative, independent labor schools suggests the parallel decline of a separate working-class culture that marked the rise of labor education in the mid-nineteenth century. Some within the labor movement have sought to revive the earlier traditions of independent educational programs directed by labor for its own interests. The National Labor College in Silver Springs, Maryland, established by the AFL-CIO in 1974, was seen by many as a move in this direction. The school's primary goal has been to develop professional staff for national unions, with expertise in collective bargaining, legal studies, statistics, and economics, although the overall climate at the institute has often fostered a more class-based political consciousness. In the 1990s, the National Labor College received recognition as an independent, accredited institution of higher learning, changing its name to the George Meany Center for Labor Studies. One of the highlights of this center has been the inauguration of an organizing institute meant to energize a new period of membership growth. Although this objective has not been realized in the first decade since its founding, organized labor continues to stress the need for education. In the cyclical patterns of U.S. labor history, labor education has been a source of direction and hope in times of decline, serving as a tool for planning new courses of action. As organized labor seeks new paths in the twenty-first century, labor education continues as a long, viable tradition within American labor culture.

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See also **Brookwood Labor College; GI Bill; Muste, A. J.; Reuther, Walter; Wright, Frances**

ELAINE, ARKANSAS MASSACRE (1919)

In the fall of 1919, an incident outside a church where an African-American union meeting was taking place led to a massacre of over a hundred African-Americans. Viewed in the context of the Red Scare and labor strife, both of which were attracting attention across the country, any activism on the part of African-Americans represented a particularly threatening challenge to the system of peonage in place on southern plantations. In fact African-Americans in the Arkansas delta and elsewhere in the South had endured segregation and disfranchisement long before the post-World War I Red Scare, and while it is true that the war gave returning black servicemen a sense that they should exercise their rights more forcefully, African-Americans had never been totally quiescent and subordinated. Long before the massacre at Elaine, individual sharecroppers and tenants had attempted on occasion to secure their fair share of the crop

settlement from their landlords, and sometimes these confrontations led to violence. What was different in 1919 was that blacks had banded together under the banner of the Progressive Household Union of America and hired an attorney to represent them in suits they planned to file. The threat of a united force of African-Americans availing themselves of legal counsel prompted a swift and deadly response from planters who were able to use racism and the rumor of race war to unite whites across class boundaries to quash the black union.

Some time during the spring and summer of 1919, Robert Hill, an African-American farmer, began organizing the Progressive Household Union of America. He organized local chapters and collected dues, preaching the need to band together and file suit against planters in order to secure a fair settlement at the end of the crop year. During the last years of World War I, cotton prices had recovered after decades of disappointing returns, and African-American sharecroppers believed they deserved to share in the bonanza, but their planters thought otherwise and kept them indebted. Planters became aware of the union and grew increasingly alarmed, some of them circulating rumors that the union meant to murder whites and take their lands. In fact Hill had hired a white attorney from Little Rock, U.S. Bratton, to represent the union, and he had sent his son to Phillips County to interview members of the union in order to gather evidence. Young Ocier Bratton was in town on the morning of October 1, 1919, when the massacre got underway and was himself arrested and held in the Phillips County jail.

The evening before Bratton's arrest, a group of black sharecroppers were holding a meeting in a black church at Hoop Spur, a small hamlet near Elaine, when a car carrying two deputies and a black driver stopped just a few yards up the road. What happened next remains a matter of conjecture, but either the black union sentries standing at the door or the deputies opened fire. Both of the deputies were wounded, one of them mortally. The black driver made his way back to Helena, Arkansas, and alerted authorities, although the substance of his exact report remains unknown. The first news stories printed in the next morning's papers suggested that the officers had encountered bootleggers, but within hours rumors of an alleged insurrection of black sharecroppers spread throughout the county. A posse was dispatched, and soon the alarm attracted gangs of whites from other Arkansas counties as well as from across the river in Mississippi and Tennessee. Soon any semblance of order dissolved into chaos as whites rampaged against blacks, most of whom had played no part in the union organizing. Estimates of the total death toll among

blacks ranged from 26—the official total—to 856. In fact it is likely that from 100–200 African-Americans lost their lives. Governor Charles Brough authorized the use of federal troops, veterans of the Great War stationed at Camp Pike, to restore order. Arriving on the morning of October 2, 1919, they disarmed blacks and whites, but historians debate the role the federal troops played in adding to the black death toll. Only five whites died, one of them a soldier.

On October 27, the Phillips County Grand Jury began to meet and four days later charged 122 African-Americans with participating in the riot. The only white man to face the threat of prosecution was Ocier Bratton, who was accused of having incited the African-Americans, but he never came to trial. Allegations later surfaced that the black prisoners were tortured into confessing to various crimes, including murder. After brief and cursory trials, some of which lasted no more than a few minutes, 65 were sentenced to prison and 12 to death. A concerted effort to spare the 12 condemned men from the gallows then ensued, with African-Americans in Arkansas participating in raising funds to represent them. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) sprang into action and hired two Arkansans, one of them black and one white, to appeal the convictions of the Elaine Twelve. Scipio Jones, a noted African-American attorney from Little Rock, was joined by George Murphy, a Confederate veteran, in pursuing the cases. The Arkansas Supreme Court upheld convictions in six of the cases, which came to be known as the "Moore defendants," but required new trials in the other six cases, which came to be known as the "Ware defendants." The Arkansas Supreme Court was convinced by Murphy's argument that the original trial court had failed to designate which degree of murder Ed Ware and five others were guilty of having committed. New trials were ordered, but they were soon convicted once again and on July 23 were again sentenced to death. Later that year however, the Arkansas Supreme Court again overturned the convictions, this time on the basis of the fact that blacks had been excluded from the jury. While the local courts delayed retrying those cases, the NAACP relentlessly pursued further appeals in the other cases—the Moore cases—and the appeals eventually made their way to the United States Supreme Court, which called for new trials. By that time, no one in Arkansas wanted to revisit the cases, and by January 1925, the last of the Elaine Twelve were freed.

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ELECTROMATION v. TEAMSTERS LOCAL 1094 (1992)

The case of *Electromation v. Teamsters Local 1094*, decided by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in December 1992, had dramatic implications for the corporate administration of nonunion employee cooperation efforts. Since the return and proliferation of these programs in the 1980s under such names, for example, as quality of work life programs, quality circles, and employee involvement programs, these cooperative efforts have been of intense concern for unions who often felt that their implementation was at best a union-substitution strategy and at worst an outright anti-union instrument designed to prevent the formation of independent unions. Thus many union proponents viewed such vehicles as nothing more than modern-day company unions that were made illegal under Section 8(a)(2) of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act. Specifically Section 8(a)(2) prevents an employer from either controlling or obstructing the establishment or management of any labor organization or from supporting it, financially or otherwise, in any manner. Prior to the *Electromation* decision, the NLRB interpreted this provision quite narrowly in prohibiting certain types of employee dealings with management. However the board's decision in this case resulted in the NLRB creating tests for deciding the legality of

union-management cooperation programs in non-union settings.

Electromation, a nonunion electrical parts manufacturer, established action committees of employees after Teamsters Local 1094 launched an organizing drive at the company. These committees discussed a variety of personnel issues, including absenteeism, the no-smoking policy, attendance bonuses, communication, and pay increases for the company's top jobs. The Teamsters requested employer recognition after the committees' creation and filed an unfair labor practice charge with the NLRB, arguing that the company had violated Section 8(a)(2) of the NLRA. Specifically the union claimed that the committees were labor organizations that *Electromation* had dominated and unfairly supported. Ruling that the action committees were controlled by the company, the NLRB ordered *Electromation* to dissolve the committees.

In the post-*Electromation* environment, nonunion employers who engaged in employee-participation efforts became concerned that their programs might be illegal with regard to the current interpretation of Section 8(a)(2). Based on NLRB and court rulings after the *Electromation* decision, employee-participation programs will probably be determined to be legal assuming the following seven conditions are present. First employee representatives are elected by coworkers to serve on the committees with terms of service regularly rotated among employees. Second employees cannot be unhappy with these participation programs, and these cooperative efforts cannot exhibit any type of anti-union bias. Third a union organizing drive cannot be taking place when these programs are created. Fourth employee participation is not coerced but voluntary. Fifth employees are allowed to join a union. Sixth the participation committee has the power to make and implement final and binding decisions, and seventh the topics discussed by these committees can be only ones that are not subjects determined to be bargained in contract negotiations.

While the *Electromation* decision neither led to increased union-organizing success nor to arresting the continuing decline in U.S. union density in the late twentieth century, it did make nonunion employers more cautious in the implementation of their employee-participation programs. In that sense employees gained some leverage in the workplace and clearly benefited from the decision. It remains to be seen however whether unions can use the *Electromation* decision to their advantage in developing successful union-organizing strategies in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

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EMANCIPATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Emancipation and the reconstruction of the American South during and after the Civil War involved the reorganization of both the antebellum South's labor system and racial order. The abolition of slavery was also an essential element of the transition to more distinctly capitalist social relations in the South.

Slavery and the Old South

On the eve of the Civil War, nearly four million slaves labored on plantations and farms in 15 states from Delaware to Texas. Between one-quarter and one-third of white households throughout the slave states held slaves. Most slaveholdings were relatively small. The large majority of slaveholders held fewer than 20 slaves, with most of these owning one or two, but the majority of slaves lived on plantations with holdings of more than 50 slaves. In addition to raising cotton, the South's most important staple crop, slaves grew tobacco in Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky; rice along coastal South Carolina and Georgia; and sugarcane in southeastern Louisiana and eastern Texas. They also worked on the smaller landholdings of yeoman farmers, both within the plantation belt and in the upcountry.

The South before the Civil War was a predominantly rural and agricultural society, but thousands of slaves also labored in the South's small industrial sector, in factories, on railroads, or in building canals. Many slaves also lived and worked in southern cities, mostly as domestic servants or manual laborers. Skilled slaves were often hired out by their owners. They were permitted a considerable degree of

independence in their daily lives and allowed to retain some of the income they earned for their masters.

While scholars have debated the question of whether the slave South was a genuinely capitalist society—with some maintaining that it was not, since slaves could not sell their labor (or more accurately, their "labor power") on a free and open market—there is no doubt that slaveholders operated within the capitalist system and were motivated by a desire to maximize profits through the production of staple crops for sale on domestic and international markets. Moreover scholars also debate whether or not slavery impeded southern industrial development and economic progress, but they agree that slavery as a labor system was both efficient and highly profitable.

The Civil War and the Abolition of Slavery

Although President Abraham Lincoln and most northerners originally viewed the Civil War as a war not to abolish slavery but rather one to preserve the Union, the war ultimately resulted in the abolition of slavery. The flight of thousands of slaves from plantations in areas of the South where the Union army gained control compelled Lincoln, the federal government, and the North at large to confront the issue of slavery. Lincoln and most northerners eventually came to see the necessity of abolishing slavery as a means of both winning the war and undertaking the reconstruction of southern society, resulting in Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863.

Both before and after this date, the fugitive slaves who sought refuge behind Union lines forced federal, military, and civilian officials to provide humanitarian assistance as well as to begin to institute programs of free or compensated labor. On farms and plantations in northern Virginia and along the Virginia and North Carolina coast, on the South Carolina Sea Islands south of Charleston, throughout the Mississippi River valley, and in southern Louisiana, former slaves worked for wages or for a share of the crops under federal auspices. They labored on plantations whose owners had remained on the arrival of Union troops as well as on abandoned or confiscated plantations under Union military control. In addition former slaves worked in freedmen's villages, home colonies, or contraband camps established by federal, military, and civilian officials and often administered by northern reformers and missionaries.

The features of wartime free labor varied from state to state and among the different crop regions, and former slaves did not benefit from many of the rights that northern workers enjoyed, such as geographical mobility and the right to negotiate their own terms of employment. Nonetheless wartime free labor instituted the principle of compensated labor while prohibiting corporal punishment, the sale of human property, and other practices of slavery. By the end of the war, as many as a half-million former slaves had some experience with wartime free labor, while another quarter-million black men and women worked in the Union army for pay as military laborers (in addition to some 200 thousand black men who formally served in the Union army and navy).

Presidential Reconstruction and the Problem of Labor

The large majority of slaves did not gain their freedom until the end of the war, and the abolition of slavery was not complete until formal ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. constitution in December 1865. But throughout the former slave states, both in areas that had experienced wartime free labor and those that had not, the central issue was the same: The conflict between former slaveholders and former slaves (or freedmen) over the control of economic resources, especially land and labor. Many if not most former slaveholders remained adamantly opposed to the freeing of their slaves, but even for those who had reconciled themselves to emancipation, the primary goals of all planters were to retain control over labor and to secure a dependable labor force to operate their plantations. They continued to envision themselves as the primary source of authority on their estates, with decision-making power in all aspects of plantation management and in the laborers' working lives, including the issue of compensation. For freedmen by contrast the primary goals were to achieve a measure of independence in their daily working lives and to escape gang labor under white supervision, as had been customary under slavery. Former slaves also demanded a voice in determining such basic matters as the hours, pace, and conditions of labor, as well as the mode and level of compensation. Most freedmen envisioned access to economic resources, in particular the ownership of land and other forms of productive property, as the best means of securing their freedom. For them freedom meant more than simply returning to work on the plantations for meager compensation.

In the immediate postwar period, the former antebellum political leadership, which was largely dominated by planters, returned to power under the policies of Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson. A southern Democrat who had remained loyal to the Union, Johnson saw Reconstruction as a matter of restoration rather than as one of fundamentally restructuring southern society. Johnson had little concern for black civil or economic rights and was adamantly opposed to an expansion of federal authority. Under Johnson's policies, southern white leaders enacted a series of laws known as the "black codes" that essentially defined black people as second-class citizens and that were designed to restrict the freedmen's economic opportunities and to bind them to the plantation system. Although the black codes were effectively negated by military authorities and by the 1866 Civil Rights Act, planters continued to use local law enforcement and the courts to reestablish control over labor.

Freedmen were not without resources. Near the end of the Civil War, the Republican majority in Congress had created the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, commonly known as the Freedmen's bureau. A division of the War Department, the bureau was entrusted with authority over all matters concerning freedmen and the transition to freedom. In particular the bureau picked up where military authorities had left off at the end of the war in overseeing creation of a system of free labor for the South. It was also given control over the nearly one million acres of abandoned and confiscated land in the former Confederacy and was authorized to begin the process of dividing this land into 40-acre plots for distribution among freedmen.

As broad as the bureau's mandate was however, it never received adequate resources to fulfill its mission, and it was consciously created as a temporary agency rather than as a permanent or even long-term one. In this respect the bureau reflected divisions among Republicans and many northerners over the federal government's role in addressing the economic status of the former slaves and the reconstruction of southern society. Radical Republicans believed that the federal government had a responsibility to provide substantial and long-term assistance to freedmen in order to address the distinct historical experience of enslavement. Moderate and conservative Republicans by contrast argued that the federal government should guarantee freedmen legal equality and the right to enter into contracts voluntarily within the capitalist marketplace, or what some thought of as "contract freedom," but that freedmen should receive no special treatment or dispensations from the federal government.

An opponent of the bureau, Johnson interfered in its operations and was eventually able to prevent it from carrying out its mission of providing land to freedmen. Instead he saw that almost all of the bureau-controlled land was returned to its former owners, thus delivering a crippling blow to the prospects of the federal government making land available to former slaves. Nonetheless, despite all of the difficulties under which the bureau operated before its closing at the end of 1868, freedmen came to see it as an important ally in the struggle with planters over the new labor system, and they did not hesitate to petition bureau agents for assistance in securing their rights as free workers.

Radical Reconstruction and the Evolution of the South's Labor System

By early 1867, Republicans had broken with Johnson over Reconstruction, and most northerners had likewise rejected Johnson's conservative policies and supported Republicans on the need to guarantee legal equality and contract freedom. With the implementation of radical (or congressional) Reconstruction in 1867 and 1868, black men gained the right to vote, hold office, and otherwise shape the creation and implementation of public policy. Although black office holding and leverage over local and state government varied from state to state until Reconstruction ended in 1877, black political power profoundly influenced the evolution of labor relations throughout the South. Former slaves came to see the issues of legal and political equality and those involving land, labor, and economics as inseparable and indeed as interdependent parts of the same struggle to define freedom. Planters for their part attempted to use both legitimate state power and when necessary, extralegal violence to thwart black political and economic aspirations.

As freedmen gained access to political power during the late 1860s and the 1870s, the South's new labor system slowly took definitive shape, although the manner in which labor was organized and the mode of compensation varied among the different crop regions. In the cotton South, the system that came to be known as sharecropping would eventually predominate, although this term is often used to describe a host of different labor arrangements. In essence sharecropping was a system in which the planter or landlord provided land, work animals, implements, and other forms of working capital, while the laborer, or sharecropper, provided labor and perhaps some working capital of his or her own. The sharecropper

and his or her family rented and worked a specified amount of land, usually purchasing necessities on credit from the landlord or a local merchant. At the end of the crop season, landlord and sharecropper split, or shared, the crop, and the sharecropper's account was settled with the proceeds of his or her share. The laborer's share of the crop depended on the assets he or she originally brought into the bargain. In instances where a sharecropper owned a mule or farm implements, he or she could negotiate a better deal for as much as half the crop; in cases where the sharecropper brought only his or her labor, with the planter providing everything else, the sharecropper received a considerably smaller share. In either case sharecropping was in theory a form of wage labor, since the landlord retained control of the crop and compensated the sharecropper for labor with a share of the crop instead of cash. In some instances freedmen who had accumulated the necessary assets to work their own farms but who lacked only land rented land for a cash payment and were able to retain control of the entire crop. Such arrangements were known as tenancy.

There has been much scholarly debate about the origins and development of sharecropping. Some scholars have maintained that sharecropping emerged out of the natural workings of the free-market system. Others however attribute its origins to the immutable class conflict between former slaveholders and freedmen in the contest over the South's new labor system. Nonetheless most scholars agree that sharecropping evolved in response to the contending desires of planters and freedmen as well as to the particular economic conditions that prevailed in the postwar South. Since it required little cash, sharecropping was attractive in a region that notoriously lacked capital. Since both landlord and laborer had a stake in the crop, sharecropping spread the risk of failure or success between the parties. But most importantly sharecropping gave freedmen a measure of control over their daily working lives, and offered them the possibility of capital accumulation and eventual land ownership even as it ensured planters a stable labor force and overall control over plantation management.

Although various kinds of sharecropping or rental arrangements also prevailed on the upper South's tobacco plantations, sharecropping was not so ideally suited to the South's other crop regions. On southern Louisiana's sugar plantations, which had traditionally been characterized by large concentrations of land, labor, and capital, highly integrated plantation organization survived after slavery, with laborers continuing to work in gangs under white supervision and to live in centralized quarters. In return, sugar workers received monthly or daily cash wages in addition to

rations, housing, and the right to keep garden plots. Despite the similarities in plantation routine during and after slavery in the sugar region, workers nonetheless used their skills and knowledge of the complex process of sugar production to gain important leverage in determining the conditions of labor. In the rice kingdom of low-country South Carolina and Georgia by contrast, a wide array of labor arrangements initially replaced slavery, but production never reached antebellum levels, and the story of the postbellum rice industry in the low country was one of irreversible decline and eventual demise. Indeed coastal South Carolina and Georgia were one of the few areas of the postwar South where the antebellum plantation system was replaced by extensive, small-scale black landholding and where the production of staple crops was supplanted by subsistence agriculture and truck farming.

If the low country was exceptional for the demise of its plantation system, it was not so for the presence of black property holders. Throughout the rural South, but especially in the tobacco regions of Virginia and North Carolina, parts of the South Carolina piedmont, the interior of the Yazoo-Mississippi delta, as well as in the low country, former slaves managed to acquire property. Individual black families marshaled together their meager resources or demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit by putting domestic and household production toward acquisitive ends, so that places like Promiseland, South Carolina, and Mound Bayou, Mississippi, became thriving and self-sufficient communities of black property holders. By 1900, approximately one out of every four southern black farmers owned the land they worked.

Some scholars have debated the question of whether the former slaves in the postbellum southern countryside constituted either a black peasantry or a rural proletariat. Perhaps less important than ascribing such labels is a recognition that a complex array of labor arrangements and methods of compensation coexisted within the southern agricultural sector. Moreover the status that individual blacks occupied was not static; instead individuals moved up and down the economic ladder over time as circumstances and conditions changed. Likewise the various members of black families and households undertook a number of different economic activities simultaneously, all working toward the goal of autonomy and independence.

Urban and Non-Agricultural Labor

One of the most dramatic developments in the postbellum South was the migration of thousands of

former slaves from plantations and the countryside to urban areas. Black people were attracted to what they believed were the greater economic opportunities that cities had to offer, as well as to the schools, churches, and benevolent and fraternal societies that tended to cluster in urban areas. Both the overall populations and the black populations of such cities as Washington, D.C., Richmond, Charlotte, Atlanta, Memphis, and New Orleans increased dramatically, while other cities, such as Charleston and Mobile, experienced significant black population growth.

The overwhelming majority of black men and women in cities were engaged in manual labor. Most men were employed as unskilled day laborers, although some obtained skilled employment, and most women worked as domestic servants. Cities were also home to the very small minority of black people who achieved professional or middle-class status, mostly as doctors, lawyers, educators, newspaper editors, and ministers, as well as to those very few African-Americans who became entrepreneurs by starting up, for example, black insurance companies.

Although they suffered severe racial discrimination, black people also found employment in the South's slowly expanding industrial sector. Many black men worked in the coal mines of Appalachia, in the naval stores industry, and in the South's burgeoning timber industry, while others were employed in iron foundries or steel mills, such as those in Birmingham, Alabama. Black men and women also labored as a small proportion of the workforce employed in the textile mills of piedmont South Carolina and North Carolina. Perhaps most tragically many thousands of black people, the large majority men but some women, endured horrific working and living conditions as convict laborers throughout the South, especially in Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana—where a seven-year term was equivalent to a death sentence—and Mississippi, home to the infamous Parchman farm.

Black Labor in the Post-Reconstruction South

Although former slaves and their descendants faced overwhelming obstacles during Reconstruction in achieving economic independence, their prospects for attaining that goal dramatically worsened at its end in 1877. In a process that began in several states before that date but that intensified and became widespread after it, the southern white propertied classes, including many planters and former slaveholders, regained political power and proceeded to use the

mechanisms of local and state government to re-establish control over labor. Combining their still-formidable financial power with the force of law, planters and other capitalists restructured legal and economic relations to their own benefit and to the disadvantage of labor. Most black sharecroppers found sharecropping to be a permanent status instead of a stepping stone to independent property ownership, with many reduced to the condition of debt peonage, although historians have debated the extent of this practice. Wage laborers for their part similarly found themselves with few options to that of selling their labor within a capitalist marketplace that was skewed in the interests of capital. Starting in the 1890s moreover, southern state governments moved systematically to impose legal segregation and to strip voting rights from black men, while lynching, race riots, and other forms of racial violence became increasingly commonplace. Black people may not have been legally re-enslaved in the decades following emancipation, but the overwhelming racial and economic oppression that they endured by the turn of the century made a mockery of black freedom, and it has caused scholars ever since to wrestle with the question of how different the new South was from the old South.

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See also Abolitionism; African Americans; Antebellum Era; Barbers; Brotherhood of Timber Workers; Civil Rights; Civil War and Reconstruction; Colored Farmers' Alliance; Company Towns; Disfranchisement; Du-Bois, W. E. B.; Gender; Gilded Age; Greenback Labor Party; Gutman, Herbert; Historiography of American Labor History; Knights of Labor; Ku Klux Klan (Reconstruction and WWI Era); Louisiana Sugar Strike (1887); National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; New Orleans General Strike (1892); New South; Peonage; Railroads; Sharecropping and Tenancy; Slave Trade, Domestic; Strikebreaking; Tennessee Convict Uprising (1891–1892); Thirteenth Amendment; Union League Movement; Washington, Booker T.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION PLANS/COMPANY UNIONS

Company unions (also known as work councils or employee-representation plans) date back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the emergence of large-scale and impersonal economic enterprises and a rise in worker militancy and trade unionism began to pose major threats to the efficiency, autonomy, and power of American employers. Shop committees and informal company-specific worker organizations had existed in the nation's factories in the nineteenth century—as early as 1833—but employers became interested in initiating and controlling such bodies in the 1890s and early twentieth century, when early welfare capitalist experiments promoting industrial “betterment,” labor-capital mutualism, and company loyalty began to spread through the nation. Some of the earliest examples of such initiatives came in smaller firms that were making adjustments to workforce expansion—and in the service sector. The adoption of company unions

however became most pronounced later in larger industrial firms and in the railroad industry.

Perhaps the earliest example of a true company-initiated union can be found in the Filene Cooperative Association (FCA), a company union of female employees established in 1898 and formalized in 1905 at the Filene Boston department store. It was an innovation that came with a variety of other welfare capitalist initiatives: Medical care and insurance, social and athletic programs, company-sponsored cultural activities—all designed to address issues of worker alienation, low morale, and efficiency. The FCA was modeled on the structure of the US government, with the chief executive officer at the top and two representative deliberative bodies—one elected by the workers, the other appointed by the company president—charged with resolving wage disputes and the varied grievances of the department store's workers. Company officers also served as a cabinet of sorts. The FCA also worked closely with Filene's welfare work department, charged with overseeing the general welfare of employees.

Other employers were motivated to adopt employee-representation reforms out of social gospel motives. Such employers as Holbrook FitzJohn Porter, vice-president of the Nernst Lamp Company, were motivated by a religious conviction heavily influenced by social gospel theologians. In addition to the usual panoply of welfare activities undertaken by the firm, Nernst established a factory committee in the winter of 1903–1904 made up of rank-and-file shop and clerical workers and line-level supervisors.

Though Nernst's and Filene's motives in adopting company unionism were not directly related to a union threat, this was not true of other firms. In fact many company unions were specifically created by executives hoping to avoid strikes and trade unions. The Pittsburgh Railroad for example emerged from the Railroad Strike of 1877 determined to avoid such destructive conflagrations with employees in the future; it did so by actively promoting company unions with limited but significant power. The Packard Piano Company of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, hired Industrial Relations Consultant John Leitch of Philadelphia in 1912 to address employee problems that threatened production. Leitch formulated a company union model not dissimilar from that of Filene's, again modeled on a two-house congressional structure. One house, an industrial House of Representatives, was made up of representatives elected by workers, and the other, a Senate, by foremen; the cabinet was entirely composed of corporate executives. Since both houses and the cabinet were required to approve all proposals, and one house and the cabinet was entirely composed of supervisory and administrative

personnel, there was no doubt that real power remained firmly in the hands of management. Because of this, it was not surprising that so many firms looking for mechanisms to address labor problems began to mirror the so-called Leitch plan. Goodyear Tire and the Durham Hosiery Mills of North Carolina were but two of 20 firms that adopted it.

Not surprisingly radicals and trade unionists were extremely critical of company unions in whatever form; the movement toward company unions became a significant one during the 1910s and into the 1920s, and few trade union leaders could ignore it. Common criticisms emphasized the hollowness of corporate-initiated and structured representative schemes and the blatant anti-union motives behind many of them. In spite of such criticisms, the movement continued to grow through the 1910s. Besides the initial stimulation of the movement by Leitch's active proselytizing of his ideas (see, in particular, his classic *Man to Man: The Story of Industrial Democracy*), company unions were most pronouncedly catalyzed by the Colorado Industrial plan (or Rockefeller plan), which emerged in the wake of the Ludlow Massacre of April 1914. The Rockefeller family was the largest stockholder in the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, the firm against which 9,000 miners affiliated with the United Mine Workers' (UMW) Union struck in the late summer and early fall of 1913. The strike was broken by the use of the Colorado National Guard. The guard attacked a striking miners' camp in Ludlow; gunfire took the lives of 10 men and a child, and a deadly tent fire (the guards had set miner tents on fire) led to the suffocation of another 11 children and two women. Following this, and in response to public outrage against the firm and the Rockefellers, John D. Rockefeller Jr. hired Clarence J. Hicks, who had extensive experience in administering welfare work at International Harvester, and W. L. Mackenzie King, former Canadian minister of labor (and future Canadian prime minister), to reform the labor practices of the firm. One of the results of their collaboration was an employee representation plan (ERP). The plan created local district committees democratically elected by the miners who would attempt to resolve grievances brought forward by workers. If workers could not get satisfaction from foremen or mine superintendents, they could appeal directly to a Joint Committee on Industrial Cooperation and Conciliation or the firm's president (through a presidential industrial representative who periodically visited each mining district). Without a viable alternative—since the UMW had been defeated in the strike—84% of voting workers gave their assent to the plan in 1915.

The Colorado Industrial plan was extended to other Rockefeller firms, such as Standard Oil, and

soon—in a variety of forms—it spread throughout the nation, as Midvale Steel Company, Bethlehem Steel, and many other firms adopted it. Perhaps the greatest catalyst for the expansion of the movement however was World War I, when government promotion efforts and labor shortages both came into play as motivating factors. With wartime production and efficiency key considerations, and anxiety over possible strikes and violence in the nation's shipyards and railroads rising, the Wilson administration looked to various forms of employee representation to ward off these threats.

Government wartime agencies, including the War Labor board, the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment board, the U.S. Railroad Administration, and the U.S. Fuel Administration, established shop committees in various strategic industrial settings. The U.S. Railroad Administration, for example, created a national board with equal representation of labor and capital charged with settling railroad disputes. It in turn fostered the creation of local shop committees to alleviate an impossible burden of dealing with thousands of grievances from around the nation. By 1919, more than a hundred firms had adopted some form of employee representation under government pressure, and many more did it voluntarily (many perhaps in anticipation of government pressure). As many wartime employee-representation initiatives were government- rather than company-initiated, it may be questionable whether to consider wartime shop committees true company unions; nonetheless they borrowed much from prewar corporate experiments, including the Rockefeller plan and the Leitch plan. In the context of World War I idealism, and calls by the Wilson administration to spread democracy around the world, it was a natural leap to apply such ideas to the industrial realm. The language of industrial democracy began to resonate with both labor and progressive employers. Of course it meant different things to these two disparate groups. For the former it meant real independent trade unions; for the latter it meant the Leitch plan or the Rockefeller plan or a half-dozen other variations on the theme.

The wartime experience had a postwar legacy. With growing fears of a spreading Bolshevik revolution, with domestic postwar worker militancy on the rise (the 1919 national steel strike being one important example), with a trade union movement growing dramatically (it grew by 50% from 1916–1920), and with Wilsonian democratic rhetoric pervasive, a significant number of large employers began to recognize the need to implement some form of industrial democracy in harmony with the nation's democratic political traditions. Some believed that employee representation would, like other welfare capitalist

initiatives, bring workers closer to management and teach them a respect for the often-unpleasant responsibilities of supervisory personnel and managers. Though the recession of 1920–1921 and escalating worker expectations—reflected in a growing number of labor grievances brought forward for review by worker and company representatives—led employers to slow their adoption of shop committees and other forms of company unions (especially the Leitch plan), the overwhelming tendency in the postwar era was toward an increasing adoption of company unionism.

The number of workers covered by employee representation plans grew through the decade of the 1920s; by 1928, around 1.5 million workers were operating under the umbrella of one or another form of ERP, most of them employed by large firms. There is little unanimity among scholars on the question of to what extent workers accepted or embraced employee-representation initiatives. Some historians emphasize success, others hostility or apathy. Some scholars measure the notion of success from a managerial perspective, others from labor's point of view. A significant recent group of revisionist historians and economists, such as Daniel Nelson, David Fairris, and Bruce E. Kaufman, argue that there was much that was positive about the development of employee-representation plans in the first three decades of the twentieth century, that in fact, many plans improved industrial relations and furthered the interests of both workers and management. Most labor historians however are less sanguine about ERPs.

It is clear the record is varied both within and across firms. In several instances, company unions became quite powerful and effective in extracting wage increases and improvements in working conditions. Employees of Kimberley-Clark, Colorado Fuel and Iron, Standard Oil experienced concrete improvements in wage and working conditions. One detailed analysis of grievances adjudicated by Bethlehem Steel Company's ERP noted that over 1,600 grievances out of 2,300 were settled in favor of the employees. Labor Economist William Leiserson noted in the 1920s—the heyday of the company union movement—that between two-thirds and 70% of grievances brought up for review by ERPs were settled in the employee's favor. In some instances shop committees and councils did help reduce labor turnover and seemed to contribute to worker loyalty to the firm—goals that promoters of company unions had argued to justify their adoption. But it is hard to identify a consistent long-term pattern of significant improvements—either from a labor or managerial perspective. As Leiserson also observed, a pro-employee predisposition was most evident in the initial years of an ERP's operation.

On the other side, more than one scholar has identified a correlation between representation plans and wage cuts, suggesting that companies may have adopted company unions in part in anticipation of wage decreases—as a mechanism to ward off or limit labor unrest. Company unions tended to draw in family men, generally more moderate—even conservative—than younger, single workers. This had important implications on the intensity and level of worker militancy and activism within such unions. Furthermore representatives were not labor or economic professionals and dealt only with local conditions. They rarely developed a more national and global perspective on the economic conditions they were often the victims of—perspectives that international and national trade union officials more often had. These are all arguments made by some business and labor historians, as well as union organizers, against the long-term effectiveness of company unions in promoting the interests of employees. Similarly contemporary businessmen and scholars noted that escalating grievances and heightened expectations in the wake of the creation of employee-representation plans introduced as many labor relations crises as they may have tried to ward off.

Through the 1920s, so long as companies and their company unions delivered some concrete benefits to workers, employee-representation plans were often accepted as the only viable route to settle grievances. Yet with the coming of the Great Depression and the New Deal, the equation that sustained company unionism changed dramatically. Economic downturn meant corporations were less able to satisfy worker expectations, and government's aggressive intrusion into labor-management relations—one hostile to company unions—soon created a major crisis for American corporate managers. From 1928–1932, the years encompassing the early years of the Great Depression, many firms began to abandon company unions, resulting in an 18% decline in employees represented by them. This pattern was temporarily reversed with the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, which recognized—under Section 7(a)—labor's right to collective bargaining and to establish independent trade unions. In defensive reaction, firms throughout the nation began to implement employee-representation plans to head off independent trade unions. The result was an increase in the number of workers covered by such plans from 1.8 million in 1934 to 2.5 million in 1935. A growing and widespread hostility to this blatant attempt to block the growth of true independent labor organizations finally led to a legal prohibition against company unions and all forms of employer-dominated labor organizations, codified by Section 8(a)(2) of the

Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act) of 1935. When the Supreme Court failed to overturn the act in 1937, the government began aggressively to break up company's unions. The 1938 Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Case (*Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co. v. Schauffler*, 303 U.S. 54) was the landmark Supreme Court case that finally terminated the 35-year-old movement.

The hundreds of company unions throughout the nation in the mid-1930s followed various tracks following the government prohibition. Some chose the path of establishing independent, nonaffiliated unions. This was the case with the Gadsden, Alabama Goodyear Tire plant. Workers violently rejected attempts by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrialized Organizations (CIO) to organize plant workers. Instead they chose to establish the Etoawah Rubber Workers' Association. A significant percentage of workers enrolled in company unions followed a similar track; from 1935 to the early 1940s, around half of all workers enrolled in company unions and newly established independent unions voted against affiliation with AFL or CIO unions in National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)-supervised elections.

On the other hand, there were also numerous examples of company unions being either rejected when viable alternatives were offered to workers or becoming springboards to trade independence in the 1930s. Trade union organizers captured employee-representative committees at Pittsburgh's steel mills and lobbied effectively for employee support of the CIO. In early 1937, US Steel finally accepted the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC), affiliated with the CIO, as the bargaining unit of their employees. A similar transition took place at General Electric—though it took various routes in the firm's diverse plants. There at the firm's West Lynn, Massachusetts, plant, a works' council had been in existence since 1918 (formed in response to government pressure). But led by a militant pattern maker named Al Coulthard, a concerted effort began in the early 1930s to replace the works' council with an independent union. In an election monitored by the New England Regional Labor Council, Coulthard's independent union defeated the council by a margin of 82% to 18%. In the Schenectady Works of General Electric, one of the firm's largest production centers, industrial union organizers—several of them Communists—became active in the firm's works' council, originally established in 1924. Already under pressure to comply with Section 7(a) of the National Recovery Act (NRA) management first attempted to convince government watchdogs that the firm was already in compliance with the law. The firm modified the council in late 1933 though, changed the Schenectady

organization's name to the Workers' Council, strengthened grievance procedures, and increased worker input into wage determinations. To assuage workers further, management announced a wage increase of 10% on April 1, 1934, and cited the effective negotiation pressure of the council as a factor in the wage increase. With the power of the council increasing, labor militants began to look to it as a mechanism to accomplish more dramatic changes in the firm. They flocked into its ranks and began to advocate for an open NLRB election to replace the council with an independent industrial union. The final result of that process led to the formation of Local 301 of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) in early 1937.

The later 1930s witnessed an end to company union initiatives. The legacies of these initiatives and the company union movement as a whole were mixed, but in their final years, employee-representation plans and workers' councils formed bridges to independent trade unionism—small, independent, and local, as well as large, affiliated, and national. The ideas and ideals of company unionism, often more than the realities, seemed to keep alive the idea of industrial democracy among workers. And as historian Irving Bernstein has noted, whether sustaining or contradicting those ideas and ideals, company unionism offered workers a language that they could use to fashion a more truly democratic and independent form of unionism, reflected in the rise of the CIO unions in the late 1930s.

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EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT (1974)

Most laws relating to private-sector pensions in the United States are contained either in federal tax law or in the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), which was first enacted in 1974. Although ERISA also deals with so-called "employee welfare plans," including, for example, health plans, pension provisions take up its bulk.

The ERISA does not require any employer to establish a retirement plan and does not dictate retirement benefits. However it does subject those pension plans that are established to numerous legal requirements, mainly aimed at ensuring that pension plans are actually used for the benefit of covered employees. The ERISA is a very large and extremely complex law, encompassing many disparate goals.

The ERISA regulates both "defined-benefit" and "defined-contribution" retirement plans. (The former term refers to a plan wherein benefits are based on a specifically defined formula, usually based on years of service and salary at or around the time of retirement. The latter refers to a plan wherein benefits are based on the size of an account to which the employee, and sometimes the employer as well, has/have contributed.) However defined-benefit plans are the type that is truly contemplated by the law and thus such plans are far more regulated by ERISA.

The Problem of Retirement

Pensions as we know them did not always exist. Neither for that matter did retirement. Prior to the Civil War, as a general rule most Americans appear to have died relatively young, worked until they died, and worked in an agricultural environment. Retirement was mostly unknown. Following the Civil War however, more people came to work in industry, where older people are commonly thought to be of less use than in agriculture. Further the population of the country generally aged from the Civil War to the 1930s. The concept of the pension slowly began to develop as a way of ensuring an income for people who were considered to be of no further use as workers.

The first American pensions appear to have been exclusive to either disabled or retired Civil War veterans (sources differ). Despite various administrative problems, the program was popular and became an important precedent. Though there is some disagreement, most sources indicate that first American private-sector pension plans were established in 1875 (by the American Express Company) and in 1880 (by the Baltimore-Ohio Railroad Company).

From here pensions grew only in number, size, and importance. Pension plans appear to have become major financial players relatively early in their history.

The Rise of ERISA

Government accommodation and regulation of pensions dates back to the Revenue Acts of 1921 and 1926, which first gave pensions a special tax status. Other laws were enacted throughout the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

Pension reform began in earnest however in the late 1950s, in response to a series of major pension-related scandals; two particularly important ones involved Teamsters union leader James “Jimmy” Hoffa, and another involved the Studebaker car manufacturer. A series of federal laws, dating back to 1958, ultimately discredited Welfare and Pension Plan Disclosure Act of 1958 (WPPDA), and a Presidential Committee on Corporate Pension Funds (put together by President John F. Kennedy in response to the Studebaker scandal) led up to the enactment of ERISA. Following the issuance of the presidential commission’s report, New York Senator Jacob K. Javits took the lead on the issue and is usually credited with principal authorship of the bill that eventually became ERISA some years later in 1974 (PL 93-406, also known as the Pension Reform Act). Why ERISA went through exactly when it did is an extremely interesting question to which the answer is rather murky.

Although ERISA has been amended several times since 1974 (most notably by the Revenue Act of 1978 and the Retirement Equity Act of 1984), its essentials appear to have remained very similar since its initial enactment.

The Basics

Many of ERISA’s provisions are detailed, technical, and complicated. However the basics of the law are fairly easy to summarize in the broadest terms.

Without requiring employers to establish pension plans or mandating what benefits are payable, ERISA subjects pension plans to various requirements. For example requirements for vesting in a plan (vesting refers to the point after which an employee can draw benefits after reaching normal retirement age for the plan even without long service to the employer) were enacted. These requirements are considered important because they limit the ability of employers to take away employees’ pensions entirely by firing them late in their careers and assist employees in changing jobs without losing their pensions entirely. Toward similar ends, requirements for benefit accrual were also established.

Provisions were also made requiring employers to report, regularly and accurately, to members regarding the benefit package and the fiscal health of the plan. Requirements for investment and financial management were also enacted. In general investors for the plan are required to make investments for the exclusive benefit of plan members, are required to invest prudently (considered to be a higher obligation than the “reasonable man standard” that often appears in other areas of law), and mandated to diversify investments unless prudence clearly dictates otherwise. Further an agency called the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) was established to pay benefits for plans that failed.

In general ERISA regulates traditional defined-benefit pension plans, wherein benefits are based on a formula that is known from the outset, more so than defined-contribution plans, such as 401(k) plans, where benefits are determined by the size of an account. The latter were not as popular when ERISA was enacted as they are now and in some circles are considered to be less retirement plans per se than deferred-compensation or assisted-savings programs. Defined-contribution plans are regulated by ERISA, only somewhat less so.

Current Issues

Within the last few years prior to the writing of this article, pension-related scandals have once again shined a spotlight on ERISA and led to calls for its amendment. At the time of writing, some proposals have been enacted, but many have not, and the basic provisions of ERISA as previously described remain about the same. To an extent ERISA’s reporting requirements have been strengthened, along with other reporting, accounting, and auditing requirements for businesses.

Employer advocates generally argue for ERISA's provisions to be strengthened in light of the various scandals where plans proved to be underfunded and instances where employers and plan managers have either violated ERISA or have sought to subvert its intent while remaining within its letter. On the other hand, some employers have argued for a lessening of ERISA's requirements, arguing that due to certain financial techniques, pension plans can coast for longer periods of time without being actually sound actuarially.

At the time of writing, many companies under financial stress have begun to seek the protection of the courts through the bankruptcy laws, and pension obligations, typically considered particularly expensive for companies, have often been the first targets of discharge or lessening of company debt pursuant to the bankruptcy laws. A study issued by the PBGC late in 2005, for example, showed that 9.4% of pension plans covered by ERISA had frozen benefit accruals; this means that while the plans were still in existence, members' benefit levels were frozen and could not grow any further despite their continuing to work for the firm.

Even before the recent rash of "dumping" of obligations, the PBGC was considered to be on rather shaky financial ground, and the increasing reliance on it to pay the pension obligations of ostensibly bankrupt firms has not helped matters. These factors together with other circumstances have led some commentators to worry that a crisis looms in the nation's private-sector retirement system.

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ENGLISH WORKERS

English workers played crucial roles in American labor history. Among all immigrants they made unique contributions to the development of industry and labor organization. This was due to an essential fact: Great Britain—England especially—was the world's first industrial nation and until the late nineteenth century, led the world in industrial technology and manufacturing. It had the world's most advanced and diversified economy and labor force, with the largest share of its population working in modernizing industries. Thus English workers in the United States—from the Revolution through the nineteenth century and beyond—offered valuable skills and experience. They brought a transatlantic industrial revolution from Britain to the United States that profoundly changed the American economy and society.

Another feature that distinguished the English from other immigrants in American labor was the fact that they already shared the same language and basic religious and political culture with most white Americans. England after all was the mother country and had planted a culture that remained essentially English after the Revolution in spite of the arrival of many non-British peoples. English workers in the United States then found a culture and institutions that were more familiar than different. They were "invisible immigrants" in the sense that they were often not seen as true foreigners but as cousins of the same stock. They blended in quickly with the larger American society. Sometimes the English did feel hostility from overly patriotic Americans who questioned their loyalty—especially in the years immediately after the Revolution, during the War of 1812, and other times of tension between the two nations. But generally the English were warmly welcomed and appreciated for their skills, hard work, common values, and quick assimilation to American life. They did not form ethnic communities or establish ethnic presses or other institutions like other immigrant groups did. Thus the English entered American labor quickly, often in leading roles. The great majority were not fleeing poverty but seeking greater opportunities in America. Some however were indeed poor. As early as the 1770s, the English in American cities began establishing St. George societies to assist English newcomers who needed help to get established as workers in the United States.

Industrial Skills

The industrial revolution is closely associated with innovation in textiles, and all of the major

breakthroughs occurred in England: James Hargreaves's spinning jenny (1764), Richard Arkwright's water frame (1769), Samuel Crompton's spinning mule, and Edmund Cartwright's power loom (1785). The transfer of these innovations from Britain to the United States occurred quickly through English immigrants like Samuel Slater. He had been an apprentice to one of Arkwright's partners and came to the United States in 1789. Slater was responding to advertisements for skilled mechanics that American state legislatures published in English newspapers—so strong was the American demand for advanced skilled labor and the accurate perception that England was the source. Slater, like other early skilled workers heading for the United States circumvented the English law that forbade the emigration of skilled workers by simply declaring himself an apprentice. In 1790, Slater signed a contract to build a water-powered cotton-spinning mill based on Arkwright's designs, and he set up his own factory in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1793. After his brother joined him from England, he built another mill in a town soon-called Slatersville. He also expanded his operations in Massachusetts. Slater employed other English workers along with local people, and he established a family system of labor, which combined some aspects of Arkwright's management system with new approaches to avoid England's tendency for horrible factory conditions. By the time of his death in 1835, Slater was involved with 13 textile mills. Another important English immigrant, Arthur Scholfield, similarly brought the latest textile technology to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and his five brothers and their families to help him. Other less spectacular examples of English immigrants building textiles mills in the United States or bringing the latest skills are common and stretch into the mid-nineteenth century and beyond.

What happened in the transfer of textile technology and skills occurred in most industries. The early iron mills of Pennsylvania and Ohio relied heavily on English people who discovered ore bands and exploited them and others who brought experience with modernizing iron production from England. English workers helped build the first U.S. iron-rolling mill in Pittsburgh in 1812, and they brought the boiling method for puddling iron in 1837. The English introduced the method of coal-fired blast furnaces and the technology to build the first coke ovens in the 1830s. They also introduced the production of blister and crucible steel and helped develop the first U.S. rail production. Naturally the English rose quickly in the mills as supervisors and owners. And when steel began to replace iron—after the Bessemer process was brought from England following the Civil

War—it was often with the help of English workers who had acquired the necessary skills and experience in their native land. The English also transferred the necessary workers and tools to establish the modern brass-making industry in Connecticut. In the 1830s, potters from Staffordshire established the pottery industry in East Liverpool, Ohio, and in Trenton, New Jersey. For decades English workers dominated and developed the industry in those cities, such that by the post-Civil War Era, the Americans could successfully compete with the English in pottery.

The English were especially important in American mining. Since the Middle Ages, the English had pioneered coal mining, and in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they created the modern coal-mining industry. As their mines plunged more than a thousand feet below the earth's surface and even under the sea bed, they developed new techniques of ventilation, water pumping, and safe methods of tunneling. Mining—whether of coal or ores—was a skilled craft until mechanization took over in the late nineteenth century, and the English (as well as the Welsh and Scots) brought that skill and experience to the United States. They opened the coalmines of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and other key states. In the 1850s alone, at least 37,000 British miners (most of whom were English) arrived in the United States, and they rose quickly to become mine bosses and owners. All over Pennsylvania and the Midwest, English workers discovered and developed important coal seams.

In other areas of mining, too, the English were instrumental. The Cornish—though ethnically distinct—were considered English as well, and they opened up the lead mines of the upper Mississippi River valley, especially in southwest Wisconsin, northwest Illinois, and eastern Iowa. The same was true of the iron and copper mines in upper Michigan and other areas in the Midwest. And of course when gold was discovered in California, and silver throughout the American West, the English were quick to exploit the new opportunities. They could apply their mining skills to the more precious ores, and with their common language and ease of participation in American life, they could move throughout the country rapidly to make the most of their situations. Virtually wherever one looks at American mining, one sees the English in prominent numbers and roles.

An overview of the occupational background of English workers in the United States reveals a remarkable diversity and comparatively high level of skill. During the late 1820s and 1830s, the English arriving in the United States were largely farmers and pre-industrial craft workers—especially building trades workers, miners, woodworkers, and so on.

ENGLISH WORKERS

Also prominent were skilled industrial workers in textiles and iron. They were generally not desperately poor or escaping technological displacement but could afford to travel as families in search of richer American opportunities. More poor workers arrived during the famine years of the late “hungry forties,” but during the prosperous midcentury, farmers and engineers and skilled machinists (who were generally doing well in England) were entering the United States in significant proportions. In 1851 alone, an estimated 440 engineers and 660 ironworkers came from Britain (mostly England) to the United States. This was just what the young, industrializing nation needed for economic development.

During the 1860s, early 1870s, and 1880s, English immigration to the United States rose. They came increasingly from urban areas and were mostly building trades workers, miners, and unskilled workers. Many professionals, including lawyers, teachers, and clerks, also arrived throughout the century. A surprising number of all of these people from industrial and professional backgrounds took up farming in the United States. The availability of cheap, fertile land had attracted many of the English to the United States in the first place. And though most of them had nonagricultural occupations in England, many had been raised on or near farms. Farming was in their blood, and land ownership was a powerful incentive for their move. Thus when the English came to the United States and took up work in industry, mining, the building trades, and other nonagricultural fields, it was often a means to acquire the necessary capital to purchase land and take up farming.

English women in the United States were most commonly textiles workers, seamstresses, or domestic servants; but many were also active in teaching and medicine. They made essential contributions to family incomes and were also crucial for agriculture. They played more diverse roles in American labor than other immigrant women. Altogether the English contributed valuable industrial skills and experience and accelerated the growth and development of the United States. The 1890 United States census shows that the English were still much more likely than other immigrants to have skills and to be working in textiles, iron and steel, machine making, and other various skilled occupations.

Labor Organization

English workers also contributed to labor organization. For though the Americans were leaders in

political democracy, the British were the leaders in industrial democracy. English workers coming to the United States carried their awareness of the need for labor unions and their experience in attempting organization. Some had been Chartists, demanding full democratic rights, but many more simply had a determination to reform the industrial system to benefit the workers. Some American businessmen who recruited skilled English workers were surprised to find that they now had employees who were organizing fellow workers for better pay and conditions, and some avoided hiring the English precisely for that reason. One of the earliest U.S. labor organizations—New York’s Workingmen’s party—was established in 1829 under the leadership of English immigrants, and in the 1840s, the arrival of English Chartists helped bolster the state’s labor movement. In 1850, when Parliament began to devise safety codes and inspection systems in response to the miners’ agitation, English miners brought their determination to accomplish the same goals in the United States. They led the formation of the American Miners’ Association in 1861.

The importance of the English in American labor organization is also illustrated in the life of Samuel Gompers. Born in London’s East End to Dutch Jewish immigrant cigar makers, he came to the United States with his family in 1863, with financial help from his father’s trade union. Starting out as a cigar maker in New York, Gompers began meeting with other skilled workers and used the British experience with labor organization to demand higher dues from the workers to allow benefits like sick relief, unemployment compensation, and especially a strike fund. With this British model, Gompers established the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions in 1881, which he transformed into the American Federation of Labor in 1886, serving as its president. Because of the role of Gompers and many other English workers, the American labor movement grew with more speed.

The peak number of English-born people in the United States was recorded in the 1890 census at over 900,000. In the twentieth century, the numbers fell as the English were drawn more to the Commonwealth. But the English were still important for the American labor force. They were more concentrated in the professions, as the “brain drain” from Britain to the United States brought more educated people into the universities, the entertainment industry, medicine, and high technology. Altogether the English made an enormous impact and contribution to American labor.

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ENVIRONMENTALISM

American environmentalism, from its Progressive Era antecedents to the first Earth Day in 1970 and beyond, must be understood as one of several social movements that arose in response to the profound changes in American political economy and society that began during the second half of the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth century. Like trade unionism, progressivism, and New Deal-style industrial unionism, the conservation and environmental movements emerged as a result of the United States' transformation from an agrarian and rural society into a predominantly industrial and urban society. As two distinct responses to this same fundamental development, the environmental movement and the various movements organized by, or on behalf of, the working class have experienced a history of uneasy coexistence. The two reform impulses have complemented one another to the extent that they each have posed challenges to the modern corporate-industrial economy, most often by looking to the federal government to curb the excesses of the corporate-industrial order. Ultimately however different constituencies and different goals have led to many intractable contradictions between environmentalism and working-class movements.

Origins of American Environmentalism, 1890–1945

The roots of modern American environmentalism are found in the Progressive Era conservation movement

that emerged at the end of the 1800s. This conservation impulse was a response to three late nineteenth century developments in the American political economy: Industrialization, urbanization, and the symbolic closing of the frontier due to the westward expansion of settlement. Industrialization ensured that the exploitation of the nation's timber and mineral resources occurred at unprecedented levels, while the westward spread of settlement meant that fewer land remained immune to this new level of exploitation. Urbanization placed seemingly unsustainable demands on the nation's forests, rivers, and farmlands and also created new environmental problems in the form of urban air and water pollution. These developments engendered a sense of anxiety among many Americans that the public domain was vanishing and that the U.S. economy was exploiting the nation's natural resources at an unsustainable pace. Perhaps historian Roderick Nash in his seminal *Wilderness and the American Mind* has explained this development most succinctly: Americans' concern for the nation's remaining natural areas became more pronounced as the advance of the urban-industrial economy threatened to destroy those areas.

Progressive era conservation was above all else a federal-level legislative and administrative response to this anxiety over dwindling natural resources. As early as 1864, George Perkins Marsh, considered by most historians to have been an early prophet of American environmentalism, cautioned against the overexploitation of American resources. In his book *Man and Nature*, Marsh warned that the rampant deforestation he observed in his native New England and in neighboring New York threatened environmental catastrophe in the form of soil erosion, flooding, and localized climate change. But for decades his warnings went unheeded. Such legislation as the Homestead Act (1862), the General Mining Law (1872), the Desert Land Act (1877), and the Free Timber Act (1878) reflected preconservation, *laissez faire* attitudes. The framers of such laws sought to promote economic growth simply by giving away to private developers the rights to public land, timber, and mineral resources. The Progressive conservation movement therefore signified an important revolution in the management of the nation's natural resources. In contrast to the long tradition of the *laissez faire* approach to natural resource policy, Progressive Era conservation policies inserted the federal government into the long-term management and regulation of American forests, soils, and rivers. The United States Forest Service (USFS) was created in 1905 and charged with managing federally owned forestlands. The Newlands Act (1902) created the Bureau of Reclamation, an agency charged with managing

rivers and irrigation projects in the arid American West. The goal of these two agencies was to shift away from concerns over immediate profitability in order to promote long-term, efficient economic development. On the other hand the American Antiquities Act (1906) authorized the president to designate as national monuments areas of historical or archaeological significance for the expressed purpose of exempting these lands from economic development in perpetuity. Congress created the National Park Service (NPS) in 1916 in order to manage these and other preserved lands. As this list suggests, the new managerial role for the federal government was contradictory from the outset. The Bureau of Reclamation and the USFS clearly intended to use federal power to promote the orderly and efficient use of the nation's natural resources. Such legislation as the Antiquities Act and such agencies as the NPS envisioned the federal government as the guardian of the nation's wild or natural places.

The questions often debated by historians of Progressive Era conservation are who spearheaded these legislative and administrative changes in conservation policy, and who benefited from these changes? Samuel P. Hays, in his classic *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: the Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890–1920*, argued that elite, scientific-minded experts foisted these conservation policies on the public and managed the nation's public lands to the benefit of American industry. Hays' archetypal conservationist was Gifford Pinchot, considered by historians the founder of American forestry. Pinchot espoused a utilitarian view of conservation that called for the "right use" of natural resources to benefit the greatest number of people for the longest amount of time. Natural resources, Pinchot argued, should not be squandered by rapacious American industry, but nor should those natural resources be "locked up" or preserved from all economic development. As chief forester of the USFS, Pinchot developed the policy of sustained-yield forestry, whereby the national forests were managed as a crop with the goal of promoting future economic development. Historian Stephen Fox, on the other hand, argued that the Progressive Era conservation impulse is best understood as a fight between the people and the interests. In *The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy*, Fox stressed the degree to which preservationists like John Muir, avid outdoorsman, founder of the Sierra Club, and tireless promoter of the preservation of spectacular natural landscapes, spoke on behalf of the people and against the interests of logging, mining, and ranching elites. The creation of 13 national parks from 1872–1913 at the insistence of preservationists like Muir, Fox argued,

was fundamentally a democratic development and represented the protection of public lands from private industry.

One possible way to reconcile this debate and also to assess the legacy of Progressive Era conservation movement is to acknowledge the degree to which the Progressive Era conservation movement—including Muir's preservationist Sierra Club—was largely an elite affair, as Hays suggested. Indeed conservationists shared many of the anti-immigrant and illiberal attitudes toward the working class with other Progressive Era reformers (the notorious nativist Madison Grant for example, was also a member of the Save the Redwoods League, a founder of the Bronx Zoo, and on the board of trustees at the American Museum of Natural History). But it is equally important to acknowledge that government regulation of the nation's natural resources amounted to a revolutionary break with past *laissez faire* policies, regardless of the business-friendly mentality of Pinchot and other utilitarian conservationists. At the end of the Progressive Era then two competing strands of thought—one utilitarian, the other preservationist—had emerged, each with its own elite constituency.

Indeed the flurry of conservationist and preservationist legislation passed during the Progressive Era is a testament to the fact that the earliest environmental impulse was a movement among elites. It is important to note however that Pinchot and other Progressive Era conservationists, such as Senator George Norris and Senator Francis Newlands, did view conservation as a way to promote social equity through a more even distribution of natural resources. But without a self-organized movement among the working or even the middle classes, promises of social equity made by conservationists inevitably went unfulfilled.

Just as American business leaders during the 1920s were able to co-opt the language and logic of the labor movement by calling for American plans and company unions, so, too, were industrialists able to bend the language and logic of Progressive conservation to their needs. Such industry-dominated groups as the American Forestry Association used Pinchot's language of "multiple" or "right" use, initially intended to ensure a wide distribution of forest resources, to argue successfully for repeated rounds of road building and logging in the national forests that favored larger timber companies. Similarly large agribusiness interests in such states as California secured extensive Bureau of Reclamation irrigation projects, justifying their actions using the egalitarian promise of 160-acre homesteads even as these agribusiness interests circumvented such acreage restrictions. Senator Newlands, the author of the legislation that

created the Bureau of Reclamation, had envisioned the 160-acre limit as a way to ensure that the benefits of irrigation would flow in democratic fashion to small-family farmers. But quickly the scope of the bureau's projects made Newlands' idea seem quaint at best, and downright backward as far as agribusiness interests were concerned. The failure to make strides toward a more equal distribution of natural resources continued unabated during the New Deal Era. The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was created in 1933 and charged with building a series of dams in order to promote hydroelectric power, flood control, and economic growth in the Tennessee River valley. The brainchild of Senator Norris, the TVA was supposed to promote social equity by bringing low-cost, publicly generated electricity to one of the more impoverished regions of the South. But to such critics as Benton MacKaye, a forester, regional planner, and creator of the Appalachian Trail idea, the TVA quickly sacrificed socially and ecologically sound regional planning at the altar of economic growth. Similar disappointments followed the construction of the Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River. The absence of a self-organized conservation movement among the middle and working classes, along with the Depression Era need to alleviate unemployment and create economic growth, meant that conservation projects placed the federal government squarely in the role of increasing the productive capacity of the nation's environments. The goal of an equitable distribution of natural resources, always less important to Progressive Era and New Deal Era policymakers than the developmental imperative that lay behind these utilitarian conservation works, was in eclipse by the end of the New Deal.

Modern American Environmentalism, 1945–2005

Modern American environmentalism began when increasing numbers of Americans recognized that the environmental consequences of post-World War II economic growth not only jeopardized the health of distant national forests or national parks but also threatened public health and quality of life at home in their own neighborhoods. Just as Progressive Era conservation and preservation stemmed from the development of the urban-industrial economy during the late nineteenth century, the development of modern environmentalism reflected significant shifts taking place in the American political economy during the middle of the twentieth century. Economic

growth led to an expanding middle class and a new consumer-oriented economy. Suburbanization invaded previously undeveloped lands at the edge of urban areas, and automobiles soon rivaled factories as a source of air pollution. Spurred by wartime innovation, newer industries, such as plastics, pesticides, chemicals, petroleum, and nuclear energy, grew tremendously. Moreover the large-scale public-works projects begun in the 1930s yielded truly Herculean levels of environmental transformation by the end of World War II. By the mid-1940s, for example, the Bureau of Reclamation's numerous hydroelectric dams had so thoroughly harnessed the Columbia and Colorado rivers that the bureau was capable of generating more electricity than any other entity, public or private, in the world. Clearly then economic growth in the postwar United States was predicated on massive changes in the American landscape and came at a high environmental price. Modern American environmentalism thus grew from a paradox at the heart of the new postwar American political economy: Robust economic growth made economic security more widespread than ever before in American history, but many Americans in the expanding middle class found their newfound sense of economic security almost immediately undercut by fears that economic growth jeopardized both environmental stability and public health. Post-World War II environmentalism was therefore more democratic than the earlier eras of expert-led conservation in the sense that during the postwar era, the environmental impulse was more widely shared. But for much of this era, environmentalism was still open to charges of elitism because it was largely a middle-class movement, a characteristic that distinguished environmentalism from the organized labor movement.

The first stage of postwar environmentalism involved the protection of iconic public lands and dramatically expanded the constituency of environmental organizations beyond their historically elite base and into the ranks of the expanding middle class. The familiar debate between preservationists and utilitarian conservationists that had been raging since the 1890s came to a head in the early 1950s when the Bureau of Reclamation announced plans to build a dam at Echo Park inside Colorado's Dinosaur National Monument. This proposal was part of the larger Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) and reflected the utilitarian spirit of Progressive and New Deal Era conservation. It would have flooded federal lands that were supposedly protected from economic development. Led by David Brower, the Sierra Club's dynamic new executive director, more than a dozen preservationist organizations waged a publicity campaign that forced the Bureau of Reclamation to scrap its plans

for Echo Park due to the public outcry. What was remarkable about this episode was that the Echo Park project would have been so very unremarkable during the 1930s or 1940s. But as middle-class Americans flocked to the national parks during the 1950s and 1960s, they could be mobilized to defeat public-works projects that adversely affected these public recreational lands. Dams in the works for Glacier, Big Bend, Kings Canyon, and Grand Canyon national parks were also scrapped as a result of this middle-class hostility toward such proposals. The fight against the CRSP marked the apogee of the preservationist strain of environmentalism that began with Muir. During this era the Sierra Club and other preservationist organizations first enjoyed widespread public support. Such organizations expanded beyond their historically elite base in the decades following the 1950s, as many middle-class Americans decided that at least the nation's publicly owned parklands should be protected from rampant economic development. This first stage of postwar environmentalism questioned the logic of incessant economic growth but only as far as iconic public lands were concerned.

The 1960s and 1970s were important decades during which the environmental movement articulated a more direct challenge to the logic of continuous economic growth. This was the second stage of postwar environmentalism. A series of high-profile environmental problems surfaced during this era. Scientists linked smog clouds over Los Angeles and other cities to automobile exhaust; middle-class Americans in suburbia found their drinking water contaminated by pollutants traced back to phosphates found in household laundry detergents; ecologists declared Lake Erie to be ecologically dead in the mid-1960s due to industrial pollutants; Cleveland's Cuyahoga River became so polluted that it famously caught fire in 1969, and so on. But perhaps the most startling revelation occurred in 1962 with the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Widely regarded as one of the most influential books in the history of American environmentalism, Carson's book revealed to unsuspecting Americans the degree to which such chemicals as DDT had deleterious—and even fatal—impacts on animal life throughout the food chain and could cause significant health problems in humans. In the wake of *Silent Spring*, many Americans came to consider pollution and toxic chemicals as direct threats to their health, security, and quality of life. As these connections between public health problems and environmental degradation on the one hand and unrestrained economic growth on the other became increasingly obvious, environmentalists began to call for a series of regulations that marked a significant departure from the earlier concern with iconic

parklands. Now the actions of privately owned businesses and the use of privately owned resources that polluted the air, water, and land were to be regulated. The Clean Air Act (1963) and the Clean Water Act (1972), both of which were amended several times in the coming decades, sought to reduce air and water pollution to safe or acceptable levels by requiring industry to restrict its emissions of harmful materials. The National Environmental Policy Act (1970) mandated environmental impact statements (EIS) in order to evaluate the wisdom of proceeding with industrial projects likely to adversely affect the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created (1970) to oversee the regulation of air and water quality, solid-waste disposal, and to supervise the EIS process. Congress banned the use of DDT (1972), and the Toxic Substances Control Act (1976) called for more stringent monitoring of the use and disposal of industrial chemicals. The Endangered Species Act (1973) mandated the protection of species designated by scientists as threatened or endangered without any consideration of the economic consequences of protection. And the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, better known as the Superfund Act, was passed in 1980 and authorized the creation of an environmental rehabilitation fund to be financed by a tax on the chemical industry. It also authorized the EPA to sue corporations for clean-up costs if corporate negligence could be proven. Taken collectively these environmental measures amounted to a frontal assault on corporate U.S. managerial prerogatives to use their privately owned resources as they saw fit.

The environmental reforms achieved during the 1960s and 1970s were far from perfect, and many environmentalists argued that they did not go far enough, but the conservative backlash against environmental regulations since 1980 suggests the degree to which environmental legislation did in fact place significant restrictions on managerial prerogatives. Since 1980, capital and its conservative political allies have argued that environmental regulations hurt the American economy and cost Americans jobs. The “job blackmail” or “jobs versus the environment” debates that have raged since 1980 are examples of this. These arguments had salience in large part due to the wrenching economic changes that the American economy experienced during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Ronald Reagan's famous proclamation that “government is the problem” led him to slash the EPA's budget, for example, and appoint a series of cabinet-level officials hostile to the very idea of federal management of natural resources, ostensibly in the name of increasing the productivity of private enterprise and boosting employment for American

workers. In addition to this pragmatic argument that environmental regulations cost jobs and hurt the economy, the conservative backlash against environmentalism has also been bolstered by the larger ideological shift toward private property rights in American political culture that has accompanied the resurgence of the conservative movement. The Wise Use movement, a movement consisting of a coterie of wealthy western miners, ranchers, loggers, and landowners assuming the appearance of a grassroots uprising, has argued that the federal government had no right to regulate any use of privately held lands and demanded an end to government regulation of natural resource use. Similarly the Republican party's 1994 Contract with America included an effort to re-interpret the Fifth Amendment to include a "takings clause." Traditionally under the rules of eminent domain, the government compensated private landowners only if their property was physically occupied. The proposed takings clause called for remuneration if any restrictions whatsoever—including regulations designed to reduce pollution or protective actions mandated by the Endangered Species Act, for example—were placed on private owners' land use options. Such a clause would make most environmental regulations unaffordable. The backlash against environmental regulations was part of the larger ideological movement to free the private sector from as much governmental regulation as possible.

Modern American Environmentalism and the Labor Movement, 1945–2005

In 1990, environmentalists successfully petitioned to have the northern spotted owl listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. This triggered actions to protect the owls' habitat, the old growth forests of the Pacific Northwest. The timber industry ominously predicted the loss of over 100,000 jobs if these forests were removed from the market. Environmentalists argued that this was an exaggerated threat and that any jobs lost were the result of a timber industry that was ailing regardless of whether or not remaining old growth forests were cut. Members of Earth First!—a grassroots environmental organization—heightened the tension when they engaged in direct-action protests that included "monkey wrenching," or the sabotaging of logging equipment. Afraid of losing their jobs and resentful of what they perceived as environmentalists' economic and cultural elitism, blue-collar loggers sided with the timber industry. The ensuing fight between environmentalists and workers quickly came to epitomize what is often

assumed to be the inherent disconnect between the environmental and labor movements. As this disagreement between loggers and environmentalists suggests, it is important to acknowledge the deep fissures that exist between the labor and environmental movements. Both movements challenged the prerogatives of industry, but environmentalism and organized labor have historically represented different constituencies that did not always challenge the corporate-industrial order in the same way. Middle-class environmentalists ensconced in professional jobs were free to question the logic and desirability of incessant economic growth, particularly in such extractive industries as logging. Labor unions, constrained by patterns of firm-centered collective bargaining in place since the Wagner Act, were understandably devoted to ensuring the health of their industry and hesitated to endorse any measures that threatened its economic growth. Different constituencies and different core values have meant that labor and environmentalism have often been at odds.

But collaboration between environmentalists and organized labor has not been impossible, and the assumption that there is an irresolvable conflict between organized labor and environmentalism is incorrect. Before the 1970s, there were considerable areas of overlap between the two movements, particularly when workers' health and the health of working-class communities were concerns. Middle-class Americans may have been worried about the negative environmental impacts of industrial processes, but without a doubt working-class Americans and their communities were the most adversely affected by industrial pollutants, and unionized workers often pushed for reforms that in retrospect seem like early instances of what would later be considered environmental demands. The United Steelworkers (USW) began supporting clean air measures as a result of the infamous killer smog incident in 1948, when local weather patterns trapped polluted air over the working-class city of Donora, Pennsylvania, killing 20 people. The steelworkers supported federal clean air measures through the landmark legislation of the 1970s, as did the United Auto Workers (UAW), the International Association of Machinists (IAM), and even the United Mine Workers (UMW) (so long as smokestack "scrubbers," and not alternative sources of energy, provided the basis for the clean air acts). Workers' health was also an issue that led to unions articulating environmental demands. The United Farm Workers (UFW) for example teamed with environmental organizations in order to reduce pesticide use in California agribusiness during that union's organizing campaigns in the late 1960s. A similar concern with toxins in the workplace led the USW,

IAM, UAW, and the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers (OCAW) to lobby for the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) in 1970. Although most environmentalists failed to openly support OSHA, several mainstream environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, the Earth Defense Fund, and the Izaak Walton League, supported OCAW's 1973 strike and boycott against the Shell Oil Company, a strike designed to force Shell to comply with OSHA regulations. In the wake of this strike, formal alliances were sought by labor and environmental leaders. Environmentalists for Full Employment (EFFE) was founded in 1975 in order to provide a way for environmentalists to reach out to the organized labor community. And in 1976, the leaders of over 100 labor and environmental organizations attended the Working for Environmental Justice and Jobs conference held at the UAW's Black Lake center in Michigan. Such alliances were instrumental in getting the Clean Air, Clean Water, Toxic Substance Control, and Superfund acts passed. This list suggests that when the health and safety of workers and their communities were concerns, support for environmental causes has been possible among the ranks of organized labor.

But these labor-environmental alliances fractured during the 1980s and 1990s. This happened for several related reasons. The alliances between labor and environmental groups forged during the 1970s were for the most part created only at the leadership levels. Such alliances failed to address the significant cultural and class differences between the rank-and-file of the two movements. And the resurgence of free-market conservatism created a hostile political climate during the 1980s and 1990s, making these decades a period of retrenchment for both environmentalism and organized labor. Indeed the most significant instance of labor-environmental collaboration during this period highlights the tenuousness of the labor-environmental alliance. From 1984–1989, members of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers engaged in a bitter dispute with the management of chemical giant BASF at that company's Geismar, Louisiana, facility. Capitalizing on the chemical industry's checkered environmental record, OCAW allied with a collection of citizen's environmental groups and local chapters of national environmental organizations, such as the Sierra Club. The OCAW and the environmentalists publicized BASF's many violations of federal and state environmental laws and argued that only a unionized workforce could force the company to comply with environmental regulations. The resulting public pressure forced BASF to reinstate locked-out union workers in 1989, a rare victory for both organized labor and environmentalists during an

era characterized by concessionary bargaining and the permanent replacement of striking workers. But the conditions under which this successful labor-environmental alliance was forged suggested just how unlikely other such alliances had become: The workers at BASF had already lost their jobs and were therefore immune to jobs-versus-the-environment arguments; BASF was committed to expanding its Louisiana facilities and therefore could not credibly threaten to move its operations elsewhere; and local residents were easily persuaded that BASF's operations had a deleterious impact on their health and safety. Indeed most of the labor-environmental relations during the last two decades have gone the other way. In addition to the divisive fight between environmentalists and loggers in the Pacific Northwest, there were other high-profile disputes between organized labor and environmentalists. The UMW broke with environmentalists over the acid rain provisions contained in the Clean Air Act of 1990. More recently, the UAW has resisted calls for strengthening the federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for cars and trucks sold in the United States. In a classic case of jobs-versus-the-environment logic and despite significant improvements in fuel economy technology, U.S. automakers maintain that the implementation of more stringent CAFE standards will result in the loss of union jobs. The UAW, already buffeted by declining union density due to foreign competition and automation, continues to side with the auto industry on this issue.

Conclusion

The history of American environmentalism demonstrates that environmentalism and the labor movement have not simply been driven apart by the machinations of corporate managers and political conservatives hostile to all intrusions into the free market. There are fundamental differences between the two movements that have made cooperation difficult. During the Progressive and New Deal eras, the conservationist and preservationist impulses were primarily confined to elites, did not have a broad popular base, and had little relation to the labor movement of those times. Since 1945, environmentalism has developed a much larger constituency but one that was for the most part confined to the middle class. Cooperation among environmentalists and organized labor was not impossible, particularly where labor issues dovetailed with environmental health and safety concerns. But tensions between middle-class

environmentalists and organized labor's working-class membership were exposed when declining union density, structural changes in the American economy, and a hostile political environment severed the fragile links between the two movements. The fundamental class differences between the two movements must be acknowledged.

It may be too simple to argue that workers and environmentalists have been driven apart by their enemies then, but the current excesses of global corporations and the ideology of free trade may yet drive these two movements together. It is not surprising that an era in which private property rights are celebrated and the public sphere is disdained has also been an era that produced a corporate order committed to rolling back labor and environmental regulations even though these regulations were the result of laws passed by democratically elected Congresses. As free trade makes it easier for corporations to circumvent such labor and environmental standards, members of the two movements have come to see each other as potential allies. The 1999 protests against the World Trade Organization at its meeting in Seattle, when tens of thousands of laborites and environmentalists marched together as part of a new coalition called the Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment, could thus come to symbolize the beginning of a new era of labor-environmental cooperation.

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex, established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Initially EEOC sought compliance from employers, labor organizations, and employment programs but could not directly enforce Title VII. Subsequent legislation expanded EEOC's powers and jurisdiction, which came to include disability, age, and pregnancy discrimination and sexual harassment. Yet EEOC's growing authority as the lead enforcement agency in workplace discrimination did not bring parallel increases in resources and funding.

The EEOC operates under five bipartisan commissioners and a general counsel, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Commissioners serve staggered five-year terms, and the general counsel a four-year term. The president designates a chair, who is chief executive officer of EEOC. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., served as first chair (1965–1966).

Following him were Stephen N. Shulman (1966–1967), Clifford L. Alexander, Jr. (1967–1969), William H. Brown, III (1969–1973), John H. Powell (1973–1975), Lowell W. Perry (1975–1976), Eleanor Holmes Norton (1977–1981), Clarence Thomas (1982–1990), Evan J. Kemp, Jr. (1990–1993), Gilbert Casellas (1994–1997), Ida L. Castro (1998–2001), and Cari M. Dominguez (2001–2006).

The Early EEOC

The EEOC's initial lack of enforcement powers was a key concession to Republicans and conservative southern Democrats in congressional debate over the Civil Rights Act. What helped the act pass in mid-1964 was elimination of proposed EEOC power to issue cease-and-desist orders or initiate litigation. Congress authorized EEOC only to interpret Title VII and to investigate and “conciliate” charges of discrimination filed by workers.

Per Title VII, EEOC was to issue employment guidelines and with individual complaints, determine whether there was reasonable cause to believe that illegal discrimination had occurred. When EEOC found reasonable cause, it was to seek compliance with Title VII “by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion.” If conciliation failed, EEOC could recommend legal action to the U.S. Attorney General, who was empowered to sue where “patterns or practices” of systematic discrimination were found (in the first year, only 11 cases were so referred). Or far more likely, EEOC advised the complainant of her or his right to file a civil action within 30 days.

What limited power the early EEOC had it applied unevenly, critics charged. Leaders of the new commission made clear that they considered sex discrimination less important than racial discrimination, a belief encouraged by the last-minute inclusion of sex in Title VII, a bill otherwise devoted to African-American rights. Working women certainly took the new law seriously—a full third of the complaints filed in 1966 concerned sex discrimination (53% concerned race). Feminists outside and within EEOC, including founding Commissioners Aileen Hernandez and Richard Graham and lawyer Sonia Pressman Fuentes, pressed for more action on women workers' behalf. Veterans of the African-American freedom struggle wondered why the new commission—a product of civil rights activism—was dominated by political insiders and bureaucrats with business ties but little relevant experience.

Making Title VII Meaningful

The early EEOC accomplished much simply in interpreting what Title VII meant and required. Congress had been vague in many areas, so it fell to EEOC to specify the parameters of employment discrimination—and it did so expansively. Particularly important was the commission's insistence that illegal discrimination did not require intentional acts that overtly targeted individuals (known as “disparate treatment”). Discrimination also occurred, EEOC argued, when an employment policy adversely and disproportionately affected a protected group, regardless of appearance or intent (known as “disparate impact”). If an employer did not prove the business necessity of such a policy, EEOC considered it illegal. Similarly EEOC narrowly interpreted the bona fide occupational qualification, or BFOQ, exception to Title VII. The BFOQ clause of Title VII allowed employers to discriminate on the basis of sex, national origin, or religion (but not race) if they showed that doing so was “reasonably necessary” to “normal” business operations. The EEOC decided this applied only rarely, such as in acting or in the hiring of a minister, priest, or rabbi. Finally believing employers were obliged not merely to stop discriminating but also to address ongoing effects of past bias, EEOC promoted affirmative action programs.

As the commission's interpretations and *amicus* briefs proved increasingly persuasive to the courts by the 1970s, workers and EEOC together gave Title VII force and meaning. Successful targets included the blatant sex typing of occupations as well as seemingly neutral educational requirements and tests whose effect was not to ensure skill levels, but to bar minorities from jobs and promotions. Workers' own organizations came under fire, too. The EEOC investigated unions for colluding in employer discrimination and even enforcing inequality through seniority systems. In some occupations and industries, EEOC-supported worker activism brought dramatic change: Airline flight attendants no longer had to be single, under 35, and female, while in the heavily southern textile industry African-Americans went from holding a mere 3% of jobs in 1960 to over 18% by 1978.

Growing Power and Responsibilities

In 1972, EEOC gained enforcement power. Congress decided it had underestimated the extent of discrimination and overestimated the potential of voluntary compliance with Title VII. With the Equal Employment

Opportunity Act of 1972, Congress amended Title VII to give EEOC right-to-sue powers, including “pattern and practices” suits previously under the U.S. Attorney General’s purview. The act also expanded Title VII coverage to civil service at federal, state, and local levels and to educational institutions, and lowered its minimum threshold from 25 to 15 employees.

Within three years, EEOC had filed more than 450 lawsuits on individual charges. It also began systematic attacks on racial and gender discrimination at some of the nation’s largest employers, including AT&T, Ford, and Sears Roebuck. Such efforts resulted in several high-profile agreements: with AT&T in 1973, then the nation’s largest private employer; the nine largest steelmakers in the U.S. and the United Steelworkers in 1974; General Electric in 1978; the Associated Press in 1983; and General Motors and the United Auto Workers in 1984. These agreements brought workers millions in back pay and featured affirmative action plans to move more women and minorities onto and up the employment ladder, out of blue- and pink-collar ghettos. Hardly all investigations resulted in such successes, however.

In the late 1970s, EEOC’s increased powers expanded to new areas of discrimination. The Carter administration gave EEOC responsibility for enforcing the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, previously the Department of Labor’s duty. By the 1980s, age discrimination was the fastest growing area of workers’ complaints. In 1978, Congress passed the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, amending Title VII to prohibit bias against pregnant workingwomen. When EEOC issued its first guidelines on sexual harassment in 1980, it brought yet another area of discrimination under sustained scrutiny. (Ironically charges of sexual harassment against former EEOC Chair Clarence Thomas while he was vetted for the U.S. Supreme Court in 1991 dramatically raised public awareness of this newer area of sex discrimination.)

The early 1990s brought a final wave of expansion in EEOC’s jurisdiction and authority. Congress charged the commission with enforcing Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, banning discrimination in employment based on disabilities. Congress also responded to the growing conservatism of the courts with another Civil Rights Act in 1991. It revised Title VII to reflect EEOC standards for defining and proving discrimination; enabled workers to seek damages, along with back pay and reinstatement; and extended Title VII coverage to Americans working overseas.

Underfunded and Always Behind

Whatever the political climate, EEOC never enjoyed adequate resources to investigate, let alone conciliate or litigate, the flood of workers’ complaints it received. The original EEOC, with fewer than 100 employees and a budget of \$2.25 million, expected 2,000 complaints in its first year. It received nearly 9,000. Though it quickly expanded, the commission would only fall further behind as its caseload swelled and Congress provided budgets of far less than requested. Pursuit of voluntary employer compliance brought limited results at best. Successful conciliations ran in the low hundreds annually for the first several years, while new charges were in the several thousands. With new power and expanded jurisdiction came even more complaints. After a decade the backlog of unprocessed cases topped 100,000 and the average complaint took more than two years to resolve (Title VII’s original timeframe was 60 days). Other problems became clear by the mid-1970s: Efforts to monitor employer compliance with settlements were lax or non-existent, and high turnover at the top had created instability.

By the mid-1970s, many believed EEOC desperately needed reform. Carter-appointed Chair Eleanor Holmes Norton instituted speed-up processing of new charges and backlog-reducing measures. Norton’s reforms did slash the backlog, but critics saw a new policy of indiscriminate settlement, regardless of a case’s merit. Under Reagan-appointed Clarence Thomas, EEOC recommitted itself to full investigations of individual complaints and pulled back from higher impact systematic approaches. The change in focus, combined with staff reductions due to funding cuts and increased responsibilities, saw the number of unprocessed charges skyrocket again in the 1980s. Under President Clinton’s appointees, new systems of prioritizing investigations and voluntary mediation reduced the backlog again, with less controversy.

Throughout its history, EEOC has struggled to provide individuals with relief while attacking discrimination broadly and to fulfill its educational and conciliation mandates (or claims adjuster role according to critics) while wielding regulatory and litigation powers. Perpetual underfunding, despite increasing responsibilities, has necessarily limited the commission’s agenda and impact. Whatever the enforcement philosophies and achievements of successive EEOC regimes, many thousands of workers have had their charges of discrimination lost in the political and bureaucratic shuffle. But those who did succeed in pressing complaints have helped, and been helped

by, EEOC in banishing more egregious forms of discrimination from many American workplaces.

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See also **Civil Rights Act of 1964/Title VII**

EQUAL PAY ACT OF 1963

Support for a federal equal pay law for women dates back to the nineteenth century. Male unionists had long supported equal pay, especially in industries where the replacement of men with women loomed large. It took concrete form as a legislative campaign however only when large numbers of women entering the World War II production workforce demanded that they be paid on a par with men. In general women were not, but they did take up jobs previously designated as men’s jobs and destabilized the notion that women were unfit to perform certain kinds of

work. Women came to expect more money and greater status in the workplace and union with this new responsibility. At the very least, they wanted to be paid what men working alongside them were paid.

As reasonable as equal pay legislation seemed in the 1940s, it would take nearly 20 years for Congress to pass an equal pay law. The reasons for the delay in passage were many: Legislators waffled on the wording of the proposed law; union leaders failed to invest the necessary resources to promote the measure; and officials in the executive branch during the presidency of Republican Dwight Eisenhower in the 1950s did not pursue such social legislation as equal pay.

The real force behind moving equal pay legislation through Congress came from a loosely formed coalition that was sponsored by the U.S. Women’s Bureau. The so-called Women’s Bureau coalition had as its members unionists and those representing liberal interest groups, some of whom had their roots in the progressive movement. The new administration of Democrat John Kennedy, elected in 1960, was not only more open to social legislation than the Republicans but included several unionists receptive to women’s issues. Esther Peterson, a longtime union staff member, revitalized interest in equal pay legislation from her post as Women’s Bureau head and assistant secretary of labor for President Kennedy. The legislation, along with President Kennedy’s Commission on the Status of Women, expansion of the Fair Employment Standards Act to include low-paid and marginalized workers, and the enactment of a federal law providing daycare support, marked a period of transition to support for gender equality.

Conservative legislators and the business community weakened the measure considerably. The act, modeled on the Fair Employment Standards Act coverage, exempted employers with fewer than 25 employees and permitted a gradual elimination of wage differentials between men and women workers. Unionists helped defeat an attempt by conservatives to include a provision in the bill postponing the effective date of the Equal Pay Act in the case of employees covered by current labor-management contracts until two years after enactment or until contracts expired. They worried that such an allowance would set a dangerous precedent when they called for examining the minimum-wage or maximum-hours provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

In its first decade of enforcement, court decisions interpreted the meaning of equal pay broadly by refusing to limit the measure to identical jobs. As a result the government awarded 171,000 employees \$84 million in back pay. The law was one of several signs in the early 1960s that support for gender equality in the workplace was on the rise. The new law

underscored a shift in working women's sentiment that would manifest itself over the course of the next decade in feminist activism.

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See also **Fair Labor Standards Act; Peterson, Esther; Women's Bureau**

ERDMAN ACT

The Erdman Act bears witness to the critical position railways and railway unions played in the evolution of twentieth-century labor law and practice. The act extended the *de facto* protection of the federal government to the four railway-operating brotherhoods (engineers, firemen, conductors and trainmen) while simultaneously making industrywide strikes difficult if not impossible to sustain. Representing the first substantive effort by the federal government to move beyond simply assisting in the suppression of strikes, the act emerged from 20 years of widespread agitation by railway employees for a determinative voice in the circumstances, wages, and administration of their work.

Though its genesis lay in suggestions found in the report of the United States Strike Commission's investigation of the 1894 Pullman strike, the bill reflected the concerns of its primary author, President Grover Cleveland's attorney general, Richard Olney. He sought to find a path to labor peace that recognized the legal existence of the operating brotherhoods but which also prevented railway employees from substantially interfering with interstate commerce through strikes and boycotts. Drafted in 1895,

the bill saw debate in several sessions of Congress before President William McKinley signed it into law on June 1, 1898.

The act called on the chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission and the commissioner of labor to mediate disputes between railways and their operating employees at the request of either party. If mediation failed, the act provided for the creation of a three-member panel of arbitration, composed of a neutral party and one delegate each from the disputants. Unlike the provisions of the Arbitration Act of 1888, the decision of the arbitration panel would be enforceable by law in federal courts and stand for one year. The act required parties in arbitration to maintain the *status quo antebellum* for up to six months. Furthermore the bill proscribed a series of anti-union practices that the railway brotherhoods found particularly noxious, including yellow-dog contracts, discrimination against union members, blacklists, compulsory participation in company-sponsored insurance and relief associations, and finally mandated specific fines for violations of those prohibitions.

In practice the act fell far short of its promise. After an initial attempt to use its arbitration procedures failed because the railroads in question refused to participate, the law fell into disuse. However from 1906–1913, when it was superseded by the Newlands Act, railways and unions brought a total of 61 requests for action of which more than half were eventually settled by mediation, arbitration, or a combination of both.

Traditionally scholars of American labor have interpreted the Erdman Act as a tentative first step toward extending the protection of the state to unions and workers but one that was quickly stymied by a conservative Supreme Court in the *Adair v. United States* decision of 1908. However in recent years a number of legal and political scholars have argued that this interpretation ignores a long-standing congressional penchant for deferring difficult or unpopular questions to the federal courts. Debates on this issue continue.

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EVANS, GEORGE HENRY (1805–1856) Jacksonian Era Labor Activist

Born in 1805, George Henry Evans was a printer, writer, political activist, and land reform advocate who participated in many of the reform activities of the Jacksonian era labor movement, including the Working Men's party, the bank crusade, the National Trades' Union, and the National Reform Association. Born in Bromyard, Herefordshire, England, Evans emigrated to the United States at the age of 15 with his father and brother and was apprenticed to an Ithaca printer soon thereafter. Under the influence of several mentors, he immersed himself in the works of eighteenth-century radicals Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson. Emulating his hero, Paine, Evans became an atheist and an anticlerical. From 1824 to 1827, Evans edited the Ithaca *Museum and Independent Corrector*, through which he made use of his Jeffersonian-Paineite education by attacking political chicanery, social inequality, and the religious revival known as the Second Great Awakening, which was then sweeping western New York.

Apparently ambitious by nature, Evans moved to New York City in 1827, and in 1829 began publishing the *Working Man's Advocate*, which started as the semi-official organ of the New York Working Men's party and which under differing names and a few pauses, Evans published for 20 years. Though Evans was neither a labor union member nor a union leader, he was nevertheless a consistent and committed voice for the constellation of reforms, including hard money, free public land, opposition to chartered monopoly, shorter working hours, universal education, secularism, and poll tax abolition, that characterized labor-oriented reform in the Age of Jackson. In short he was sympathetic to the constituency and aims of the labor movement, whose leaders were frequently his closest ideological and political allies. Most importantly Evans was always true to the spirit and ideals of Jeffersonian and Paineite republicanism,

from its emphasis on the ownership of land by nearly everyone as a great bulwark to the Republic to its strict insistence that all men are created equal; from its Enlightenment optimism to its skeptical stance toward organized religion. The *Declaration of Independence*, the *Rights of Man*, and the *Age of Reason* constituted the holiest books of his radical Bible. After the demise of his last reform journal, *Young America*, Evans retired to his New Jersey farm, where he died in 1856.

Evans first got involved in labor politics in October 1829, when he began publishing the *Working Man's Advocate*. A young man of 24, Evans was never a leader of the Working Men's party, though as editor of the *Advocate* he was drawn into the internecine, three-way factional struggles that characterized the party in 1829 and 1830. Thomas Skidmore, an autodidact machinist whose polemical book, the *Right of Man to Property*, advocated the redistribution of wealth and abolition of inheritance, was the leader of the party in its early days, when it won several local races and seemed poised for even greater successes. Shortly after the November 1829 elections however, an alliance between Robert Dale Owen and Fanny Wright, who urged universal free education as a panacea, and Henry Guyon and Noah Cook, who were politicians attempting to use the party as a weapon against the regular Tammany Hall Democrats, forced Skidmore out of the party. Within months Guyon and Cook had managed to expel Owen and Wright as well. Though initially attempting to mediate these disputes, Evans eventually turned against the radicalism of Skidmore and embraced Owen's State Guardianship plan for universal public boarding schools. Divided into three separate parties however, the Working Men's movement achieved little further success and was dead by 1831.

For the two years following the demise of the Working Men's party, Evans continued to publish his newspaper and attempted to keep the spirit of reform alive with proposals for public bathhouses (to improve the public health), abolition of the military academy at West Point, hard-money opposition to chartered banks, and antisabbatarianism. The latter of course reflected the anticlerical influence of Paine, as Evans argued that laws prohibiting activities on Sunday amounted to an imposition of the Christian religion on the populace in violation of the Constitution.

The bank issue, which Evans raised as early as 1831, became a political issue of national importance in 1832, when Congress, at the urging of Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank of the United States,

renewed the bank's charter four years early, and President Andrew Jackson vetoed the legislation. The banking issue resonated deeply in the urban working class. Small-scale artisans and others in the laboring classes had long argued that the banking system was rigged to hold down the honest mechanic by limiting access to capital to those with wealth or political connections. Further employers paid wage laborers not in hard specie, but in bank notes that often proved to be fraudulent or worthless. Thus the bank issue was, unbeknownst to the inept Biddle and the bourgeois Whig party, a labor issue, which Henry Clay handed to Andrew Jackson, who turned a simple veto into a powerful statement of the populist sympathies of the Democratic party that still resonates today. Evans, who however was always more of a Jeffersonian than a Jacksonian, entered the fray only in 1833, and added nothing new to the debate, preferring to reprint the contributions of others, such as *New York Post* editor William Leggett. Early in 1835, in response to the New York Assembly's grant of several new state bank charters, Evans helped organize and became vice-president of an organization called "The Working Men Opposed to Paper Money," which helped organize antibank sentiment into an electoral force, which contributed to Democratic political victories.

Evans's first direct participation in labor union activity was short-lived. In 1834, Evans gave needed editorial support to the new National Trades' Union, (NTU) which proposed to unite the various local trades' confederations into a national organization. The NTU specifically recommended that its members read the *Advocate*, along with several other reform journals. At the NTU's inaugural convention however, Evans was greatly disappointed by the decision to abjure politics and focus on the hours of labor and wages. By mid-1835, Evans was in serious financial difficulty and relocated to his New Jersey farm, giving up his journalism for about five years.

In 1840, Evans emerged from his self-imposed political exile advocating the panacea of free public land. The idea that the federal government should give away public lands to those willing and able to till its soil was not new: The NTU had urged free public land in 1834, and many others before and after as well. Most importantly to Evans, his old hero Thomas Paine had urged, in *Agrarian Justice*, that uncultivated land was the "common property of the human race," though he had made no specific proposal for its distribution. Drawing on the ideas of Paine, Thomas Skidmore, English radical political economist Thomas Spence, and French Associationist

Charles Fourier, Evans argued that because property is the produce of labor, and land is not the produce of labor, land cannot be property. Thus Evans concluded, land should not—indeed could not—be bought or sold. He proposed that the federal government should give away public land in the form of 160-acre, nonalienable homesteads to anyone willing and able to use that land productively. On death the homesteads would be distributed to others: An arrangement not unlike the life tenancy that had once characterized the holdings of many English yeomen. He further urged the abolition of all laws for the collection of debts, imprisonment for debt, long hours of labor, chattel slavery, and wage slavery.

In 1844, along with the Irish Chartist Thomas Devyr, Evans was instrumental in the founding of the National Reform Association (NRA), whose stated purpose was to pursue land reform along the lines Evans was advocating. Evans published and edited the NRA's triweekly journal, the *People's Rights*, while reviving the *Advocate* as well. The availability of so much land in the West, particularly in light of the controversies over the annexation of Texas and the Oregon boundary, made land reform a fairly salient issue in the politics of the 1840s, and Evans's talents as a writer ensured that land reform became a well-known cause. Nevertheless Evans's proposal, especially the requirement that land be neither bought nor sold, was still too radical for most Americans or for passage by Congress. Urban workers and their unions, too, failed to flock to the plan, since they were more concerned with economic issues related to the work place. By 1848, the NRA and radical land reform were dead issues, though both continued in one form or another for several years. When Congress did finally pass land reform, the legislation provided only for cheap, but not free and not inalienable, homesteads. Disillusioned by the failure of radical land reform, Evans retired from politics in 1849 and returned to his farm for the last time.

Though Evans met limited success in his career as a reformer, his contribution to the American labor movement goes well beyond a tally of wins and losses. Evans was the prototypical radical printer turned reform journalist, an originator of a tradition that would include John Swinton, J. A. Wayland, and George E. McNeill. His participation in left wing politics was almost always a consequence of his work as a newspaper or book publisher, and though he barely transcended his Paineite and Jeffersonian roots, he always lived up to them.

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See also American Exceptionalism; Great Migration

F

FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE COMMITTEE

In its day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) was the most controversial federal government agency ever created. The FEPC's mission was to receive, address, and resolve any instances of employment discrimination by employers with defense contracts. If today the elimination of job bias remains a radical, "hot button" political issue, in the 1940s any notion of altering American race relations bordered on the revolutionary. President Roosevelt himself wanted little to do with fighting job discrimination while he was preparing the United States to potentially fight fascism in Europe and in Asia. He was forced, however, by a group of African-American civil rights leaders, most notably A. Philip Randolph, to deal with unfair employment practices. Although Roosevelt's FEPC did yeoman work, it ultimately failed to redress the fundamental racial and ethnic injustices in the American economic system. Still, the Committee's work and the efforts of the civil rights groups that supported it provided the necessary impetus and substance to transform the struggle for equality in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The origins of the Fair Employment Practice Committee lay in the rapid mobilization of the United States for military conflict beginning in late 1939. When Hitler unleashed his Nazi forces upon Europe, President Roosevelt started to prepare the United States for the inevitable. The federal government poured billions of dollars in the economy to equip

and train millions of soldiers. And despite the approach of war clouds, there was one practical benefit from this massive spending. As Americans began to pound ploughshares into swords for the second time in 20 years, the Great Depression in the United States dissipated and eventually disappeared. One group of Americans, however, was left out of the new emergency-spurred prosperity: African-Americans.

This was nothing new to black workers. Historically, they were the most-downtrodden of the working class. Emerging from centuries of chattel slavery, African-American workers had only known a few years of opportunity and hope during the later years of the Civil War and the first few years of Radical Reconstruction. By the 1880s, the old patterns had returned. In no way were black workers on equal footing with that of whites. The Great Depression had made matters worse, as they were pushed to lower rungs of the economic ladder as white workers took jobs that they previously had refused such as domestic servants, hod carriers, and common laborers. The New Deal had provided some relief, but not all of Roosevelt's alphabet agencies treated blacks the same. The National Youth Administration and especially the Works Projects Administration were sympathetic and helpful to African-American workers. Other agencies, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, reflected the norm of American race relations. The CCC discriminated and segregated, treating needy blacks as second-class citizens.

As the New Deal gave way to defense mobilization, conditions for blacks remained all too similar. For

example, six months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, African-American workers were barred from about half of all available work in defense factories. The situation was bad in the South but worse in other sections of the nation. In 1942, one out of every two war jobs in Texas were for whites only. In Michigan, the figure was eight out of every 10 jobs. And in Indiana, 94% of all available war work was for whites only. Black leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Urban League, and other groups shared the frustrations of black workers as their complaints to local employers and local government officials fell on deaf ears. NAACP head Walter White described the situation succinctly when he said that blacks had been “left out in the cold.”

If the economic reality for black Americans in 1940 and 1941 was not unusual, their reaction was. In stark contrast to the general support African-Americans gave the Wilson administration during World War I, blacks across the political spectrum and across class lines voiced disgust with the mobilization effort. The vanguard of this discontent was a newly established civil rights organization, the March on Washington Movement. In spring 1941, A. Philip Randolph, the head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (AFL), called on 100,000 African-Americans to march on Washington, DC, to protest discrimination in defense employment and the military. But FDR's actions were woefully inadequate to deal with the enormity of the problem. A Socialist and a strident advocate for civil rights and black labor rights who had actually opposed American intervention in World War I, Randolph hoped to push President Roosevelt into more dramatic and effectual action. And he knew that he had the president cornered. FDR did not want a march on Washington to protest racial discrimination. Not only would such an event embarrass the “arsenal of democracy,” but it could also provoke a race riot in the nation's capital. In late June 1941, Roosevelt called both Randolph and the NAACP's Walter White to the White House. There Randolph repeated his pledge to march unless FDR did something to rectify the issue. At that point, Roosevelt turned to White, the more conservative of the two, and asked how many would march. Although he did not know for sure, White told the president that Randolph would bring 100,000 African-Americans down Pennsylvania Avenue. In return for calling off the march, Roosevelt then told the civil rights leaders that he would issue an executive order banning discrimination in defense factories. Although Randolph did not get everything he wanted—no mention was made of discrimination in the military—he agreed

and called off his march. On June 25, 1941, FDR signed Executive Order 8802, which established the policy of the United States that “there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or Government because of race, creed, color, or national origin.” Executive Order 8802 also created the Fair Employment Practice Committee to enforce the ban.

The creation of the FEPC was tremendously significant. For the first time since Reconstruction, the federal government had set up an agency specifically designed to deal with the problems of minority workers. Additionally, it was a major advance in the struggle to solve what Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal called the “American dilemma,” that is, the problem of a nation that had not fulfilled the promise of its founding, which had been based upon ideas of liberty and civic virtue. Yet, there were limits to what the FEPC could do. First, the Committee was a part of administrative law. As such, it had no access to the federal courts to subpoena, fine, or jail offenders of Executive Order 8802. The Committee's members would have to use moral suasion and forceful persuasion to convince recalcitrant employers to stop their unfair employment practices. Second, the Committee was limited by a meager budget and a small staff, which at no time numbered over 130. Finally, the FEPC could work only with employers with federal contracts or with federal agencies. Employers outside the contracting systems or attached with a state or local government were beyond its purview.

Despite these shortcomings and handicaps, the Fair Employment Practice Committee accomplished much during its short five-year life. From June 1941 to June 1946, the FEPC processed over 12,000 complaints of job discrimination and settled nearly 5,000 to its satisfaction (42%). From August 1944 to August 1945, it held 15 public hearings, docketed 3,500 cases, and resolved over 1,100 of them. Two examples will have to stand for thousands. In January 1942, six ranking members of the FEPC held a public hearing in Chicago, Illinois, to resolve several dozen complaints against employers in the Windy City and in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Among the companies appearing that day was A. O. Smith, a manufacturer of various military supplies. At that time, A. O. Smith's managers had hired not a single black worker. After several days of public castigation and behind-the-scenes negotiations, A. O. Smith relented. By the war's height in 1944, it employed over 800 African-Americans, who made up over 5% of its workforce. These instances of success were, of course, tempered by failures. In 1943, Willie Webb, a black woman from Cincinnati filed a complaint with the FEPC. Although she had amassed

over 500 hours of training as a welder, officials at the Crosley Radio Corporation, maker of naval signaling equipment, had denied her a position. In March 1945, the FEPC held a public hearing in Cincinnati to redress Webb's grievance and those of nearly 50 other black women and 20 black men. Although there were some breakthroughs at these hearings, most Cincinnati employers continued to ignore Roosevelt's fair employment policy. The Cincinnati hearings, which were among the FEPC's last, illustrated the pattern of discrimination that the Committee's members discovered. In northern areas with tight labor markets, change was quite possible. In border areas and in the South, regardless of labor conditions, the FEPC had an extraordinarily hard time easing the color line in employment. It is important to emphasize that tight labor markets alone did not create equal employment opportunities, as the 1942 Chicago hearings well illustrated.

Despite the FEPC's accomplishments and activities, or perhaps because of them, its days were numbered. Congressional conservatives in both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party had vehemently opposed the Committee since its creation in 1941. However, after 1943, when the FEPC was reorganized and strengthened, congressional leaders sought to destroy it. Since the late 1930s, a coalition of conservatives had presented numerous problems for the Roosevelt administration. The advent of World War II had quelled much of the rancorous politics of the late New Deal. But by 1944, FDR and his alphabet agencies were once again the target. Of particular concern was the FEPC, which according to Democratic Representative John Rankin (Miss.) was in essence a Communist plot to subvert the American way and Christianity. With the cooperation of key Republicans such as Senator Robert A. Taft (Ohio), Congress successfully cut all funding for the FEPC, thus killing it at the source. The Committee also suffered a severe political blow when President Roosevelt died in April 1945. President Harry S. Truman was initially unresponsive and did nothing as the Committee disappeared.

Although it was a short-lived and small New Deal agency, the Fair Employment Practice Committee had an enormous influence. Some of the Committee's members went on to significant careers in politics and the federal government. One such person was Elmer Henderson, who as an FEPC official began legal proceedings against the Southern Railway Company, which had discriminated against him. The lawsuit eventually went to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1950, the Court sided with Henderson and in so doing overturned its previous decision in *Plessey v. Ferguson*. From the 1950s through the 1980s, Henderson

worked on Capitol Hill as a political liaison between the Congress and various presidents.

The FEPC was also important because after World War II, it became *the* model for civil rights reform for more than 30 years. From 1946 to 1964, 35 states and over 200 cities passed fair employment laws and ordinances. One of the central organizations pushing for these kinds of reforms was A. Philip Randolph's post-war civil rights group, the National Committee for a Permanent FEPC (NCPFEP). The NCPFEP's central goal was a new federal FEPC, but it did work with state and local groups like the Committee for a Pennsylvania FEPC and the Ohio Commission for Fair Employment Practice Legislation. Although by the 1960s more than half of the states had fair employment laws and agencies, most of them were weak and ineffectual. The powerful and well-funded New York State Committee Against Discrimination was the exception. Wisconsin's FEPC, for example, was run by a single woman, Virginia Huebner, who had neither the legal power, staff, or time to adequately address the serious problems of discrimination in the Badger State.

The failures and frustrations of state FEPCs added momentum to the movement to re-create the federal FEPC, which culminated in the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Although similar, the EEOC and the FEPC differ in several ways. Because it was established by a statute, the EEOC has had access to federal courts. Moreover, it has an expanded mission. The EEOC is charged with eliminating job bias against workers because of race, color, religion, national origin, *and* sex. In the early 1970s, the EEOC was re-organized and given more powers. And yet, like the FEPC, the EEOC has found that fighting job bias is no easy task. Like the original FEPC, the modern version has had to fight racially insensitive employers and unions as well as constantly battle with conservative politicians who wish to eliminate it.

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FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

The passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) by Congress in June 1938 marked a historic turning point for labor in the United States. For the first time, the federal government mandated wages and hours standards for the majority of the nation's workers, a goal that reformers had sought since the Progressive Era.

The Minimum Wage Movement Begins in the United States

While nations such as Great Britain and Australia possessed national minimum wage laws by 1910, the first minimum wage law in the United States did not exist until two years later, when Massachusetts established a minimum wage commission. Efforts to expand this precedent proceeded fitfully for the next two decades. While the Supreme Court upheld minimum wage legislation for male workers in *Stettler v. O'Hara* (1917), six years later it rejected a similar law for women workers (*Adkins v. Children's Hospital*). The minimum wage movement lost its momentum after 1923, and although reformers in several states, most notably New York, continued the fight, the *Adkins* precedent seemed to foreclose any national effort.

The Great Depression Provides Further Impetus

The Great Depression did not start immediately after the stock market collapses of late October 1929, but by late 1932, the dire salary situation facing labor became painfully evident. From 1929 through 1933, the weekly wages of manufacturing workers in the United States decreased from approximately \$25 to less than \$17, a decline of 33%. With an accompanying decline in retail sales from \$48 billion to \$24 billion in the same four years, the need to stabilize workers' salaries so as to increase consumption, and thus revitalize the nation's economy, became a primary objective of President Franklin D. Roosevelt when he assumed office in March 1933. The passage by

Congress of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in May 1933 reflected this concern.

The NIRA Sets a Precedent for Federal Hours and Wages Legislation

The NIRA lasted only two years, but it proved the first significant step toward federal hours and wages legislation. Not only did the NIRA establish the National Recovery Administration (NRA), but Section 7(a)(3) of the statute required that "employers shall comply with the maximum hours of labor, minimum rates of pay, and other conditions of employment approved or proscribed by the President." As the NRA's committees worked with both management and labor to establish industrial hours and wages standards, President Roosevelt advanced the idea of voluntary agreements with employers, known as the President's Reemployment Agreement (PRA). By 1935, over two million agreements came into effect, covering over 16 million employees throughout the nation.

Although the Supreme Court declared the NIRA unconstitutional in May 1935, U.S. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins continued the momentum for federal labor standards with the Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act, passed by Congress in 1936. The Act required federal contractors to meet minimum wage standards. Perkins also held seven national minimum wage conferences during the first Roosevelt administration.

The Introduction of the FLSA

By early 1937, several key forces united behind a federal labor standards law. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) traditionally opposed federal legislation, fearing interference with both trade unionism and labor negotiations. But the AFL changed its viewpoint after experiencing positive results with the NIRA. The new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which represented millions of unskilled workers throughout the United States, also supported federal legislation, particularly through its influential vice president, Sidney Hillman. Buoyed by his unprecedented re-election mandate in 1936, moreover, President Roosevelt decided to prepare a presidential message to Congress on the subject.

On May 24, 1937, as Roosevelt sent his message to Congress, selected congressmen introduced the

administration's measures in both houses of Congress. Known as Senate Resolution (S.R.) 2475 and House Resolution (H.R.) 7200, the original bills provided, among other features, for a five-member Fair Labor Standards Board; a minimum wage of not more than 80 cents per hour, or \$1,200 a year; the mandating of a 40-cent-per-hour, 40-hour workweek except in unusual circumstances; and the prohibition of interstate shipment of goods produced with "oppressive child labor."

The FLSA Is Passed

As is usual with major legislation, the final law proved far different from the original statute. In addition, new political factors complicated the passage of the FLSA. The failure of Roosevelt's attempt to reform the U.S. Supreme Court by mid-1937 damaged his credibility and solidified the growing congressional coalition of conservative Republicans and southern Democrats. Business interests feared government interference with their affairs, while southerners opposed a federal labor law that favored the North's higher wages.

Thus, while the Senate quickly reported out an amended version of S.R. 2475 in July 1937, the House Rules Committee delayed consideration of H.R. 7200 on the legislative floor. AFL leaders also objected to the Senate proposal because their recommendations failed to make the final version. Although the entire House of Representatives voted to discharge H.R. 7200 from the Rules Committee in December 1937, the bill eventually returned to the House Labor Committee. A final, compromise measure passed both houses of Congress in June 1938, and Roosevelt quickly signed the bill.

The new statute created a Wage and Hour Division in the U.S. Department of Labor; mandated a 40-cent-per-hour minimum wage by 1945; required a maximum workweek of 44 hours, with a reduction to 40 hours by 1940; established an overtime wage rate at one and a half times the regular rate of pay; and prohibited "oppressive" child labor. While no regional wage differentials were recognized, southern concerns were implicitly accepted by the exclusion of agricultural employees, among other workers, from the law's provisions.

"That's that," President Roosevelt exclaimed as he signed the FLSA on June 25, 1938. Ironically, Roosevelt's expression signified more than just a sigh of approval; the new measure represented the last significant legislative achievement of the New Deal. Conservative gains in the 1938 congressional

elections, and the burgeoning war in Europe, ended any further domestic reform until after World War II.

The FLSA Passes Constitutional Muster

Business interests challenged the new federal law in two cases, *United States v. Darby* and *Opps Cotton Mills, Inc., et al. v. Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division of the United States Department of Labor*. The cases quickly reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which announced its decisions in February 1941. By this time, the nation's highest court had sanctioned minimum wage legislation in *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish* (1937), and President Roosevelt's several Court appointments from 1937 through 1940 had replaced conservatives with justices sympathetic to the New Deal.

Not surprisingly, the Court upheld the FLSA in both cases, rejecting the claim that the statute regulated only the manufacture of goods, and thus failed to involve Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce under the U.S. Constitution. The Court held that the power to regulate interstate commerce encompassed the production, as well as the transportation, of goods and that the FLSA could thus prohibit the shipment of goods in interstate commerce produced under its "forbidden substandard labor conditions." The justices also rejected the claim that the FLSA's minimum wage requirements violated employers' rights, citing *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish*.

The Continuing Effect of the FLSA

The FLSA's original hours and wages requirements came into effect well before the prescribed deadlines, as industrial committees appointed by the Department of Labor quickly enacted the mandated standards. The first FLSA amendments, passed as part of President Harry S. Truman's "Fair Deal" program in 1949, increased the minimum wage to 75 cents per hour and also expanded coverage to airline and cannery employees. Except for an increase of the minimum wage to \$1 an hour in 1955, no major changes then occurred until the first year of John F. Kennedy's administration. The hourly minimum wage became \$1.25, and retail and service employees now received coverage. Congress's 1966 amendments proved the most significant changes to the FLSA since its original passage, as over nine million workers now became eligible for a floor wage.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, continuing FLSA amendments brought the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour. Many labor advocates argued, however, that the minimum wage failed to provide workers with adequate incomes for their families. Business interests and their conservative supporters in Congress claimed, in turn, that a large increase in the floor wage would mean higher labor costs, forcing layoffs. The federal government under President George W. Bush also passed regulations restricting the use of overtime pay for certain classes of so-called white-collar employees. These controversies demonstrated that the FLSA not only stood as one of the most significant labor laws of the 1930s, but also remained viable in a new century.

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FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (the official citation is Public Law 103-3) guarantees unpaid but job-protected leave to many, but not all, working Americans.

Covered employees are guaranteed up to 12 weeks of such leave during any 12-month period, for personal or family medical conditions (work-related or otherwise), the addition of a child into the family (by birth, adoption, or foster care), or like matters.

The impact of the Act is commonly regarded as positive upon employees and negligible or minimal

upon employers, despite complaints by employers at the time of enactment (and continuing to this day).

History

Like many laws, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) as an idea was around for some time prior to its eventual enactment. As working Americans increasingly complained of difficulties managing work/life issues, and as an apparently decreasing willingness of employers to accommodate their concerns spread, they turned to public policy makers. In turn, policy makers looked outside the United States for inspiration. While family and medical leave, usually paid as opposed to unpaid, seemed to be common (and indeed typical) across Europe, in the United States guaranteed leave for non-work-related disability was rare, and for such leave to be paid was even rarer. For example, in the early twenty-first century, only six states had a form of off-the-job disability insurance, and even then it was typical for the covered individual's job to not be guaranteed upon recovery or upon this paid leave running out.

The idea saw bill form during the administration of President George H. W. Bush (1989–1993, referred to as the “First President Bush” to differentiate him from his son, who also served). President Bush, however, based upon the objections of business, vetoed the bill twice, once in 1990 and once in 1992.

Democratic presidential candidate William J. “Bill” Clinton, during the election of 1992, announced that he would sign the bill if he were elected, and Congress passed it again. After he assumed office in 1993, Congress did just that, and President Clinton signed it as Public Law 103-3. For most employers, the act was effective August 5, 1993.

Main Provisions

The FMLA guarantees covered employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, but job-secure (in other words, an employer cannot legally fire an employee for taking FMLA leave) family and medical leave, during a 12-month period. The employer is allowed to define the start date of the 12-month period. It could be the calendar year or any 12-month period following the enactment of the FMLA.

Quoting directly from a U.S. Department of Labor document, covered employers include government entities (including state, local, and federal employers)

and private businesses that employ 50 or more employees in 20 or more workweeks.

To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must:

- Work for a covered employer (see above)
- Have worked for that employer for a total of 12 months
- Have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months
- Work at a location inside the United States, or in any territory or possession of the United States

Covered forms of family and medical leave include time off for the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child (this child-care leave must be concluded within 12 months of such birth, or adoption, or start of foster care); to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition; or for employees unable to work because of a serious medical condition (including both job-related and non-job-related conditions) to recover or take care of themselves. This guaranteed leave is unpaid.

The Act appears to be considered a “floor” rather than a “ceiling,” and provisions of collective bargaining agreements or employer policies can supplement it.

Employees have been allowed to switch back and forth between FMLA leave and other forms of leave offered by their employers, sometimes during the same working day. For example, an employee could be considered to be on FMLA leave for, say, four hours in a given day, and then take four hours of “personal time” as granted by the employer.

While sometimes employers complain that the administrative tasks associated with these practices are onerous, and that some employees take advantage of the system, there appears to be very little, if any, evidence that it actually is all that much of a burden. Further, employers are often granted the right to determine if a given use of leave is FMLA leave or some other kind of leave.

Significance and Current Issues

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the FMLA seemed to be relatively stable. Some “noise” from the administration of President George H. W. Bush (the son of the earlier President Bush, who vetoed the first version of the FMLA) was made about modifying the Act so as to limit the ability of employees to mix and match FMLA leave and other

forms of leave. These measures did not appear to be a high priority for the administration, however.

Also, the second Bush administration rolled back regulations propagated under President Clinton allowing states to compensate employees on FMLA leave for birth or adoption of children using Unemployment Insurance (UI).

There were some important, but technical, issues involving the interaction of FMLA leave and state workers’ compensation programs that had yet to be worked out. The FMLA could apply to work-related injuries or illnesses, which were also, by definition and intent, the domain of state workers’ compensation programs. It was often not clear, for example, if employees on workers’ compensation had to be required to draw upon their FMLA leave.

The broader significance of the FMLA for working-class life is a matter for debate. It certainly, by definition, provides protections that did not exist prior to its enactment. However, the fact that the leave is unpaid has, in the arguments of some commentators, effectively granted rights that members of the working class literally cannot afford to exercise. The Act has, however, clearly been an extremely important right to specific members of the working class in certain specific circumstances.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Act covered roughly 60% of the American workforce. Some working-class advocates wanted to see that figure increased, but this, too, seemed rather unlikely.

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FAMILY WAGE

The term “family wage” is a key word in academic discourse about the history of the sexual division of labor and is also central to public policy and religious debates about the historical relationship among wage labor, morality, and family life. In contrast with the term “living wage,” with which it is often paired, working-class Americans have rarely used the term “family wage.” Among the social workers and policy makers who popularized the term in the post-World War I years, and the political commentators and academics who re-introduced it in the late twentieth century, the phrase came to stand in for two somewhat contradictory notions, both with authentic roots in American labor history: the ideal of a male breadwinner who could support his family on his wages, on the one hand, and the reality of the “family wage economy,” in which all family members contributed their wages as a cooperative survival strategy, on the other. Many commentators assume that over the course of the twentieth century, America has moved from the former to the latter, that is, from a country in which male breadwinners predominated to one of multiple wage earners. In fact, throughout American history, most families have needed more than one breadwinner to support themselves, and it was only for a brief period in the United States—beginning in the 1920s—that a majority of American families consisted of a breadwinner husband, a homemaker wife, and children at school rather than the workplace. The stresses of the Depression and the increasing number of married women in the workplace during World War II and in the postwar years made this supposed “norm” surprisingly short-lived. What is often taken as the rule, in other words, is really the exception. While it is true that two-earner families have become increasingly common since World War II, the reality is that two meanings of the family wage—the ideal of the male breadwinner and the family wage economy—have been paired in tension from the very beginning of the development of a wage labor economy in the early nineteenth century.

The family wage—understood as a male breadwinner capable of supporting a family on his wages—was a long-standing ideal for working-class families, dating back to the early nineteenth century.

As wage labor became increasingly common in the early nineteenth century, and as the republican ideal of independent proprietorship became correspondingly rarer, many male workers, and their families, demanded a subsistence wage that would enable them to support their families and even to have savings for retirement. This version of the family wage, based on socially defined needs of workers as citizens

and family supporters, provided workers with an alternative to the “natural laws” of supply and demand, which employers used to justify low wages. With this notion of the family wage, workers for the first time adopted the idea of wage labor, which they had previously rejected, as acceptable. These moral economic claims also promoted a sexual division of labor—male breadwinners, female homemakers—consistent with the Victorian ideal, if not the reality, of “separate spheres” for men and women. “We must strive to obtain sufficient remuneration for our labor to keep the wives and daughters and sisters of our people at home,” a Philadelphia trade union declared in the 1830s (Carlson, 2001). As the American labor publication, the *Ten Hour Advocate*, editorialized in 1846: “We hope the day is not distant when the husband will be able to provide for his wife and family, without sending the [wife] to endure the drudgery of a cotton mill” (May, 1982, p. 401). Despite these clarion calls for a single male breadwinner, even in the nineteenth century, the reality was that working-class families typically relied on a family economy consisting of husbands, wives, and children, all earning wages and helping, in varying degrees, with household labor. The Victorian ideal of “separate spheres” was far more descriptive of middle-class families than it was of laboring families. In the early twentieth century, as an increasing number of wives entered the paid labor force, the reality was often even further from this family wage ideal. And it is widely acknowledged that by the late twentieth century, this ideal bore little relation to reality for most American families, which consisted largely of dual wage earners and of single-parent breadwinners.

Throughout the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, American workers and their organizations demanded “living wages” that would enable them to support their families, participate in public life, and maintain an “American Standard of Living.” While initially these demands for what later became known as “family wages” were derided as “communistic,” many distinctly non-Socialist reformers, religious leaders, politicians, and businessmen came, for a variety of reasons, to support the idea of a family wage. In 1914, the pioneering automaker Henry Ford, for example, began offering his male workers five dollars per day (at a time when the typical wage for a worker was about half that much) as a means of promoting mass consumption, minimizing class conflict, and solidifying traditional gender relations in working-class families. According to Ford, “The man does the work in the shop, but his wife does the work in the home. The shop must pay them both.... Otherwise we have the hideous prospect

of little children and their mothers being forced out to work” (May, 1982, p. 415).

Ford and other employers, such as Edward Filene, the Progressive department store owner, were echoed by proponents of Social Gospel Protestantism, who embraced the idea that working people should earn enough to provide the essentials of food, clothing, and shelter for a family as well as the creature comforts and respectable consumer satisfactions of life in an industrializing America. Many reformers, alongside many workers, who held the ideal of the male breadwinner as a goal, used the phrase “family wage” as shorthand for the effort to promote a wage that would support a single breadwinner for a family. As the Progressive economist Robert W. Bruere noted, “Too many employees are in the habit of interpreting the family wage as meaning the total earnings of all members of the family, rather than the wage paid to the head of family alone.” In 1919, Bruere called for a “minimum guaranteed family wage,” and in so doing became one of the first to use the phrase “family wage” (Bruere, pp. 95–100).

The Roman Catholic Church has, since the late nineteenth century, also strongly supported the effort to secure a single breadwinner “family wage.” Pope Leo XIII’s 1893 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (“The Condition of Labor”), pointed to the familial nature of the just wage. Forty years later, Pope Pius XI called explicitly for a family wage for every male adult, as a matter of social justice. In books such as *A Living Wage* (1906) and *Distributive Justice* (1916), Father John A. Ryan, the leading American advocate, called the family wage the linchpin of a moral economic system. Ryan declared that “the laborer has a right to a family living wage because this is the only way in which he can exercise his right to the means of maintaining a family.” The welfare of society made it “imperative that the wife and mother should not engage in any labor except that of the household.” Ryan insisted that “the State has both the right and the duty to compel all employers to pay a Living Wage.” In 1981, Pope John Paul II’s encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* (“On Human Work”) continued the Church’s call for family wages: “Just remuneration for the work of an adult who is responsible for a family means remuneration which will suffice for establishing and properly maintaining a family and for providing security for its future.” John Paul II noted his preference for this remuneration to be given “through what is called a family wage—that is, a single salary given to the head of the family for his work, sufficient for the needs of the family without the other spouse having to take up gainful employment outside the home” (http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/

[john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens_en.html)).

If a consensus in favor of the family wage formed in the first half of the twentieth century, it is important to note that the concept was never without its critics. These critics came from opposite ends of the political spectrum. Many business leaders and politicians believed that the family wage interfered with the free market for wages and freedom of contract. The family wage concept was also criticized by some feminists both in and out of the labor movement who believed that it undermined the idea of equal pay for equal work. They argued that the family wage ideal sanctioned gender discrimination and a sexual division of labor, in which women earned lower wages. Historians generally concede that the family wage ideal served a masculinist ideal of male breadwinners, which contributed to the difficulties of female breadwinners to breach the sexual division of labor that rewarded “male” jobs more highly than “female” jobs.

Whatever the historical costs or benefits of the family wage ideal, by the late twentieth century, there was a widespread consensus that this ideal was in crisis. And in recent decades, a call for a revived family wage has been made by a diverse coalition of conservative Christian promoters of “family values” as well as laborite supporters of living wages. The former believe that a family wage will provide incentives for the return of the “traditional” family of stay-at-home moms and working dads. The latter believe that it is necessary to recognize that workers, including many single mothers, support families. The slow increase in the legal minimum wage, making it worth less in real dollars in the 1990s and 2000s than it was in the 1960s and 1970s, suggests that these pleas have not been widely heeded in policy. Moreover, despite the diverse coalition of support for the family wage, critics remain. As one critic recently suggested, “returning to a system of male breadwinning is an unworkable and for many families, an undesirable solution.” Feminist advocates of the living wage argue that the solution to the family wage problem is not to pay men more but to compensate women for their labor. “The breadwinner-homemaker household is a short-lived arrangement that, even at its height in the 1950s, never met the needs of countless women, men and children” (Letter from Kathleen Gerson, “Homemaker Nostalgia,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1995). So the consensus that the family wage ideal collapsed in the last third of the twentieth century has not led to a clear solution to this problem, since for many critics, it was the family wage ideal itself that was the problem. With increasing globalization

and economic insecurity, debates about the family wage will doubtless continue well into the twenty-first century.

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FANSTEEL v. UNITED STATES (1939)

Nineteenth-century striking workers effectively prevented continued production by removing their tools and knowledge from the workplace. Twentieth-century employers could continue mass production during strikes by bringing in new workers to run the massive machinery and assembly lines. Workers could be sure of stopping production only by sitting down at their machines. The first such strike occurred at a General Electric plant in Schenectady, New York, in 1906. It was revived by tire and rubber workers from 1934 to 1936 in Akron, Ohio, most often over use of non-union workers, speedups, and work rule changes, and most often as spontaneous rank-and-file beginnings. Most of these strikes started among younger workers

on the night shift. In 1936–1938, a wave of more than 62 sit-down strikes spread to other industries attempting to force employers to bargain with unions, the most famous being the autoworkers strike in Flint, Michigan. In the vast majority of sit-downs, little damage was done to plants and machinery, and then mostly during eviction attempts.

The U.S. Supreme Court decided the legality of the sit-down tactic under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), *NLRB v. Fansteel Metallurgical Corp.*, 306 U.S. 240 (1939). Fansteel processed rare metals in Waukeegan, Illinois. The Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers of North America, Lodge 66, affiliated with the CIO, first attempted to represent Fansteel employees during September 1936. The plant superintendent, A. J. Anselm, replied that the company would not deal with an outside union. The company hired the operative Alfred Johnstone, National Metal Trades Association, to infiltrate and spy on union activities, isolated the union president, John Kondrath, next to the superintendent's office, and enlisted employees in a company union. On February 17, 1937, Lodge 66, representing 155 of 229 employees, again demanded collective bargaining and was refused. At 2:00 p.m. that day, the union determined to strike by sitting down. By 2:30, approximately 95 employees seized key buildings 3 and 5.

At 6:00 p.m., Anselm, company counsel, and two policemen approached the seized buildings, announcing in a loud voice that the men were illegally trespassing and were all fired. The next day, the company sought an injunction against continued possession of the buildings. On February 19, the sheriff passed copies of the writ through an open window to Swanson and Warner, the respective leaders in the two buildings. Later that day, the sheriff, with approximately one hundred deputies, tried to forcibly evict the men with tear gas bombs, a battering ram, and baseball bats. They were met by a fire hose and a hail of nuts, bolts, small tools, parts, and sulphuric acid until the sheriff withdrew after two hours.

At dawn, February 26, the sheriff, with a slightly larger force, wheeled a truck with a 30-foot armored scaffold to the buildings. From the higher vantage, they fired tear and emetic gas into the windows. After an hour of pitched battle, the occupying men scattered and fled.

The company suffered \$75,000 in broken windows, small tools, and parts thrown from the building, all of which occurred during the two stormings of the buildings, but no major damage to the heavy machinery. During and after the strike, the company solicited individual employees and strikers to return to work, rehiring 35 of the sit-downers. After the strike, the company encouraged membership in a new union, the

Rare Metal Workers Union No. 1, providing it with a place to work and meet, and supplies.

Thirty-nine of the sit-downers were prosecuted for contempt in state court. They were fined between \$100 and \$1000 and jailed for 10 to 240 days.

The National Labor Relations Board, 5 NLRB 124 (1938), found violations of the NLRA, sections 8(1) interfering with the right to self-organize, 8(2) supporting a company union, 8(3) discriminating against union activity, and 8(5) refusing to bargain and attempting to bargain with individuals. The Board ordered reinstatement of all the strikers and bargaining with the union under its remedial power to effectuate the purposes of the NLRA. It argued that allowing the seizure to disqualify the workers from relief would reward the company for its unfair labor practices.

The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals refused to enforce the order 2-1, and the Supreme Court affirmed 7-2. Recognizing the existence of the unfair labor practices, Chief Justice Hughes nonetheless stated, "We are unable to conclude that Congress intended to compel employers to retain persons in their employ regardless of their unlawful conduct—to invest those who go on strike with an immunity from discharge for acts of trespass or violence against the employer's property." The only concession to the Board suggested a Board-supervised election to determine the majority's representation choice. The dissent by Justices Reed and Black would have returned the parties to the same position they were in before the unfair labor practices and the strike, enforcing the Board's order, arguing it is too easy for employers to get away with unfair labor practices as long as the employer has a nonrelated reason to fire the strikers.

The loss of the sit-down had legal, economic, and organizational consequences. First, sit-downs largely worked for meeting workers' demands. Second, aside from removing a key tactic in the successful organization drives of the CIO in the late 1930s, the majority's rationale weakened the Act's reach by elevating the property rights of employers over the organizing abilities of workers. This was a judicially imposed choice not mandated by the NLRA. Third, another loss to labor was the increased solidarity among the rank and file who had time to talk about their work and get better acquainted during the strikes. This held over in the form of increased demands from workers in those plants experiencing sit-downs. Finally, usually short sit-down tactics were perceived by workers as spontaneous rank-and-file actions, the removal of which encouraged centralization of bargaining and grievance machinery.

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See also Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers; Sit-Down Strikes (1937)

FARM EQUIPMENT AND METAL WORKERS UNION

The Farm Equipment and Metal Workers Union (FE), a relatively small union that was influenced by the U.S. Communist Party (CPUSA), had a jurisdiction that overlapped with the much larger United Auto Workers union (UAW). Beginning as the Farm Equipment Division of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee in July 1938, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) chartered the FE as the international union whose jurisdiction encompassed the farm implement industry. At its peak, the FE had 70,000 members, with its major base of strength located in the plants of the International Harvester Corporation, where the union represented 40,000 workers. During the 17 years (1938–1955) of the union's existence, the FE pioneered an independent shop floor unionism and was a vigorous proponent of racial egalitarianism and civil rights for its African-American members.

Believing that the workers were involved in a constant struggle with capital, the FE at both the national and local levels encouraged a shop floor unionism based on direct action at the point of production in defending workers' rights. This militancy was expressed in the union's continuous use of work

stoppages—both authorized and unauthorized—throughout most of the union’s life. For example, at Harvester during the years between 1945 and 1951, the FE engaged in 849 strikes, while UAW members participated in 171 walkouts.

With regard to the union’s commitment to racial egalitarianism within the workplace and the union, the FE was successful in its fight to upgrade African-American workers to better jobs. For example, at the McCormick Works (Chicago), where 80% of the employees were white, although the majority of blacks still labored in the foundries, FE Local 108 won the right for African-Americans to hold jobs as assemblers, inspectors, welders, and polishers by 1949. Furthermore, blacks were amply represented in the local’s leadership positions, ranging from shop steward to the executive board. And in the 1949 elections, four of the 11 executive board members and three of the seven grievancemen voted in were African-American. FE Local 236’s (Louisville) record on fighting for racial equality was as good if not better than that of Local 108. It had obtained a nondiscrimination clause in its 1946 contract with Harvester and aggressively fought to desegregate Louisville’s white-only parks and hotels.

The FE’s Relationship with the UAW, 1945–1949

Until 1945, the rivalry between the UAW and the FE was handled by the two unions splitting up the jurisdiction over the relevant industrial units, with the FE organizing the agricultural implement factories and the auto union maintaining control over the truck plants. However, after World War II, this arrangement abruptly ended, with the two unions competing to organize new plants. In addition, the UAW attempted to raid, that is, to replace one union with that of another as the collective bargaining agent, the FE plants for the first time.

In 1947, the UAW membership rejected a proposed merger of the FE into the auto union when Walter Reuther, the UAW president, and his faction (the Reuther Caucus) actively opposed the combination on the grounds that FE’s addition to the UAW would tip the balance of power within the union in the direction of the CPUSA-supported Thomas-Addes forces. That same year, the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, with its requirement that all union officials sign noncommunist affidavits in order to retain National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) protection, had severe consequences for the FE when the union’s officers refused to comply.

FE Local 105, which represented 16,000 production workers at the Caterpillar Tractor Company’s Peoria plant, struck Caterpillar in early April 1948 when its contract expired. Arguing that since the union had not fulfilled the Taft-Hartley Act requirements, Caterpillar ceased bargaining with Local 105 in March, stating that it did not want to spend time negotiating with a union that might be replaced by a legitimate labor organization certified by the NLRB at a later date. Shortly thereafter, four unions initiated organizing drives in order to lure the Caterpillar employees away from Local 105. With the FE ineligible to be on the ballot, the runoff election between the UAW-CIO and the UAW-American Federation of Labor (AFL) resulted in the former obtaining bargaining rights for the Caterpillar workers and depriving the FE of nearly 25% of its membership.

Shortly after the Caterpillar debacle, the FE officers complied with the Taft-Hartley Act affidavits, which made other UAW raids on FE plants later in the spring of 1949 unsuccessful. The FE soundly defeated the auto union at the John Deere Plow Works in Moline (Illinois) and the Oliver plant in Iowa.

The UAW’s Raids on the FE, 1949–1954

When the CIO expelled the FE in the fall of 1949, along with 10 other Communist-led unions, the federation sanctioned raids by the UAW against the FE. In an attempt to protect itself from these attacks, the FE merged with another CIO union that had also been expelled for its ties with the CPUSA, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), also becoming known at this time as the FE-UE.

The UAW-FE rivalry, which accelerated after the union’s expulsion from the CIO, reached a crescendo in 1952 when the union struck Harvester and the UAW provided no support to the beleaguered FE. In June 1952, two months before the strike, the UAW launched an unsuccessful raid against FE Local 108. With the hostility between the two unions having reached a feverish pitch, Harvester had steeled itself to engage the FE in an all-out struggle.

The FE strike, which commenced on August 21, 1952, involved approximately 30,000 workers in eight Harvester plants throughout the United States. In an attempt to break the work stoppage, the company kept its plants open and conducted a vigorous campaign, encouraging the strikers to return to work. With McCarthyism nearing its peak in 1952, Harvester

took advantage of the anti-Communist fervor sweeping the country to sway public opinion against the FE. The corporation took out advertisements in the Chicago newspapers emphasizing the intimate connection between the FE leaders and the CPUSA. Another devastating blow to the union occurred when the House Un-American Activities Committee arrived in Chicago a mere two weeks into the strike in order to examine the influence of Communism in Chicago unions.

Despite the walkout's violent nature, employees were returning to work. By the end of the first week in November, a considerable percentage of workers had crossed the picket lines in all eight plants. With the strike disintegrating at an astonishingly rapid rate, Geralde Fielde, the FE Secretary-Treasurer, ended the work stoppage on November 15 by signing a contract that totally capitulated to Harvester on all of the union's original demands.

The conclusion of this disastrous strike against Harvester only emboldened the UAW in its raids of the weakened FE. At this time, the auto union consciously selected plants where the "back-to-work movement" had been the strongest in order to petition the NLRB for new representation elections. However, the UAW was unsuccessful in ousting the FE at these factories. The Richmond (Indiana) plant workers voted for the FE over the auto union by a 2-to-1 margin. At the West Pullman plant in Chicago, the level of victory was even greater, with the FE beating the UAW 3-to-1. Realizing that it had no chance to defeat the FE at the Farmall (Rock Island, Illinois) plant, the auto union dropped out just two days before the NLRB election.

In spite of the union's ability to successfully retain its membership in these poststrike raids, problems within the FE first surfaced in two Harvester plants in the Quad Cities of western Illinois in the middle of August 1953. At the East Moline and Rock Island facilities, the workers conducted membership referendums and voted to disaffiliate their two locals from the FE. The East Moline NLRB representation election, held on May 26, 1954, led to the first irreparable crack in the FE Harvester chain when the workers voted to affiliate with the UAW rather than to remain in the FE.

However, raids were not the FE's only worries at this time. With McCarthyism still in full force throughout the nation, the FE was confronted with the Communist Control Act of 1954. The Act granted the attorney general the authority to use the Subversive Activities Control Board to decree that a union was controlled by Communists, thus depriving it of any protection under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). In addition, if a mere 20% of a

Communist-controlled union's members demanded a representation election, the union could re-organize under new non-Communist leadership and still be able to retain its contract and have access to both the NLRA and the NLRB.

After the defection of the East Moline plant, the next plant to leave the union for the UAW was Farmall. After these two losses in the Quad Cities, the movement expanded to include the Chicago Harvester plants, the stronghold of the FE membership, and finally to all of the union's plants.

The FE's Affiliation with the UAW, 1955

At the end of January 1955, a committee of five top-level FE officers met with a comparable committee of UAW representatives. This meeting, called under the guise of achieving unity between the two unions during the upcoming negotiations at Harvester, however, was little more than a way for the FE leaders to see what they could get from the UAW for bringing their members, as a group, into the auto union.

In the middle of March 1955, the FE Harvester Conference Board voted for disaffiliation from the United Electrical Workers Union and decided to join the UAW as a group. Under the arrangement, the auto union agreed to retain the former FE staff representatives (except for the president, Grant Oakes, and the secretary-treasurer, Gerald Fielde) for the FE bringing their locals into the UAW. In the subsequent NLRB representation elections held in the former FE Harvester plants in May and June 1955, the UAW won all elections over the rival AFL unions and the "no union" choice by decisive margins. The end of the FE, and its rivalry with the UAW, came with a whimper, not a bang.

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FARMER-LABOR PARTY

The Farmer-Labor Party (FLP) was an attempt in the post-World War I years to establish a viable third-party political party uniting workers from all aspects of society.

The impetus for a labor party after WWI came from many sources. Another influence came from the success of the British Labour Party. Many believed that similar successes could come from a similar American organization.

At the time of the formation of the FLP, many labor organizations across the country were starting to organize their own political parties. While it is uncertain where the first true labor party was formed, there was considerable action in several states. In Chicago, under the call of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), unsuccessful attempts came in 1905, 1908, and 1910. According to some scholarship, the first vital party was formed in 1918 in Bridgeport, Connecticut. In Minnesota, a Farmer-Labor Party was begun in the same year as in Connecticut. The Minnesota party had some success with the election of three governors and four U.S. senators. The party called for protecting both farmers and labor unions, and government control of some industries. But it was especially in the Chicago arena that the ideas came together.

John Fitzpatrick, the longtime CFL president, pushed for independent political action, an act which he knew would meet with opposition by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) president, Samuel Gompers. While not opposed to political action itself, Gompers believed in nonpartisan political action by supporting those who would promote labor concerns. Radical groups such as the Socialists were also opposed to the idea of a labor party for two reasons. First, they argued it would divide the working-class vote at the polls, and two, it would take away from their own publicity and membership.

The CFL started developing the drive for the national party in 1918, when it first formed a local party for Cook County (the county in which Chicago is located), and then a state party afterward. Neither party met with much, if any, success. During August 1919, along with 30 representatives from across the country, the CFL called for the formation of a national party. Each city's central labor body was permitted to send one delegate each, and local parties and unions could send one delegate for every 500 members. The convention met three months later in Chicago. With over 1,200 delegates in attendance, party officers were chosen, and a party platform developed, mostly taken from that of the Illinois party. Also in attendance were the single taxers, farmers,

and the progressive "Committee of 48." Since the national elections were not until the following year, that first convention did not feel any need to make major decisions, including a candidate for the presidency.

The next national convention met in Chicago during July 1920. At this time, the party blended many groups into one, and a new name was chosen—the Farmer-Labor Party. Delegates from the Non-Partisan League, the World War I Veterans, the Single Tax League, the Farmers' League, and the Committee of 48 attended. To promote their activities, the FLP especially used the CFL newspaper *The New Majority*, which was initially founded to promote the CFL's local political activities.

The platform, once again, was based upon that developed in Chicago. The 48ers objected to many of its provisions, such as the "democratic control of industry," which they believed to be too socialistic. The 48ers had no objections to antimonopoly provisions, but they were dead set against any sort of nationalization of any industry. The platform also called for recognizing the Soviet Union, civil rights for African-Americans, and nationalization of the mines, among other provisions.

The 48ers would also become disappointed with the FLP's choice for a presidential candidate. Instead of choosing LaFollette, the convention nominated Parley Parker Christensen, of Salt Lake City, and Max S. Hayes, a former Socialist candidate, for vice president. Furthermore, LaFollette expressed no interest in being a candidate. To many, the 48ers were latecomers to the movement and wanted to take over the FLP merely to promote their own agenda. Since the 48ers had no sort of a majority, their ideas were overridden.

The election in November 1920 was an utter disaster for the FLP. Warren G. Harding won by a landslide, easily defeating James Cox, the Democratic Party candidate. Christensen received less than a quarter of a million votes, not even 1% of the total. The Socialist labor leader Eugene V. Debs, currently serving time in prison for having violated the WWI Espionage and Sedition Acts, received just over 900,000 votes. Furthermore, the local parties created by the CFL suffered mostly devastating defeats as well. Any successes were in winning seats on the local level in places such as Illinois, New York, Washington, and Minnesota.

The CFL called for constant organization, believing that any hope for success in future elections depended upon not waiting for another election, but rather keeping their platform before the public. But the defeat in 1920 took its toll on the party. The next

congressional elections would be in 1922, and calls were made to prepare. Popular sentiment toward the party was fading, and fast. Despite trying to portray itself as a party for all Americans, the FLP could not interest the general public, including labor's own rank and file. The Socialists proposed a meeting with the National Executive Committee to discuss possible options, but was turned down.

The CFL also began a "member contest," a last-ditch effort to keep the party moving by heavy recruitment of new members. The winners would be given dues for 12 months, a 12-month subscription to the *New Majority*, and an invitation to the next party dinner. The *New Majority* never reported the results.

At the 1923 convention, policy would be dictated by the Communists, led by Fitzpatrick's former organizing partner, William Z. Foster. With the FLP in a weakened state, the Communists were able to impose their will on the convention. Many of the less radical FLP members withdrew from the party, with Fitzpatrick himself furious at the move. To ally themselves with the Communists was political suicide, especially during the early 1920s when the first Red Scare took aim at any radicals, real or perceived. With the Communists in control, the FLP name was changed to the Federated Farmer-Labor Party.

In May 1924, Fitzpatrick and the CFL abandoned the idea of independent political action. The repeated failures, and the party takeover by the Communists, sent the CFL straight back into the AFL fold of nonpartisan political action. In a speech, Fitzpatrick lamented the turn of events while praising the AFL tactics. To further separate themselves from the now-defunct FLP, the CFL changed the name of its paper from the *New Majority* to *Federation News*, a name that remains into the present day. *Federation News* also declared its allegiance to AFL policies. While the party was dead on the national scene, the FLP continued to exist in Minnesota. In 1944, the Minnesota Democratic Party, led by the verbose Hubert H. Humphrey, merged with the FLP, then becoming known as the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party.

The FLP's failure stemmed from its lack of popular support, organization, funds, and coverage from the mainstream press, as well as staunch opposition from the leadership of the AFL.

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FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) represents the most successful and long-lasting unionization effort among Midwestern farmworkers in the twentieth century. Created in 1967 to address the needs of migrant farmworkers who toiled on tomato farms in Ohio, FLOC has since expanded to include farmworkers in the South as well.

FLOC is very much associated with its founder, Baldemar Velasquez. Born in Texas in 1947, Velasquez worked as a migrant laborer with his family, regularly traveling between the Southwest and the Midwest. In 1954, the Velasquez family settled in Putnam County, Ohio, where they continued to work together in the fields. However, Velasquez also attended school, and after graduating from high school, he enrolled in college at Bluffton College in Ohio, where he took part in the emerging civil rights and free speech movements.

In 1967, based on his own experience in the fields as well as the supportive influence of Jesse Salas, who was already organizing pickle fieldworkers in Wisconsin, Velasquez decided to organize FLOC. He envisioned FLOC as a way to address the kinds of hardships he and thousands of Mexican and Mexican-American migrant farmworkers faced in Ohio—low pay, substandard housing, isolation, and limited educational opportunities. Since almost all the farmers who grew tomatoes owned relatively modest family farms, the FLOC organizers' first strategy revolved around trying to pressure individual growers to work voluntarily with them to improve living and working conditions as well as wage rates. Velasquez and his fellow organizers soon realized, however, that even

gaining access to farmworkers would present a formidable challenge. Many farmers refused to allow FLOC organizers to visit with or speak to the migrant farmworkers. As such, FLOC organizers challenged their exclusion in court, and thereby successfully gained access to migrant workers, though they were not allowed to photograph the workers' living conditions inside migrant camps. FLOC also attempted to reach as many farmworkers as possible by sending organizers to Texas each winter to meet with migrant workers who would be traveling in the spring to work in Ohio. Equally important, FLOC began a well-organized publicity campaign to highlight the plight of migrant workers in the Midwest. This publicity campaign included a traveling theater, a bilingual union paper (*La Voz del Campesino*), and a radio program.

After failing to convince the farmers to address the working and living conditions of migrant workers, in September 1968, FLOC organized a strike against 10 Ohio farmers, including grower James Ackerman. FLOC demanded wage increases, life insurance, day care, paid hospitalization, and various wage guarantees to protect workers in case of inclement weather and delayed growing seasons. Though most growers refused to negotiate with FLOC, five growers agreed to sign a contract establishing FLOC as the sole bargaining agent and labor recruiter. The growers also agreed not to discriminate against union activists as well as to provide a minimum wage and limited insurance during the growing season. In return, FLOC members agreed to remain in the fields until the end of the growing season. Within a couple of weeks, a total of 21 farmers signed contracts with FLOC as well.

By 1969, FLOC's membership had grown to three thousand workers, and organizers looked forward to even more victories. However, FLOC soon faced an increasingly organized and militant opposition as various growers, associations, including the Farm Bureau, went on the offensive. Of the 21 growers who had signed the FLOC contract in 1968, 12 simply stopped growing tomatoes, while others tried to undermine FLOC by offering workers minimum wage increases on their own. Although FLOC officials were successful in using the court to force the growers to abide by the 1968 agreement, and even successfully negotiated two-year contracts with 11 growers, the prospect of trying to convince dozens of individual growers to sign contracts each year forced FLOC organizers to rethink their organizing strategy. Velasquez feared that negotiating contracts with individual growers would not deliver the kinds of long-term benefits that he and his associates hoped to achieve. Moreover, even the recently hard-won victories

provided plenty of evidence that the strategy of negotiating one-on-one with Ohio's farmers left FLOC in a particularly vulnerable position.

In the post-1969 period, FLOC directed its energies toward challenging the processors with whom the farmers contracted to grow tomatoes—most importantly, the Campbell Soup Company—rather than just the farmers. The idea was that if organizers could convince the processors to sign multiparty contracts, this would force growers and farmworkers to recognize their common interests as well as ensure uniform wage rates and better living conditions for the thousands of farmworkers dispersed throughout the Ohio countryside. To achieve these multiparty three-way contracts, however, FLOC had to get the processors to come to the bargaining table.

The battle to convince Campbell Soup to engage in three-way collective bargaining and to sign multiparty contracts lasted for seven years. During that time, FLOC expanded its public relations campaign by calling for a national consumer boycott of all Campbell's products. In 1983, FLOC also engaged in a well-publicized protest walk from Ohio to Campbell's headquarters in Camden, New Jersey. By 1986, these efforts to reach out to the broader public paid off when Campbell Soup finally agreed to engage in three-way collective bargaining. Soon thereafter, other processor companies also agreed to three-way contracts, including Heinz, Vlasic, Aunty Jane, Dean Foods, and Green Bay Foods.

While FLOC organizers continued to organize farmworkers in the Midwest in the 1980s and 1990s, they also recognized the fact that since the market for tomatoes was becoming more national and international, they, too, needed to begin to organize workers outside the Midwest. Therefore, in 1997, FLOC expanded its organizational strategy by looking to organize farmworkers in North Carolina. Doing so posed new challenges. In contrast to the relatively homogenous farm labor force in Ohio, the nearly 40,000 migrant farmworkers in North Carolina included significant numbers of single men from diverse backgrounds, including the United States, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. The prospect of successfully organizing this diverse workforce was further hampered by the very antiunion environment of this conservative southern state.

FLOC began its 1997 organizing campaign in North Carolina by directing its attention to the Mt. Olive Pickle Company. Though FLOC hoped that Mt. Olive would cooperate and help pressure local farmers to engage in three-way bargaining, Mt. Olive proved to be a formidable opponent. Mt. Olive executives insisted that since they hired neither the farmers nor the farmworkers, they had no authority to engage

in any kind of bargaining. To counter Mt. Olives' intransigence, FLOC began another public relations campaign, including a well-publicized boycott, which received support from over two hundred labor, community, and religious groups. Mt. Olive responded with its own campaign, which received support from many antiunion conservatives. However, after a seven-year battle and a five-year boycott, in 2004, the Mt. Olive Pickle Company and the North Carolina Growers' Association capitulated to FLOC's call for three-way multiparty bargaining. In addition to agreeing to negotiate living and working conditions, Mt. Olive also pledged to increase the growers' pay by 10% over a three-year period to encourage them to increase the workers' pay as well. The 2004 victory provided FLOC with renewed optimism about organizing migrant farmworkers in the twenty-first century.

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

The U.S. Department of Justice initially relied on other federal agencies to conduct investigations. A 1908 bill to create a Bureau of Investigation failed due to congressional opposition to a central spy agency. President Theodore Roosevelt insisted that the Department needed detectives and instructed his attorney general to create the Bureau after Congress adjourned. In 1935, it was renamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Starting as a small agency with narrow jurisdiction, the FBI grew rapidly under J. Edgar Hoover, director from 1924 until his death in 1972. Hoover had joined the Justice Department in 1917 and headed the Radical Division, quickly renamed the General Intelligence Division, from 1920. Hoover amassed huge files, which he used to create a political role for the FBI that, for most of the twentieth century, exceeded its statutory responsibility. He maintained

dossiers on every member of Congress, the Supreme Court, Cabinet, and the eight presidents under whom he served. He shaped the Bureau's internal labor policies and its approach to labor organizations. Determined to control personnel, Hoover refused to cooperate with the Civil Service, and he barred African-American men as agents.

Bureau agents participated in the 1917 Espionage Act raids against immigrant working-class radicals, Socialists, the Industrial Workers of the World, and critics of the war. Despite lack of authorization, the Bureau assisted the Immigration Department in 1919 to arrest 750 immigrants, of whom over 200 were deported. Hoover helped organize the 1920 Palmer Raids, mass arrests of four thousand radicals in 33 cities, made possible by undercover agents in positions of sufficient leadership in the radical movement to organize the simultaneous meetings.

Federal officials claimed lack of jurisdiction, however, to investigate the 47 murders during the 1917 East St. Louis race riot, an antiblack rampage ignited by white craft workers. The FBI did investigate the East St. Louis black community for any influences which might foster attacks on whites, and it worked with employers to portray the riot as proving the dangers of unions. The FBI did not investigate any lynchings, averaging 65 per year during and after World War I, often the result of white hostility to black men in uniform. Nor did the FBI evince interest in labor racketeering. According to James B. Jacobs, the FBI devoted few resources to organized crime while Hoover was alive. Popular impressions to the contrary stem from confusion with other agencies (Al Capone was stopped by Treasury agents) and from Hoover's extraordinary promotional skills. The FBI joined with the Military Intelligence Division of the Army and the Office of Naval Intelligence to investigate the 1919 Steel Strike. FBI agents infiltrated the 1922 Railroad Shopmen's strike. Unable to develop evidence of radicalism, agents nonetheless helped make the case for federal troops. Although the General Intelligence Division was abolished in 1924, the FBI maintained its files on labor organizers and worked with plant security forces to develop fingerprint collections with which labor activists were tagged for blacklisting.

In 1932, the FBI infiltrated the Bonus March, a nonviolent demonstration by veterans, in an unsuccessful search for evidence to support President Herbert Hoover's claim that the marchers were Communists or criminals. The FBI used wiretapping extensively in violation of the 1934 Communications Act and helped train other police forces in its use. Wiretapping and related practices such as break-ins and mail intercepts were illegal, and illegally obtained

evidence was inadmissible in court. However, the FBI found them effective in antiunion operations where the objective was disruption and provocation rather than prosecution. The FBI also shared wiretap information with employers.

The 1942 FBI break-in at the Los Angeles Communist Party headquarters provided the membership lists underpinning the Hollywood movie studios' blacklist. From 1934 to 1945, the FBI participated in an unsuccessful campaign to deport Harry Bridges, the president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Other labor targets in the 1940s included the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), including CIO leader and key Roosevelt ally Sidney Hillman, the National Maritime Union, the United Mine Workers, and the New York City Teachers' Union. In 1946, Hoover proposed to President Harry Truman an emergency detention list including labor and civil rights leaders, which Attorney General Tom Clark authorized two years later. The FBI launched an anti-Communist and antiunion educational campaign in 1946, using cooperative columnists to disguise the FBI initiative.

President Truman's 1947 Federal Employee Loyalty Program increased both the FBI's surveillance mandate and its de facto unaccountability to constitutional standards. FBI files, inadmissible in court, proved decisive in loyalty dismissal proceedings. After the accused lost their positions, continued FBI surveillance and visits to prospective employers enforced blacklisting. FBI files on homosexuals, compiled without authorization since 1937, led to dismissals of thousands of federal employees.

The FBI provided information for congressional investigations of union activists, particularly leftists in the CIO, and shared information with plant security. In the 1953 House Committee on Un-American Activities hearing in Pittsburgh, the FBI supplied information about the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America that it had received from the manufacturers' labor spies and an FBI informer on the union's staff.

The FBI also gave information about union leftists to selected union leaders. James Carey, president of the International Union of Electrical Workers, started exchanging information with the FBI in 1943. In the March 1952 Detroit hearing against United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 600, the FBI provided CIO Vice President Walter Reuther with information from an informer in the local. The FBI spied on A. Philip Randolph, especially regarding the World War II-era March on Washington Movement for fair employment, and also reported to Randolph about possible Communist influence within the march.

The FBI engaged in disruption of black organizations. When the Memphis sanitation workers struck in 1968 and organized in the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, the FBI filed reports on the strikers (and shared information with the antiunion mayor) from the strike's inception. After Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, the FBI continued to monitor the Poor Peoples' Campaign, sharing information with the Military Intelligence Division and Central Intelligence Agency, as well as leaking derogatory gossip to reporters. A paid FBI informant provided the diagram of the apartment in which Fred Hampton, a charismatic young Black Panther Party leader, was shot while asleep by the Chicago police in 1969. FBI testimony, disputed by historians and Amnesty International, led to the sentence of life imprisonment for the American Indian Movement member Leonard Peltier following a shoot-out at the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975.

After Hoover's death, the FBI began to focus more on organized crime. The passage of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 (including the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations [RICO] Statute and the Witness Security Program) provided the FBI with tools to combat labor racketeering; it focused especially on corrupt locals within the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. There has been debate within the union movement whether the FBI can be effective against labor racketeering, as it remains closely attuned to the demands of the presidency and largely immune to working people's priorities for law enforcement and union democracy.

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See also **Bridges, Harry Renton; Communist Party; Hillman, Sidney; Hoffa, James R.; House Un-American Activities Committee/Dies Committee; Industrial Workers of the World; International Brotherhood of**

Teamsters; Landrum-Griffin Act (1959); Memphis Sanitation Strike (1968); Railroad Shopmen's Strike (1922); Randolph, A. Philip; Socialist Workers' Party; Strikebreaking; United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America

FEDERAL COAL MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT

In 1969, President Nixon reluctantly signed the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act (FCMHSA) in the face of a rank-and-file movement of U.S. coal miners. It heralded a paradigm shift by comprehensively committing the federal government to creating and enforcing safety standards, and compensation for disease, in America's most hazardous industry. The prior reliance on states' initiatives had resulted in a dismal record on coal-mine safety in the United States, with over 90,000 officially reported fatal accidents from 1906 to 1970 (in bituminous mines alone), over 1.5 million injuries from 1930 to 1969, and likely even higher numbers killed and disabled more slowly by black lung disease.

Among other measures, the 1969 Act mandated federal inspections of each underground mine; fines for violations, with criminal penalties for willful violations; and the right of miners to request federal inspections. Soon, the groundbreaking 2 mg. of respirable dust per cubic meter of air rule was adopted, and coal miners were given periodic X-ray exams, with the right to demand less dusty work when black lung (Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis, or CWP) was detected. The 1978 amendments created the Mine Health and Safety Administration (MSHA) within the Department of Labor (DOL) to take charge of mine safety matters, replacing the historically passive Department of the Interior. Proposals in 1978 for safety representatives, chosen by the miners, who would carry out the sampling of respirable dust, were rejected as a radical infringement on property rights.

Title IV of the FCMHSA (amended expansively in 1972 and 1978 and restrictively in 1981) created a federally administered black lung benefits program. The industry promptly challenged its constitutionality and lost in the Supreme Court. Title IV was originally a temporary federal commitment, under which:

- (1) benefits would be paid from government revenues to those older disabled miners and widows still surviving the pre-1970 cover-up and abuse;
- (2) a model adversarial workers' compensation program would then be created, followed by,
- (3) adoption of similar programs by the states.

In practice, the backlog of older miners was too great, and the bureaucracy too unwieldy, to dispose of both rapidly and fairly. Furthermore, epidemiological evidence showed that the disease was more widespread than had been thought, because many miners whose X-rays were negative for the "textbook" picture of CWP nonetheless had coal dust-induced disease—both "classical CWP lesions" and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), which was shown to result from coal dust exposure as well as from smoking.

The states could not rise to the challenge. In 1978, the federal program was made permanent, and the legal definition of pneumoconiosis was amended to include all respiratory disease arising out of coal-mine dust. An industry-financed Trust Fund was established for the older miners, whose last coal-mine work was prior to 1970. Those miners were freed from the opposition of the individual employers to their claims.

Then the 1981 amendments, supported by the coal industry and President Reagan, abolished several of the lenient eligibility provisions that had been won by the continuing vigilance of black lung activists. The approval rate plummeted from a high of 37% to a low of 5%. The decline also resulted from the shrinking number of "Trust Fund" cases and, concomitantly, the growing involvement of individual coal-mine operators. Their armies of well-paid lawyers and medical consultants vastly "outgunned" claimants on fixed incomes, and their appeals against the few claims awarded dragged on for years. In 2000, miners and their advocates won passage by the Clinton Administration of long-sought changes in the DOL's implementing regulations. These rules sought to level the field by limiting the quantity of evidence that could be submitted by employers, and they explicitly recognized the link between COPD and coal dust. The industry filed suit against the regulations and lost, but continued challenging the rules case by case.

One generation into the FCMHSA, mine fatalities have been greatly reduced (only in part because there are far fewer underground miners). Over 600,000 miners and widows have been awarded billions of dollars in benefits, and a network of clinics for diagnosis and treatment has been created. On the other hand, fatal accidents have still not been eliminated, especially at cost-cutting, often nonunion mines. It was revealed, in the late 1990s, that leaving the operators in charge of collecting and submitting dust samples for analysis had resulted in widespread fraud, condemning many miners unnecessarily to future disabling black lung. The problems with dust control added a certain irony regarding the resources—public and private—expended on adversarial battles over

black lung claims, a situation which the 2000 regulations may partly alleviate.

The compensation aspect of the Act, “paying the piper” for years of accumulated neglect, has probably generated the most sustained adversarial conflict. Efforts to use black lung benefits as a model for federally administered compensation of all chronic occupational disease have thus far failed, despite government findings (1978) that 20% of Social Security Disability beneficiaries were disabled because of their jobs, and that only 5% of those with work-related illnesses were receiving state compensation. On the prevention side, the FCMHSA helped break ground for the Occupational Health and Safety Act one year later. Thus, the impact of the Act on coal miners and, to a degree, on workers in general has been substantial.

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See also **Black Lung Associations; Boyle, W. A. Tony; Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act; Miller, Arnold; Miners for Democracy; United Mine Workers of America**

FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

In 1933, the Roosevelt administration unveiled the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) as part of its New Deal economic reform program. Congress allocated \$500 million to fund the program that provided large-scale direct relief to the many unemployed of the Great Depression. The program operated by providing block grants to states, which provided matching funds, allowing states to stretch their limited relief funds greatly. This represented a sharp break with prior policy, as the federal government had previously tended to leave poverty relief to states and had traditionally been extraordinarily hesitant to provide any direct relief whatsoever.

Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Harry Hopkins to head FERA. Hopkins was an enthusiastic supporter of the agency, eager to spend money to alleviate the suffering of those in need, and eventually Hopkins proved to be one of the most popular and influential advisors to Roosevelt. Hopkins sought not only to disburse FERA funds directly to the needy, but also to use FERA as a laboratory to experiment with novel forms of poverty relief.

The agency did not disburse cash in most cases; rather, recipients received coupons to buy necessities like food, fuel, and clothing. Still, from the outset, the idea of giving unearned money to the needy troubled everyone involved in the program, including Hopkins and Roosevelt. Most government officials and local reformers favored a system of earned stipends. Thus, FERA chartered the first of the work relief programs of the New Deal, the Civil Works Administration (or CWA). The CWA put the nation’s unemployed to work building schools, roads, parks, and other public improvements. The CWA eventually employed over 4 million workers. While the CWA was not part of the original legislative intent in creating FERA, it quickly became the most popular part of the program, both for the program’s participants and for those who disapproved of direct government assistance to the poor. There were critics, however. Conservatives saw the CWA as a mass program of busy work. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) feared the CWA’s real potential to undercut union wages, as CWA workers received a bare living stipend. Thus, the union movement would push to make CWA workers paid a prevailing local wage. Overall, union leaders remained

wary of the program, as government work relief had the potential to replace high-paying private sector jobs with low-paying government work relief.

FERA was an enormously popular measure of the Roosevelt administration's New Deal. It greatly expanded the ability of government to provide relief to those most in need, and served as a model for later programs like Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) that provided a more thorough social welfare system. Congress perceived the popularity of the most popular program of FERA, the CWA, and extended it. But Roosevelt and Hopkins both saw government relief as a temporary expedient for relieving poverty. They ended the CWA in the spring of 1934. The program served as the inspiration, however, for later, larger New Deal work relief programs such as the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration.

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FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

The U.S. Congress established the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) with Sections 202–205 of the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947. Taft-Hartley charged the FMCS with preventing strikes, lockouts, and other work stoppages by working to settle labor disputes with mediation and conciliation. Taft-Hartley created the FMCS as an independent organization, separate from the U.S. Department of Labor. Further, the mediation services that the U.S. Department of Labor had provided were transferred to the FMCS.

The FMCS is divided into an Eastern and Western region, which are subdivided into 10 districts and 70 field offices. The national office is in Washington DC. Contact information for the national, regional, and district offices is available on the FMCS Web site (www.fmcs.gov).

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service offers mediation services during collective bargaining negotiations. Any party to a collective bargaining dispute can request that the FMCS provide a free mediator during a contract negotiation. Mediators will attempt to help both sides come to an agreement.

They may make suggestions, but all of their recommendations are nonbinding. In addition to providing mediation during a contract negotiation, the FMCS can also provide grievance mediation. While the FMCS does not mediate routine grievances, it will attempt to mediate chronic problems between employers and employees, with the goal of improving overall workplace relations. The FMCS has turned increasingly toward preventative measures such as grievance mediation to stop labor disputes before they begin.

Federal law requires both employers and unions to notify the FMCS 60 days before they intend to terminate or renegotiate a contract. The FMCS Web site provides an F-7 form to notify the agency about a potential labor dispute. Once the FMCS receives an F-7 form, it will assign a mediator from the nearest regional office. Depending on the circumstances of the negotiations, the mediator could become very involved or relatively uninvolved.

The FMCS also serves as a reference for parties that wish to pursue arbitration. If the parties to a labor dispute choose to submit to arbitration, the FMCS will provide a list of “qualified neutrals” who will hear a case and produce a solution. The FMCS will also produce a panel of seven prospective arbitrators. The two parties to the dispute can then either mutually agree on an arbitrator, or each side can rank the panel by preference. The FMCS will then review the two lists and appoint an arbitrator from the panel. Whereas FMCS mediators make suggestions that either party can choose to adhere to or ignore, a decision produced by an arbitrator is legally binding.

The creation of the FMCS in the Taft-Hartley Act was a part of the broader trend to limit the militancy of labor. The FMCS was also emblematic of the move toward cooperative rather than antagonistic labor relations—which some have praised, and some have seen as hostile toward labor.

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See also Taft-Hartley Act

FERRELL, FRANK Knights of Labor

In the mid-1880s, at the height of the Knights of Labor's strength, Frank Ferrell was the best-known

African-American labor activist in the United States. A native of Brooklyn, New York, and a member of the "Home Club" organization within District Assembly 49 (DA 49), Ferrell burst onto the national scene during the Knights' October 1886 "General Assembly" in Richmond, Virginia. This national convention, only months after a nationwide strike for the eight-hour day and the dramatic Haymarket events in Chicago, attracted press coverage across the country. Reporters, who expected the assemblage of nearly 1,000 delegates to pass historic resolutions on the eight-hour day, strikes, relations between the Knights and trade unions, violence, legal repression, and a call for amnesty for the Haymarket martyrs, instead found issues of race relations (popularly known as "social equality") dominating the gathering's two weeks. And at the center of these issues was Frank Ferrell.

Ferrell traveled to Richmond as the only African-American among DA 49's 60 delegates. In a letter to the *New York Sun* posted just before it left via steamship for Richmond, the delegation pledged to challenge the system of racial segregation that had emerged in the former capital of the Confederacy and many other southern cities. When they arrived in Richmond, they attempted to register in a white-only hotel, where they had made reservations beforehand. When the desk clerk refused Ferrell admission, all 60 delegates walked out and secured lodging in a variety of African-American establishments. This action scandalized the local press, which regaled its readers with daily front-page stories of black and white delegates sharing rooms ("sleeping together") and assertions that such behavior revealed that the Knights stood for "social equality." Some articles even quoted wealthy whites' complaints about a new "impudence" evinced by local African-American servants. The national media echoed such concerns. "Genuine social equality can be witnessed" at one black hotel, reported the *New York Tribune*.

Ferrell and his New York compatriots launched additional challenges to local racial mores. On the steamship that carried them to Richmond, they had met a touring Shakespearean drama troupe on its way to perform *Hamlet* at the nationally recognized Richmond Academy of Music. The thespians gave the labor delegates free tickets to the opening night of the show. All of the tickets were in the traditionally whites-only orchestra section, and Ferrell's insistence, with the support of his allies, that he not be banished to the "colored gallery" occasioned uproar and a near riot. Once again, Ferrell and his colleagues made front-page news, locally and nationally, as purveyors of "social equality."

This perception was given added significance by the decision of Knights' General Master Workman Terence Powderly to invite Ferrell to introduce him to the assemblage at the opening session of the convention. DA 49's leaders had actually asked for more, urging that Ferrell introduce Virginia's governor, Fitzhugh Lee, the nephew of Robert E. Lee and a well-known white supremacist. Unwilling to go quite that far, Powderly did place Ferrell on the stage with Lee and himself, which offered a striking visual image of the labor organization's commitment to racial equality. Ferrell told the audience, "One of the objects of our Order is the abolition of those distinctions which are maintained by creed or color." Powderly's remarks affirmed Ferrell's: "When one that happened to be of a dark skin, of a delegation of some sixty men, could not gain admission to the hotel where accommodations for the delegation had been arranged, rather than separate from that brother, they stood by the principles of our organization which recognizes no color or creed in the division of men." He then explained his selection of Ferrell to introduce him to the General Assembly as evidence that "we practice what we preach."

These actions provoked responses not only in the media, but also in the ranks of the Knights. Some delegates praised Powderly, Ferrell, and DA 49, while others, particularly white southerners, condemned them. The African-American community, including not only members of locals affiliated with Black District Assembly 92 but also political activists, businessmen, and professionals, embraced Ferrell, DA 49, and the Knights. Midway through the convention, a parade saw black participants far outnumber white ones. The thousands of black spectators who lined the parade route led one correspondent to speculate that "the entire colored population of Richmond" was in attendance. A week later, when the General Assembly came to a close, local black activists organized a banquet to honor DA 49 and Frank Ferrell. They packed the hall above a prominent funeral parlor, listened to speeches from local African-American activists, and gave toasts in honor of their guests from New York.

Over the next four years, the Knights of Labor slid down a slope toward overall decline, losing numbers, strength, and power. Interestingly, though, their popularity among African-Americans, especially in the South, even the rural South, actually grew. Frank Ferrell had fired their imaginations, while Terence Powderly and the Knights of Labor had reached out publicly to him in a way that suggested that they did, indeed, practice what they preached.

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See also **Haymarket Affair (1886); Home Club; Knights of Labor**

FILM

At the start of the twentieth century, leisure in the United States was stratified by class and marked by a distinct gulf between high-brow and low-brow entertainments. Movies emerged in the early twentieth century as a primarily working-class pleasure, and working people were simultaneously the primary consumers, producers, and subjects of the early silent films. As nickelodeons and storefront theaters proliferated in American cities, movies quickly surpassed dance halls, vaudeville theaters, amusement parks, and other cheap amusements to become the mainstay of working-class leisure.

During this period, too, the experience of moviegoing was quite different from that of more respectable, high-brow entertainments. Working-class movie audiences were not passive cultural consumers; rather, they actively engaged with the movies and each other. As audiences cheered their heroes and hissed the villains, sang along with the musical accompaniment

or talked amongst themselves, a trip to the movie theater became a distinctly communal and participatory experience and one that contrasted sharply with the regimentation of the workplace. Moviegoing was also critically important in reshaping women's leisure and use of public space. Theaters encouraged women to bring children to the show, and movie houses were a key site for family-centered leisure. Single women, too, were ardent filmgoers, and "movie-struck girls" relied on film images in negotiating new freedoms and gender conventions. For young women and men, movie theaters also offered an ideal space for sociability and new opportunities for romance both on- and off-screen. The appeal of movies crossed racial as well as ethnic and gender lines. Though many theaters remained racially segregated, African-Americans were avid consumers, not only of mainstream movies, but also of "race films," produced by African-American filmmakers specifically for black audiences. Thus, both the content and experience of these early silent films helped to bridge ethnic, religious, gender, and sometimes racial divisions within the laboring population.

In the years before World War I, when relatively little capital was required to produce the one- and two-reel silent shorts, film production was remarkably fluid. Small-scale entrepreneurs, often immigrants, and women (who worked in the film industry in greater numbers and more diverse positions during this period than ever again) vied with established companies like Biograph and Edison to meet the seemingly insatiable demand for movies. Lary May estimates that in 1912, nearly 100 small companies scattered throughout the East and Midwest were involved in film production. The entrepreneurial nature of early film production translated into a complex amalgam of film styles and subjects, ranging from documentaries to melodramas and comedy to romance.

Though film historians continue to debate the significance and extent of class representations in early silent films, many have argued persuasively that these movies exhibited a distinct working-class sensibility. The silent era's slapstick comedies were as popular as they were potentially subversive. Mack Sennett's bumbling Keystone Kops lampooned law and order and police authority, while Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp mocked everything from middle-class pretensions to gender roles to the mechanization of labor. The social realism of Progressive Era art and literature also influenced silent films. As in the paintings of the Ashcan School or the photography of Lewis Hine, images of the modern city, the bustle of street life, and the diversity of working people, predominated

in silent film. The hardships as well as the dignity of working-class life were dramatized in a wide range of movies, from “social problem” films to less politically explicit melodramas and romances. A number of prominent filmmakers shared the Progressive Era’s reform impulse. Lois Weber, for example, used film to explore issues of birth control, divorce, child labor, and capital punishment, while D. W. Griffith—though perhaps better known for his epic defense of white supremacy in *The Birth of a Nation* (1915)—also sympathetically contrasted the exploitation of workers with the decadence of capitalists in *A Corner on Wheat* (1909). Movies like *The Jungle* (1914), an adaptation of Upton Sinclair’s muckraking novel, and *The Blacklist* (1916), which dramatized the Ludlow Massacre of striking mine workers, not only depicted struggles for justice against corrupt bosses and politicians, but also encouraged working-class solidarity.

Steven J. Ross has also identified a thriving pre-World War I worker film movement composed of radical filmmakers, often affiliated with labor organizations or socialist movements. Drawing inspiration and material from the labor struggles of the period, from the 1909 Uprising of the Twenty Thousand to the free speech fights of the Industrial Workers of the World, the movies of the worker film movement emphasized collective action and the power of an organized working class to reform the public sphere. These radical films competed with films produced by conservative business interests, making movies an ideological battleground over representations of labor militancy. Where the worker film movement depicted unionists engaged in rational and peaceful negotiations or social action, the conservative labor films depicted passive workers becoming unruly mobs under the influence of wild-eyed anarchists. Whatever their political perspective, the confrontational class politics in these labor-capital films worked to raise political consciousness and shape audience response to the world of work.

From the beginning, then, movies were broadly understood not simply as entertainment but as a powerful vehicle for shaping public consciousness and behavior. As such, movies quickly became a site of contention for middle-class reformers. While some applauded the democratizing and Americanizing potential of movies, others argued that movies encouraged crime, juvenile delinquency, and sexual promiscuity. Closely linked to the Progressive Era antivice crusades, the campaign against the movies called for the voluntary regulation not only of film content but also of theaters themselves, which were seen as sites of urban disorder and immorality.

The Rise of the Studio System

During the 1920s, the film industry and the movies themselves changed dramatically, as the entrepreneurial mode of production gave way to the studio system. As filmmakers and small production companies struggled to meet the growing demands for longer and more sophisticated films, the pressure to centralize and standardize the production process became overwhelming. Between 1915 and 1930, nearly every aspect of filmmaking was standardized, economized, and regimented, and film production was centralized in the business-friendly frontier town of Hollywood, though the marketing and administrative functions remained in the corporate offices in New York. By 1930, eight vertically integrated companies dominated the film industry, together producing up to 600 full-length features a year.

The consolidation of film production under the Hollywood studio system affected movies and audiences in myriad ways. During the 1920s, studios sought to expand their audience, investing in opulent theaters in more affluent neighborhoods to attract middle-class patrons. These movie palaces helped to make moviegoing respectable and, in the process, significantly changed the ways movies were watched and experienced by audiences of all classes. Ticket prices rose to match the rising costs of film production. The star system spurred higher salaries for actors as well as a full-blown publicity machine to nurture the emerging fan culture around major movie personalities like Clara Bow, the “It” Girl, and “Hollywood’s Sweethearts,” Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. The introduction of talkies in the late 1920s had a significant impact on the film industry as well, requiring the studios not only to retool theaters to accommodate the new technology, but also to recruit and maintain a stable of more sophisticated writers. As the studios’ financial investment in film production soared and each studio produced fewer, more expensive movies each year, box office returns took on an inordinate importance. In sharp contrast to the pre-World War I era, the new studio moguls were less willing to take a chance on controversial subjects or specialized films that seemed unlikely to appeal to a broad audience. Despite—or perhaps because of—their own immigrant and working-class backgrounds, the Hollywood moguls were deeply conservative and antagonistic to the use of movies to raise public consciousness or dramatize social issues. Insisting that movies were simply “entertainment,” Harry Cohn once famously growled, “If you want to send a message, use Western Union.” As movies became the epitome of mass

culture in the 1920s, the worker film movement and the culture of the masses of the pre-World War I era dissipated. Though working people continued to be represented on film, themes of working-class solidarity and collective action gave way to stories of cross-class romance and upward mobility.

This trend held to a great extent through the 1930s, despite the widespread economic dislocation of the Depression and the resurgence of the labor movement under the New Deal. Hollywood's initial response to the Depression was mixed. Hoping to attract the dwindling audience to theaters, the studios offered wildly extravagant entertainments like *Gold Diggers of 1933*, which infused a conventional rags-to-riches romance and glitzy musical numbers (most notably "We're In the Money") with both escapist glamour and a working-class élan. In contrast to the frivolity of much of the film, *Gold Diggers* closes with "Remember My Forgotten Man," which invoked breadlines, homelessness, and the Bonus Marchers. The early 1930s were also the heyday of the fallen woman film and the gangster film, both of which suggested that economic hardship had led to the moral downfall of these protagonists. The backlash against the perceived violence and immorality of these films, however, also spurred the creation of the Production Code Administration (PCA) in 1934 to forestall government regulation and assuage conservative organizations like the Legion of Decency. In its zeal to banish offensiveness from movies, the Code sharply defined the representational parameters of Hollywood films during this period, imposing sharp restrictions on a wide range of issues, primarily sexuality, but also class, race, labor relations, and particularly any negative representation of capital and business.

Thus, the films of the 1930s reflect both the conservatism and self-censorship of the Hollywood studios and the revitalized class consciousness and populist ethos of the New Deal era. On the one hand, movies such as *Black Fury* (1935) and *Black Legion* (1936) depicted labor unions as corrupt institutions that led passive workers astray, while on the other hand, movies like *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) sympathetically dramatized the struggles of working people while gritty films such as *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932) and *Dead End* (1937) suggested the social realist tradition was alive and well. Certainly, class remained a central pre-occupation across film genres, though the overwhelming emphasis in films of the 1930s is on upward mobility, individual success, and personal solutions to political problems. Nonetheless, the cross-class romance theme in screwball comedies like *Easy Living* (1934) or *My Man Godfrey* (1936) offered numerous opportunities to poke fun at the pretensions of the rich and to applaud the

"regular Joe." Both comedies and melodramas of the 1930s also featured the "city boy," epitomized by James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, and John Garfield, and the "wise-cracking dame," epitomized by Rosalind Russell, Myrna Loy, and Barbara Stanwyck, new models of masculinity and femininity that were deeply inflected with a working-class sensibility even when the films in which they appeared elided working-class politics.

A more direct result of the New Deal-era resurgence of labor came in the intense and convoluted struggles to unionize key sectors of the film industry itself. The screenwriters, always the most politicized of the talent workers, led the way, founding the Screen Writers Guild (SWG) in April 1933; the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) followed suit three months later, while the Directors Guild was founded in 1936. The studio moguls fought unionization with belligerence and divisiveness. Though the 1935 National Labor Relations Act authorized collective bargaining, it was ignored by the studios. The threat of an actors' strike two years later finally forced the studios to recognize SAG in 1937. Despite recognition of SWG by the National Labor Relations Board in 1938, the screenwriters battled the studios and the company union, the Screen Playwrights, before a contract agreement was reached in 1941. This bitter and protracted unionization battle between the talent guilds and the studios reinforced the participants' sense of themselves as cultural *workers* and gave birth to a highly politicized left-liberal cadre in Hollywood.

These progressive filmmakers were key players in the New Deal-era "laboring of American culture" described by Michael Denning. Despite the creative and political constraints imposed by the studio heads and the PCA censors, Hollywood progressives consistently attempted to address issues of class and labor, with varied success. Ironically, perhaps, film radicals gained a new legitimacy during World War II, as the studios drew upon their political expertise to produce hundreds of films depicting the threat of fascism and explaining "why we fight" to American moviegoers. Nonetheless, with the oversight of the Office of War Information, which declared a moratorium on social problem filmmaking for the duration, Hollywood representations of class and labor were largely refracted through the lens of patriotic Americanism. Films depicting the home front emphasized the contributions of laboring men and women to the war effort, while war films depicted military units as cross-class microcosms of the American melting pot fighting to preserve the American way of life.

The immediate postwar period in Hollywood witnessed a volatile jurisdictional struggle between Hollywood craft unions, as the left-liberal Conference

of Studio Unions (CSU) battled unsuccessfully against the mob-controlled International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. Two protracted CSU strikes between 1945 and 1947, marked by red-baiting and violent clashes between strikers and studio police, augured both the burgeoning anti-Communist climate and the breakdown of the left-liberal coalition of the Popular Front period. As Lary Ceplair and Ken Englund suggest, the conservatism of the studios' postwar agenda was signaled as early as 1945, when Eric Johnston, the new head of the Motion Picture Producers Association, announced to a meeting of the Screen Writers Guild, "We'll have no more *Grapes of Wrath*, we'll have no more *Tobacco Roads*, we'll have no more films that deal with the seamy side of American life. We'll have no more films that treat the banker as a villain." Nonetheless, Hollywood progressives greeted the postwar period with enthusiasm, eager to tackle the domestic social problems that had been discouraged by the Office of War Information during the patriotic frenzy of the war years. Postwar films like *Crossfire* (1947) and *Gentleman's Agreement* (1947) indicted American anti-Semitism while *Pinky* (1949), *Home of the Brave* (1949), and others explored the problem of racism. This flurry of progressive filmmaking was cut dramatically short, however, by the postwar investigations into subversion in the film industry by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which resulted in the blacklisting of the Hollywood 10 in 1947 and hundreds more Hollywood leftists during a second round of hearings in the early 1950s.

The Postblacklist Period

With Hollywood's postwar attack on domestic social problems derailed by the HUAC investigations, dissent—particularly around issues of class—in 1950s films merely seeped through the cracks of the Cold War consensus, confined largely to *film noir*, with its sordid settings, paranoid protagonists, and existential despair, and to juvenile delinquency films like *The Blackboard Jungle* and *The Wild Ones* (as well as a whole slew of B films), featuring alienated, angry youths rebelling against a conformist adult world. During this period, blacklisted producer Adrian Scott identified several troubling trends in Hollywood filmmaking: a postwar cycle of anti-Communist films (which bombed at the box office), films glorifying the American businessman and the capitalist order, and films glorifying the military might of the United States. Most disturbing to him, however, was that, in the vacuum created by the blacklisting of radical

cultural workers, liberal filmmakers abandoned social and economic causality and wholeheartedly embraced the individualistic, psychological solutions of the postwar therapeutic culture.

The widespread affluence and decline of labor militancy in the Eisenhower years also re-inforced the notion that the problem of class in America had finally been solved. In this context, sympathetic or overtly political images of the labor movement and working-class people were few and far between. Nonetheless, Judith E. Smith points to the persistence of an ethnic or working-class sensibility in a handful of films she describes as "everyman's love stories": *Born Yesterday* (1950), *Marty* (1955), *The Marrying Kind* (1952), and *A Raisin in the Sun* (1961). In contrast, *On the Waterfront* (1954) resurrected earlier images of corrupt unions and powerless workers, and in the wake of director Elia Kazan's decision to name names to HUAC, raised troubling questions about labor solidarity and the politics of informing. One striking exception to this trend was *Salt of the Earth* (1953). Produced outside the studio system on a shoestring budget by a handful of blacklistedees, the film dramatized a strike by Latino mine workers in New Mexico. Though distribution of the film was blocked in the 1950s by the major studios and the anti-Communist network, *Salt of the Earth* was rediscovered in the 1970s and praised for its progressive treatment of gender and race as well as its powerful evocation of labor solidarity.

Despite the collapse of the studio system and the resurgence of progressive political movements in the 1960s and 1970s, the New Hollywood, built by independent production companies, powerful agents, and multi-industry conglomerates, did little for the representation of the labor movement and the working class. Though certainly a number of Hollywood films from this period, such as *Norma Rae* (1979), *Bound for Glory* (1976), and *Silkwood* (1983), offered sympathetic portrayals of working-class consciousness and the possibilities of collective action, for the most part, Hollywood continued to depict unions as cynical and corrupt in such films as *F.I.S.T.* (1978), *Blue Collar* (1978), and *Hoffa* (1990). Since the 1980s, a number of independent filmmakers have offered exceptionally progressive labor films, including John Sayles' *Matewan* (1987), a dramatization of cross-race solidarity in a 1920s West Virginia coal strike, as well as Ken Loach's *Bread and Roses* (2000), which depicts the struggles of two Latina immigrant sisters to win justice for janitors. Perhaps the most significant film representations of working-class life and labor since the 1970s have come from documentary filmmakers, from Barbara Koppel's *Harlan County, USA* (1976) and *American Dream* (1991) to Michael Moore's

Roger and Me (1989) and *The Big One* (1997). Though the New Hollywood offers increasing opportunities for independent filmmakers, the future of labor and film remains to be seen.

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FINNS

The Finnish presence in North America dates to the 1600s, when Swedish colonizers relied on Finns for their skills as woodsmen. Though Finns were few in number, historians have argued that they set the pattern of colonial backwoods homesteading. After this initial foray, the Finnish migrant stream dried to a trickle until the high tide of Finnish immigration came on suddenly at the turn of the twentieth century, when hundreds of thousands joined the millions of New Immigrants then filling the ranks of the industrial workforce of the United States. Immigrant Finns confronted racism, nativism, grinding work,

and horrible conditions, but they organized and confronted these obstacles with a unique brand of ethnic radicalism that persisted through the conservative 1920s into the post-World War II era.

“America Fever” began in the extreme northern part of Finland in the 1860s. Michigan’s Upper Peninsula drew large numbers of Finns after a copper company recruited a number of them to work its mines. These miners sent word home, and the urge to move west spread to more populous industrialized regions of Finland, themselves undergoing economic and industrial transformations that displaced thousands of farmers and workers. In all, some 350,000 Finns, one ninth of the total population of Finland in 1900, left for the United States, the vast majority arriving between 1900 and 1914. From the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Finns spread out to settle in the Northeast, the Upper Midwest, the Mountain West, and the Pacific Northwest, drawn to jobs through transatlantic networks of kin, community, and friendship. With the development of Minnesota’s Mesabi and Cuyuna Iron Ranges in the late 1890s, large numbers of Finns moved there, and within a short time most Iron Range communities possessed their own “Finntowns,” pejoratively dismissed as “Pig Towns” or “Finn Hells” by some of their neighbors. By 1920, almost 150,000 Finns lived in northern Minnesota alone, but Finnish enclaves could be found in mining communities across the American West.

Finnish miners faced harsh lives in the raw, undeveloped mining towns of the Midwest and West. A few miners lived in company towns—model villages of trim cottages and clean streets—but in Minnesota, most lived in “locations,” temporary towns built in close proximity to mines that could be easily moved should the mining companies wish to extract the underlying ore. Though some of these locations were relatively clean, most were ramshackle and squalid affairs thrown up by residents with little or no assistance from the companies. In addition to their refusal to concern themselves with the living conditions of employees, mining companies in Michigan, Minnesota, and western states like Montana and Arizona kept costs low by refusing to pay for safety devices in the mines, employing industrial spies to discourage unions, ethnically and racially segmenting their workforces to keep wages down, and using brutal strikebreaking tactics when necessary. Finns also faced virulent racism and nativism encouraged by companies, which in one instance in Minnesota tried to have some Finn union organizers deported as “Mongolians.”

While many Finns arrived in the United States already radicalized by events in Europe, especially those who arrived from the urban areas of Finland

after the abortive 1905 Revolution in Russia, most joined unions as a result of the conditions they encountered in the mines; Finnish miners embraced labor radicalism in this hostile environment. Though not all Finns joined radical labor unions—there were strong divisions between Church Finns (deeply religious men and women also known as “white” Finns or Temperance Finns) and the radials (“Red” Finns)—they nevertheless gained a reputation for a propensity toward radicalism wherever they worked. Finns spearheaded organizing efforts with the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the mining regions of Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, and Arizona, though the locus of their activity remained in the Upper Midwest.

Finnish immigrant miners first distinguished themselves in the 1907 strike against Minnesota iron-mining companies, an industry dominated by a U.S. Steel subsidiary, the Oliver Mining Company. Iron miners suffered from lower pay than their native-born coworkers. They had to pay the cost of materials like tools and explosives. The work season forced them to shift for themselves over the long winter months, when Lake Superior shipping routes were icebound. Most important, miners complained of a dismal record of safety in the underground mines. When the Western Federation of Miners began to organize on the Range, Finns proved to be eager and enthusiastic members, and when a wildcat strike broke out at a Range sawmill in the summer of 1907, Finns quickly turned it into a general strike against the mine companies. The companies fought back and imported Eastern European strikebreakers, blacklisted hundreds of Finnish miners, and induced local merchants to cut off the credit of striking miners. By the end of the summer, the strike had been defeated. Finnish miners responded in a number of ways: some left the Range for other mining regions—notably in the Mountain West—while those who remained formed cooperative stores (many of which survived into the 1950s) and flocked to the Industrial Workers of the World.

This pattern repeated itself again in a 1913 strike against Michigan’s copper mines that involved almost 15,000 copper miners, most of them Finns, who struck for 265 days before giving in to company pressure. As in Minnesota, companies turned to strikebreakers, threats of violence, and blacklists. In the 1916 Mesabi Iron Range strike, Finns again took leadership roles and turned their extensive network of Finn Halls into headquarters for IWW organizing efforts. One-time strikebreakers from Italy, Russia, Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro joined the Finns to demand equal pay, better and safer conditions, and more benefits. The Oliver Mining Company recruited over a thousand

armed guards and engaged in a systematic campaign of threats and violence to suppress this strike of some 20,000 miners, ultimately instituting one of the most extensive industrial spy networks in the country, which effectively forestalled future strikes.

The decline of iron and copper mining and the consequences of immigration restriction in the 1920s took their toll on the once-flourishing Finnish enclaves. Finns still constitute a visible ethnic presence where they settled the most thickly, however. Snatches of Finnish polkas can yet be heard in the backyards of western mining towns like Butte, Montana, and distinctive blue-and-white bumper stickers bearing slogans like “*Suomi* (Finland) Power” and “*Sisu*” (Strength) can be seen across Michigan’s Upper Peninsula and in northern Minnesota, proclaiming the tenacious ethnic pride of local residents.

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FITZPATRICK, JOHN (1871–1946) President, Chicago Federation of Labor

John Fitzpatrick was one of the most important Chicago labor leaders in the first half of the twentieth

century, and was also a national leader of what historian John Keiser labeled “progressive unionism” between 1915 and 1925.

Born in Ireland, Fitzpatrick came to America in 1882 following the death of both of his parents. He found work in Chicago’s stockyards, and in the wake of the labor unrest in 1886 in favor of the eight-hour day, Fitzpatrick joined the International Union of Journeymen Horseshoers of the United States and Canada and the Blacksmiths, Drop Forgers and Helpers Union. He held a number of positions within these unions, including business agent, treasurer, and president. The office for which he is best known, however, was the presidency of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), which he held from 1904 until his death, from a heart attack, in 1946, with one short interruption.

Fitzpatrick won the CFL presidency through the efforts of local progressives and municipal reformers, including the recently formed Chicago Teachers Federation. In fact, Fitzpatrick represented one of the best efforts at combining progressive reform and labor activism. Nevertheless, Fitzpatrick’s program was ultimately a failure, and by 1925, he was forced to repudiate many of the reforms he had fought for. To a large extent, this failure was a result of the structural difficulties inherent in progressive unionism, particularly the need to steer between the extremes of Gompers-style trade unionism on the right and revolutionary socialism on the left. When the strength of the left began to decline in the 1920s, Fitzpatrick was easily tarred by his “conservative” opponents within the American Federation of Labor (AFL) for his closeness to socialists and Communists like William Z. Foster.

Fitzpatrick was instrumental in two major organizing campaigns, the drive to unionize the Chicago stockyards in 1917 and the national steel strike in 1919. In both campaigns Fitzpatrick, along with Foster, his friend and ally, pioneered the notion of “federated” unionism, a position halfway between the trade unionism advocated by the AFL and the more radical industrial unionism called for by groups like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Drawing on the example of the railroad brotherhoods, under federated unionism an umbrella organization was created that contained delegates from all of the trades present in a given industry. This organization would then coordinate organizing activities for the industrywide organizing campaign, while the international unions would retain their authority over collective bargaining.

Federated unionism was initially successful in both campaigns. The Stockyards Labor Council and the National Committee for Organizing Iron and Steel Workers (both of which were chaired by Fitzpatrick), the umbrella organizations in the stockyards and

steel campaigns, respectively, managed to temporarily head off jurisdictional disputes between the various trade unions involved in the campaigns, and considerable numbers of workers were organized. Both campaigns, however, were ultimately defeats for the labor movement. While much of the blame has been placed on the growing business intransigence toward unions after the war and the conservative, antilabor consensus that began to dominate in the 1920s, the inability of the various trade unions to cooperate long-term also played a major role in the campaigns’ defeats. In the stockyards, for instance, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters withdrew from the Stockyards Labor Council and attempted to claim the newly organized packing-house workers for itself, precipitating the defeat of the federated unionism attempt. Nevertheless, Fitzpatrick and Foster’s attempts at federated unionism served as one of the important precursors to the wave of industrial unionism under the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) that occurred in the 1930s.

Fitzpatrick was also closely involved with the American Labor Party movement, which arose in the aftermath of World War I. The Chicago Federation of Labor created one of the earliest of these labor parties in 1918, and Fitzpatrick and the CFL were instrumental in creating the Illinois State Labor Party as well as the national Farmer-Labor Party in 1920. Fitzpatrick himself ran for office twice on the Labor Party ticket, first for the Chicago mayoralty in 1919 and then for United States senator in 1920. The various labor parties, however, largely failed to appeal to workers, and the Labor Party’s share of the vote steadily declined after its founding. In an attempt to broaden its appeal, Fitzpatrick advocated amalgamating the Labor Party with other independent political movements, including the National Non-Partisan League, an organization of small farmers. This union led to the creation of the Farmer-Labor Party in 1920.

Unfortunately for the Labor Party movement, Fitzpatrick decided to extend his attempts at amalgamation to include a number of small left-wing and socialist parties. Among these was the Workers Party, which was, at the time, the secret, aboveground arm of the American Communist Party. In 1923, William Z. Foster, who had by then become a member of the Communist Party, betrayed his former ally, Fitzpatrick, and helped pack the July Farmer-Labor Party convention with Communists. Foster succeeded, and a new party, the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, controlled by the Communists, was created. This split created a great deal of confusion and led to the decline of the Farmer-Labor movement outside of Minnesota.

Fitzpatrick and his progressive unionism had long been a thorn in the side of Samuel Gompers, and the head of the AFL took the Farmer-Labor debacle as an

opportunity to re-assert his control over Fitzpatrick and the CFL. During the 1923 AFL convention, a resolution favoring independent political action on the part of labor was soundly defeated. This turn of events, along with consistent pressure from Gompers, left Fitzpatrick to choose between abandoning his advocacy for the Labor Party and other progressive causes or leaving the AFL. Lacking an independent base of support outside of his position in the CFL, Fitzpatrick chose to remain within the AFL and moderate his positions. He remained a major labor leader on the Chicago scene for the next 20 years, although his role as a national labor leader waned with the defeat of progressive unionism.

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See also **Chicago Federation of Labor**

FITZSIMMONS, FRANK E. (1906–1981) President, Teamsters Union

Succeeding James R. Hoffa as the leader of the largest union in the United States, Frank E. Fitzsimmons had originally been appointed as a caretaker, who would hold his predecessor's place during his jail term. But the unassuming Fitzsimmons made this position his own and led the Teamsters through a period of continued growth and controversy from 1967 to 1981.

Fitzsimmons was born in Jeannette, Pennsylvania, a small town outside of Pittsburgh. The family later moved to Detroit, and at age 16, with his father ailing, Fitzsimmons left school to begin working in a local factory. He eventually became a long-haul truck driver and through that job joined the Teamsters Union in 1934. His fellow drivers elected him to the post of shop steward, and through that position he met Hoffa, then an ambitious business agent for a Teamsters local in Detroit. With Hoffa's support, Fitzsimmons steadily progressed up the union's ranks, becoming a business agent in Hoffa's Local 299 in 1937, and then vice president of the local in 1940. By 1961, Fitzsimmons was elected thirteenth vice

president of the national Teamsters union, making him a member of its ruling General Executive Board. As a trusted Hoffa loyalist, but also one whose ambitions and abilities seemed limited, Fitzsimmons became Hoffa's choice to lead the union in his place when he faced the certainty of a prison sentence. In 1966, Hoffa convinced the union's convention to create a new position, general vice president, who would be empowered to lead the union in the general president's stead. Hoffa then supported Fitzsimmons's election to that new post. The next year, in 1967, when Hoffa began serving a 13-year jail sentence, Fitzsimmons assumed the role that Hoffa had created for him.

But Fitzsimmons soon proved himself to be more than a mere placeholder for Hoffa. As general vice president, he ran the union in his own way, telling other members of the General Executive Board that he would let local and regional Teamster leaders operate with more autonomy, thus reversing Hoffa's policy of centralization within the union. That policy, as well as the solid gains Fitzsimmons won in national trucking industry contract negotiations in 1967 and 1970, helped him build up a core of his own supporters. When Hoffa, in an effort to win parole, resigned all of his union offices in 1971, Fitzsimmons was unanimously elected general president by the Teamsters convention in 1971.

In some ways, the union prospered during his leadership. Membership grew from 1.6 million in 1967 to 2.1 million by 1975, and wages and benefits increased steadily. But the union remained notorious for its corruption and its alleged connections to organized crime. That notoriety was only further heightened by the disappearance in 1975 of Hoffa, widely believed to have been killed by the Mafia. Like his predecessors, Fitzsimmons took no real constructive action to deal with the problem of corruption, limiting himself to indignant attacks on the union's critics. He died in office in 1981, a victim of lung cancer.

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See also **Hoffa, James R.; International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

FIVE-DOLLAR DAY

In a decisive series of industrial and technical innovations, Ford factory managers, engineers, and others

developed sequential methods of mass production in the Highland Park Plant between 1910 and 1914. Then, in January 1914, Henry Ford astounded the nation when he announced that the Ford Motor Company would pay its workers the then unheard-of sum of \$5.00 a day, about double the existing rate for factory work. *The Wall Street Journal* proclaimed that Ford was a “traitor to the capitalist class,” since his announcement would destroy prevailing wage rates. The Socialist *Milwaukee Leader* praised Ford for the “large melon” that he offered to American workers. Workers from around the nation swarmed into Detroit in an effort to obtain the Ford jobs with the big wages. On a freezing January day, Ford officials turned fire hoses on workers who massed at the factory gates and who sought the Ford jobs that paid the big money.

The famous Five-Dollar Day was much more complicated than simply a generous increase in the wages of Ford automobile workers. It was a grand experiment in welfare capitalism rooted in the transformation of production and intended to fashion the new worker for progressive or line production in the mechanized Ford plant. It arose from Henry Ford’s desire to produce the extremely popular “motorcar for the great multitude,” from the modern production methods to satisfy the huge demand for the Model T Ford, and from the need to instill the necessary work and industrial discipline in the habits and culture of a largely unskilled immigrant workforce.

In the recently mechanized Ford plant, mass production truly revolutionized the nature of factory work and the social composition of the workforce. The most salient feature of the Fordist work regime was the drastic removal of skill in factory work. At their machines and on the assembly lines, work became simplified, routinized, and monotonous. Far fewer skilled and semiskilled workers were required for the actual production of automobiles. Large numbers of unskilled Southern and Eastern immigrants replaced the more skilled Northern European and American-born workers. But this new immigrant workforce, a majority from pre-industrial parts of Europe, did not have the industrial skills and work discipline for modern factory work.

As mass production unfolded, absenteeism and labor turnover soared in the newly constructed Highland Park Plant. By 1913, absenteeism averaged 10% of the workforce through the week; turnover reached an astonishing 360%. In other words, an average of 1,500 extra workers needed to be hired each day to work at machines and to maintain production. Or each year, Ford personnel managers needed to hire around 54,000 workers to ensure a workforce of 15,000. In many

ways, Ford workers expressed their widespread dissatisfaction with tedious and repetitious jobs at machines and on assembly lines. In addition to high rates of absenteeism and turnover, they soldiered and malingered, restricted output, and began expressing an interest in various forms of unionism. Ford officials sorely needed some mechanism to stabilize, regularize, and reward its largely immigrant labor force.

Consequently, Ford and his factory managers instituted the now famous Five-Dollar Day. This was not a wage increase but rather a sophisticated profit-sharing scheme to reshape the habits and culture of a largely immigrant workforce. Under this unique scheme, a worker’s daily compensation was divided into two parts—wages (approximately \$2.40 for an unskilled worker) and profits (about \$2.60). All workers received their wages for the tasks that they performed in the mechanically and organizationally controlled work environment of the Highland Park Plant. In order to receive their profits, they needed to prove their “worthiness” and demonstrate what Ford officials labeled “right living.” Developed in the Progressive Era, when social reformers believed that a good environment produced good people, Ford and his associates felt that a good home created good habits, which in turn generated good workers.

To implement this innovative program, Ford officials created the Sociological Department (later called the Educational Department) to ensure that Ford workers were worthy and lived according to the appropriate Ford standards. Almost immediately after the Five-Dollar Day’s announcement, Ford officials established a staff of more than 100 investigators to examine a Ford worker’s production figures, to investigate a worker’s home conditions and habits, and to assess whether or not the worker merited Ford profits. Embedded in the Sociological Department standards were distinct American and lower-middle-class values. The Ford investigators approved profits for hard workers who lived with their families in neat and clean homes and who neither stayed out late, drank alcohol, nor smoked. If a worker did not meet these criteria, the investigator typically allowed six months for the reform of living conditions and work habits or recommended dismissal. For approved workers, the investigators conducted follow-up visits to ensure that they did not become backsliders.

As part of the acculturation to modern factory work, Ford officials also established the Ford English School for non-English-speaking workers. Meeting after work hours, foremen instructed laborers in the rudiments of the English language, the proper industrial habits and work discipline, and the skills needed in a modern industrial society. In addition to

FIVE-DOLLAR DAY

procuring the advice of investigators and establishing English School instructors, Ford labor managers produced lavishly illustrated pamphlets and brochures that provided detailed information on how best to satisfy the Ford requirements and to receive the Five-Dollar Day.

Over the short term, the Five-Dollar Day was enormously successful. Workers simply accepted the trade-off of high wages for boring and degraded work. The technical advantage of progressive production allowed Ford to pay the high level of compensation. Absenteeism and labor turnover fell to more reasonable and manageable levels. Those workers who resented the encroachment into their personal lives moved on to other less-intrusive firms. With the high “wage,” Ford was able to select and to skim off the cream of the Detroit workforce to work in the Highland Park Plant.

But over the long term, other Detroit automobile firms soon adopted the Ford technical innovations and also increased their workers’ pay. In the same time, wartime inflation eroded the incentive to change worker attitudes and values. At the end of the First World War, a Ten-Dollar Day would be needed to provide the same financial incentive. Moreover, against the background of postwar labor activism, Ford labor policies became more brutal in the wake of the antiunion offensive known as the American Plan. By the 1920s, the Sociological or Educational Department transmuted into Harry Bennett’s notorious Service Department, which took the lead in Ford labor relations and which created a harsh regime of factory spies and shop-floor thugs to monitor and discipline underperforming and dissident Ford workers.

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FLETCHER, BENJAMIN HARRISON (1890–1949) Industrial Workers of the World

Benjamin Harrison Fletcher was an important African-American labor activist in the most influential radical union of the early twentieth century, when few blacks

were permitted in unions and fewer still belonged to left-wing organizations. Fletcher helped lead the largest, most powerful, and longest-lasting interracial union of the era, Local 8, which was Philadelphia’s longshore union belonging to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), nicknamed the Wobblies.

Fletcher began his career in the IWW as a young man. Born in Philadelphia in 1890, Fletcher seemed a typical young black man, working as a day laborer and longshoreman. One of the better jobs a black man could find in early twentieth-century Philadelphia was longshoring, which involved the loading and unloading of ships. Around 1912, he joined the IWW and the Socialist Party. It is not known how he became radicalized; presumably, he heard Wobbly soapbox speakers address working-class audiences in his riverside neighborhood. Fletcher became a local activist, beginning a long career in public speaking that won him many accolades for his fine voice and incisive arguments for overthrowing capitalism, the goal of both Wobblies and Socialists.

Fletcher was the most prominent member of Local 8. In May 1913, thousands of longshoremen struck for better wages and union recognition: their new union, the IWW; their best-known leader, Fletcher. Local 8 and Fletcher seemed to prove one of the Wobblies’ central tenets: race was used to divide workers who shared a more important identity, that of class. While this notion is hotly debated, Local 8 undeniably proved that interracial unionism was possible, and arguably essential, to working-class might.

However, that power did not last, and Fletcher, again, proved central. As America formally entered World War I, Philadelphia became one of the nation’s most important ports. Though they engaged in but a single work stoppage (Local 8’s birth was celebrated annually with a one-day strike), the government targeted Local 8’s leaders in its national raids on the IWW. Fletcher was the only African-American among the hundred Wobblies tried for treason in 1918. Though no evidence ever was provided against Fletcher, Local 8, or even the IWW (most “evidence” was statements of the IWW’s anticapitalist beliefs, not any planned actions to interrupt the war effort), all of the defendants were found guilty. Fletcher’s punishment was 10 years in the federal penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas, and an astronomical \$30,000 fine. As the sentences were announced, the Wobbly leader William D. “Big Bill” Haywood reported, “Ben Fletcher sidled over to me and said: ‘The Judge has been using very ungrammatical language.’ I looked at his smiling black face and asked: ‘How’s that, Ben?’ He said: ‘His sentences are much too long.’” Fletcher’s release became a celebrated cause among black radicals, championed by *The Messenger*, a monthly

coedited by A. Philip Randolph. Fletcher served around three years, pardoned along with most other Wobblies in 1922.

After his release, Fletcher remained committed to IWW precepts, though he never played as active a role, especially after Local 8 collapsed amid a brutal lockout in late 1922. Fletcher briefly organized the Philadelphia Longshoremen's Union but rejoined the IWW by 1925, though Local 8 never resumed its former influence. He occasionally gave speeches, on tours and street corners, into the 1930s. Fletcher's health failed while he was still young, typical for longshoremen, and he suffered a stroke in his 40s. In the 1930s, he rolled cigars, moved to New York with his wife, and managed a small apartment building owned by a fellow old-time Wobbly, before dying in 1949.

Fletcher was unique as a black leader in the IWW. The union that he helped lead for a decade, Local 8, stands at the pinnacle of interracial equality in the Progressive Era. Widely acclaimed while alive, he is now largely forgotten, although his legacy of working-class power and racial equality lives on.

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See also **Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Industrial Workers of the World**

FLYNN, ELIZABETH GURLEY (1890–1964)

Industrial Workers of the World, Communist Party of the United States

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, nicknamed the "Rebel Girl," remains one of the premier female radicals in U.S. history. An activist while still a teenager (hence her nom de plume), Flynn remained committed to the Left for 60 years. As a leader of both the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the Communist

Party of the United States of America (CPUSA), Flynn deserves the attention she has received.

Born into an Irish-American family, Flynn learned her politics and activism from her parents, both of whom were socialists. Flynn's father also was involved in the struggle for Irish independence, and thus steeped his daughter in a transatlantic world of resistance. Not surprisingly, Flynn became a socialist. Famously, Flynn gave her first public speech, titled "Women under Socialism," at 15.

Shortly thereafter, Flynn joined and became a leader of the soon-legendary IWW, often called the Wobblies. Like many of her time, she felt that the Wobblies were the leading organization in an era of revolutionary change that soon would occur. She became a much-sought-after public speaker, traveling nationwide to spread the IWW gospel of industrial unionism, direct action tactics, and socialism. She spoke in countless towns to untold numbers of workers, often the only woman present. Flynn took part in many a strike but none more famous than the 1912 Lawrence, Massachusetts, "Bread and Roses" affair. After the first Wobbly leaders were arrested on false murder charges, Flynn and "Big Bill" Haywood took the reins, leading 25,000 textile workers, mostly immigrant women, to a stunning victory. Flynn helped a young Margaret Sanger to organize the much-publicized "Children's Crusade," which sent children of strikers to sympathetic families across the Northeast. After she visited with him in his Utah jail cell, where he sat on a still-controversial murder conviction, Joe Hill, the famous bard of the IWW, wrote a song about Flynn called "The Rebel Girl."

Flynn was the author of the controversial pamphlet "Sabotage," written in 1913 during a Paterson, New Jersey, silk strike. The use of the term "sabotage" typically is presumed to suggest violence, but Wobblies took it to mean slowing down on the job, in order to pressure employers to concede demands by hitting them in the pocketbook. In that pamphlet's preamble, Flynn wrote, "Sabotage is to this class struggle what the guerrilla warfare is to the battle. The strike is the open battle of the class struggle, sabotage is the guerrilla warfare, the day-by-day warfare between two opposing classes."

When World War I erupted, most Wobblies took an antiwar stand, though the organization as a whole did not; yet despite this official nonposition, the IWW—Flynn included—came under government attack. When 166 leaders of the IWW were arrested nationwide, Flynn was the only female in the bunch. Due to her prominence, Flynn had more options (read: wealthy supporters) than most of the accused. She split with the other defendants, believing that the only way to get a fair trial was to have individual



Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Dr. Mary Engi(?), R. Marsh(?), and Helen Schuster walking side by side on sidewalk. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-55896].

ones; by contrast, most stood together *en masse* in a single trial of 100 defendants. Flynn was found innocent, while the entire large group was found guilty. In the process, Flynn incurred the wrath of many fellow Wobblies.

Just as she was active in IWW free speech fights in the 1910s, Flynn was at the forefront of the international cause célèbre of the 1920s, the fight to save Sacco and Venzetti, two Italian-born anarchists sentenced to die by the state of Massachusetts. Along with many other leftists, anarchists, and civil libertarians, Flynn championed their case until they were executed in 1927.

In 1937, Flynn joined the CPUSA, which was at the height of its influence in U.S. history. She quickly took charge of the Women's Commission for the next decade. She ran for U.S. Congress, as a Communist, in 1942, and won 50,000 votes, championing the most oppressed Americans, whom she identified at that time to be African-American women. Flynn was one of the leaders of the CPUSA and recognized as the premier woman in it.

During the high point of domestic anticommunism during the early years of the Cold War, many Communists were imprisoned, and Flynn led the fight for their release. Flynn herself was arrested under the Smith Act in 1951, and then ran for Congress again, this time from a jail cell. Her campaign slogan was, "Vote No! to McCarthyism. For Peace and Jobs! Amnesty for all." Flynn served three years in the Alderson Women's Federal Prison in West Virginia.

Later in life, at the age of 65, Flynn wrote her autobiography, *I Speak My Own Piece*, now seen as a masterpiece among those interested in women of the Left.

She continued to suffer from persecution because of her political affiliations. In 1961, she was elected chairperson of the CPUSA. In January 1962, the State Department revoked Flynn's passport, as well as several other Communists'. Flynn protested that denying citizens the ability to leave the country freely because of their political beliefs was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court ruled in Flynn's favor in 1964. Subsequently, Flynn returned to the Soviet Union, where she died. The Soviet Union held an official state funeral for her. Communists from across the world mourned her passing.

Though she became gray-haired and a Communist, many considered her the "rebel girl" of Joe Hill's song and a Wobbly. As the *New York Times* reported in its front-page obituary, Flynn remained true to her beliefs to the end: still dreaming of a socialist America and world. For more than 50 years, Flynn worked with most of the leading, radical lights of the American labor movement: "Big Bill" Haywood, Gene Debs, Mother Jones, Joe Hill, Frank Little, Earl Browder, and many more. As with the remains of the Haymarket martyrs and her fellow Wobbly-turned-Communist Haywood, Flynn's remains are buried at Chicago's famous Waldheim Cemetery.

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FONER, MOE (AUGUST 3, 1915– JANUARY 10, 2002) 1199/SEIU, New York’s Health and Human Service Union

Moe Foner was 1199/Service Employees International Union (SEIU), New York’s Health and Human Service Union’s longtime executive secretary and campaign strategist, whose public relations efforts helped establish 1199 as the nation’s first union for employees in private, nonprofit hospitals.

Born in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, the son of Russian and Polish immigrants, Foner was the third of four boys. His older brothers, the twins Jack and Phil, became well known as college teachers and as authors of numerous publications on American labor and black history. His younger sibling, Henry, was president of the Fur and Leather Workers Union in New York.

Joining and then also managing his brothers’ band in his teen years, Foner discovered both radical politics and an ability to orchestrate diverse talents. Moe attended Brooklyn College, where, in 1934, he joined the Young Communist League. After graduating, he worked in the registrar’s office at City College of New York (CCNY). In 1941, Moe and Phil, along with some 50 other CCNY employees, were fired as a result of investigations by the Rapp-Courdert committee, which had been created by the New York State legislature to purge alleged Communists from the government.

Foner married Anne Berman in 1941. He was drafted into the army during World War II and served as a commissary clerk on Governor’s Island, New York. After the war, as the education director for Department Store Local 1250, Foner staged *Thursdays ’Til Nine*, a musical review based on the job experiences of store workers, some of whom also performed in the show. For Foner, union-produced cultural programs were neither “fluff” nor a diversion

from labor’s bread-and-butter concerns. Such events served as a vital link, beyond dues paying and contract gains, between the union and its members.

In 1950, Local 1250 was absorbed into District 65, Wholesale and Warehouse Workers Union. An intense internal struggle developed within 65 over the Taft-Hartley Act’s requirement that labor officers sign non-Communist affidavits. Foner, caught in the middle of the dispute, left in 1952 to join the staff of Local 1199, Retail Drug Employees Union, as activities director and editor of *1199 News*. In the late 1950s, Leon Davis, president of 1199, recruited Elliot Godoff, a pharmacist and skilled organizer, to launch a union campaign among workers in New York City’s voluntary, not-for-profit hospitals. Foner’s effective marshaling of support from prominent public figures like Eleanor Roosevelt and his ability to enlist hard-bitten news reporters to cover the strike were critical to the success of the union’s first major effort, at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx, New York. For his efforts as a labor publicist in this campaign, Foner received the Silver Anvil Award from the American Public Relations Association.

Firmly entrenched in New York City, 1199 secured a breakthrough contract in 1968 establishing a \$100-per-week minimum salary for its members. The following year, attempting to build on its success in the New York metropolitan area, the union launched a “union power, soul power” national campaign in Charleston, South Carolina. Four years later, after successful efforts in Philadelphia and defeats in some other cities, 1199 established itself as the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees. In each of these union drives, Foner orchestrated public support of 1199 from civil rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King (who described 1199 as “my favorite union”), Bayard Rustin, and A. Philip Randolph, and from labor movement leaders such as Harry Van Arsdale, president of the Central Labor Council, and Walter Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers.

With Davis’s health deteriorating, issues of succession and merger dominated 1199 in the 1980s, leading to an internal rift in 1982 between the New York metropolitan area local and the national union. Under the leadership of Dennis Rivera, who became president of the New York union in 1989, 1199 was reunited. Then, in 1998, the long-sought merger of health care unions was accomplished as 1199: National Union of Health and Human Service Employees Union, SEIU, AFL-CIO.

Foner retired as 1199’s executive secretary in November 1982 during the civil war that rent the union. Nevertheless, working under the banner of “Bread and Roses,” he continued to produce theater projects, art and photography exhibits, concerts,

lectures, and other cultural programs for 1199. One of his last projects before his death, “Unseen America,” distributed cameras to working people and to the homeless and then enabled them to exhibit their photographs in 1199’s gallery. In *Bread and Roses*, as in his lifelong commitment to the labor movement, Foner held to a vision of creating a fairer, more humane world. Foner passed away at age 86 on January 10, 2002.

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FOOD, TOBACCO, AGRICULTURAL, AND ALLIED WORKERS OF AMERICA

See *United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America*

FOOD PROCESSING

Of all industrial products, processed food is unusually ubiquitous. American consumers encounter it repeatedly each day. In fact, few commercially available foods are truly unprocessed. Even the freshest produce is extensively manipulated before it finds its way onto supermarket shelves. But unlike most industrial products, food also makes up and becomes part of what we are. On the one hand, its prevalence makes processed food easy to take for granted. On the other hand, our close relationship with it makes understanding the history of processing and the workers who manufacture the food we eat especially important.

Like the varieties of food available, the industry’s activities are diverse, ranging from fresh produce packing to engineering food-related chemicals, with much in between. Each of these sectors has its own labor history, and as a result, overarching generalizations about food-processing work must be qualified. However, several trends have helped shape the experience of food workers in the United States since colonial times. First, processing has transformed from a geographically distributed sector composed primarily of small- to medium-scale firms into one that is both geographically and industrially concentrated. Second, a sector that was once very skilled has become predominantly unskilled. Deskilling throughout the

industry—through the combined effects of mechanization and increasingly minute divisions of labor—has led to a mounting lack of political leverage for food workers. But while some aspects of processing have become almost completely automated, others have proven nearly impossible to mechanize entirely, resulting in a continuous need for unskilled workers. Third, the industry has historically fulfilled its labor needs by hiring new immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Latin America, African-Americans, and female workers. Fourth, the industrialization of processing work has often been facilitated by the support of the state.

From Colonial America to the Civil War

Processing played an important role in the colonial and early American economies. Preserved cod—split, salted, and packed in barrels—was one of the most prolific and profitable colonial exports. Baking, brewing, and cheese making were small-scale, geographically dispersed, skilled operations. Although processed, these foods were highly perishable, forcing processors to locate near raw materials and markets. For these same reasons, slaughterhouses were built close to centers of consumption. Live animals were herded to slaughterhouses, where skilled groups of workers killed and prepared carcasses for shipment. Retail butchers then carved these into cuts of meat.

Food processors began to mechanize operations at an early date. In the 1780s, Oliver Evans patented a partially automated flour mill, which used a water wheel to power conveyors, a grindstone, and a mechanical sifter that separated kernels from flour. Evans marketed his design by emphasizing that it produced more, higher-quality flour than traditional mills, yet it required only half the workers. Reducing labor led to significant cost savings for mill owners, and it decreased their vulnerability to worker control.

A growing network of navigable waterways aided the food industry’s westward expansion. Grain and livestock, especially, were produced in increasing quantities in the West and shipped to eastern markets. One of the first western meat centers, Cincinnati, shipped livestock and preserved pork to eastern packinghouses and butchers via the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and New Orleans. These meatpackers began applying assembly line-style divisions of labor to the disassembly of animals during the 1830s, significantly changing the experience of packinghouse work. Workers led livestock up ramps to the top floor of multistoried packinghouses, where animals were slaughtered. Carcasses were then attached to hooks hanging from overhead rails, and gravity moved them from

floor to floor, where other workers performed specific cuts on the passing carcasses. In this fashion, by the 1840s, 20 workmen could incrementally disassemble 77 hogs an hour.

Civil War and Nineteenth-Century Expansion

While the Civil War devastated the southern economy, northeastern and western food processors thrived. The army purchased vast amounts of food: Union soldiers consumed some 500 million pounds of meat and ate enormous amounts of canned food, such as condensed milk and pork and beans. Wartime demand, in fact, was instrumental in establishing canning as a major food industry, the output of which doubled each decade between 1890 and 1960 (with the exception of the 1930s). Early canneries were for the most part coastal, labor-intensive, small- to medium-scale operations. Some steps in the canning processes, particularly hand-soldering tins and cooking, required significant skill. At the same time, many jobs, such as sorting and slicing produce or scaling salmon, required only minimal training. Cannery owners staffed these jobs with unskilled, seasonal workers who could be hired and fired as business waxed and waned.

The division of skilled and unskilled cannery work was racialized and gendered. In the mid-1800s, white, male workers occupied most skilled positions, while immigrant workers performed unskilled tasks. In California and along the West Coast, Chinese barred from gold prospecting did the bulk of the unskilled work; however, with the Chinese exclusion legislation beginning in the 1880s, the Chinese population began to decline. From 60% of the cannery workforce in 1870, Chinese workers accounted for only 4% by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. Cannery owners replaced Chinese workers with female workers, who they assumed would accept low wages and seasonal employment, and would be unlikely to organize. By 1900, there were approximately 16,000 female cannery workers in California, nearly all of whom were paid less than their male coworkers and were assigned to unskilled jobs. Even so, many saw cannery work as a step up from domestic employment.

The potential for worker control in nineteenth-century canneries was high, and skilled workers in particular exercised significant autonomy over their daily lives. In part as an effort to gain more control over the manufacturing process, owners installed mechanical processing machines. The machines eliminated both skilled and unskilled jobs, smoothed seasonal labor cycles, and increased production speeds.

In addition, machines could also help achieve racial goals. The inventors of a machine called the “Iron Chink,” which could eviscerate 43 salmon a minute, boasted that each one could replace more than 10 skilled Chinese workers. Realizing the effects of mechanization, workers strenuously, sometimes violently, resisted. In one cannery, a guard brandished a gun while a machine was installed.

Produce canneries were supplied by growers who themselves sometimes seemed more like manufacturers than farmers. In the late 1800s, Atlantic Coast market gardeners used hothouses, sophisticated botanical knowledge, and efficient transportation systems to distribute their perishable products. California growers of fruits and vegetables soon joined these eastern growers. In 1887, the first ice-cool railcar filled with oranges departed from California toward eastern markets, and before the year was out, one million boxes had followed. By the turn of the century, southern California produced 77% of the United States’ oranges and 90% of its lemons. Heavily capitalized, these growers employed migrant Asian-American and later Mexican-American workers, relied heavily on transportation, and utilized sophisticated production technologies and marketing techniques.

Civil War demands and an increasingly extensive rail network pushed Chicago to the forefront of meatpacking, and by 1900, fewer than half a dozen Chicago meatpackers controlled 90% of the American red meat market. Prior to the 1850s, Chicago meatpackers (like their Cincinnati competitors) mostly shipped live animals and whole carcasses to eastern slaughterhouses. However, with the development of ice-cooled storage and railcars in the 1860s, Chicago packers began to ship “dressed” cuts of meat. In the years between their opening in 1865 and the turn of the century, the yards processed 400 million cows, pigs, and sheep. By 1900, the yards had a daily processing capacity of 455,000 animals. Meatpackers became the city’s largest employer, with approximately 25,300 laborers in 1899.

Chicago meatpackers deployed the assembly line on an unprecedented scale. Steam power carried carcasses suspended from overhead rails throughout the packinghouse, and networks of pipes transported animal bits from one part of the factory to another. But meat processing proved difficult to mechanize completely, prompting managers to rely on a minute division of labor. The result was a mechanized yet labor-intensive manufacturing process, in which a single animal would pass in front of more than 150 workers before exiting the factory. The division of labor shifted the composition of the workforce toward unskilled workers, a change that increased line speeds and reduced worker autonomy.

Workers in the Chicago packinghouses in the late 1800s were a mix of European immigrants. Established Germans and Irish held the more skilled jobs, while more recent Central and Northern Europeans held unskilled positions. As the century drew to a close, female workers, mostly in their 20s, worked in increasing numbers in packinghouses. For the most part, they were confined to the least-desirable and lowest-paying jobs in packinghouse canneries and by-product processing. Wages were low: in 1900, average wages were 15 cents an hour, and by World War I, they had increased only a cent and a half.

Packinghouse workers labored and lived in what can only be described as shocking conditions, and attempts to organize in response began in the 1880s. Early strikes in the 1890s, however, were unsuccessful and sometimes violently put down. In 1904, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen (Amalgamated) called its first strike, with demands for improved wages. In response, managers hired African-American strikebreakers. In 1906, Upton Sinclair published his famous muckraking novel, *The Jungle*, based on his experiences living with Union Stockyard workers. A call for organization, Sinclair's book described a world that was smelly, loud, backbreaking, and unsanitary.

Wars and Depressions

Fueled by military food purchases, the processing industry grew during World War I. Working conditions and wages began to improve, while the war also provided opportunities for unions. By 1918, the Amalgamated increased its roster from a low of only 2,000 in 1904 to 28,000. During the 1920s, the food industry concentrated significantly. Large companies dominated nearly all sectors of the industry, from meat to canned and frozen produce, from dairy to baking.

Building on methods for producing and marketing frozen and refrigerated food that had existed since the late nineteenth century, Clarence Birdseye and General Foods began developing an improved method for industrial freezing in the 1920s. Contrary to advertisements that portrayed frozen food as a revolutionary product, links to existing truck farms, canneries, and meatpackers were strong. Early production of frozen food concentrated in the Mid-Atlantic states, most notably in New Jersey, a state that had established itself as a source of fresh and canned produce. Frozen food manufacturing maintained many of the labor relations familiar to the canning and packing activities it supplemented. Introduced at the onset of the

Great Depression, frozen food was slow to take off. In fact, one of the first commercially successful frozen products was concentrated orange juice, invented in 1945. Designed by government researchers as a way to supply troops with vitamin C, frozen concentrated orange juice became an incredibly popular consumer item. For orange growers in Florida and California, concentrated juice provided a way to process surplus harvests into a profitable product.

Canning remained a hazardous, monotonous, and often unsanitary occupation during and after World War I. Gendered and racial divisions of labor persisted, an arrangement that management believed would reduce worker solidarity. Male workers continued to hold permanent, skilled positions, while female workers held seasonal, unskilled ones. In California—which between 1939 and 1950 produced more canned fruits and vegetables than any other state—the number of female cannery workers steadily increased, as did their percentage in the workforce. From 16,000 in 1900, by 1939 there were 75,000; by 1945, 75% of the California cannery workforce were female. The ethnic composition of cannery workers began to change dramatically as well. In 1928, Los Angeles County boasted the highest percentage of Mexican-American cannery workers, at 23.5% of the workforce. By 1975, the California canning industry tallied that upwards of 70% of its workers had Spanish surnames.

During the Great Depression, both the production of processed food and wages for food workers declined. From the perspective of these workers, the government's response was decidedly mixed. While the National Industrial Recovery Act guaranteed collective bargaining rights for most manufacturing workers, it only covered some food-processing workers. At issue was whether these workers were manufacturing or farm laborers (the latter were not covered by the Act). The government adopted a geographic solution to this problem. Processing on the farm was considered agriculture; processing in another place was manufacturing. In practice, this meant that two workers who did the same kind of work might have different labor rights, depending on *where* they worked. The Wagner Act, on the other hand, adopted a definition based on practice. All workers who manufactured food (as opposed to grew and harvested it) could organize. The Wagner Act was a boost for food unions. By the time the United States entered World War II, the Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee (later the United Packinghouse Workers of America, UPWA) claimed 80,000 members, and Amalgamated 100,000. Similarly, the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America made significant gains

in organizing women and Mexican-American cannery workers.

As in previous wars, processed food was essential to the defense effort, and World War II pulled the industry from depression. Through the Lend-Lease program, the government purchased vast amounts of processed food to send to Europe. The deployment of American soldiers only compounded demand for specially produced rations, canned food, and meat. Conditions for food workers improved through the course of the war for two main reasons. First, processing was regulated by the National War Labor Board, which enforced a set of minimum labor standards. Second, the war precipitated an industrywide labor shortage. Many male workers were conscripted, while other workers were drawn into different industries. For those who remained, processing wages rose (although they remained lower than other war industries). Doors opened for female workers, who for the first time moved into the skilled and managerial posts previously unavailable to them. At the same time, labor shortages encouraged processors to further mechanize their operations, leading to an overall decrease in their reliance on labor.

Even so, the decades immediately following World War II were a rare period of success for processing unions. Meatpacking workers enjoyed wage parity with other industrial workers for the first time. Even as intense competition raged between rival unions—sometimes prompting red-baiting and illegal agreements between organizers and processors—membership increased dramatically. Unions themselves began embracing African-American and female workers, who historically had been treated as a threat to white, male employment.

Food Technology and Factory Labor

The prevalence of deskilling in food manufacturing was in many ways made possible by the industry's increasing reliance on highly skilled engineers who called themselves "food technologists." Since the turn of the century, these researchers played a central role in developing new sorts of food products and the technologies of industrial food manufacturing. Their role in the industry only grew in the decades following World War I. In university departments of food technology and processors' own industrial laboratories, researchers invented machines, engineered the texture of food, and developed chemical preservatives and flavors.

In many cases, this work was supported by the state through land grant universities, extension stations,

and military funding. In 1972, Jim Hightower and the Agribusiness Accountability Project published *Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times*, a report that criticized public institutions for conducting research and development for the food industry. His report contended that tax-funded research was benefiting large processors to the detriment of workers, consumers, and small businesses. Hightower went so far as to claim that improving food was not the driving motivation behind technological development in the industry. Rather, "The major impetus for food engineering has come from the desire to eliminate labor by mechanizing the harvesting and processing phases of agriculture."

The title of Hightower's report referred to mechanical tomato harvesters and a specially bred thick-skinned tomato that could withstand automated packing and long-distance shipping. The two interrelated technologies were developed in tandem by the University of California and became the subject of a contentious lawsuit over the proper relationship between the state and the agriculture and food industries. Indeed, the debut of this expensive system in the 1960s had striking results. Many small tomato producers could not afford the new technology, and within a few years, 85% were driven out of business, while thousands of migrant fieldworkers saw their jobs eliminated at the same time. Large producers who could afford to purchase the system grew larger.

This case was hardly an isolated one. In dairy processing and cheese making, new machines, processes, and chemicals led to nearly complete automation. For those businesses that could not obtain the credit necessary to finance new technology, the outlook was not good. By 1974, 85% of the dairy processors in business 24 years earlier had closed. A similar situation faced canneries, one quarter of which shut their doors between 1947 and 1954. Other production processes like dehydrating and baking were also extensively automated, while the transfer of more and more processing—for instance, skilled butchering—out of retail markets and into factories affected the daily experience of retail workers.

Hightower's report emphasized the fact that the interrelated processes of mechanization and deskilling were not inevitable or automatic. Widening profit margins and reducing labor requirements in factories required expensive and highly skilled work in the laboratory. While lowering their dependence on one kind of labor, processors were becoming dependent on another. Most important, the financial support provided by the state often masked the true expense of food technologists' work. But the impact on food manufacturing workers seemed clear: many lost their jobs, while those who remained became less and less skilled.

The Work of Food Preparation

The prevalence of processed food in the twentieth century affected the consumer as well. Because processed food could be stored for long periods and transported over large distances, seasonal and geographic variations in food consumption began to decline. Even as class-based differences in diet began to decline, this new diet was more expensive than the old. As Harvey Levenstein notes, even as the income of the average household rose in the 1940s and 1950s, so too did the percentage of its income spent on food—from 22% in 1941 to 26% in 1953. The rising cost of the American diet in the decades following World War II was attributable to increasing consumption of processed foods. In 1953 alone, Americans consumed 16 billion pounds of canned goods. Purchases of frozen foods totaled \$2.7 billion in 1959, representing a 2,700% increase over 1949. Consumers were paying not only for the food itself, but also the technology that supported its production. Food processing altered the work of domestic food preparation. Processors claimed that their products dramatically reduced household labor. In a 1957 article titled “Kitchen Revolution,” one advocate claimed that processed foods came with “built-in maid service.” According to this vision, the tedium of preparation would be transferred from the home to the processing plant. No longer would housewives spend hours preparing dinner. Instead, frozen, precut, and precooked ingredients needed only to be heated and served. The reality, however, was not so simple. If processed food made any one job faster or simpler, it also contributed to rising expectations of what constituted a complete and proper meal. Encouraging this trend, processors published cookbooks—perhaps the most famous of which were authored by the fictional Betty Crocker—with instructions on incorporating new food products into ever more complicated and labor-intensive menus.

Processed food also had a major impact on work in commercial food preparation. Its influences are perhaps most clearly seen in the fast-food industry. Fast food as we recognize it today began in the 1940s in southern California, where companies like McDonald’s began as small, family-owned restaurants. These self-service restaurants relied on high volumes of sales from simple menus, a strategy that kept the costs of ingredients low. Fast food caught on, and it quickly became a national business, and then an international business. In 1970, Americans spent \$6 billion dollars on it. In 2001, McDonald’s was the largest purchaser of beef and potatoes in the United States (and the second largest customer for chicken), and Americans spent \$110 billion on fast food.

From its infancy, the fast-food industry has been an avid customer and developer of food technologies like those discussed in the previous section. In 1948, for example, the founders of McDonald’s developed the “Speedee Service System.” Its purpose was not simply to offer quick service for customers, but also to reduce labor costs for the owner. The system divided the process of preparation into a set of discrete, assembly line-like steps, each of which was performed repeatedly by unskilled workers. The concepts underpinning the system are now commonplace in the fast-food industry. Technologies like computerized ovens with conveyor belts automate preparation. In addition, fast-food companies rely heavily on processing companies for pre-prepared foods, such as precut French fries, seasoned and breaded chicken, shredded lettuce, and shaped burgers. Rarely are these items prepared from scratch within a restaurant itself, further reducing the necessary skill level of workers.

In a highly capitalized industry like fast food, the cost of labor is one of the few variables over which restaurant franchisees have control. While there are certainly exceptions, the industry often keeps labor costs low by hiring young people on a part-time basis. For many of these young people, fast-food work is not a final goal, and many leave after a short time, resulting in a high industrywide turnover rate. For others, however, fast food is one of but a few options. For recent or undocumented immigrants, fast-food work can be relatively easy to obtain. For all workers, long hours are common. Compensation for this repetitive work is low, and in 1990, the 3.5 million fast-food workers represented America’s largest minimum wage workers group.

Many obstacles to organization exist. Unionization is often not a priority for young workers, who view the job as temporary. At the same time, the fast-food industry takes advantage of high employee turnover rates. In some cases, fast-food companies have delayed union votes for so long that the organizing workers have simply left to find other work. Moreover, the industry’s low skill requirements make organizing workers easy to replace.

The “IBP Revolution”

The decade and a half of union success in the meat-packing industry following World War II began to wane in 1960, when a new company opened its first packinghouse in Iowa. With a plan to take full advantage of nonunionized and highly mechanized production, IBP avoided urban union strongholds by

opening its plants in rural areas with lower prevailing wages. Occasionally, it would shut down a unionized plant and re-open it with an unorganized workforce. The depressed economy of the 1980s facilitated IBP's successful transformation of the meatpacking sector. By 1989, IBP was the largest meatpacker in the world with approximately \$6.8 billion in sales. Nine of its plants were nonunion, while only three were organized. By the late 1990s, the labor representation that remained was done by the United Food and Commercial Workers, which, while boasting a membership of one million in various food and retail sectors, had been forced to make regular concessions to IBP.

Working conditions in the post-"IBP revolution" period were harsh. Conveyors dictated the work pace more than ever before. Line speeds were high, and repetitive stress traumas, lacerations, and other injuries were all too commonplace. In 1985 alone, meatpacking had the highest worker-injury rate of any industry, with 30.4 injuries per 100 full-time workers—and this was an improvement. Wages fell below other manufacturing industries and to a fraction of what they were in unionized plants. Even though they composed a growing segment of the workforce, female, Mexican-American, African-American, and Asian-American workers were assigned to the worst jobs and were paid less than their white, male coworkers. Job security was nearly nonexistent, since unskilled workers in rural areas with high unemployment were easy to replace.

Poultry processing followed a similar path. Between the 1930s and 1960s, chicken processors began to vertically integrate feed production, chicken rearing, slaughtering, and processing. Consumption of chicken soared during World War II, since it was not rationed like other meats. Originally concentrated near eastern markets in the Delaware-Maryland-Virginia region, the postwar expansion of poultry processing was focused in the South, where lower prevailing wages made factories especially profitable. Attempts by the Amalgamated, UPWA, and the Teamsters to unionize poultry workers met with mixed success, but antiunion campaigns followed in the 1980s and 1990s. Today, a single plant can process 40,000 pounds of chicken a day, and a line worker might conduct the same operation on more than 40 chickens a minute.

Work in poultry factories has been highly gendered and racialized. While the sector historically employed more female workers than red meatpacking, women were in the minority. In the 1990s, approximately two thirds of poultry employees were male. Female workers were generally assigned to lower-paying disassembly line jobs, ostensibly because they were unsuited

for jobs that require mechanical skills or heavy lifting. These line jobs have been among the most monotonous and prone to injuries. In 1997 alone, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reported over three hundred instances of repetitive trauma at a single chicken processor. In 1999, Tyson was fined for violating child labor laws for employing two underage workers, both of whom were casualties of industrial accidents. What has changed significantly, however, is the ethnic composition of the workforce. As white workers left the South in increasing numbers during the last decades of the twentieth century, the poultry industry began employing Mexican and Latin American immigrants, many of whom were undocumented. Processors have been known to use the threat of deportation to force worker concessions.

Alternatives

In the 1970s, activists proposed an alternative to processed food. They conceived of organic food as a rethinking of production, processing, and consumption. By refraining from chemicals and processing and relying instead on small-scale, local production, organic was envisioned as being friendlier to the environment, workers, and consumers. Thirty-five years later, however, organic food has fallen short of its original goals. Nearly all of the large processing companies, using familiar labor strategies, have entered the organic market. The USDA definition of organic permits chemical flavorings and preservatives, making possible mechanically produced and highly processed, yet certified-organic, food.

A history of industrial concentration, worker disempowerment through intense deskilling, gendered and racialized divisions of labor, and state support for businesses over workers has helped to define the work experience in the industry over the past centuries. As attempts to create alternative foodways suggest, industrial food processing, and the labor relations and business organization it relies on, seem to have considerable momentum.

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See also Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butchers Workmen; Bakery and Confectionery Workers Union; Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union; Domestic Service; International Fishermen and Allied Workers of America; United Brewery Workers; United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America; United Food and Commercial Workers Union; United Packinghouse Workers of America/Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee; Waitressing and Waiting/Food Service

FOOD SERVICE

See Waitressing and Waiting/Food Service

FORD, HENRY

See Assembly-Line Production; Five-Dollar Day

FOREIGN MINERS TAX

In 1850, the California State Legislature passed the Foreign Miners Tax that would purge thousands of Latino and Chinese miners from the gold diggings. Under the legal doctrine of foreign trespass, all miners who were not citizens of the United States or who had not become citizens under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo would have to buy a miner's license for a monthly fee of \$20 (about \$400 in today's currency); the tax collector would receive \$3, and the remaining money was split between the county and the state. While the law's professed goal was to raise \$200,000 a month from Mexican and South American miners, the tax became a tactic in ethnic cleansing.

On Sunday, May 19, 1850, four thousand armed French, Mexican, and Peruvian miners seized control of the plaza in the California foothill town of Sonora and declared that they would never pay the tax (Holliday, p.173; Lang, pp.30–34). Facing them was a vigilante army of five hundred Anglo tax collectors and miners. When the mob fired on the Latinos, the Chilean and Mexican miners retreated from the diggings, on burro and on foot (Holliday, p. 172; Lang, pp. 30–34). In early June, another vigilante army of three hundred men marched into the Latino diggings in the mining town of Columbia to collect the first tax. But facing protests from Irish, English, Canadian, and German miners, the law was rewritten to exempt any "free white person" or any miner who could become an American citizen.

The tax launched a reign of terror, spurred on by "The Great Greaser Extermination Meeting" in Sonora that demanded that all Latino miners leave the goldfields in 48 hours. Assaults and lynchings followed. Ten thousand Mexican miners returned home. By 1860, four fifths of the Latino population had been driven out of the California mines.

Missing their customers, white merchants from across the Sierras petitioned Governor Peter Burnett to repeal the Foreign Miners Tax (Holliday, 173; Lang, 34, 44–45). While Burnett could dismiss protests by Mexican miners, he listened to the Tuolumne County real estate owners and merchants and had the tax repealed, just 11 months after its passage (Lang, p. 34, 44–45; see also Steven Lavoie, "Miss LIBERTY," in Holliday, p. 172). Years later, white miners still recalled "the long train of fugitives" leaving the gold diggings and returning home: "Some were going North; some South; the great body was probably bound for home; some by way of the sea; others by Los Angeles and the Great Desert" (Johnson, p. 215).

The Chinese were to follow. In 1852, the Chinese formed one tenth of the state's population and nearly one third of the mining population. By 1855, 175,000

miners from all over the world—tense, poor, and disappointed—were crowded along California’s rivers, deltas, and beaches. That year the Foreign Miners Tax was reborn, with the express purpose of expelling the Chinese from California. The new tax forced each foreign miner to pay a fee of \$3.00 per month for the right to mine; in 1853, it was raised to \$4.00, and in 1855, to \$6.00, with the provision that each successive year there would be a further \$2.00 increase. No Chinese man was allowed to mine for gold until he paid the tax, one half of which went to the county treasury, and the rest to the State of California, with a fixed fee for the tax collector. In practice, the tax was limitless. Between 1852 and 1870, years in which *one billion* dollars worth of *untaxed* gold was mined in California, Chinese miners paid a staggering \$58 million to the state, ranging from one fourth to one half of California’s revenue.

The tax launched a fierce wave of Chinese expulsions. Although the law stated that private parties had no authority to eject “aliens” who failed to pay the tax, it allowed collectors to seize and sell a Chinese miner’s claim and tools. Fraudulent collectors sprang up all over the mountains; real and scam collectors repeatedly visited the same Chinese camps and threatened violence or deportation if the Chinese miner did not pay up. The Chinese miners did their best to avoid the tax. Some bribed the tax collectors; others paid a small amount directly to the collector and agreed not to ask for a receipt. Some simply refused to pay. Others hid in the woods, or in winter, moved into town. Many escaped the tax by going to work for absentee owners or mining corporations, which, as early as 1853, began investing in the costly technology of tunneling and quartz mining. In 1855, groups of Chinese men in Tuolumne and Mariposa counties were killed as they attacked the tax collectors.

Not all Californians agreed that the tax was a good idea. Some worried that it was a form of “taxation without representation” that could lead to Chinese demands for citizenship (Letter from an Old Miner). During the era of abolition, others predicted that it would create a population of paupers who could easily become a desperate class of slaves or burden the state into bankruptcy. And then there was the revenue. The Shasta Miners Convention reminded the legislature that in 1854 alone, the counties and the young state gained \$300,000 from the Chinese miners’ tax, which would have been lost if it had forced the Chinese out.

On May 8, 1852, the Second Columbia Miners Convention declared that “no Asiatic or South Sea Islander shall be permitted to mine in this district

either for himself *or for others*” and formed a Committee of Vigilance to ensure that none of the “degraded inhabitants of China and Islands of the Pacific” either purchased their own claim or worked for an absentee company (*Alta California*, May 15, 1852). The anti-Chinese movement threatened commercial interests (Johnson, p. 248).

The Foreign Miners Tax cut the Chinese population by the thousands for several years. But new arrivals soon equaled and quickly doubled the number of those who departed the Sonora foothills. Many refugees who returned to China stayed only temporarily (Chiu, p. 142; Coolidge, p. 498).

By 1870, the tax was nullified. At least two legal challenges in California prevailed. In 1870, Congress targeted state laws such as the Foreign Miners Tax when it modified the Civil Rights Act of 1866, and banned any tax imposed on “any person immigrating...from a foreign country which is not equally enforced...upon every person immigrating to such a State from any other foreign country” (Civil Rights Act of 1870, ch. 114, 16 Stat. 140). In 1870, in *U.S. v. Jackson* (26F.Cas 563 [1870 or 1874], a collector of the miners tax), the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the revised Civil Rights Act, and the Foreign Miners Tax became null and void—long after its most egregious effects had passed (McClain, pp. 28–29). Nonetheless, during the two decades of its enforcement, 98% of \$4,919,536.40 collected came from Chinese miners.

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FOREIGN POLICY

Efforts by American workers to influence foreign relations date back to at least the American Revolution. The historian Dana Frank has noted the key role of sailors and artisans in acts of revolutionary defiance like the Boston Tea Party and the critical participation of workers in economic and military campaigns against the British. The political mobilization of ordinary people during the revolution in turn undermined patterns of social deference and gave birth to an ideology of labor republicanism that stressed equal rights for white male workers and helped lead to broad suffrage for this group by the Civil War. White male workers in the United States thus possessed more political power to influence foreign policy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries than their counterparts in many other industrializing countries.

Yet the role of the emerging U.S. working class and labor movement in shaping foreign policy before the Civil War remains unclear. As the industrial revolution transformed the Northeast, replacing household manufactures with products from newly created mills and factories, fledgling trade unions emerged to protect the rights of industrial workers. Yet although such unions used local publications to voice occasional opinions on foreign policy issues, they lacked sufficient power to influence national debates over American diplomacy. The dearth of independent labor voices in national debates may have made enfranchised white male workers susceptible to cross-class appeals that urged them to support the quest for continental empire at the expense of people of color, including Native Americans, African-Americans, and the Creole and Mexican populations in the Southwest.

Early Labor Critiques of the International Division of Labor and American Quest for Empire

In the post-Civil War era, elites expanded their appeals to white workers, emphasizing that the country now needed not just a continental but also an overseas empire to ensure a healthy economy. Advocates of an aggressive and militaristic foreign policy,

as the historian Kristin Hoganson has argued, also emphasized overseas empire as a way to revitalize American manhood and forge a bond between white brothers of all classes. But several national trade union movements afforded labor activists a forum to promote alternative labor perspectives on foreign policy and empire. No consensus emerged among the nation's trade unions about what role labor should play in shaping the nation's foreign policy between the Civil War and World War I, but healthy debates about the international division of labor and about potential divergences between class interests and so-called national interests helped to clarify what was at stake for workers—both at home and abroad—in supporting U.S. foreign policies.

The short-lived National Labor Union, created in 1866 and led by the dynamic William Sylvis, brought attention to foreign policy issues and questions of international labor solidarity by announcing its intention to affiliate with the initially European-based International Working Men's Association or First International. Leaders of the First International such as Karl Marx emphasized that imperialistic foreign policies grew naturally from capitalism and its never-ending quest for new markets, investments, and natural resources. By encouraging their governments to acquire or dominate new territories and populations, businessmen could enlarge their profits and avoid the contradictions of overproduction and underconsumption even while continuing to exploit workers in their home countries. Marx urged workers to counteract the imperialist designs of government and business through a two-pronged approach that involved supporting the collective actions of international labor organizations and using political channels available within their respective countries.

Sylvis and his supporters within the National Labor Union agreed with Marx about the desirability of limiting the mobility of capital and labor and gaining increased international influence for workers. Although the National Labor Union unraveled before its alliance with the First International was fully consummated, activists within the union helped to publicize the class-based critique of international affairs developed by Marx and other European radicals. American socialists as well as European immigrants to the United States also spread the doctrines of the First International, and by the end of 1871 it boasted 27 sectional chapters and several hundred members in the United States. Perhaps propelled by its popularity in the United States, the First International relocated its headquarters to New York in 1872. But the organization proved faction-ridden and was dissolved at a meeting in Philadelphia in 1876.

The Knights of Labor also helped in unique ways to promote a class analysis of international affairs and U.S. foreign policy. Founded in 1869, this inclusive organization's membership peaked in the mid-1880s at about 750,000 workers. Although some Knights of Labor leaders developed a hostile attitude toward the socialists who dominated the First International, immigrants within the Knights often stressed the linkages between the American class struggle, class struggles in their former homelands, and imperialist domination. Irish-Americans proved an especially important force within the Knights. Weaned on Irish land reform and anticolonial ideologies, Irish-American labor activists naturally conceptualized their trade union battles in the United States as part of a worldwide struggle between the owning and producing classes and used local Knights meetings to raise support for the Irish nationalist cause. Given the internationalist currents flowing through the grassroots intellectual life of the Knights of Labor, it is hardly surprising that Knights chapters spread throughout Canada, and to Ireland, Scotland, and Britain. Although the Knights spent little time lobbying the U.S. government on foreign policy issues, they helped both to advance the cause of international labor solidarity and to lay the intellectual groundwork for an anticolonial critique of U.S. and British foreign policy upon which future immigrant labor activists would build. The Knights of Labor itself, however, would soon be overshadowed by the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Early International Activities and Foreign Policy of the American Federation of Labor

Founded in 1886, the American Federation of Labor was composed predominantly of craft unions—some of whom had previously belonged to the Knights of Labor—that emphasized improving wages and working conditions for skilled and semiskilled workers rather than eliminating or fundamentally transforming capitalism. Despite its pragmatic focus and narrow membership base, the AFL developed an early interest in the activities of international labor organizations and in giving labor an independent voice in international affairs. In 1889, the AFL worked with the Second International that convened in Paris in 1889 to coordinate the first celebrations of May Day in Europe and the United States. The AFL's relationship with the Second International subsequently cooled, but during the early twentieth century, many individual AFL unions became active in international trade secretariats. These organizations were

composed of trade unions from the same industry but different countries that came together to promote their international interests. Among the AFL unions that joined international secretariats in the early twentieth century were the miners, molders, painters, and shoemakers. AFL President Samuel Gompers followed the lead of constituent unions and made the AFL an active member of the International Secretariat of Trade Union Centers, which subsequently became the International Federation of Trade Unions. This organization concerned itself not only with international labor standards but with pacifist endeavors designed to encourage labor mediation of international disputes between nation-states—a cause in which Gompers himself was keenly interested during his early career.

The AFL also demonstrated an early interest in directly influencing U.S. foreign policy, and became particularly active in the debates surrounding the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War and the acquisition of an overseas empire in the 1890s. When Cuba first rebelled against Spain, a majority of delegates to the AFL convention called on the AFL to demand that Congress recognize Cuban belligerency. Supporters of the Cuban rebellion argued that trade unionists in the United States had a responsibility to help fellow Cuban workingmen win their liberty. Yet a vocal minority opposed committing the AFL to support the revolution because it might encourage war with Spain. And war, they argued, always disproportionately hurt workingmen because they were the ones who inevitably did most of the fighting. Interestingly, some also wondered whether labor might be playing into the hands of business leaders in supporting Cuban belligerency, since the United States would no doubt seek to dominate the island nation if Spanish forces were defeated there. As Andrew Furuseth of the Seamen's Union explained at the AFL convention in 1897, the question was really one of "whether the New York speculator or the Spanish capitalist should skin the Cuban workingman." The debate demonstrated that there was no consensus within the ranks of the AFL about supporting nationalist rebellions or about the virtues of an American overseas empire.

For his part, AFL President Samuel Gompers initially supported proposals to recognize Cuban belligerency but opposed President William McKinley's decision to declare war against Spain and to annex former Spanish territories such as the Philippines and Puerto Rico at war's end. Gompers, however, subsequently came to what the historian Delber Lee McKee called a "tacit compromise" with the State Department. The AFL president toned down his opposition to U.S. annexation and imperial control

of the Philippines and other acquired islands in return for government and business acquiescence in AFL campaigns to build labor unions in these areas. In contrast to Marx and other socialist theorists, Gompers and his closest colleagues on the AFL Executive Council reasoned that if they could raise labor standards in the island protectorates, then U.S. imperial control might actually benefit U.S. as well as island workers. Goods from these areas would not undersell their American counterparts, and businesses would not be tempted to establish low-wage factories there. Island workers, for their part, might use increased wages to buy American products. Gompers thus proved susceptible to cross-class appeals that emphasized the benefits of U.S. economic expansion and empire for workers both in the United States and abroad. Doubtless cultural messages that proliferated in the American media and in government circles about the need for white men of all classes to participate in the paternalistic oversight of nonwhite races also influenced Gompers. As Delber McKee has documented, Gompers referred to the people in newly acquired territories as “semibarbaric.” Initially, Gompers feared that such barbarians might immigrate to the United States and undermine labor standards. But over time Gompers came to believe that such problems could be prevented if island workers were tutored in principles of trade unionism by their more experienced Anglo-Saxon brothers.

World War I

Gompers’s interest in cooperating with business and government elites to promote economic expansion and overseas empire led to a full-fledged commitment to corporatist forms of power sharing during World War I. Social scientists use the term “corporatism” to refer to cooperative relationships that develop among business, labor, and the state in modern industrial capitalist societies in order to encourage industrial harmony and efficiency as well as to promote national economic expansion into foreign markets. President Woodrow Wilson (1912–1920) was committed to promoting such a cooperative relationship in the United States, as became clear when he created the Department of Labor and the Commission on Industrial Relations to oversee industrial arbitration and to make recommendations on increasing industrial productivity.

Significantly, when Wilson began to promote military preparedness after the outbreak of war in Europe, he also created a Council of National Defense

to develop plans for the conversion from peacetime to military production. AFL President Samuel Gompers eagerly accepted a position on the council and created a labor subcommittee within the council composed of business, government, and labor representatives to study questions of industrial coordination and to draw up guidelines on wages, hours, and mediation in war-related industries. Gompers’s writings reveal that he clearly believed he was laying the groundwork for a permanent system of industrial arbitration. When a U.S. declaration of war against Germany seemed likely in March 1917, Gompers called a special labor assembly of the representatives of the AFL’s constituent national and international unions and secured a pledge of support for any future U.S. war effort from the meeting. Significantly, AFL-affiliated city labor councils were excluded from the meeting on the grounds that they were centers of pacifism. Local activists in turn charged that the meeting was not democratically constituted and argued that the AFL should instead demand that the government have a referendum vote of the entire population on the question of the war. Gompers, however, ignored such pleas and used the AFL’s patriotic pledge as leverage to gain more positions for AFL leaders within emerging war boards. AFL representatives were also asked to serve on the Root Commission to Russia, and the AFL sent two missions to Europe during the war to win support for Wilsonian war aims.

The AFL’s support for the war thus won it unprecedented diplomatic and domestic political influence within the Wilson administration. Yet its collaboration with the government also spurred intense criticism from socialists, some Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) members, and many local AFL activists. As the historian James Weinstein has documented, a majority within the Socialist Party of America continued to vigorously oppose U.S. participation in World War I after President Wilson’s war declaration and lambasted the AFL for becoming “a fifth wheel on the capitalist war chariot.” The syndicalist IWW viewed U.S. involvement in the war as an unfortunate distraction from its efforts to promote one big union and to encourage militant strike activity in the United States. Although some IWW activists cooperated with the government in its efforts to encourage workers to register for the draft, others carried on what the historian Fran Shor has called a “discursive campaign” against both U.S. involvement in World War I and the AFL’s collaboration with the government. Both the Socialist Party of America and the IWW faced severe government persecution for their questioning of government policy, and in

contrast to the AFL, emerged from the war greatly weakened and faction-ridden.

Some militant AFL-affiliated city labor councils such as the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) and Seattle Central Labor Council also renewed their criticism of the AFL by war's end. Such councils, as Gompers and his colleagues correctly assumed, were often more organically connected to immigrant working-class subcultures in the cities they served than to the AFL and became hotbeds of pacifist activity before the United States entered the war. As the historian Elizabeth McKillen has shown, the Chicago Federation of Labor and Seattle Central Labor Council criticized but reluctantly supported the AFL's wartime loyalty pledge after the United States entered the war in 1917 because they believed that to oppose the AFL's foreign policy during wartime would be comparable, in the words of one activist, to being a "scab" during a strike. However, both councils doubted the benefits of wartime collaboration for labor and following the armistice created local labor parties in defiance of the AFL's political policies. The parties raised critical questions about the AFL's corporatist approach, arguing that the AFL should not merely seek equal representation with labor in government councils, but should demand representation for labor "in proportion to its voting strength." In contrast to AFL leaders, who hoped for one labor representative on the peace commission that would travel to Paris at the end of the war, CFL activists asked for representation for workers at the peace conference and in future international organizations "in proportion to their numbers in the armies, navies and workshops of the world." Similar labor parties erupted in some 45 other cities in the immediate postwar era and drove the movement to create the national Farmer-Labor party of 1920, a group with a strongly anti-Wilsonian and anti-imperialist agenda.

Gompers and other AFL leaders, by contrast, remained strongly committed to Wilson and a corporatist approach in the postwar era and sought to convert the war boards into permanent arbitration councils. Gompers also joined Wilson at the Peace Conference in Paris and, at Wilson's request, chaired the International Labor Legislation Commission that created the International Labor Organization (ILO). An advisory body to the League of Nations, the ILO was designed to make recommendations regarding questions of international labor standards and other international issues relevant to labor that could be either accepted or rejected by the League and by individual countries. The organization clearly bore the imprint of Gompers's corporatist thinking: it was

designed to include not just trade union representatives but national delegations composed of two government, one business, and one labor representative. Critics like Andrew Furuseth of the Seamen's Union complained at the AFL convention in 1919 that to trust business and government leaders in the ILO to deal fairly with international labor standards, one would have to assume that "men all of a sudden have become saints."

European labor leaders initially boycotted the Peace Conference because it refused to allow leaders from the defeated countries on French soil and complained that Gompers and the International Labor Legislation Committee had acted without consulting European labor. Ironically, European trade unionists came to dominate the ILO after the U.S. Congress rejected the Paris Peace Treaty, thereby preventing U.S. representatives from participating in the League of Nations or its advisory bodies. The AFL also distanced itself from the International Federation of Trade Unions and Red International after quarreling with these organizations over their support for international strike and boycott activities.

Interwar Years

Isolated from European labor, the AFL devoted its international energies to improving its relations with Latin American labor movements in the 1920s. During 1918, with the help of secret financial aid from the Wilson administration, the AFL had joined with representatives from several Latin American labor movements to create the Pan American Federation of Labor (PAFL). The official goals of the organization were to raise labor standards in Latin America, curb abuses of labor by international capitalists, and promote the growth of unions in the Americas. AFL leaders also hoped to use the organization to resolve immigration problems between the United States and Mexico and to promote AFL trade union principles in Latin America while undermining those of the Industrial Workers of the World and other radical organizations. The Pan American Federation of Labor, however, declined rapidly in the late 1920s as more left-leaning organizations gained influence in Mexico and Latin America and criticized PAFL as an instrument of U.S. imperialism.

Largely isolated from European and Latin American trade union movements, the AFL at first advocated a nationalist approach to the Great Depression. It resisted Franklin Roosevelt's efforts to promote expanded trade through reciprocal agreements with

other countries and instead promoted “Buy American” campaigns and higher tariffs as a way to stimulate the American economy. Yet oppositional subcultures within the AFL helped prevent it from retreating into full-scale isolationism. In particular, the historian Bruce Nelson has documented how maritime workers, whose “legendary rootlessness and transiency” isolated them “from the main integrative institutions of American society,” were also natural internationalists who alerted fellow workers to the dangers of fascism. One typical example occurred in July 1933 when workers from American and Danish merchant ships joined together to pull a swastika from a German ship trying to enter Olympia harbor. Concerns about the growth of fascism in Europe helped to provoke AFL boycotts of German and Italian goods and doubtless played some role in the AFL’s decision to re-affiliate with the International Federation of Trade Unions in 1937.

The AFL’s renewed interest in international labor politics was also likely inspired by the emergence of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The CIO is primarily known for organizing mass industrial unions that incorporated most grades of workers in critical industries like steel and rubber. But the CIO also won much sympathy from trade unionists in other countries by initially pursuing a foreign policy that was more accommodating to Latin American nationalism and by seeking to co-operate with trade unions from the Soviet Union during World War II and the early Cold War.

World War II and the Cold War

Because most allied labor movements were hostile to fascism, they were willing to work closely with their governments during World War II on wartime planning issues. But Victor Silverman suggests that the war also encouraged an increased spirit of labor internationalism that pervaded working-class life in the major democracies after 1941. In the United States, increasing numbers of workers no longer felt they could remain isolated from world affairs. Meanwhile, in Britain the war stimulated sympathy for the Soviet Union among workers and resulted in the creation of an Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee. The success of this committee in turn led British labor leaders to propose that a new labor organization be created at war’s end that incorporated the Soviets. The AFL refused to attend a conference designed to organize the new labor international, but the CIO eagerly sent delegates and played an important part

in the creation of the new World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) in October 1945. The CIO distinguished itself within the organization by championing the demands of trade unions from colonial areas for representation independent of their mother countries.

But the new organization soon fell victim to Cold War politics. From the beginning, the AFL’s Free Trade Union Committee collaborated with the State Department to weaken the WFTU by sowing discord between the communist and noncommunist European trade union movements. The AFL also successfully worked to prevent international trade secretariats from affiliating with it. The CIO, desperate to appear loyal in the face of mounting anticommunist hysteria at home, asked the WFTU to officially endorse the Marshall Plan. As Peter Weiler has written, the “introduction of the Marshall Plan into the WFTU brought the Cold War directly into the international trade union movement.” When the Soviets refused to endorse the Marshall plan, the CIO and many European movements withdrew from the WFTU and joined the AFL in creating the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The AFL, CIO, and ICFTU subsequently helped to implement the Marshall Plan in Europe but also played divisive roles within European trade unions movements by encouraging discord between communists and non-communists.

The AFL and CIO’s early Cold War foreign policies also produced mixed results in occupied Japan and in Latin America. In Japan, AFL and CIO leaders became part of the Labor Division of the Occupation bureaucracy and helped to establish the legal framework for Japanese workers to organize unions, bargain collectively, and strike. Yet when the Japanese labor movement started to drift to the left, American labor leaders encouraged the creation of anticommunist cells within the movement and eventually called for the development of an anticommunist labor federation in Japan called Sohyo. In Latin America, AFL leaders co-operated with the Central Intelligence Agency and United Fruit Company in undermining the left-leaning government of Arbenz Guzman in Guatemala. After a coup in Guatemala that was partly financed and directed by the CIA, Carlos Castillo Armas took power and proved quite hostile to the Guatemalan labor movement, dissolving thousands of unions. Anticommunism thus re-inforced a longstanding corporatist animus within the American labor movement that placed greater priority on co-operating with American business and state leaders in promoting national foreign policy goals than on encouraging international labor solidarity.

Debate and Changes in the AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy

After the AFL and CIO merged in 1955, the new labor federation struggled to overcome the increasingly negative international image of the American labor movement. During the 1960s, the AFL-CIO created three new labor centers: the American Institute for Free Labor Development (Latin America), the African-American Labor Center, and the Asian-American Free Labor Institute to provide assistance, education, and training for trade unionists from these areas. Yet some charged that paternalistic assumptions about the need for American trade unionists to uplift their less-developed brethren permeated the centers' educational programs. More troubling than charges of paternalism were claims that the institutes worked with the CIA to undermine democratically elected governments in these areas. The American Institute for Free Labor Development, for example, was implicated in U.S. efforts to undermine the governments of Joao Goulart in Brazil in 1964 and Salvador Allende in Chile during 1973. Such disclosures led labor dissidents to conclude that the institutes had been an exercise in trade union colonialism. Grass-roots labor groups emerged by the 1980s to oppose the AFL-CIO's foreign policies in Latin America.

The Vietnam War further undermined consensus within the AFL-CIO over foreign policy goals. AFL-CIO President George Meany unwaveringly supported the Lyndon Johnson administration's Vietnam policies, as did the yearly AFL-CIO convention. Newscasts, meanwhile, highlighted hard-hatted unionists attacking antiwar demonstrators. But opposition to the war had always existed within militant subcultures in the labor movement, and after 1967, these groups coalesced in the National Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace. Labor opponents of the war like Walter Reuther grew especially vocal when President Richard Nixon widened the war by bombing the neutral country of Cambodia.

Antiwar labor activists helped to revive debate within the labor movement not only about Vietnam but also about the AFL-CIO's broader foreign policy goals during the Cold War. They questioned not only the morality of AFL-CIO Cold War foreign policies aimed at combating or overthrowing left-leaning governments abroad, but also whether such policies served the economic interests of U.S. workers. By using trade union funds to intervene in the internal political struggles of other countries, they argued, the AFL-CIO had sometimes helped to bring to power right-wing dictators who suppressed workers' rights and who created low-wage economies that encouraged U.S. capital flight and investment

overseas. Meanwhile, products from such countries often undersold their American counterparts and caused economic stagnation in the United States. Protests particularly erupted over the role of cheap imports in undermining the sales of American-made products like automobiles.

The end of the Cold War in 1989 helped ensure the birth of a new labor foreign policy. When the reformer John Sweeney was elected AFL-CIO president in 1995, he shut down many of its existing overseas operations, including the CIA-linked American Institute for Free Labor Development, and created in their place the American Center for International Labor Solidarity. The new organization, as the name implied, was designed to encourage transnational labor strategies for counteracting the global machinations of corporations rather than to aid U.S. government interventionism in other countries. Many individual unions within the AFL-CIO have, for their part, also forged ties with foreign union movements in order to develop effective tactics for coping with multinational corporations and the global economy. Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO's continuing opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement suggests that its leaders have become more critical of the corporatist and Cold War assumptions that freer markets always bring economic expansion and create freer and more prosperous workers. Since bipartisan consensus has often reigned on NAFTA, some activists have rallied behind a new labor party movement as a way to gain an independent voice on foreign policy issues. A new generation of labor leaders also seems dedicated to developing increased international influence by continuing the task of building a strong international labor movement that was begun in the nineteenth century.

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See also American Alliance for Labor and Democracy; Anticommunism; Cold War

FOSTER, FRANK K. (D. 1909) **Labor Activist**

The 1880s were a tumultuous decade for the labor movement in the United States. Not only did hundreds of thousands of workers join labor organizations, participate in strikes, and struggle for the eight-hour day, but they also engaged in arguments about the form, scope, ideology, strategies, and tactics appropriate for the new labor movement. Frank K. Foster was one of the most important voices in these debates.

Like many of the key labor activists of this era, Foster straddled social classes in his own work and social life. He learned the printer’s trade, participated as a leader in the International Typographical Union

(ITU) at the local and national levels, and became editor of several newspapers that not only provided news coverage and editorial statements but also promoted poetry and fiction. Foster himself wrote some of this material and, later in life, published a novel and a collection of poetry.

In the early 1880s, Foster, like many of his peers, sought to maintain membership in both the trade union movement (not only the International Typographical Union, but also the Boston Central Trades and Labor Union, and the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, the precursor to the American Federation of Labor) and the Knights of Labor (KOL). He was a visible and prominent advocate of both organizations at the national as well as the local levels. At the same time, he was president of the Cambridge local of the ITU, secretary of the Boston Central Trades and Labor Union, and editor of the Haverhill *Daily and Weekly Laborer*, the official Massachusetts newspaper of the Knights of Labor. In 1886, he even sought the Democratic Party nomination for lieutenant governor of Massachusetts.

But by 1886, internal tensions were rippling through the Knights of Labor, revolving around the Order’s relationship to the growing trade union movement, the struggle for the eight-hour day, the fallout from the Haymarket violence, arrests, trials, and executions in Chicago, the emergence of socialism and labor politics, and the issues of racial justice raised by the Richmond, Virginia, KOL General Assembly in October 1886. Of course, these conflicts were also overlaid by personality conflicts among key figures in all the movements, from Terence Powderly in the KOL to Adolph Strasser and Samuel Gompers in the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and the likes of Albert Parsons, Daniel De Leon, Eugene Debs, and others, at first on the margins, but increasingly building followings. Activists like Frank K. Foster were caught in the middle, the ground beneath their feet pulling apart into a chasm.

By 1887, Foster—and many of the other men from similar craft and experiential backgrounds—were moving into the trade union camp. They were uncomfortable with the increased criticism of craft unionism, collective bargaining, and the protection of union work rules emanating from within the KOL, as well as the Order’s apparent move toward cooperatives, independent labor politics, and ideological radicalism. Foster expressed many of his concerns in a chapter on the history of shoemakers’ unionism, which he contributed to George McNeill’s seminal volume, *The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, in 1887.

In this essay, Foster criticized the pressures being exerted by the Knights of Labor to integrate shoemakers into “mixed locals” rather than allowing them to maintain their specific, separate trade organizations. At the same time, Foster praised the KOL’s commitment to solidarity, their ability to organize community support for striking shoemakers in a number of struggles, and their efforts to promote labor activism.

Indeed, although Foster ultimately moved solidly into the AFL camp, becoming the editor of the *Labor Leader*, the voice of the Massachusetts American Federation of Labor, he never became an advocate of mere “pure and simple trade unionism.” While he advocated craft organization, apprenticeship regulations, control over the labor market, and the values of skilled labor, he also upheld principles of solidarity, class organization, and the importance of a broad labor movement. Interestingly, he even became a more outspoken voice for the inclusion of cultural material and perspectives within the movement, encouraging the writing and publication of poetry and fiction. Foster—and many of his peers—continued to see the United States in class terms and to understand workers as producers of a class-based culture that revolved around values of equality, independence, justice, and solidarity. They may have rejected socialist ideologies, the organization of cooperatives, and the practice of independent labor politics, but they remained committed to a vision of broad social transformation.

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FOSTER, WILLIAM Z. (1881–1961) Communist Party Activist

William Zebulon Foster was an American socialist, syndicalist, and communist leader who participated in some of the most dramatic conflicts of twentieth-century American labor and radical history. Coming of age and reaching maturity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, he was stirred and influenced by militant U.S. trade union struggles raging throughout the nation and by international revolutionary developments in Russia and Europe. His career within the Communist Party (CP), beginning in 1921, encompassed the decades of the Party’s most spectacular rise and decline. Foster’s ideological loyalties and personal dilemmas reflected the continuing contradictions and tensions inherent in the intersections of national and international radical movements on American soil.

Born in 1881 in Taunton, Massachusetts, to an Irish-Catholic immigrant family, Foster spent most of his youth and young adulthood not in Massachusetts, but in Philadelphia’s working-class West End, to which his parents had moved soon after his birth. There, he came into contact with a boisterous, urban political and trade union culture, characterized by militant strikes and numerous competing strains of socialism and syndicalism. Surrounded by constant local and national evidence of the class struggle—the Homestead steel strike of 1892, the Pullman strike of 1894, and the Philadelphia street railway strike of 1895—Foster drank deeply of the culture of working-class radicalism. His early experience with strikes taught him about the “class struggle” and formed the foundations of his lifelong dedication to revolutionary action.

The disintegration of his family following the untimely death of his parents led Foster into an itinerant lifestyle. He traveled widely, developed extensive contacts with a multiplicity of workers, and took up various jobs: newspaper hawker, laborer, steamfitter, fireman, engineer, seaman, railroad worker, and miner. He worked in the streets of West Philadelphia, the packinghouses of Chicago, and the steel towns on the south shore of Lake Michigan, learning from each encounter with skilled and unskilled labor, and with inflexible and exploitative employers.

Drawn into the world of De Leon socialism and into an increasingly international radical community, Foster soon became associated with left-wing socialists who eschewed electoral politics and instead emphasized industrial unionism and worker initiatives.

Though he had joined the Socialist Party in 1901, he was expelled in 1909 during a factional battle between left- and right-wing Socialists in Washington state. Hardly one to stay unaffiliated, Foster soon joined the recently established Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), an organization more consistent with his syndicalist beliefs. He forged broad and disparate contacts with radicals around the country—in Seattle, the Midwest, and especially Chicago, California, New York, Montana, the South, and Canada.

His travels soon widened; he went abroad in 1910 as an IWW representative and attended the International Union Conference in Budapest the following year. He began to expand his familiarity with French, English, and German syndicalism and increasingly identified himself with a worldwide worker movement. Upon his return from Europe, Foster used his own organizational experiences and examples from abroad to develop institutional forms that he hoped would foster industrial and syndicalist unionism in the United States. The British syndicalist Tom Mann's British Industrial Syndicalist Educational League (ISEL), for example, provided Foster with a model for the Syndicalist League of North America (SLNA), founded in 1912, the International Trade Union Educational League (ITUEL), founded in 1915, and later the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), established in 1920. Through his immersion in the first two decades of the twentieth century in international labor and radical organizations, Foster soon became a global, and globally known, labor activist.

Throughout his career, Foster continually pointed out and sought to remedy the weaknesses inherent in America's undisciplined, parochial, and craft-dominated trade union movement. His early pre-CP activism was heavily focused on nurturing militant strike movements and building an internal left opposition group to challenge Samuel Gompers's leadership in the American Federation of Labor (AFL). All of this was consistent with his early syndicalist ideals. World War I and the growing militancy of workers that came in its wake provided Foster with several opportunities to demonstrate the potential of industrial unionism. In 1917, while a railway car inspector in Chicago and a member of the AFL Railway Carmen's Union, Foster joined with the progressive labor leader John Fitzgerald, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, in a successful effort to organize wartime packinghouse workers in the city. Over 200,000 workers joined the newly established organization. Then, with his now established and well-earned status as a shrewd and successful organizer, Foster took on his most significant challenge.

It came in the post-World War I era, when he led a coalition of 24 steel industry craft unions in a unified attempt to re-organize the steel industry (an older union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin workers had been reduced to impotency by Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, and a coterie of virulently anti-union steel industry managers). The steel organizing drive of 1918–1919 began brightly, with the rapid recruitment of over 100,000 workers. The steel organizing committee hoped to avoid a strike and sought immediate collective bargaining. Its initial demands included an eight-hour day (it was 12 hours then) and an increase in wages. But Elbert H. Gary, chairman of the board of the United States Steel Corporation, declined to “discuss business” with any trade union representatives. The call went out for a strike, and the Great Steel Strike of 1919 began in late September of that year. Within a week, 350,000 workers in nine states had put their tools down and ceased work. The 1919 Steel Strike anticipated the more general industrywide strikes of the 1930s CIO era in its scope and goals. Foster and his allies were attempting to demonstrate to AFL leaders the potential of industrywide organizing and bargaining. Yet, despite Foster's outstanding organizational and leadership skills, the strike failed, and so did postwar efforts to build an industrial labor movement in the United States.

Though there is disagreement over which factors—domestic or foreign—most heavily shaped the trajectory of Foster's life in the post-World War I period (reflected in the contrasting views of Foster's two major biographers, James Barrett and Edward P. Johanningsmeier), it is certainly obvious that Foster's immersion in international politics had an important influence on his ideological development. His encounter with the Russian Communist Party in 1921 and his growing familiarity with the course of the Russian Revolution led Foster to a belief in the potential power and need for a disciplined, centralized, and militant revolutionary cadre. It also led him into the American Communist Party in late 1921, where he quickly rose to the front ranks of the organization. Three times he ran as the Party's candidate for the U.S. presidency, in 1924, 1928, and again in 1932.

Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, as Foster navigated between shifting Communist Party lines and existing trade union realities, he was continually forced to compromise his own beliefs on how best to engineer the transition from American business unionism to a revolutionary working-class trade and political movement. Foster's varied work experiences amongst skilled and unskilled laborers, his political and organizational experiences in Seattle and Chicago, and during the steel strike, led him again and

again to a recognition of the need to work within existing trade union institutions and transform and radicalize them. But the debates within the CP on organizing autonomous revolutionary unions or “boring from within,” supporting or undermining third-party initiatives, and cultivating progressive allies or keeping them at arm’s length were not always resolved in harmony with Foster’s better judgment. His own experiences taught Foster that working with existing organizations and steering them leftward was the most sensible way to operate within American institutional and ideological realities. That belief was reflected in the Trade Union Education League (TUEL), which he helped found in 1920 and which he brought into the Russian *Profintern* (the Red International of Labor Unions, the RILU) in 1923. The goal of the TUEL was to steer conservative AFL and independent unions to the left by helping to foster insurgent and militant worker movements *within* existing craft-dominated organizations. Nonetheless, Foster was forced to adapt to Party dictates when, during the Stalinist “Third Period” from 1928 until 1934–1935, he yielded to a dual-union emphasis and concentrated his efforts on building competitive and more militant alternatives to existing AFL organizations. The TUEL gave way to the TUUL, the Trade Union Unity League, in 1929, and began immediately to establish new unions. Around a dozen industrial unions were founded in the following six years, in a variety of economic sectors: textiles, marine labor, mining, shoe and leather manufacturing, agricultural labor, and more. More than 50,000 workers were soon organized by TUUL affiliates.

With the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the abandonment of Third Period Communism in 1935, Foster was able to return to a personally more appealing “boring from within” strategy. He and the Party helped funnel hundreds of effective and disciplined Communist organizers into John L. Lewis’s newly established industrial union organization, assisting in the transformation of the American labor movement in the 1930s and 1940s.

Following the uncomfortable and potentially disastrous two years of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, Soviet and U.S. unity during World War II helped revive and sustain the Party’s effective trade union work. But the political and economic de-radicalization of the Party during World War II by Party head Earl Browder (he transformed the CPUSA into an “association”) alienated Foster from Browder and led the former to spearhead efforts to oust Browder in 1946. Adapting to American realities and encouraging wartime unity was one thing; but forsaking basic socialist principles was another. When Browder moved further and further to the right and became almost

indistinguishable from Franklin Roosevelt, Foster had enough. The publication of the famous critical letter by French Party leader Jacques Duclos in the late spring of 1945 gave Foster and his allies all the ammunition they needed to purge the now-discredited Browder. Foster succeeded Browder in 1946 and for the remaining 15 years of his life led the Party during its most sectarian and self-destructive period. Unwilling to tolerate deviations from Party discipline, Foster stifled various attempts to reform and democratize the U.S. party during the Cold War years and was unwilling to challenge Moscow’s violent put-down of the Hungarian Revolution. Even after Khrushchev’s revelation and condemnation of Stalin’s excesses in 1956, Foster remained steadfast in holding on to Communist orthodoxy. He became rigid in his dealings with internal dissent and unwilling to tolerate the many calls for reform that spread through the Party’s rank and file in the wake of Khrushchev’s disclosure of Stalin’s many moral and ideological transgressions.

In the final years of his life, in the late 1950s, as he wrestled with illness and remained unbending in his ideological course, Foster watched and—according to many scholars—contributed to his Party’s self-destruction. Over 80% of the CP’s membership abandoned the organization in the remaining years of the decade. Finally, succumbing to a heart disease that plagued him since the early 1930s, on September 1, 1961, in a sanatorium just outside of Moscow, Foster died.

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See also Communist Party

FOURIERISM

Fourierism—also called Associationism by Americans—was a nineteenth-century communitarian movement with wide appeal in the United States. Between 1841 and 1846, idealists and reformers, working under the tutelage of boosters like Albert Brisbane and Horace Greeley, inaugurated 25 communities—including the famous Brook Farm—that housed between 7,000 and 8,000 people. The founding of a few other colonies followed in the 1850s, and the last Fourierite colony lasted until 1892.

FOURIERISM

The historian Carl Guarneri has estimated that when interested hangers-on are counted among the Associationists, their numbers reached perhaps 100,000. Although none of the Fourierite communities lasted long, while they did last they featured innovative experiments in the management of labor and in progressive education, and were hotbeds of reformist energy.

Charles Fourier, a French cloth merchant and obscure social theorist who lived from 1772 to 1837, was never taken seriously in his own country, where only one Fourierite community was ever constructed. Fourier's ideas were translated to the American context by Albert Brisbane, a native of New York who experienced a forceful ideological conversion while in Europe, and subsequently made popularizing the ideas his life's work. Through the pages of the *New York Tribune* and several books, Brisbane transformed Fourier for an American context, leaving out some of Fourier's more controversial notions.

What was left was "attractive industry," the idea that humans had a limited variety of personality types and that each personality was uniquely suited to a type of industry. Through an emulative vocational education that began as soon as a child could walk and talk, people might be ideally matched with the type of light industry or agricultural work that would uniquely suit them. Accompanied by bands of music and wearing colorful uniforms, they would march to the fields or workshops. There, they would have interesting workdays, full of variety, spurred on to great heights of productivity by friendly competition among "groups" and "series" of workers and by the presence of attractive workmates of the opposite sex. In Fourier's notion, there was someone in a community who was perfect for every job—young boys, who love to play in mud, would naturally serve as garbage collectors for a community, for example.

Fourier had envisioned his communitarians living in phalansteries, symmetrical communities of 2,000 individuals whose geographic planning resembled college campuses. The phalanstery, to be created by members taking out shares in a joint-stock company, was the optimal mix of country and city: a little castle in the midst of the rural idyll. In reality, no Associationist community in the United States was able to attract 2,000 residents—the longest-lived community, the North American Phalanx, had about a hundred. Nor were the Associationists able to construct phalansteries on the scale that Fourier had detailed in his drawings—some, like the community in Ceresco, Wisconsin, had plenty of land but not the capital for grand public buildings; others were swamped with residents and forced to build quickly. Forced to compromise on these key issues, Associationists used

available buildings or constructed group housing that resembled the local vernacular architecture.

While Fourier had emphasized agriculture, especially the growing of fruit, as the prime industry for his communities, American Fourierite communities practiced a wide variety of industries, including shoemaking, milling, and tailoring. Like many so-called utopian socialists, Fourier had boasted of the advantages to women of housework being done communally, but some women who joined the communities complained that equality in tasks and pay existed more in theory than in practice. This was a characteristic of the Fourierite communities: even the groups, series, and task rotations so integral to Fourier's plan were impossible to achieve with tens or hundreds rather than thousands of members.

Fourierite communities were notable for their progressive ideas about the education and role of children. In 1844, under the supervision of member George Ripley, the Brook Farm commune became a Fourierite experiment—one that would later be chronicled by Nathaniel Hawthorne in *The Blithedale Romance*. Brook Farm would become best known for its school—a school that attracted children from many of the area's best families. Children in Fourierite communities earned wages for their work and could become self-supporting by the time they were in their teens—a fact that conflicted with traditional family arrangements in some of the communities.

While they lasted, Fourierite communities promised people an altered lifestyle that they hoped would serve as a model for broader societal change. For their residents, they provided an active social life, with musical evenings, lecture series, charades, sledding, and festivals that they created themselves. Fourierite communities were also hotbeds of reform in antebellum America. Reforms embraced by individuals and groups included temperance, vegetarianism, the abolition of slavery, and land reform. Fourierites viewed all of these as inferior to the one great reform: when society was organized around communitarian lines, all of the other issues could easily be mastered.

What explains the popularity of Fourierism? At a time of commercial transformation in America, during which the structure of the workplace was changing and the waged workplace increasingly separate from the home, Americans were attracted to many kinds of alternative living arrangements or "patent office" models for the improvement and reconfiguration of society, including Shakerism, Mormonism, and the Oneida Community. The Fourierites differed from the others by their willingness to embrace new technologies, both in their daily lives and to propagate their propaganda. In addition to Brisbane's column in the *New York Tribune*, Fourierites had their

own wide-circulation newspapers, the *Phalanx* and later the *Harbinger*, which helped to spread news of the far-flung communities and to unite physical participants in the program with a network of interested reformers and followers. John Allan and John Orvis, the movement's itinerant lecturers, traveled through upstate New York and Massachusetts and as far west as Wisconsin, taking advantage of the mania for lyceums and self-improvement. Capitalizing on the desire for voluntary association among new urban dwellers, the Fourierites formed clubs of followers in major cities. The response was strongest among the middle classes and skilled artisans.

Despite the strong appeal of both the ideology and its propagation machine, the longest-lived antebellum experiment lasted only 12 years. Individuals chafed under the restraints imposed by a minutely planned vision of society. Strained finances could not cope with fires that claimed major buildings. Perhaps most important, the Fourierites, unlike later Socialists, never rejected the individualist, familial, and private-property-owning aspects of American society, making it easy for members of the communities to drift away and seek their fortunes in the world once the American economic situation improved in the 1850s.

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See also **Brisbane, Albert**

FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

To portray the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) as a genuine labor union is historically inaccurate. During most of its existence, the FOP maintained that the unionization of any police force was dangerous and vigorously resisted any attempt to be labeled a police union by city officials or other labor organizations. Although it has long been organized in a manner similar

to labor unions, with local lodges subordinate to state lodges, which are affiliated with the national Grand Lodge, it is only recently that the FOP has adopted the purpose and tactics of traditional labor unions.

Founding

The Fraternal Order of Police was founded in 1915 by two Philadelphia police officers, Martin Toole and Delbert Nagle. The two officers possessed a distinct view of the United States in general, and American police in particular, that stressed the exceptional nature of American civilization and the role of the police as its guardians. They looked to an idealized Roman Empire as their civilizational model and adopted the Roman motto "*Jus, Fidus, Libertatum*" ("Law is the safeguard of liberty") as their own. Ironically, this Roman motto was the source of some confusion within the FOP. Since its founding in 1915, the organization had translated the Latin phrase as "Fairness, Justice, Equality." However, in the early 1920s, a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the FOP pointed out that the word *fairness* could not be translated from the Roman phrase *Jus, Fidus, Libertatum*. Hence, the translation was adjusted to "Justice, Friendship, Equality." The correct translation (Law is the safeguard of liberty) was not recognized and adopted until 1968, by which time changing the Latin motto on all FOP publications would have been too costly.

The political context during the founding of the FOP accounts for its traditional anti-union stance. Europe was engaged in World War I when the order was founded in 1915. After the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Delbert Nagle, the first grand president of the FOP, assured the public that his organization would be the first to rally around the flag during any national crisis. When the United States entered the war, the FOP passed a resolution pre-emptively endorsing every act of the president. After the war, as anti-German and anti-immigrant sentiments transformed into antiradical hysteria, all forms of workforce organization became suspect in the view of industry and government. Since local police forces were so often used against striking workers, a police union seemed particularly troublesome, if not contradictory.

It was this same tension between the police officers' obligation to break up strikes and their own desire to fight for better pay and working conditions that shaped the stridently conservative identity of the Fraternal Order of Police. From the very beginning, the Order's founders insisted that they had no desire to form a police union. The Order's first constitution reflected this concern; union affiliation and police

strikes were strictly prohibited. In fact, when representatives from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) contacted the FOP leadership about building a working relationship, the Order's grand president staunchly refused on the basis that police siding with striking workers could result in social upheaval.

Expansion

The FOP's overt opposition to police unionism during the post-WWI Red Scare stimulated a substantial increase in FOP membership. Ironically, it was the actions of a non-FOP affiliated police force that facilitated the swelling of the FOP's ranks. The widespread labor radicalism of the era produced the first police strike in American history. Boston police officers went on strike in 1919 when the city refused to recognize their affiliation with the AFL. Governor Calvin Coolidge had to call in the National Guard to quell the violence and looting that took place in the wake of the police strike. The corresponding backlash by city officials and the national media produced a nationwide assault on all efforts by police to organize. Although the FOP was not exempt from these attacks (it was repeatedly condemned as radical, anarchist, Bolshevik, and Communist), the Order's forceful denunciation of all things radical and its continued opposition to police unionism and strikes convinced most of its critics that it was sufficiently antiradical. Since most states passed laws banning organized bargaining rights for police officers in the wake of the Boston strike of 1919, the FOP remained as the only viable, nonunion alternative for police officers. From that moment until the 1960s, the FOP lobbied legislative committees and employed publicity campaigns to improve the working conditions of its members.

Membership in the FOP also increased when it proved its ability to deliver better pay and working conditions to prospective members. Originally conceived as a national organization, each gain made by the FOP in its mission to improve the lives of police officers has served as a major selling point in its effort to garner new members. The Order made its first attempt to expand shortly after its inception during WWI. Its first major victory came in 1916 when the Pittsburgh lodge successfully lobbied the city council to give police officers two days off a month with pay. The following year, the original founders mandated the publication of an official FOP journal as a means to communicate with its rank-and-file members and to raise funds through advertising. The use of revenues from the publication soon became a contentious issue within the FOP when Nagle and Toole made the

journal their private enterprise. They were soon purged from the FOP and accused of fraud, misappropriation of funds, and theft (though criminal charges were never brought against them). Despite such an inauspicious end for the Order's founders, the organization grew steadily during the 1920s as antiradical sentiments fueled heightened concern for law and order. The FOP grew so rapidly in the 1930s that a general instability descended upon the Order as huge numbers of new members created new coalitions and factions within the original organization. The ensuing power struggle pitted founding members from the Pittsburgh lodge against new members from Ohio, Indiana, and West Virginia. Fistfights during the Order's annual conventions were not an uncommon occurrence throughout this period. Stronger state lodges emerged from the infighting, and membership tripled from 5,000 in 1930 to 15,000 in 1940. Though concentrated in the Midwest, the FOP was now the largest police organization in the nation, stretching from Pennsylvania to Arizona. During WWII, dissent within the ranks decreased as new membership growth slowed. In 1952, the FOP began publishing its Annual Survey of Salaries and Working Conditions of the Police Departments in the U.S. This allowed all officers, departments, and city officials to have access to comparative statistics on salaries and working conditions from police departments throughout the country. The Annual Survey proved to be the single most important tool in the FOP's lobbying effort on behalf of its members. By 1960, with 500 local lodges and FOP membership at 40,000, the Order had become a powerful national organization able to fight for and defend the interests of police anywhere in United States.

Challenges

The 1960s were the most critical years for the Fraternal Order of Police. A growing emphasis by civil rights organizations on police misconduct led to calls for civilian review boards that would have the power to discipline abusive police officers and overly aggressive tactical units. The Order's uncompromising defense of any officer charged with police brutality brought thousands of officers into the ranks of the FOP. In just five years, the FOP grew by 20,000 members to a total of 60,000 in 1965. Since civilian review boards represented a threat to both local police forces and the local governments that employed them, a close working relationship developed between city governments and local FOP lodges. The Order organized legal defense funds and alarmist publicity

campaigns to resist challenges brought by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and even Robert Kennedy's Justice Department. As quoted in Justin Walsh's history of the FOP, "The public should be scared into supporting us," suggested Grand Lodge President John Harrington. The tactic worked; few civilian review boards were ever established.

This period was also marked by a growing police unionization movement across the country. Existing unions such as the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, as well as new unions such as the National Union of Police Officers, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, and the International Conference of Police Associations, attracted growing numbers of police officers because of their willingness to engage in collective bargaining and even strikes to fight for the interests of its members, tactics that the FOP leadership had resisted for 50 years. The more militant posture of these unions forced the FOP to adopt a similar stance. A change in FOP attitude toward union activity and strikes became clearly evident by 1967 when FOP members refused to reaffirm the Order's ban on such actions. FOP members engaged in their first strike in Youngstown, Ohio, on September 6, 1967, and received a \$100 a month pay raise. The FOP has functioned as a genuine labor union for police officers ever since. By 1975, FOP membership had risen to 120,000.

Political Efforts

Broader issues for which the FOP has lobbied for in the past include effective gun control laws and forced sterilization of repeat offenders. In addition, the FOP has organized against affirmative action hiring of women and minorities and is on record as opposing the hiring of homosexuals. The FOP leadership, in accordance with the more activist posture of the 1960s, endorsed the segregationist George Wallace for president in 1968 and Richard Nixon for re-election in 1972. By 1976, the FOP had begun to routinely endorse and campaign for pro "law and order" politicians.

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FREE-SOILISM

"Free-Soilism" refers to the popular mid-nineteenth-century plan to provide cheap federal land in the West to poor settlers while excluding slavery from that same land—in essence, free land and land free of slavery.

Calls for equitable distribution of public land dated back to eighteenth-century Enlightenment radicals. Building on this tradition, Jacksonian-era labor reformers developed the concept of free soil as a cure for low wages and unemployment suffered by urban workers. Free productive land parceled out in small plots would support underemployed workers, end land speculation, and, by drawing labor out of the cities, improve conditions for those remaining behind. Opposition to slavery fed into land reform because slaveholders constituted a powerful interest that threatened to engross public lands at the expense of ordinary Americans. The free-soil critique of slavery owed more to labor reform arguments that banks and corporate monopolies undermined the equality of white citizens than it did to the abolitionist argument that slavery and the racial hierarchy that supported it were morally wrong.

George Henry Evans, an immigrant British printer and editor, led the fight for free soil. He developed his ideas while involved with the utopian Robert Dale Owen and the Workingman's Party in the late 1820s. The agrarian Thomas Skidmore and the anti-slavery Democrat William Leggett also influenced Free-Soilism's development. In the mid-1830s, advocates of free land distribution included the National Trades Union, the antimonopoly Locofoco faction of the Democratic Party, and, for a time, New York City politico Mike Walsh. In 1844, Evans and two other printers organized the National Reform Association, headquartered in New York City. National Reformers promoted free soil by urging workers to "vote yourself a farm."

Evans opposed slavery and was one of the few whites to praise Nat Turner's rebellion. However, Evans also criticized abolitionists for paying more attention to slaves than to white wage earners. That narrowed vision of free labor's concerns enabled Free-Soilers to win support from racist whites who nonetheless worried about the growing power of slaveholders, but it undermined political antislavery's commitment to racial equality. The racism of Free-Soilers led abolitionist followers of William Lloyd Garrison to keep the movement at arm's length.

Nonetheless, as foes of slavery, Free-Soilers attracted some abolitionists who had supported the Liberty Party in 1840 and 1844. Free soil also appealed to tenant farmers in Upstate New York

who fought against high rents. Followers of the communitarian theorist Charles Fourier, including Albert Brisbane and, through Brisbane's influence, editor Horace Greeley, also took up the cause of free soil. Along with these constituencies, free soil won adherents in the major parties who worried about the growing power of slaveholders. Northern Democrats witnessed this power in 1844, when southerners blocked New Yorker Martin Van Buren's nomination for president because they doubted his support for slavery's expansion. Similarly, antislavery Conscience Whigs, such as Massachusetts' Charles Sumner, grew restive at the collusion between "the lords of the loom and the lords of the lash"—northern industrialists and southern.

The annexation of Texas in 1845 and the ensuing war with Mexico brought southwestern territories under U.S. control and heightened northern concern that slaveholders would dominate settlement of public lands. In 1846, David Wilmot, a Democratic congressman from north-central Pennsylvania, proposed a ban on slavery in land conquered from Mexico. The so-called Wilmot Proviso was narrowly defeated, but it sparked a new political movement. In 1846, the first Free Soil Party appeared in New York. In New Hampshire, a coalition of free-soil Whigs and Democrats led by John Parker Hale won control of the legislature.

In 1848, the Free Soil Party nominated Van Buren for president. Van Buren campaigned on free soil, but he advocated other labor reform issues such as public works, cheap postage, and the elimination of unnecessary public offices. In the industrial state of Massachusetts, Free-Soilers pushed for the 10-hour day and enjoyed strong support in manufacturing centers like Lynn. Although the Free Soil Party refused to endorse racial equality or immediate emancipation, free black abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and Charles Remond supported it as a necessary step in converting white northerners to anti-slavery. In the election, Van Buren polled 291,804 votes, 10% of the national total and 14% of all northern ballots. The Free Soil Party did best in rural areas where small farmers had little access to prosperity-generating canals and railroads.

The federal Compromise of 1850, which brought California into the union as a free state, temporarily quieted conflict over western land, but the opening of Kansas and Nebraska to slavery in 1854 re-ignited free-soil protests in the North and spawned the Republican Party. The Kansas-Nebraska Act rescinded an 1820 ban on slavery in these lands by allowing voters in Kansas and Nebraska to decide slavery's status for themselves. Across the North, workers

and farmers worried that wealthy slaveholders would buy up the best land, wring profits from it with unpaid slave labor, and drive out ordinary farm families. Exploiting these fears, the new Republican Party promised to provide white families with free homesteads in the West and stop slavery's expansion.

Over the next six years, Republicans challenged the increasingly proslavery and prosouthern Democratic Party for control of the federal government. Like other Free-Soilers, Republicans emphasized slavery's harm to whites and downplayed universal emancipation and racial equality. That argument had mass appeal in the North where anger at the Slave Power had to counterbalance white racism that had in earlier times helped slaveholders win support in the free states.

The Republican Abraham Lincoln's victory in the 1860 presidential election sparked the secession of 11 slave states, and civil war ensued. During the Civil War, Lincoln's administration made good on free-soil promises by passing the Homestead Act of 1862, which gave 160-acre lots to farmers who paid a \$10 fee and settled the land for five years. In 1863, Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed slaves in rebel-held territory, and, in 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution banned slavery throughout the United States.

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See also **Brisbane, Albert; Civil War and Reconstruction; Emancipation and Reconstruction; Fourierism; Evans, George Henry; Leggett, William; Locofoco Democrats; Lynn Shoe Strike (1860); Owen, Robert Dale; Skidmore, Thomas; Walsh, Mike**

FRENCH-CANADIANS

Since the establishment of New France in 1608 and its subsequent conquest by the British following the Seven-Year War, French-Canadian settlers were largely concentrated along the Saint Lawrence Valley,

with a significant minority scattered throughout its vast hinterlands. One of the major activities they were engaged in—the fur trade—had taken many of them to the most remote corners of the continent, and even after the Conquest, many remained in the employ of fur companies as voyageurs, *engages*, and artisans. When in 1867 British North America was re-organized into the Canadian Confederation, French-Canadians made up the majority of the population of the newly created province of Quebec.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, French Canada remained essentially an agrarian society despite the growing importance of proto-industrial activities and a few commercial centers such as Quebec City, Three Rivers, and Montreal—soon to emerge as the province's leading manufacturing and metropolitan area. The co-existence of commercial and subsistence agriculture proved unable to sustain the natural growth of this rural population, whose birthrate was one of the highest in the western world. Moreover, in the absence of adequate public policies to encourage the settlement of largely forested hinterland regions, rural French-Canadians began to overflow from the old parishes toward commercial centers and increasingly across the border and into the United States. Public concern about the loss of population to the United States was voiced as early as the 1830s. By mid-century, the southward population movement seemed to have become irreversible, as ascertained by an 1857 Quebec public inquiry. While the majority crossed into rural districts of neighbouring states, and a few joined the expanding agricultural frontier in the American Midwest, a growing number migrated seasonally to work in canal and railroad construction and logging—thus providing a significant labour input to the initial phase of industrialization associated with antebellum America.

Cross-border migration accelerated dramatically following the Civil War and reached its all-time peak in the 1880s, when the net population loss to the United States for that decade rose to 150,000. Despite the ensuing declining trend, French-Canadians continued to migrate south in large numbers up until the onset of the Great Depression. Estimates covering the 1840–1940 period have placed their net migration to the United States at 900,000.

Despite the multidirectional nature of these cross-border flows, two sections in the United States acted as major poles of attraction: the Great Lakes region, owing—at least initially—to the previous existence of French-Canadian enclaves that had survived the decline of the fur trade; and New England, on account of the geographical proximity of its expanding labour markets.

French-Canadians in the Midwest

On the eve of the Civil War, the states of Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin had become the destination for nearly one half of all French-Canadians residing in the United States. Of these, Michigan soon rose as by far the leading pole of French-Canadian settlement. One key factor was the pull exerted by the forestry industry, whose rapid development by the 1860s had made Michigan the major producer state in the union. Many French-Canadian lumberjacks had followed the forestry industry in its continental move from the East to the West; others, encouraged by improvements in fluvial and rail transportation, joined it in Michigan as enclaves and communities started to multiply, particularly in the Saginaw Valley, where much of the forestry production was concentrated. By 1885, French-Canadians made up 13% of the valley's population, with more than half of their labour force employed in logging operations and sawmills—thus making them the largest immigrant group within the valley's forestry industry. So intimately bound was their economic future to that resource industry that when a major strike broke out in 1885 around the issue of a shorter working day—one that proved to be the major labour/capital confrontation in the valley during that era—French-Canadians joined their fellow immigrant and American workers, and offered their community center for rallies and other organizing purposes. Outside the forestry sector, a significant minority of French-Canadians residing in the valley were engaged in skilled trades, either as employees or as independent craftsmen. Others became well established in the service sector (hotels, saloons), often as owners.

In the northern section of Michigan—known also as the Keweenaw Peninsula—French-Canadians began to arrive in the 1850s. To a large extent, their early arrival and subsequent influx were related to the rapid growth of copper mining and its central role in the region's economy. So acute was the labour shortage in this sector that on many occasions employers had to send recruiting agents across the border and entice Canadians with the promise of higher wages. By the end of the century, French-Canadians made up 12% of the peninsula's population and had created a stable institutional network, particularly in the towns of Lake Linden and Calumet.

Not surprisingly, mining-related work became the leading single sector of occupation among French-Canadians, followed by logging and a variety of service-related occupations.

Among the manufacturing centers of the Midwest, it was the city of Detroit that exerted by far the most important pull for French-Canadians. By 1900, they

had become the leading immigrant group after the British, the Anglo-Canadians, and the Polish, and were engaged primarily in unskilled and semiskilled occupations.

Migrating to New England

However significant the influx of French-Canadians into the Great Lakes region, its importance within the overall migration movement decreased substantially as the industrial landscape of the nation changed. By the turn of the century, in fact, for every French-Canadian headed to the Great Lakes states, four more were choosing the New England states as their destinations.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, much of the French-Canadian population overflow into New England border counties—from Vermont to Maine—had been essentially an agrarian phenomenon. But with the unprecedented industrial growth marking the “Gilded Age,” New England consolidated its role as a major pole of attraction for immigrant labour in the nation.

Of all manufacturing sectors, it was textile production—mostly concentrated in central and southern New England—that drew the largest proportion of French-Canadians. In ever-growing numbers, they discovered the possibilities that the textile mills to the south offered them, and inversely, textile employers discovered the Quebec countryside as a source of labour willing to submit to the particularly harsh working conditions prevailing in that manufacturing sector.

Geographic proximity, of course, played a leading role, particularly now that Quebec had become integrated within the New England rail network. Unlike European immigrants, who were separated from New England labour markets by an often strenuous Atlantic crossing, most French-Canadians only had to reach a nearby rail junction in order to find themselves, in less than a day trip, in any of the labour-hungry industrial centers of New England. Often they were encouraged to migrate by recruiting agents sent by mill owners. Studies of Lewiston, Maine; Lowell, Massachusetts; Manchester, New Hampshire; and Woonsocket, Rhode Island—among others—have traced the early entry of French-Canadians in the textile industry to the 1860s. In many such cases, their arrival and subsequent influx into textile production took on the proportion of a historic immigrant turnover in an industry that had previously relied largely on Irish labour, and before it, on a local Yankee workforce. By 1900, in fact, French-Canadians represented the majority of the population in some large textile

centers such as Woonsocket, Rhode Island, as well as in a myriad of smaller mill towns throughout the Blackstone Valley. Moreover, they made up nearly one half of the entire labour force employed in textile manufacturing in Maine and New Hampshire, and in Massachusetts and Rhode Island they accounted for nearly one third of the textile workforce.

But what best explains the historic encounter of rural French-Canadians with the New England textile industry was the particular type of labour market engendered by a production process that was the first one to be mechanized on a large scale and made to depend significantly on the labour of women and children. As a result, hard-pressed small holders, as well as subsistence and tenant farmers in Quebec, saw in textile work a rare possibility to turn several of the family members into wage earners. Not surprisingly, family migration became the main pattern of this movement, resulting in extended kin-based chain migration; and the reliance on the work of children was a key consideration for those envisaging a move south of the border. By 1880, for instance, about 30% of the French-Canadian immigrant population in the state of Rhode Island were children aged 14 and younger—a striking contrast with most European immigrant populations. Perhaps even more significantly, 81% of that population was made up of nuclear families. The same survey revealed that 80.4% of all French-Canadian children aged 11 to 15 were reported at work as against only 8.5% reported at school—thus making this cross-border movement not only a chapter in immigrant working-class history but also a chapter in “children’s history.” Even when, during the Progressive Era, child labour laws kept a large number of them out of the labour market, French-Canadian older children kept contributing significantly to the family wage. As shown by a New England-wide survey of French-Canadians in the cotton industry produced by the U. S. Senate’s Immigration Commission (1908–1911), the earnings of children aged 14 and 15 accounted, on average, for 33% of the total family income, with the earnings of fathers accounting for 52%. Throughout these years, only a small minority of male heads of families gained access to textile manufacturing. The majority of them tended to find work as unskilled day labourers or semiskilled production workers in boot and shoe factories and in brick manufacturing.

French-Canadians and Labour Activism

The stereotype circulated in the 1880s by Massachusetts labour reformers depicting French-Canadians as “the

Chinese of the East” for their ethnic gregariousness, their submission to employers’ whims, and their lack of interest in American institutions has long served to explain their low proclivity for labour militancy. In effect, despite the growing instances of French-Canadian workers’ resistance unearthed by historians, their participation in the waves of industrial strife marking the Gilded Age and Progressive America bears little proportion to their weight within the New England workforce.

A more historically sound explanation may be found in the previously mentioned demographic and labour-market realities marking their industrial experience, as well as in the organizational priorities of the craft unions prevailing in textile throughout that era, which kept the overwhelming majority of low-skilled, French-Canadian mill workers out of their concerns. Geographic and cultural factors also played their role. Proximity to Quebec, in fact, and the existence—throughout the New England region—of family and kin networks encouraged what one may call “a mobility of abstention.” In periods of protracted labour strife, French-Canadians tended to leave their strike-ridden mill towns and head back temporarily to Quebec or join family or relatives in other textile centers. Yet, in some cases, these choices were prompted by a refusal to act as scabs.

But perhaps a more important deterring factor was the significant degree of social control exerted on the community by the church and the local ethnic elite.

It is important to stress that church authorities in Quebec had long condemned out-migration to the United States for the spiritual dangers it posed to those who subjected themselves to the evil influences of urban/industrial life; along with a Quebec nationalist elite, they had also condemned out-migrants for abandoning their fatherland, thus weakening French Canada’s political weight within the Canadian Confederation. In the hope of stemming the exodus, they had resorted to repatriation programs as a way to re-channel the southward exodus toward colonisation of Quebec’s hinterlands—though with little success. But in the face of the movement’s resiliency, the church redefined its mission by joining immigrants in the land of exile in order to ensure that they preserve their French-Canadian traditions (religion, language, family)—thus sheltering them from the evil influences surrounding them.

This posture soon took the force of an ideology known as “*La survivance*” (the survival), which in many areas of settlement pervaded the elaborate institutional network French-Canadians created and which encompassed national parishes, hospitals, French-language schools, mutual-aid societies, recreational activities, and the press.

Just as in Quebec the nascent French-Canadian labour movement was effectively dominated by church officials, who ensured that workers’ demands, when economically justified, occur within the framework of enlightened paternalism, so in New England local *curés* exerted intense pressures on their parishioners, viewing, as they did, American labour unions as the embodiment of modernism and socialism, and strikes as a form of disobedience to established authority. But not all French-Canadians yielded to those pressures.

One should not lose sight of the fact that most immigrant communities, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, experienced the tension of trying to maintain cultural traditions and ethnic associations while at the same time undergoing the Americanisation pressures brought about, most acutely, by the World War I patriotic drives and the ensuing nativist ethos prevailing in much of the country. This tension appears to have been much more pronounced among French-Canadians on account of the growing confrontation in most communities of rival elites: those seeking to enforce *survivance*, and those encouraging naturalisation and participation in the wider civil society. The proximity to Quebec ecclesiastical influences and to the growing Quebec ethno-nationalist movement translated—at least initially—in added ideological ammunition for the former group. Still, this traditionalist-modernist mix defies generalisation, as it varied significantly according to local circumstances and community leadership. But it runs as a common thread in the history of much of New England’s “Franco-America,” inevitably impacting the types of relations workers had with the local labour organizations and industrial strife.

As resilient as the *survivance* ideology may have been, it did not prevent a new generation of French-Canadian workers—some born in Quebec, but increasingly U.S.-born—from heeding the labour call and joining strikers as the New England textile industry underwent the convulsions associated with the growing competition from southern production, or resulting from the industrial mobilisation of the war period and from the nationwide, historic capital-labour confrontation of the postwar years. A number of skilled workers among them took up labour responsibilities in the United Textile Workers or in other local textile unions such as the Woonsocket-based Independent Textile Union, playing key roles in reaching the mass of French-Canadian unskilled and semiskilled workers. In one of the major textile strikes of the 1920s, fought against the giant Amoskeag corporation, in Manchester, New Hampshire, French-Canadian workers were among the labour activists who spearheaded the nine-month-long

confrontation (1922)—thus challenging both the company’s entrenched paternalism and their ethnic leaders’ call for submission.

While ending in defeat, the Amoskeag strike reflects the transformations occurring in the demographic and political composition of French-Canadian textile workers, and in many ways stands as a rehearsal for the massive, and more successful, organizing drives of the turbulent 1930s, when class interest and solidarity took precedence over ethnic loyalties.

During much of the 1920s, in fact, French-Canadian immigration declined sharply, coming to a virtual end with the onset of the Great Depression. By 1930, nearly two out of three individuals of French-Canadian stock were born in the United States and inevitably subject to the Americanisation influences of the inter-war years. To many of them, the labour militancy that swept through the nation, and the ensuing U.S. involvement in the “good war,” gave the opportunity to partake in the building of a new, more democratic industrial order, while at the same time adjusting their culture and traditions to a more mainstream vision of Americanism.

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FREY, JOHN American Federation of Labor

John Frey was a conservative stalwart of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the early to mid-twentieth century. In the internal union struggles of the 1930s, Frey argued for the maintenance of the AFL’s craft unionist tradition. Frey cut his teeth in the metals unions, serving as vice president of the Iron Molders from 1900 to 1950. Frey also served with the national AFL, as secretary and director of the Metal Trades Department. As head of the Metal Trades Department, Frey sought to defend the old jurisdictions of the craft unions against the emergence of new industrial unions.

Frey’s political outlook was generally antistatist. He resisted government involvement in labor, and in the economy generally. In the early 1920s, he opposed the creation of Unemployment Insurance, and in the 1930s, he opposed the creation of the Social Security system. Frey feared that government involvement in the welfare of workers was bound to sap labor’s independence. Frey initially supported the Wagner Act of 1935 and the creation of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). But the actions of the Board soon seemed to threaten the skilled workers that Frey represented. Because the NLRB tended to favor the creation of large bargaining units, skilled workers were often included with unskilled workers. The ensuing union certification votes tended to favor industrial organization over craft organization. Frey lobbied for changes to the Board’s policies of bargaining unit creation, but was largely unsuccessful.

Frey’s period of greatest prominence and influence came during disputes between the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the AFL. Frey opposed the CIO from the beginning, even when it was created within the AFL as the Committee for Industrial Organization. His opposition to the CIO became still more strident as it split from the AFL and became the independent Congress of Industrial Organizations. In 1936, Frey led the charge from the AFL Executive Council to suspend the 12 major unions of the CIO. Frey charged the Committee for Industrial Organization with “fomenting insurrection.” Frey

also charged leaders like John L. Lewis and David Dubinsky with encouraging “dual unionism.” Frey held that the charters granted by the AFL to affiliates were exclusive, and that the Committee for Industrial Organization was infringing on the rights of craft unions. By encouraging workers to organize into CIO unions in industries where the AFL had granted charters to craft unions, Frey claimed, the CIO was violating the AFL constitution, and should be suspended. Frey prepared a case for the AFL Executive Council against the 12 major unions in the Committee for Industrial Organization, and then presented evidence against them. The ensuing “trial” culminated in the suspension of the 12 unions from the AFL and the eventual schism of the American union movement into the AFL and CIO. In late 1937, as some sort of reconciliation seemed possible, Frey opposed any reunification between the AFL and CIO. He claimed that Lewis’s position of leadership in the CIO was weak, that the CIO was suffering financial troubles, and that the intervening year had proved the AFL’s old policies of craft unionism were still superior.

Frey continued to hound the CIO even after the split, accusing the CIO of Communist subversion. In 1938, Frey allied himself with Martin Dies, chair of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He became one of Dies’s star witnesses, presenting sensational charges of Communist domination of industrial unions.

Almost every historian of the labor movement in the 1930s demonizes John Frey. Frey operated through underhanded tactics. He was an unapologetic elitist, and his actions sowed division amongst his fellow unionists. These criticisms are accurate and fair. Frey’s legacy is basically that of a hit man for the old guard of the AFL. He was resistant to change, unwilling to organize unskilled workers, and vehemently opposed the presence of radicals of any stripe in the union movement. Yet Frey represented a group of workers that were numerous and dedicated to their beliefs. In the world of 1930s unionism, the craft tradition that Frey defended was still surviving, and in some cases thriving.

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FUGITIVE SLAVE ACTS

The Fugitive Slave Acts refer to laws passed by Congress in 1793 and 1850 providing for the capture and return of escaped African-American slaves to their owners. Although the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Act in *Ableman v. Booth* in 1859, the acts were eventually repealed in 1864.

Early History

The origins of the Fugitive Slave Acts date back to the colonial period. The earliest act is found in the Articles of Confederation of the New England Confederation of 1643, which contained a clause requiring the return of all fugitive slaves. In 1787, delegates from 12 states met in Philadelphia for what became known as the Constitutional Convention, and wrestled with key issues of slavery, mainly among the northern-southern divide. At this same time, Congress met under the existing Articles of Confederation and passed the Northwest Ordinance (also known as the Ordinance of 1787), which banned slavery in the Northwest Territory and included a clause requiring the return of slaves who escaped to the Northwest Territories. The new U.S. Constitution included a similar fugitive slave clause in Article IV, Section II. It is important to note that the passing of both fugitive slave clauses was a part of major negotiations and compromises between northern and southern states.

Fugitive Slave Act of 1793

Despite the inclusion of a fugitive slave clause in the new U.S. Constitution, states did not always cooperate over the handling of escaped slaves due to major philosophical and legal differences. A conflict that erupted between Pennsylvania and Virginia over an escaped slave named John Davis led to the passing of the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act. This conflict, which lasted over three years, is instructive for understanding the many differences that existed between states over the issue of slavery. Pennsylvania Governor Thomas Mifflin called for the extradition of three men from Virginia accused of kidnapping Davis and returning him to their home state. Virginia Governor Beverly Randolph refused Mifflin’s request, claiming that Davis was a fugitive slave who was subject to rendition. Mifflin argued that Davis was actually a free man and thereby protected by law. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 was written in response to the

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Davis case and was approved by Congress by a strong majority. President George Washington signed it into law in February 1793.

The impact on slaves and even on free African-Americans was tremendous. The act guaranteed the rights of slave owners to reclaim escaped slaves and established the legal processes through which escaped slaves could be apprehended and returned to their masters. All escaped slaves were seen as permanent fugitives. The act made it a federal crime to assist an escaped slave in any way, including giving an escaped slave refuge. Escaped slaves were denied jury trials. Notably, this law denied constitutional rights even to freed slaves. The capturing of slaves became a cottage industry, and even free African-Americans were sometimes kidnapped, seized, and sold back into slavery. The Underground Railroad eventually developed in response to the incredible impact of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793.

Personal Liberty Laws

Many in the North opposed the 1793 act, and Indiana, Connecticut, New York, Vermont, and Pennsylvania reacted by passing versions of what came to be known as personal liberty laws. These laws were designed to curtail the capture of escaped slaves and to protect free African-Americans. They did so by raising the legal standards in these cases: slave hunters were required to prove that a captive was in fact a fugitive slave, and those captured were often given the right to a trial by jury. However, in 1842, the Supreme Court ruled in *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* that Pennsylvania's personal liberty laws, as well as all related state fugitive slave laws that countered the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act, were unconstitutional—while states were not obligated to enforce the federal law, they could not override it with state-level laws. Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania responded with legislation that forbade state officials from aiding in enforcing runaway slave laws and using state jails to incarcerate fugitive slaves. Slave catchers were left to kidnap fugitive slaves and return them to their owners or hope to appear before federal judges who were not bound by state laws.

Fugitive Slave Act of 1850

Leaders of southern states were angered by northern states' lack of cooperation in capturing escaped slaves

and by the growth of the Underground Railroad. Southern leaders' demand for more assistance resulted in the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. This legislation was part of the Compromise of 1850. The act made federal marshals who refused to enforce the law subject to heavy fines. Any person caught assisting escaped slaves was subject to imprisonment and stiff fines. All law enforcement officials were obligated to arrest anyone even suspected of being a runaway slave, often on very little evidence. Accused fugitive slaves could not testify on their own behalf and were denied the right to a trial by jury. Resistance to the new law continued, however, as abolitionists became more active, Underground Railroad activity increased, and many northern states passed new rounds of personal liberty laws.

Demise of the Fugitive Slave Act

In 1859, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled in favor of an abolitionist convicted of violating the Fugitive Slave Act. The Supreme Court, in *Ableman v. Booth*, denied the right of state courts to interfere in federal cases and upheld the Fugitive Slave Act. However, the Fugitive Slave Act was soon to come to an end. In March 1862, the federal government prohibited Union army officers from returning fugitive slaves, effectively annulling the act. On January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation was signed into effect by President Abraham Lincoln. In 1864, Lincoln signed a repeal of the Fugitive Slave Act. And in January 1865, Congress ratified the Thirteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, thereby abolishing the institution of slavery.

DAVID PURCELL

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See also **Abolitionism; African-Americans; Civil War and Reconstruction; Emancipation and Reconstruction; Slave Trade; South; Thirteenth Amendment**

FURUSETH, ANDREW (1854–1938) **International Seamen’s Union of America**

An Oslo-born sailor and fisherman, who jumped ship in 1880 to make his home in San Francisco, Andrew Furuseth was a self-taught exponent of sailor union federation, craft unionism, and ultimately, political regulation of the waterfront. A close friend of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) president Samuel Gompers, Furuseth moved through several union consolidations, from the Coast Seamen’s Union (1885) to the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific (1891) to the National Seamen’s Union (1892) to the presidency of the International Seamen’s Union (ISU) of America (1899). Together with James G. Maguire, the San Francisco Democratic congressman and former judge, he had begun crafting seamen’s reform bills as early as 1894, and particularly so after 1900, when he practically turned his leadership of the Seamen’s Union into a full-time lobbying position in Washington DC. The power and pathos of his argument, together with his sheer persistence of effort, won this ascetic, lifelong bachelor (with a face that some compared to the “prow of a Viking ship”) a growing circle of influential friends and admirers.

Undoubtedly, Furuseth’s supreme achievement was passage of the Seamen’s (aka La Follette) Act of 1915, a complex piece of legislation that, most famously, eliminated the vestiges of coerced labor (that is, heretofore quitting a ship could land a sailor in prison for desertion) for American ships on the high seas. Furuseth’s biographer has aptly noted that his subject spent 20 years trying to pass the seamen’s bill and another 20 years trying to defend it before unsympathetic administrative and legal authorities. His famous (but perhaps apocryphal) words on the subject of sailor incarceration have been oft-repeated: “You can put me in jail, but you cannot give me narrower quarters than as a seaman I have always had. You cannot give me coarser food than I have always eaten. You cannot make me lonelier than I have always been.”

A common defense of the long-standing desertion law had likened a sailor’s contract to his duty in a marriage contract. Before the Senate Commerce Committee in 1912, Furuseth quickly dismissed such analogies in favor of a graphic focus on the sailor’s world:

When we talk about a ship we always say: “Thank God, I am not married to her.”... [The bill] is not worth discussion from that point of view.... I have seen men go ashore and commit misdemeanors to get clear of a vessel. I have seen men eat soap to get clear of a vessel. I have seen men go and put their feet through plate-glass windows to get clear of a vessel.... I have run from a vessel and left L50 due me and was glad I had a chance to run away.

Given the emotional wedge of the desertion issue, it was perhaps not surprising that when, at a key moment in the seamen’s bill deliberations in 1915, Furuseth, the crusty old Norwegian leader of the ISU, “personally begged” President Woodrow Wilson “to make him a free man,” it moved the president, according to the bill’s sponsor, Senator Robert M. La Follette, as “[I] had never seen him moved on any other occasion” (Auerbach, p. 359).

Yet, it was no altruistic game that Furuseth and other advocates were playing. For them, the intended international jurisdiction of the Seamen’s Act was more than a desirable extension of the bill’s logic: it was the very core of that logic. The reformers’ logic began with an appreciation for the American sailor’s (and by inference the American shipper’s) weak bargaining positions on the world’s seas. It assumed a single world market for seagoing labor in the foreign trade. If “sea labor,” like any other commodity, were allowed to float at market price, then all would-be employers would have to pay that price. The draconian penalties against desertion, however, prevented the operation of a “free market” in labor, segmenting sailors according to national wage norms, while also preventing lesser-paid sailors from taking advantage of opportunities at higher-wage ports of call. “If conditions can be brought about whereby the wage cost of operation will be equalized,” argued Furuseth and the ISU, “the development of our merchant marine and our sea power will be unhampered.... The remedy is to set free the economic laws governing wages.”

Though an effective advocate of the expansive use of the power of government in the case of the Seamen’s Act, Furuseth otherwise generally fit in the most “old school,” conservative side of AFL-type craft unionism. A vociferous, openly racist opponent of Chinese (or other Asian) access to maritime work, he also consistently opposed alliances between sailors and longshoremen and fought socialist and “Wobbly” (Industrial Workers of the World, IWW)

competitors for sailor loyalty on many occasions. He was also loath to surrender national standard-setting instruments on the high seas for forms of international regulation; he thus opposed both the post-*Titanic* London Conference on Safety of Life at Sea in November 1913 and the formation of the International Labor Organization in 1919, a position which alienated the seamen's leader even from the more pragmatic Samuel Gompers. Altogether, the post-WWI years proved frustrating for Furuseth. Following big gains in membership and wages from 1916 to 1921 (more likely stimulated by wartime demands than the effects of the Seamen's Act), a crackdown by ship-owners precipitated a disastrous seamen's strike in 1921. Maritime unionization was effectively curtailed for the next 15 years. When mobilization revived beginning with the San Francisco general strike of 1934, an irascible as well as terminally ill Furuseth found himself unable to stem the tide of left-led militancy. When he died on January 22, 1938, his coffin was placed on display in the auditorium of the Department of Labor Building, the first labor leader to be so honored.

LEON FINK

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FUTURE OUTLOOK LEAGUE OF CLEVELAND

In February 1935, a group of southern-educated, middle-class African-Americans gathered at the home of a local political activist, John O. Holly, in Cleveland, Ohio, to found the Future Outlook League (FOL). Holly, a clerk at the Federal Sanitation Company and president of his electoral precinct's Democratic Club, joined a number of local black professionals and white-collar workers to form the FOL's leadership circle. FOL leaders and allies touted the group as a younger and more militant alternative to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban

League (NUL). The FOL directly challenged both organizations; the League's job campaigns tested the NUL's traditional job-placement role, while its direct action took attention and money from the NAACP's legal actions.

The League was one of a number of organizations—including the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the National Negro Congress, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—that forged new labor-minded civil rights coalitions to fight racial discrimination in northern cities. The FOL won jobs for many blacks in Cleveland by connecting "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaigns with direct-action techniques such as picketing and letter-writing campaigns. Beginning in July 1938, the FOL also fought for rent decreases and against arbitrary evictions. The League's membership varied a great deal over time. FOL leaders claimed membership of 10,000 in 1936, 18,000 in 1939, and 20,000 in 1943. Historians agree that these numbers were exaggerated; dues-paying members numbered in the hundreds, not the thousands. However, the FOL won power in Cleveland in fights for jobs and tenants' rights. Its influence spread through the FOL's own journal, *The Voice*, and the essential publicity provided by William O. Walker, the editor of Cleveland's black newspaper, the *Call & Post*.

The FOL's programs were remarkably innovative. In 1936, for example, the FOL organized 75 previously independent African-American-owned beauty parlors into the unprecedented Future Outlook League Beauticians Association. More generally, the FOL grounded its direct action on unconventional community organizing techniques. African-American women, who generally controlled household economies, were key organizers of consumer boycotts and acted as "shock troops" on picket lines with black men. The FOL was also exceptionally conscious of not perpetuating the color bias among African-Americans; when employers asked for the lightest-skinned applicants possible, the FOL repeatedly sent prospects with dark skin. Finally, the League created a unique Employees' Association, consisting of dues-paying League members who found jobs through FOL programs. The Association worked to enforce agreements with employers and to improve working conditions. In 1940, the Association became a federally certified labor union, the Future Outlook League Employees Union Local One (EU).

The League's greatest successes came in sometimes-violent struggles to gain jobs for blacks in Cleveland's Central Area, the city's virtually all-black section. A flurry of activity in 1935 won dozens of jobs in retail stores and theaters where the clientele was predominantly black but the workforce was all white. From 1936 to 1940, the FOL continued its

campaign to integrate Central Area merchants, while also pressuring the Cleveland Railway Company to hire black motormen and conductors. In 1941, the FOL pressured Ohio Bell Telephone to hire black women. This campaign marked the first time the League fought for jobs outside the Central Area. In addition, many black churches, professionals, and local chapters of the NAACP and the NUL that previously criticized the League's militancy joined in the action. Significantly, African-American women pushed Holly and the leadership circle to pursue direct action against Ohio Bell, as they would in later fights to integrate defense industries.

In 1942, the FOL joined widespread efforts to compel the federal government to enforce integration of defense industries. For the first time, the FOL pursued its agenda through the courts. In two cases—*Effie M. Turner v. Warner and Casey Co.* and *Claretta J. Johnson v. Thompson Products*—the FOL sought to force war industries to employ black women or give up their federal contracts. The case gained national attention but did not directly win any jobs for black women in Cleveland. The local court decided in favor of employers' contract rights. Moreover, by the time the case reached the Ohio Supreme Court, Cleveland's war industries had already succumbed to unprecedented labor shortages and the necessity of hiring black women.

The FOL battled legal obstacles, intransigent employers, uncooperative unions, and unfavorable public opinion. During the League's first three years, employers were able to win injunctions from business-friendly judges who ruled that antiracial discrimination pickets were not legal labor disputes protected under the 1932 Norris-LaGuardia Act. This changed in 1938 when the U.S. Supreme Court expanded the definition of a labor dispute to include protests against racial discrimination. Nonetheless, FOL pickets, which often ended in violence, remained controversial in public opinion. Although it was generally unclear who sparked the clashes—shop owners, League members, or passersby caught up in the excitement—the specter of violence hung over the FOL's activities. Trade unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) presented yet another obstacle to the FOL. In struggles to integrate streetcar conductor and motormen positions, the FOL ran into opposition from the Streetcar Trainmen's Union; and the Bakery Drivers' Union, Local 52, obstructed a 1940 drive to convince local companies to hire black drivers in the Central Area. Finally, money was a constant concern for the FOL; its fluid membership of unemployed and recently employed workers was often unable or unwilling to contribute much-needed sums.

In late 1940s and 1950s, the League's power gradually faded. The FOL won less publicity as it became more of a clearinghouse for social needs. In addition, a grand vision for a \$100,000 capital campaign to build a new community center largely failed, and the League came under suspicion for how it allocated the funds it did raise. The political environment of the 1950s destroyed popular support for militant direct action, and the League's original leadership core began to diverge. John O. Holly himself concentrated on a career in local and state politics, without much success. Finally, the FOL's working-class base was generally not as desperate as during the Depression, while other movements captured public imagination. An effort to revive the FOL in the 1960s never gained momentum. The League's decline does not diminish the power and concrete gains it achieved at a key moment for urban black workers. Especially important was the FOL's ability to tap the collective power of jobless African-Americans during the Depression and to respond to demands for direct action from black women and men in Cleveland.

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GARMENT INDUSTRY

The production of clothes from the Colonial Era up until the early nineteenth century was small-scale and largely home-based. Clothes were made to order and fitted for an individual. Given the prevalence of this mode of production, there were few demands for the industrialization of the production process. Indeed in many households, clothes were made by family members. Those who could afford to hire artisan tailors and dressmakers to make them an entire garment from start to finish. These skilled tailors and tailorsesses tended to be native-born Americans or German and British immigrants, with immigrant groups represented to a lesser degree. Some tailors traveled from house to house in search of work carrying their tools with them. Other tailors and dressmakers worked from workshops, usually in, or connected to their homes, and employed journeymen and apprentices. The master craftsman was thus a manufacturer, a teacher, and a retailer. Even at this early date, New York City was the largest center of clothing production and remained so up until the late twentieth century, although increasingly garments were also produced in other locations.

Both tailors of men's clothing and their apprentices were male, although the assistance of female family members was often called for during the finishing process or when the workload was especially heavy. Dressmaking was one of the few craft trades open to women in this period, largely because it was considered improper for men to engage in the physical contact with women involved in fitting a dress. This

concern carried over into the twentieth century, and women continued to remain a large proportion of workers in the custom-made dress trade.

The garment trade in the United States expanded following the introduction of a protective tariff in 1816, which allowed American garment producers to capture the market in ready-made clothing for southern slaves, heretofore dominated by English companies. Ready-made garments—those not made to order and of a lesser quality than those worn by whites—relied more heavily on unskilled labor. The expansion of the ready-made trade catering to Americans of all races and classes beginning in the nineteenth century produced significant changes to the garment industry.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, ready-made garments became increasingly popular among a broader spectrum of the male population; accordingly the men's clothing industry underwent considerable change. The growth in ready-made clothing that was designed to fit an average person, as opposed to measured to fit a specific individual, meant that the manufacturing process could be standardized, greater numbers of semi- and unskilled workers could be employed, and production could be expanded. Although there remained a custom-made trade for the middle and upper classes, increasingly production of ready-made clothes moved out of the small-scale workshop, away from the guidance of an artisan tailor, and into the factory, where the manufacturer replaced the artisan. The first recorded factory was established in New York in 1831 (Boston and

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New Bedford, Massachusetts, became other centers of clothing manufacture by the mid-nineteenth century).

Unlike in the factories of the late nineteenth or twentieth centuries, garments were not actually assembled in these early plants. Clothes were designed and cut in factories, but the cut fabric was sent out to be sewed by individuals who worked in their homes in what was known as “home work.” Because of the labor-intensive nature of the garment industry, coupled with the general lack of equipment necessary, clothes were assembled in workers’ living spaces. This meant that workers paid for lighting and heating in addition to the purchase of needles and thread, which continued even once production had moved to factories. Manufacturers thus increased their profit margin while workers turned their homes into production centers. Despite such exploitation some workers, particularly married women with children, preferred home work because it with them to engage in wage labor while attending to their domestic responsibilities, namely, childcare.

The Garment Industry in the Late Nineteenth Century

The demand for uniforms during the Civil War (1861–1865) further encouraged the development of the ready-made trade in the men’s garment industry. At the same time, changing fashions facilitated the development and growth of the women’s ready-made trade. Largely because of women’s fashions, it was not until the post-Civil War years that the women’s garment industry adopted ready-made techniques on a large scale, although cloaks (originally meaning capes or coats but increasingly including suits) had been made *en mass* before the 1860s. Home work was less prevalent in the women’s garment trade and inside shops, in which the majority of a garment was made in one establishment employing girls and young women, dominated until the 1880s. However, conditions in these shops were poor. A study in Boston (the center of the cloak industry at this time) in 1871 recorded that workers were crammed into upper floor rooms with poor ventilation, often with no toilets or drinking water. These girls and women usually worked for 10 hours a day, but as they were paid by the piece, they often took work home with them to finish late into the night. After the 1880s, the women’s ready-made garment trade became more like the men’s. More male workers were employed, suits were made in larger quantities, and contracting was introduced.

By the 1880s, garment centers had developed throughout and beyond the Northeast. Important centers included Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, Milwaukee, Rochester, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Syracuse. Manufacturers built larger factories; there was greater standardization of sizes, styles, and processes; and the manufacturing process was subject to a greater subdivision of tasks. Subcontractors began to distribute the cut cloth to be sewn as manufacturers expanded and could no longer handle all the orders themselves. As fashions changed more frequently and orders were put in at the last minute, manufacturers were precluded from producing year round and stockpiling. In addition to poor working conditions, workers were thus faced with seasonal slow downs or unemployment in the production of both men’s and women’s clothes. The men’s garment trade peaked between January and March and then fell off until November. The women’s had two distinct peaks in the spring and fall. In between these months, many workers were unemployed. Some found casual work, while many women returned to their domestic commitments.

This expansion of the garment industry in the 1880s and 1890s occurred at the same time as waves of European immigrants were arriving in the United States. The makeup of the workforce changed as people from Eastern Europe (the majority of whom were Jewish) arrived, replacing a workforce that was largely of Irish and German descent. New immigrants, some of whom had worked as skilled tailors in Europe, provided an abundant cheap-labor supply and thus assisted in the expansion of the industry but were habitually exploited. Many immigrants found work through ethnic networks, and the dominance of immigrants in the garment trade meant that the ability to speak English was not necessarily a requirement. This was especially true when the employer was an immigrant entrepreneur who had moved from the workforce to a subcontracting or management position.

Sweatshops became endemic around the late nineteenth century (not just in the United States but in Europe, too) as demand for, and production of, ready-made clothing increased. Sweatshop conditions occurred in factories as well as in people’s homes. Sweatshops were characterized by long hours for low wages in poor conditions. Deductions were often made for thread and needles; mistakes had to be paid for by the worker; rooms were often badly lit, were too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter, and were poorly ventilated. Both women and men worked in such conditions and at times child labor was used, especially by workers who worked in their own homes where clothing manufacture could involve the whole family.



Garment workers parading on May Day, New York, New York. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-41871].

The 1892 Tenement House Act in New York, although difficult to enforce, encouraged a move from production in homes to factories. Inside-shops thus grew, particularly in the newer garment centers, such as Chicago, which produced 17% of goods in the men's garment trade (to New York's 40%) by 1909. Factory production was more inclined to standardization of products and the division of the production process into multiple semi- or unskilled tasks. The subdivision of the work process entailed dividing a single skilled job into multiple tasks. The individual tasks tended to involve less skill, although there was no inherent necessity for them to do so. For example the task system that had long been practiced in Europe and was brought to the United States by immigrants in the late nineteenth century maintained skill levels but encouraged specialization. The incentive on the part of the employer to deskill the individual tasks was twofold. Lower wages could be paid to semi- and unskilled workers, and by paying piece rates (based on the number of items completed) instead of weekly rates (based on the number of hours worked), workers were encouraged to increase their own production levels in order to earn a decent wage.

Closely connected to this was the fact that the deskilled, subdivisional system afforded the employer greater control over the workers for s/he was less reliant on skilled workers who were of more limited supply.

Processes of mechanization were closely connected to subdivision and the move to factories; indeed they often happened hand in hand. The mechanization of the garment industry began in the 1850s when the first viable sewing machines were marketed. (Elias Howe invented the sewing machine in 1846.) Singer became the pre-eminent manufacturer, increasing its output from 810 machines in 1853 to 21,000 a decade later and 232,000 by 1873. Within 4 years 87,000 had been sold in the United States. Sewing machines were put to use in both small-scale workshops, larger scale factories, and by individuals at home as prices fell in the interwar years. Other machines included the band-knife, also introduced in the 1850s; the buttonhole machine that in the 1880s could sew six buttonholes a minute; and Dearborn's blind-stitch machine for felling hems that was first introduced in 1900 and was improved 2 years later so that it could be used for padding collars and lapels.

GARMENT INDUSTRY

In factories workers used electrical sewing machines, edge-pressers, collar- and lapel-padding machines, and felling machines, all of which led to a further growth in semi- and unskilled jobs in the trade. For example at a Hart, Schaffner, and Marx factory in Chicago, 150 separate operations were involved in the manufacture of a coat. Such machines could also lead to rationalization and thus a loss of skilled positions. Skilled positions (such as cutting and pressing) tended to be occupied by male workers, while women were employed as machine operators and finishers (for example buttonholers), which were perceived to require less skill. This gendered division of labor was not unique to the garment industry. However the discourse surrounding clothing production was more readily able to draw on contemporary gender discourses that perceived domestic chores, including sewing, to be women's work. Constructing sewing as something women could do naturally meant that it was not considered an acquired skill and thus had neither high payment nor status.

Unionization at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

The large number of immigrants arriving in the United States looking for work and the lack of union organization in the garment trades facilitated these poor conditions. Small groups of workers working in a multitude of locations across a city were incredibly difficult to organize, and although attempts were sporadically made to challenge single issues, it was not until the turn of the twentieth century that nationwide unions had any strength. One of the first significant protests occurred in New York in the summer of 1883. Seven hundred cloak makers and dressmakers, half of them women, struck in what New York newspapers named the "Emigrants' Strike." Although the Cloak and Dressmakers' Association was formed out of the strike, it was short lived, as was common at the time.

Until 1891 in the men's garment trade and 1900 in the women's, there were no national garment workers' unions although workers often organized on a city or state basis. National unions were needed in both sectors of the industry, for increasingly manufacturers looked to other cities when faced with a strike to get their garments made. Without nationwide unions, there was no way of limiting this, and thus workers' power was considerably limited. In the last half of the nineteenth century, numerous unions representing the range of workers in the garment industry sprung up sporadically, often around strikes,

at times affiliating with the national federation the Knights of Labor. The workers who organized with the Knights tended to be the more skilled and more educated, which by the late nineteenth century, were the minority in the garment industry.

The first nationwide garment union was the United Garment Workers (UGW), founded in New York in 1891 to organize the men's garment industry. The first elected leaders were American-born workers who supported the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) pure and simple unionism, while the majority of union members were immigrant workers who were often sympathetic to socialism and anarchism. Although the leadership remained male-dominated, the UGW claimed to do a better job of organizing women workers than many of the previous local unions. Nevertheless women still remained excluded from the union executive, and the union demonstrated limited commitment to their organization.

The Garment Industry and Garment Unions in the Twentieth Century

The structure of the industry as established by the early twentieth century changed little in the next century. It remained a labor-intensive, low-technology trade reliant on cheap labor. Immigrant workers remained an important factor, although the immigrant groups changed. As competition from imported goods in the later twentieth century increased, American companies looked for cheaper production methods, including relocating within the United States and then going overseas in search of even cheaper labor markets.

Although the work process remained the same and manufacturers were reluctant to improve working conditions, they were increasingly pushed to do so as garment trade unions grew stronger. Cloak makers, who were among the most skilled in the women's garment trade, founded the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in 1900. The ILGWU got off to an inauspicious start with only 11 delegates from seven local unions, all of whom were Jewish and from the East Coast, attending the founding convention. However a strike of children's cloak makers in New York in 1907 helped to revitalize the union. The 1909 Uprising of the Twenty Thousand, in which thousands of shirtwaist workers, many of whom were women, walked out in New York, galvanized the ILGWU's position. Following the Great Revolt, another strike in 1910 in New York that saw 60,000 workers on strike, the ILGWU demonstrated its potential power in securing an unprecedented agreement

known as the Protocol of Peace that secured wage and hour standards and allowed for the impartial arbitration of disputes and a joint commission to address workplace health concerns.

Workers in the men's garment industry inspired by the New York protests also began to challenge the standards in their sector of the industry. In Chicago in the winter of 1910–1911, a general strike in the men's garment industry peaked with 40,000 workers out. The strike began when 18-year-old Hannah Shapiro, a Ukrainian Jewish immigrant who worked at Shop 5 of Hart, Schaffner, and Marx, led her coworkers out in protest of reduced wages, and soon spread across the city. As in the Uprising of the Twenty Thousand, women thus played an important role in the Chicago strike, although also as in New York, the public voice of the strike all too quickly became male. Nevertheless both the Uprising of the Twenty Thousand and the Chicago strike demonstrated the potential of cross-class alliances that were the foundations of the women's labor movement. The Women's Trade Union League in both cases played an important role in organizing soup kitchens, negotiating with city officials and employers, and using their role in the public eye to draw attention to the plight of working women.

The 1910–1911 Chicago strike sowed seeds of dissent within the men's garment trade unions. Unhappy with the role of the UGW leadership in December 1914, Chicago workers led a group of delegates at the UGW convention in Nashville, Tennessee, out of the convention to form a rump session that became the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). It organized workers on a quasi-industrial basis and thus was more welcoming to semi- and unskilled workers, many of whom were immigrants and women. Women played a central role in work protests and were an increasing constituent of the membership, but they remained marginal among union officials. Although Dorothy Jacobs Bellanca became the first female vice-president of a major trade union (the ACWA) in July 1916 at the age of 21 and Fannia Cohn became organizing secretary of the ILGWU General Education Committee in the same year and then educational director 2 years later, they remained the only women on the executive committees of the two leading garment unions.

Because the ACWA claimed jurisdiction over the same group of workers as the UGW, it was perceived to be a dual union by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and thus was not issued a charter. Nevertheless the ACWA had rapid success. By 1916, it had a national membership of 48,000, and this had jumped to 138,000 just 3 years later. Moreover the ACWA secured a landmark agreement with Hart,

Schaffner, and Marx in 1919 that secured a 44-hour week, and New York's manufacturers soon followed.

The Great Depression caused decreased production and increased unemployment in the garment industry. In 1934, the production value of garments produced in Chicago was only 30% of what it had been in 1929; in Rochester, New York, it was only 28%. As union membership dropped, employers shattered the wage and hour standards that the ILGWU and ACWA had secured in the 1920s. Nevertheless the ILGWU and the ACWA capitalized on Section 7a of the New Deal's National Industrial Recovery Act (June 1933) that gave workers the right to join unions and to engage in collective bargaining. In particular they tried, with varied success, to organize the newer garment centers, such as Puerto Rico and Los Angeles. By 1924, the latter was already the fourth largest center of garment production in the United States. Also in the 1930s, both the ILGWU and the ACWA as advocates of industrial unionism were highly influential in the formation in November 1935 of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO—later the Congress of Industrial Organizations).

After World War II the trend that had begun in the 1920s of garment manufacturers relocating in search of higher profit margins was accentuated. Often this meant moving from a union stronghold to the non-unionized South or West. Thus the garment industry declined in the Northeast and Pennsylvania. The West, especially California, and the South, especially North Carolina, benefited. The former became the center of the burgeoning sportswear industry. Immigrants still made up a large proportion of the workforce, but instead of being eastern European Jews and Italians, by the 1960s the dominant groups were southeast Asians and Hispanics. (Workers from these ethnic groups were also an increasingly important component of the workforce in such cities as New York.) This was true of other areas garment manufacturers moved to. For example Miami's garment industry was boosted in the late 1960s by New York-based companies leaving a union stronghold to relocate in Florida and employing members of the Cuban immigrant community, which was unorganized and at least initially relatively passive. The ILGWU and ACWA (which merged with the Textile Workers' Union of America in 1976 to form the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union [ACTWU]) continued to try to organize these new garment centers.

By 1989, Los Angeles had surpassed New York as the largest U.S. garment-producing center. Many workers were undocumented, and employers used this against them if they protested low wages or poor conditions. The industry remained seasonal, as

it had been since the nineteenth century. Work peaked in March, declined in the summer before picking up again in the fall, then dropped off again in January to begin the cycle again. Surveys in the 1990s revealed extensive violation of laws regulating health and safety, wages, hours, and homework, but with a declining number of government inspectors, there was little that could be done to enforce such regulations.

As the twentieth century came to a close, imported garments increasingly threatened the American-based industry. By the late 1990s, more than 60% of garments sold in the United States were imported, mostly from Asian countries. The first large wave of Asian imports in the 1960s forced American companies to look for cheaper production methods. Item 807 of the U.S. Tariff Schedule (1963) facilitated the move to overseas production. Under this ordinance cut garments could be shipped overseas for assembly and when re-imported to the United States; U.S. duties were paid on only the difference in value that low-cost assembly had added. In 1983, the Reagan administration further encouraged such processes with the creation of the Caribbean Basin Initiative that extended special trade rights to 22 countries. Although more work was available in these overseas locations, investigations in the late twentieth century revealed that real wages in the garment industry declined in the countries chosen for relocation.

Despite advances in the technology of clothing manufacture and the textiles involved and decades of stability in the garment trade, unions' highly exploitative sweatshop conditions still remained at the turn of the twenty-first century. In August 1995, the Department of Labor raided a compound in El Monte (a middle-class suburb of Los Angeles) and uncovered a sweatshop where 72 undocumented workers from Thailand worked behind barbed-wire fences earning around \$1.60 an hour. The clothes they made were destined for such well-known stores as Macy's, Filene's, and J. C. Penny's. Indeed across the Los Angeles area at the turn of the twenty-first century, conditions were remarkably similar to those a hundred years earlier. The largest garment center in the country may have moved from the East to the West Coast and the immigrant groups employed shifted from eastern and southern Europeans to Central Americans and southeast Asians, but workers, a majority of whom are women, still worked in sweatshop conditions with little organization or protection. Trade unions widened their campaign base in the 1990s as they had in the 1910s. They found support on U.S. college campuses with the formation of United Students against Sweatshops in 1998. However companies continued to resist the unionized shop. Indeed some companies responded to attempts by the

United Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE—founded in 1995 from the merger of the ILGWU and ACTWU) to organize in California by moving production to Mexico.

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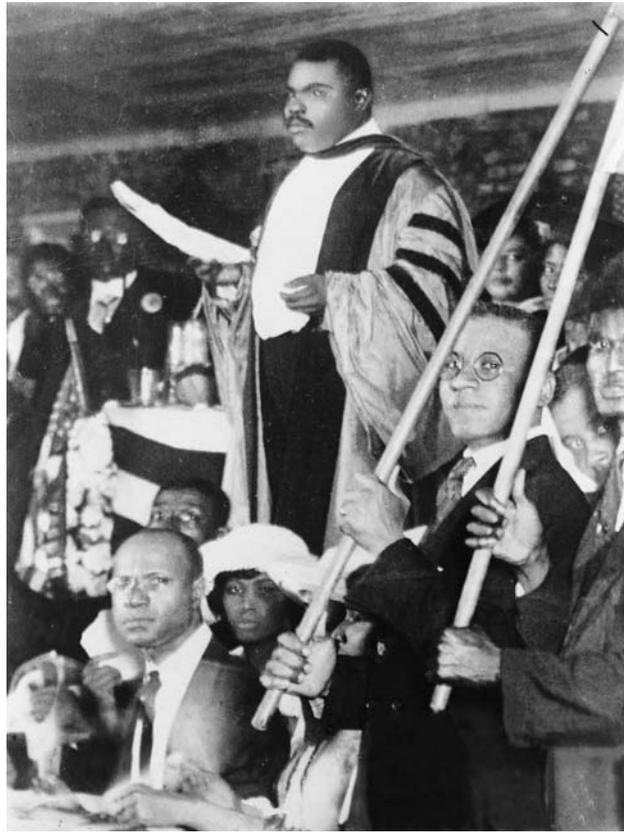
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See also Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America/UNITE; Cohn, Fannia; Hillman, Sidney; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Lemlich, Clara Shavelson; Nestor, Agnes; Newman, Pauline M.; Pessota, Rose; Protocol of Peace; Schneiderman, Rose; Triangle Shirtwaist Fire; United Garment Workers

GARVEY, MARCUS (AUGUST 17, 1887–JUNE 10, 1940) Black Nationalist

Jamaican native Marcus Garvey led the first mass movement among African-Americans in the United States. Garvey's short-lived and ultimately unsuccessful effort to stoke black nationalism into a Back-to-Africa movement provided a dramatic episode in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s.

Garvey was born in Jamaica and received an elementary education there. He was trained as a printer,



Convention address by Hon. Marcus Garvey delivering constitution for Negro rights. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-109628].

became a foreman, and led a printers' strike in Kingston in 1907. The strike failed and probably permanently soured Garvey on collective labor action. He was blacklisted and worked in Costa Rica and Panama before settling in London and returning to work as a printer in 1912. In London he studied the works of Booker T. Washington and admired his philosophy of racial self-help. He also met Duse Mohhamend Ali, who was working toward self-determination for Egyptians. Garvey wrote for Ali's magazine and began to imagine a program of racial solidarity among blacks of the Diaspora, who would return to and redeem Africa.

After a brief return to Jamaica, Garvey moved to the United States and settled in Harlem in 1916. With war raging in Europe and the United States torn over whether to join it or not, this was a particularly exciting time and place to be. Booker T. Washington, widely regarded as the premier race leader, had just died, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), formed by many of Washington's rivals, was beginning to grow into the nation's principal civil rights organization. Hundreds

of thousands of southern blacks were migrating into northern cities, attracted by industrial jobs and less formal segregation and pushed by poor cotton crops and southern racism, in what was known as the Great Migration. This migration continued into the 1920s, especially when Congress made permanent the wartime interruption of European immigration. Garvey established the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities' League, usually called the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). He published a newspaper (the *Negro World*) and launched a number of business ventures, the most important of which was the Black Star steamship line, which would show that blacks could be successful entrepreneurs and aid in the return of African-Americans to Africa. He was a flamboyant orator and showman, dressed in imperial regalia as he led his crusade. Many of his detractors, most particularly W. E. B. Du Bois at the NAACP, regarded him as a vulgar charlatan, and his methods did smack of those of the rising European dictators of the interwar years.

Like Booker T. Washington and most black leaders of the period, Garvey was largely hostile to

organized labor. He was impressed at the power that the American Federation of Labor (AFL) had acquired during World War I and urged black Americans to organize their own unions. He warned black workers to steer clear of white unions, either of Communists or what he called the American Federation of White Workers or Laborers. He urged blacks to undercut white unions by working for lower wages. As a racial separatist who wanted to build a separate black economy, he was especially hostile to the white and light-skinned socialists and integrationists in the NAACP. He went so far as to praise the Ku Klux Klan for "their honesty of purpose toward the Negro. They are better friends of my race, for telling us what they are, and what they mean, thereby giving us a chance to stir for ourselves." His supporters mailed a severed hand to union leader A. Philip Randolph as a threat in response to his criticism of Garvey.

In the early 1920s, the *Negro World* had 50 thousand subscribers; and there were perhaps as many dues-paying members of the UNIA. But Garvey's business methods proved to be his undoing. The Black Star Line was a fiasco, and Garvey was indicted for mail fraud related to its finances in 1922. He was convicted and began a 5-year prison sentence in 1925, continuing to run the UNIA from his Atlanta cell. President Coolidge commuted his sentence in 1927, and the U.S. deported Garvey. After unsuccessfully trying to revive the UNIA in Jamaica, he moved back to London in 1935, where he died 5 years later.

For all his failings, the charismatic Garvey obviously struck an important chord among African-Americans. He was able to claim a mass appeal and legitimacy as a race leader that few have been able to match. His emphasis on separatism and racial pride tapped into a persistent African-American sentiment that marked Booker T. Washington before him and the Black Power militants of the 1960s. Many of his critics perhaps let their aversion to his tone and style obscure their similarities. Du Bois for example embraced economic separatism and self-help in the 1930s and ended up returning to Africa himself. At the very least Garvey signaled a new consciousness among black Americans as they urbanized and moved North in the interwar years.

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GASTONIA STRIKE (1929)

The violent strike at the Loray mill in Gastonia, North Carolina, that began in April 1929 stood out in the wave of unrest that swept the southern textile industry in the late 1920s and early 1930s because of the leadership role played by the Communist-led National Textile Workers' Union (NTWU). Unions of any sort were uncommon in the South at the time, so it seemed particularly incongruous that a Communist union might make headway in the region. But in the early days of the strike, thousands of white, pro-segregation, God-fearing cotton mill workers attended strike rallies organized by labor activists who stood for atheism and racial equality in addition to promoting the interests of industrial workers.

Since the 1870s, Gastonia had grown considerably along with the rise of the southern cotton textile industry. Thousands of impoverished farmers from the Piedmont and southern Appalachia had fled to industrial centers like Gastonia looking for a chance to escape from debt. Boosters in Gastonia promoted their English-speaking, hardworking, cheap, and faithful work force. Mill owners emphasized their paternal oversight of company-owned villages, including their support of churches. While the Loray mill had been constructed largely with local capital, in 1919 it was purchased by the Jenckes Spinning Company of Rhode Island, which merged with the Manville Company, also of Rhode Island, in 1923. This was part of the long-term but rapidly escalating transition of the textile industry from the North to the South, where labor costs offered a competitive advantage.

The 1929 strike in Gastonia arose from the same combination of pressures and grievances that had already produced serious textile labor conflicts in Henderson, North Carolina, in 1927 and earlier in 1929 in Elizabethton, Tennessee. Most significantly the market for textiles had been erratic at best during the 1920s. Following the exhaustion of the wartime economic boom, textiles slumped into serious depression in 1921 and had experienced only a few months of prosperity at a time since then. Cotton prices, the largest factor in the cost of production, were unpredictable throughout the decade, largely because of the boll weevil. Having only limited control of their circumstances, mill owners, including those at Loray,



Strike's on—they put away the spools. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-109628].

were forced to economize by increasing the pace of work and adding more tasks to each employee's routine.

At the Loray mill, a new superintendent in 1927 had to contend with declining markets for his main product, fabrics used in the production of automobile tires. The auto industry was slumping, and tire manufacturers were developing their own textile mills. In response the Loray superintendent cut the work force from 3,500 to 2,200 while maintaining the same level of production. In many cases workloads doubled. In addition workers suffered from two 10% wage cuts and arbitrary power exerted by supervisors. Weavers at Loray walked out briefly in protest in May 1928. The superintendent was replaced in late 1928, and his successor eased the stretch-out and invested more in community welfare programs. But mill workers were obviously exhausted and angry well before the much larger 1929 strike.

Triggering the Strike

In March 1929, representatives of the NTWU entered Gastonia, hoping to organize southern textiles as a stepping stone toward a Communist United States. The Loray strike, claimed the NTWU, would lead to

a general strike in Gaston County, followed by an uprising of the entire southern textile labor force. The NTWU's lead organizer, Fred Beal, found Loray workers ripe for a strike but worried about adequate organization and preparation. After several union supporters were fired, Beal called a meeting for March 30 that was attended by nearly 1,000 people. Two days later virtually the entire Loray workforce went on strike. The NTWU helped formulate the workers' list of demands, which for the most part emphasized basic trade union concerns like recognition of the union, a minimum weekly wage, a 40-hour week, ending the stretch-out and speed-up, and improved cleanliness and sanitation in both the mill and village. These demands hardly distinguished the NTWU from the more ideologically conservative United Textile Workers (UTW), affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). But the NTWU lambasted the UTW for its inability to lead successful strikes in Henderson and Elizabethton, not to mention an earlier failure in Gastonia in 1919. Ironically civic boosters praised the absent UTW in 1929 but offered only firm resistance to any sort of unionism before, during, and after.

Although NTWU organizers in Gastonia were sensitive to local concerns, top Communist party officials demanded advocacy of racial equality and atheism. Given the long-term segregation of textile jobs, very

few Loray workers were black, and all of them were confined to menial jobs. When the NTWU tried to organize local blacks to demand equal opportunities in the mill and equal membership in the union, few turned out for fear of white reprisal. White Loray workers seemed to tolerate union calls for racial equality as long as the NTWU fought harder for their demands. Local Communist organizers strategically played down the union's atheism as well. Town leaders however trumpeted the evils of an organization that would promote race mixing and abolish churches.

The strike's fate was sealed however by the force of the state. On April 2, pickets at the Loray mill scuffled with local authorities at the plant gate, prompting the governor to send the National Guard to restore order, which was defined as assuring that the plant could operate. This show of force resulted in dozens of arrests of strikers and an opportunity for strike-breakers to enter the plant with military protection. Many strikers were among those willing to cross the picket lines. Within two weeks the strike was effectively over, and within a month, only some 200 die-hards continued to hold out. It is impossible to know exactly why the strike crumbled so quickly, but Beal's concern about lack of preparation appears to have been well-placed. The NTWU had nowhere near the resources necessary either to replace the strikers' paychecks or to offer even minimal relief. Moreover the company threatened to evict rebellious workers. Continued striking appeared likely to lead to hunger and homelessness if not incarceration as well.

Bloody Aftermath

The Loray strike made its mark however because of events that occurred well after the strike was essentially broken. After their headquarters was burned, holdout strikers and their NTWU backers organized themselves in a tent colony outside the company's jurisdiction and continued to agitate for their demands. On June 7, the "bitter enders" held a rally and marched toward the mill. On the way they were turned back by Gastonia police, some of whom demanded to search the new union headquarters in the tent colony. A major fight ensued, shots were fired, and a striker and four police officers were wounded. No one knows who fired the shots, but one of the officers, Police Chief Orville Aderholt, died the following day. This set in motion a wave of repression against strikers and NTWU organizers, with most strike leaders arrested for murder before they could be lynched.

The first prosecution of the defendants ended in a mistrial because after authorities brought a life-size

wax model of Aderholt into the courtroom, a juror suffered an emotional breakdown. The suspension of legal proceedings served as a green light to many anti-union activists in Gastonia. Some remaining NTWU organizers were kidnapped and beaten, while others were taken out of the county and jailed elsewhere. The tent colony was attacked to the point that it had to be abandoned. In this wave of repression, the NTWU officially called off the strike but not before a group of union supporters traveling in a truck were attacked with gunfire by vigilantes. In this altercation a single mother of five, Ella May Wiggins, who was known as a feisty woman and as the strike's balladeer, was shot to death. Despite dozens of eyewitnesses, no one was ever convicted of Wiggins's murder.

Those accused of killing the police chief however were convicted after a second trial. The prosecution emphasized atheism more than evidence, and the jury deliberated for less than an hour. The NTWU defendants however skipped bail and escaped to the Soviet Union. After becoming disillusioned with life under communism, Fred Beal returned to the United States and was ultimately sent back to Gastonia to serve his sentence. Four years later, Beal was paroled by the governor.

The Gastonia strike received national attention because of its violence and the presence of Communists in such an unlikely location. Much of the later attention to the conflict has centered on the Communist leadership and the subsequent trials that convicted Aderholt's alleged killers and exonerated Wiggins's. The conditions of labor for the thousands of textile workers however worsened throughout the 1930s. The speedup, stretch-out, and arbitrary power of management continued to be the millhands' primary complaint and would be at the core of their unsuccessful participation in the General Textile Strike of 1934.

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See also American Federation of Labor; General Textile Strike of 1934; National Textile Workers' Union; Textiles; United Textile Workers

GENDER

Most human societies have allocated different tasks to men and women. The ways in which tasks are allocated, however, varies widely over time and across cultures. Both sexual difference and social constructions of masculinity and femininity have influenced the kinds of work that women and men historically have performed. Labor thus is marked by gender, a term that refers not only to sexual difference, but to the social and historical meanings societies ascribe to sexual difference and to the power relations those meanings produce.

Gendered Divisions of Labor

Gendered divisions of labor are not natural, that is, they are not necessarily linked to sex differences. They have instead emerged in response to particular historical developments and have shifted over time. Although the labor of both men and women has been equally important to the survival and prosperity of human societies, male and female work roles have not always held equal value. For much of American history, the labor of men has held higher value than that of women. Women's political and social status and the value accorded to women's work are linked. In general women's status tends to be higher when they contribute substantially to the economy, control the fruits of their labor, and receive public recognition for their contributions. Women's status also tends to be higher where there is no clear distinction between public and private and no sharply defined class structure.

There is nothing fixed about the relationship between sexual difference and the ways in which societies allocate labor. Archeological evidence indicates that early humans probably did not link work roles closely to sex differences and that women hunted along with men. Foraging societies that subsisted on a combination of gathering available vegetation and hunting both small and large game animals would gain no survival benefit by assigning either of these tasks exclusively to men or women, and anthropological evidence gleaned from foraging societies in the

recent past indicates that hunting is not entirely incompatible with pregnancy, childbirth, and child-rearing. The tendency for women to spend less time producing food and more time nursing and caring for children may have arisen in part from improved hunting technologies that boosted infant survival rates. Eventually the development of agriculture gave rise to new sets of tasks that more closely matched the rhythms of childcare.

In precontact Native American societies, farming and hunting complemented one another. Among the matriarchal Iroquois, women farmed and so provided the most abundant and stable source of food. They controlled food distribution. Men hunted, but they also cleared the fields so that women could plant. Iroquois men and women held relatively equal status. Although Iroquois men ran tribal political organizations, women had the power to nominate council elders and depose chiefs. Among Pueblo societies, men cultivated the cornfields, but women owned the corn and controlled the processing and distribution of corn meal. Women built the houses and acted as household heads, while men's status was tied to hunting, warfare, and religion. Hunting and warfare tended to increase male power and status, but they produced gross gender inequality only in societies where women lacked power based on their contributions to the economy. The fact that Iroquois and Pueblo women could divorce their spouses as easily as could men serves as a measure of women's relative equality in both cultures.

Intruding European cultures changed the division of labor within Native American societies in ways that marginalized women's economic contributions, limited their political influence, and reduced their social status. French traders for example were interested primarily in acquiring furs supplied by the Native American men of the Great Lakes region, not in the small game, tools, utensils, or clothing that women produced. Moreover as the items women produced became more readily available through trade, women's contribution to community subsistence became less important. Women's work came to revolve narrowly around preparing furs for trade. Although women's work was vital to the fur trade, women did not produce furs, nor did they control the price and distribution of furs. Before the Spanish colonized New Mexico, Pueblo women controlled their households and the distribution of the meat their husbands provided through hunting. Franciscan priests intervened directly to change the work roles of Pueblo women and men. As priests began converting the Pueblo peoples to Catholicism, they encouraged men to assert authority within the household and put households and property in the hands of men rather than women.

English colonists brought to the new world social, political, and religious structures that subordinated women within both church and state. Married women had no independent legal status, no voice in public affairs, and no status within their own households. Households were patriarchal; women had no control over household affairs, property, or children. Northern rural families divided labor between field work and home work, with men generally performing the former and women the latter. However men's and women's work roles tended to complement each other, and their tasks sometimes overlapped. Women had primary responsibility for the production of cloth, for example, but men assembled looms, planted flax, and sheared sheep. During the height of the growing season and at harvest time, women helped in the fields and performed some of the same tasks as boys, such as hoeing, haying, and husking corn. There were other tasks women could have performed but did not. For example they did not drive cattle to market nor carry grain to the mill, as boys did. Women's work, though varied, remained centered on household and farmstead.

Although men held broader political rights and economic responsibilities than did women and men's work held higher status, households were the basic units of economic production, and women were essential to their operation. Women's economic activities and the autonomy those activities fostered contrasted sharply with their legal and political status. As historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has demonstrated, northern colonial women participated in and managed a largely invisible economy that brought income into the household. They kept their own accounts, contracted for work, and paid their own bills. Within this circumscribed, female network, women contributed substantially to household economies and controlled what they produced and earned as they traded and sold goods like butter and cheese and generated income from such activities as spinning, weaving, and midwifery.

As in rural economies, women's domestic labor remained critical to the functioning of urban households, but urban economies provided work opportunities for colonial women that rural economies did not. Although shop keeping and other mercantile activities were largely male occupations, both married and unmarried women in towns took in lodgers, ran taverns, and kept shops. Still women's opportunities remained far more restricted than those of men, since women were far less likely to acquire specialized training in a craft or skill. Unmarried women could enter into male-dominated occupations more easily than married women whose domestic tasks kept them from pursuing other work. Unmarried women could

exchange credit and debt, own and rent property, and control their own money. Married women could however keep accounts and act as "deputy husbands" in a spouse's absence, and many widows continued family businesses after the death of a husband. In urban as in rural economies, single women developed mutually beneficial economic networks, and urban women's contributions to local economies gave them a degree of status and autonomy.

Early Industrial Capitalism and Gendered Divisions of Labor

As commerce expanded in the early 1800s, distinctions between men's and women's work grew sharper. The example of the New England shoemaking industry suggests that the development of a more rigid sexual division of labor resulted from a conscious decision on the part of male shoemakers to expand production and yet protect the status of their craft. In order to increase production, male artisans assigned wives, daughters, and female household help the task of shoe binding, or sewing shoe uppers. Artisans then separated shoe binding from knowledge of the rest of the craft. Women were excluded from apprenticeships, thereby ensuring that they would remain subordinate to men in the production process and reserving the artisan training system for men. This sexual division of labor carried over into the early factory system. By excluding women from certain jobs, men protected their positions as skilled workers; built worker solidarity grounded in a mutualistic, masculine identity; and maintained greater control over the workplace. As merchant manufacturers began to replace artisans as employers, shoe binders divided into two groups. Married women still worked at home in the out-work system, earning the lowest wage in the shoemaking industry. Young, mostly single women worked in the factory system, where their work remained limited to shoe binding. As men's and women's work roles grew more distinct, the complementarity that had characterized pre-industrial labor gave way to labor competition between men and women.

The slave labor system, on the other hand, tended to blur gendered divisions of labor. Slave men and women labored together in the fields. Although slave men generally were expected to perform the heaviest work, women also performed hard labor and were similarly punished if their work came up short. Within their own quarters however, slave families preserved a gendered division of labor that resembled that of white rural families. Men hunted, fished, and

trapped during off-work hours; and women cooked, sewed, and cared for children. The work that African-American men and women performed for their families was of necessity cooperative. They relied on kin networks as well as on nuclear families to maintain households under the slave system.

Class-Based Constructions of Gender

Although class structure remained relatively fluid in the early stages of industrial capitalism, clear class distinctions gradually emerged and with them class-based constructions of gender. During the 1840s and 1850s, as the number of self-employed workers fell and the ranks of wage workers swelled with the arrival of large numbers of immigrants, skilled workers lost ground both to mechanization and labor competition. Decreasing wages and the presence of a slave labor system in the South led northern industrial workers to characterize their condition as “wage slavery.” Masculinity stood at the core of working-class formation. In the North a distinctive working-class construction of manhood emerged that rested on workingmen’s ability to control work rules and the pace of production, to command respect from the bosses, and to earn a family wage, that is, a wage sufficient to support a family of dependents so that women and children would not have to become wage earners themselves. The family wage ideal thus emerged as a response to specific industrial conditions. It also developed within the presence of a powerful, middle-class ideology defining male and female gender roles and as a reflection of working-class masculinity.

Middle-class constructions of manhood rested on the image of the self-made man and emphasized independence, self-sufficiency, and the ability to provide for one’s family. As entrepreneurial and managerial positions developed in commercial centers, middle-class men’s productive work moved away from the household while middle-class women remained in the domestic sphere. As consumer goods became more readily available to middle-class women, they performed less productive work and more reproductive work. The “cult of true womanhood” elevated middle-class women’s status as wives and mothers and gave them greater moral authority within the household, but the labor they performed as housekeepers and child minders became less visible and less valued.

Working-class men whose wages and status were declining saw in the middle-class model of domesticity a means to raise wage rates, resist industrial capitalism, and shore up working-class masculinity. They

argued that an industrial system that pushed wages down and so forced wives and children into the labor market threatened to degrade working-class women. The wives and daughters of the well-to-do would, they pointed out, no more associate with factory girls than they would slaves. Workingmen argued that not only would their wives and children suffer if they were forced to enter the labor market in order to supplement the family income, but that their own status as workingmen would be degraded as well if their wives and daughters were forced to become factory girls.

Factory girls themselves had a different view. As the textile industry developed in the 1820s, young, single women from rural areas began to migrate to factory towns like Lowell, Massachusetts, to work in textile mills. Drawn by the promise of both economic and cultural opportunities, they entered the workforce in large numbers during the 1830s. Sensitive to middle-class prescriptions of womanhood, factory owners tried to reproduce the domesticity that presumably protected true womanhood by lodging women in company-managed boarding houses, enforcing strict moral standards, and closely monitoring their activities. Factory girls resisted company control, asserted their independence, and upheld the dignity of labor. The female work culture gave rise to a version of class consciousness that reflected women’s experiences as workers and that challenged both the cult of domesticity and capitalist labor relations.

The Lynn shoe workers strike of 1860 demonstrates the ways in which workingmen’s and women’s interests diverged. When the strike began, male shoe workers asked for workingwomen’s support. They hoped to organize female shoe binders as an auxiliary force to encourage community support and to boycott uncooperative shoe bosses. Yet male artisans remained committed to the family wage. They were not prepared to acknowledge or fight for the interests of female factory operatives. For their part the factory operatives opposed a strike strategy whose only goal was to raise men’s wages. They began to organize female shoe workers, asking married women who worked at home to join them in striking for higher wages. Such a gender-based coalition would have protected the wages of both married outworkers and single factory operatives. Male workers opposed this alliance, fearing that higher wages for factory operatives would encourage wives to enter factory work rather than stay at home. Male shoe workers persuaded their wives that joining the factory girls would alienate the bosses, result in less home work, and hurt men’s chances to win a family wage. The home workers rejected the strategy of the factory girls, supporting higher wages for men instead.

Home workers who put family interests above their individual interests as wage earners weakened the position of female shoe binders relative to employers. Male artisans who defined women primarily as family members rather than acknowledging their interests as workers largely excluded them from the process of class formation and thus weakened the ability of the working class to challenge industrial capitalism. In the process of resisting capitalist intrusion into their craft, men and women shoe workers debated not just the place of women in the shoe industry, but the meanings of womanhood and manhood.

Labor, Gender, and Relations of Power

Working-class men's ambivalence toward female workers continued through the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. In 1869, the newly formed Knights of Labor declared its support for equal rights for all workers regardless of race or gender but at first excluded women from membership. When a group of female shoemakers in Philadelphia won a strike in 1881, formed a labor organization, and sought admission into the Knights of Labor, the national organization was forced to stand by its principles and admit them to the union. Women subsequently joined in large numbers, particularly in the shoemaking, textile, and clothing industries. By the mid-1880s, women constituted 10% of Knights of Labor membership. Despite opposition from some male members of the order, women served as union organizers and proved to be active, even militant, unionists. In 1888, female organizers called on the Knights of Labor either to uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work or admit that it was a mockery and eliminate the statement supporting an equal pay policy from their platform.

As the Knights of Labor faltered in the 1890s, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) took its place and grew to include 4 million workers by 1920. During that same period, the proportion of women in the workforce increased rapidly. In a competitive labor market, male unionists understood the threat that unorganized female workers posed. Trade unionists repeatedly affirmed a commitment to unionize female workers and support equal pay for equal work but did so largely in order to protect male wage rates. Unionists continued to pursue the family wage, arguing that women's contribution to the home and their duties as mothers were so valuable that they ought not to be in the workforce at all and that employers' exploitation of mostly unskilled, female workers constituted a capitalist assault on the working-class family. As the

pragmatic, craft-based AFL came to dominate the labor movement, antagonism toward female workers grew among some affiliates, and a discourse that centered on male privilege developed. An article appearing in the July 5, 1893, issue of the *Coast Seamen's Journal* commented that women were mentally and physically incapable of achieving great things, but they were capable of making it impossible for men to be what nature intended them to be, that is the providers and protectors of women and children. The author argued that the labor movement's principal responsibility was to ensure that every man had a chance to earn enough to provide for a wife and family. Ignoring any wage-earning aspirations that female workers might have had themselves, he wrote that once male workers earned a family wage, the issue of women in industry and in the union would cease to exist. Such rhetoric bore little relation to reality. The family wage, had workers succeeded in getting it, would have benefited only women in stable marriages. It did no good for single, divorced, or abandoned women whose interests would have been better served by access to high-paying jobs that offered opportunities for advancement. In the end keeping women out of the workforce proved impossible. Most women working for wages in the early 1900s were single, and they often supported mothers and younger siblings with their pay. Only 3.3% of female industrial workers were organized into trade unions. Because unskilled women could not count on trade unions to work on their behalf for higher wages or better working conditions, working-class women sought the help of middle-class reformers and legislators to address the problems of organizing female workers and improving working conditions.

In 1903, middle-class reformers and working-women founded the National Women's Trade Union League (NWTUL), a national labor organization dedicated to unionizing female workers in order to obtain better working conditions and higher wages. Many if not most middle-class women involved in labor reform remained convinced that women's place was in the home, but they realized that women who worked had to do so in order to support themselves and their families. Given the necessity of women's work, middle-class reformers committed themselves to improving working conditions and wage rates. Middle-class women did not however support strikes as a means of achieving those goals. Rather they supported state intervention in the form of minimum wage laws and protective labor legislation. States began to enact laws regulating the conditions and hours for workers in the early twentieth century. The Supreme Court at first struck down such legislation on the grounds that it

denied workers the right to make their own employment contracts. However in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908) the Court sustained protective legislation for women on the grounds that their “physical structure” and “maternal functions” placed them at a disadvantage. In the Court’s estimation, women could not work so long or so hard as men and requiring them to do so endangered the health and well being of the nation’s future citizens. But passing protective labor legislation could hurt as well as help working women. While it shielded women from some of the worst abuses of early twentieth-century industrial capitalism, it also excluded them from a number of highly skilled, highly paid occupations that required night work or that were deemed too physically taxing for women. As historian Alice Kessler-Harris has pointed out, because protective legislation divided workers into those who could and could not perform certain work roles, it is responsible in part for institutionalizing women’s subordinate position in the labor force. Protective legislation drew fire from groups like the Women’s League for Equal Opportunity, which lobbied against night work laws and the 54-hour workweek for women. The chief opponent of protective legislation was the National Woman’s party (NWP), the nation’s most militant suffrage organization. In 1921, the NWP proposed an equal rights amendment to the Constitution of the United States that read: “No political, civil or legal disabilities or inequalities on account of sex nor on account of marriage, unless applying equally to both sexes, shall exist within the United States or any territory thereof.” The proposed amendment sparked a battle between groups like the NWTUL, which believed that it would worsen conditions for workingwomen, and groups that believed effective union organization would do more for women than protective labor legislation. A new style of unionism that had taken shape during the pre-World War I period of Socialist party activism gave the latter groups some hope that they were right. The new unionism fostered a sense of working-class solidarity that was absent in the craft unions of the AFL. These new unions enrolled female members, offered social programs for workingwomen, and won wage increases and shorter working hours. The new unions however remained as male-dominated as the old. Women were permitted greater involvement at lower levels of organization, but men monopolized all union offices and male leaders did not trust female organizers nor allow women to handle strikes. Limited job opportunities, protective labor legislation, and varying levels of exclusion from labor union participation isolated women from the mainstream of the labor movement and marginalized women within sex-segregated jobs.

Labor and Gender in the Twentieth Century

The number of workingwomen increased steadily over the course of the twentieth century, but they remained in sex-segregated jobs. In 1910, 51% of single women worked for wages, but until World War II, about 90% of all working women filled only 10 different occupations. These occupations included secretarial work, retail sales, telephone switchboard operation, and teaching. Black women, who had far fewer opportunities than did whites, remained employed mostly in agricultural or domestic work. Sex-segregation contributed to the assignment of low wages and status to these jobs even when those jobs previously had been filled by men.

During World War II, new opportunities opened up for women. War work made women aware of job possibilities they had not previously considered, but Kessler-Harris has argued that women’s wartime experience reflected continuity as well as change. The inroads women made into higher paying, male-dominated occupations continued an earlier trend of working women to seek better wages, higher status, and greater job satisfaction. The war provided women some of what they sought. Patriotic rhetoric suggested that war work took precedence over home responsibilities, handing those women who aspired to work outside the home a compelling reason to do so. Black women, older women, and professional women all took advantage of the wartime labor shortage to enter well-paying jobs. Black women’s gains were most dramatic. About 20% of black women who previously had been limited to low-paying domestic service jobs before the war found higher paying positions. By the end of the war, the number of black women working as factory operatives and in clerical, sales, and professional work had increased substantially.

Still the gains women made were limited by the view that they were temporary workers. During the war employers refused to integrate women into training programs that might provide access to skills beyond those essential for their immediate tasks. Management believed that additional training would be a wasted investment for temporary help. Women pressed for pay equal to that of male workers, and unions fought to maintain wage levels during the war in order to protect men’s wages, but most women were forced to return to lower paying, sex-segregated jobs. After the war women’s participation in the work force dropped by the same percentage as it had risen to meet wartime labor shortages, indicating that most of the women who remained in the workforce after the war would have been working for wages anyway.

But by 1950, the overall rate of women's participation in the workforce had risen to 32%, a net gain of 16% from 1940–1950.

The publicity accorded female workers in war industries during World War II made it clear to Americans that women could do men's work but whether or not they wanted to was a different matter. The shop floor represented a stronghold of male culture, a world away from family responsibilities and feminine influences. When women did invade the male culture of the shop floor, as they did occasionally before the war and more permanently beginning in the 1970s, they met with derision, hostility, and sexual harassment. The gap between the jobs women were interested in and capable of performing and the limitations imposed by a return to the prewar, sex-segregated labor market fueled second-wave feminism. The women's movement of the 1960s challenged both the sex-segregated labor market and the gender-based wage differential. From 1960–1970, the number of women in skilled, male-dominated trades had risen by 80%. By 1970, more than 40% of married women worked for wages. Women's wage rates however remained only 59% of those for men. The tension between the rising participation of women in the workforce and consistently low wage rates prompted demands for legislation to address gender inequalities in the workplace. As more and more women from all classes and levels of education entered into the workforce, gendered divisions of labor became less rigid and the sex-segregated labor market began to break down, though not so fast nor so fully as women hoped. Many male jobs opened up to women, but less rigid gender-based divisions of labor also offered broader opportunities for men drawn to traditionally female occupations like nursing or for fathers who wanted to take a more active role in child rearing by staying home with their children part-time. Comparing men's and women's work roles in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century to those in earlier periods of American history demonstrates the degree to which gendered divisions of labor, gender constructions, and gender-based relations of power have shifted and evolved over time.

Gender and Labor History

Human labor—its allocation, organization, and valuation—has always been marked by gender and so have analyses of labor history and working-class formation. Through the 1960s, labor historians focused on formal institutions of power, such as trade unions,

and on male labor leaders and organizations and so excluded women from labor history. Labor historians have relied on male experiences and changes in workingmen's status in order to periodize labor history and working-class formation. As labor historians shifted from studying men who held formal positions of power to ordinary union members and unorganized workers, they began to look at workers and work cultures and at how race and ethnicity shaped working-class experiences. At the same time, the fields of women's history and feminist theory were developing, and working-class historians began incorporating perspectives on women and families in their analyses.

But the incorporation of women's experiences and perspectives in working-class histories did not in and of itself make for a gendered analysis of labor history. As Joan Scott pointed out, E. P. Thompson's path-breaking study of working-class formation, *The Making of the English Working Class*, included the stories of individual women but still constructed class as a masculine identity. Thompson associated working-class consciousness and class formation with the politics of male workers and focused on women's domestic experience even when women as workers, not wives, constituted the subject of his narrative. His concern was to assess capitalism's impact on male workers, not to assess the reasons for women's lower status and lower value in the labor market.

The development of feminist theory and gendered interpretations of workers' experiences have expanded, enriched, complicated, and fundamentally changed labor and working-class history. Using gender as a category of analysis has opened the field up to new questions and new ways of thinking by redefining the terms worker and workplace, highlighting gendered divisions within working-class households, on the shop floor, and in the labor movement; and challenging the notion that a unified set of class interests exists. Feminist historians have asked how divisions of labor based on sex led to women's lower status and lower value in the labor market. Attending to social constructions of gender has raised questions about when and why working-class men and women supported family-wage ideology, why craft unions excluded women, and how employers used gender ideology to divide the working class. Analyzing relations of gender has illuminated the ways in which men and women used particular gender constructions and ideologies to promote their own interests, their families' interests, and working-class interests. Viewing shop floor and factory as gendered spaces has yielded insight into how male and female work cultures have fostered worker solidarity and challenged employers for

control over the workplace. The scholarship that has emerged from using gender as a category of analysis amply demonstrates how gender was embedded in daily work practices and class relations and offers historians a fresh and fruitful perspective on labor history.

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GENERAL WORKERS' LEAGUE

Various associations of *émigré* German craftsmen and radicals adopted the name *Arbeiterbund* (Workers League or Labor league) in the years before

the Civil War. These were largely the work of revolutionary-minded German artisans who had been active overseas before immigrating to the United States, although conditions for immigrant labor in the United States sustained the organizations. Their presence had a major impact on the American workers' movement at a formative period in its history.

German Workers' Associations and the Workers' Revolution

The cooperationist goals, conspiratorial means, and insurrectionist tactics of the nineteenth-century French revolutionary associations may have been even more appealing to the relatively transient German artisans. Auguste Blanqui's *Société des Familles* and *Société des Saisons* inspired the 1834 formation of the *Bund der Geachteten* (the League of the Proscribed, or Outlaws), which reorganized 2 years later as the *Bund der Gerechten* (the League of the Just).

The group embraced a German version of an emergent socialist ideology, specifically that of Wilhelm Weitling (1808–1871), a Magdeburg tailor, whose numerous works include, most famously, his *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit* (1842). The league also sought to foster ideas of international labor solidarity through broader educational societies. Its general socialist ideas and its broad orientation drew Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels into the group. In 1847, it adopted a new name, the *Bund der Kommunisten* (Communist league), on behalf of which Marx and Engels wrote their famous *Manifesto*. Some of these generally migratory workers found their way to the United States, and the numbers would become a legion with the defeat of the 1848–1849 revolutionary upheavals.

General Workers' League

A former member of the league, Hermann Kriege (1820–1850), came to the United States, and then launched a newspaper to promote revolutionary and socialist ideas. In 1845, he founded the *Association der Social-Reformer* (the Social Reform association) in New York City, and it spread to Newark, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Chicago, and St. Louis. The group embraced American land reform radicalism, but Kriege gave his deepest loyalties to the Democratic party. Kriege returned to Germany for

the 1848 revolutionary upheavals but returned a less ambitious and more conservative figure.

Weitling's immigration to the United States was permanent. In 1850, as American workers were forming citywide industrial congresses and other bodies, Weitling helped unite 2,400 German artisans in New York into a *Centralkommission der verinigten Gewerbe* (Central Commission of the United Trades). Riding the tide of a strike movement and inspired by the cooperative vision of continental socialism, it mobilized 4,500 members in 1,700 trades, inspiring similar bodies in Baltimore, St. Louis, and other cities.

Weitling and others eager to establish a national coordinating body called the October 1850 convention that founded the *Allgemeiner Arbeiterbund* (General Workers' league). The group gained sometimes large affiliates in Baltimore, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Detroit, Dubuque, Louisville, Maysville, Newark, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Rochester, St. Louis, Trenton, and Williamsburg, as well as New York City. English-speaking radicals at the New York City Industrial Congress also established American Labor leagues, presumably cooperative bodies inspired by their German comrades.

However this *Arbeiterbund* did not pursue the earlier successes in the trades but pursued cooperative agitation and invested much effort in launching a socialist society at Communia in Iowa. Local associations, calling themselves a *Verein* or a *Gemeide*, surely attained a greater influence on labor activism in those years. Finally the organization seemed even more utopian against the background of the explosive agitation over slavery. By 1852, this *Arbeiterbund* went into decline.

The American Workers' League

In that year a handful of veteran radicals started a tiny *Proletariarbund*, partly to fill the void left by the orientation of the *Arbeiterbund*. Its primary leader was Joseph Weydemeyer (1818–1866), a veteran of the Prussian artillery as well as the Communist league and the 1848 revolutions. It proclaimed labor solidarity, human equality, hostility to slavery, and opposition to all capitalist parties.

By March 1853, the ideas of Weydemeyer's *Proletariarbund* proved sufficient to draw some 800 workers from the New York area to a convention that launched a new *Amerikanische Arbeiterbund*. It briefly drew together many of the local *Arbeitervereine*, established a *Frauenverein* for women, and restated the radical egalitarianism of its predecessor.

The organization gained some support in German-speaking communities across the country, but was overshadowed by the existence of the much broader *Sozialistischer Turnerbund*. A revolutionary republican gymnastic and theatrical club in Germany, the Turners in the United States were explicitly in favor of abolishing classes.

Then, too, from 1854–1858, a loose federation of émigré groups evolved in New York uniting German socialists with French, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, Cuban, and other radicals. They formed a general Universal Democratic Republican Society, then an ongoing convention of liberal societies that celebrated revolutionary anniversaries beneath socialist slogans and red flags.

Communist Club and International Ties

The Panic of 1857 led to massive demonstrations by the unemployed and the final phase of antebellum German workers' organization. The nationalists, largely still looking for a revival of the republicanism of 1848 launched another *Allgemeiner Arbeiterbund von Nord-Amerika*, but it never revived the promises of its namesakes.

That same year, Friedrich Albert Sorge (1828–1906), a veteran of the earlier efforts by both Weydemeyer and Weitling, took the initiative in launching a tiny local *Kommunist Klub* that revived the militant egalitarianism and socialist vision of the earlier groups. By July 1858, the group helped form an American section of the international association. Although largely dominated by the old republican nationalism of 1848, the group became the most immediate forerunner on both sides of the Atlantic of the International Workingmen's Association, the "first international" formed in 1864.

By 1858, however, Weydemeyer had moved into the Midwest, ultimately to St. Louis. He and much of the antebellum German workers movement were consumed by the Union war effort in the Civil War.

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See also **Germans**

GEORGE, HENRY (1839–1897) Political Economist, Reformer

A self-taught political economist, Henry George wrote one of the most powerful and widely read critiques of the late nineteenth-century industrial United States. Published in 1879, *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth*, argued that the growing inequities between social classes in the Gilded Age threatened American democracy. It went on to become the best-selling book on political economy in the nineteenth century and launched George as a prominent social reformer with an international following.

Henry George was born in Philadelphia on September 2, 1839, the son of Catherine (Vallance) George and Richard George, a publisher of religious books. Disinterested in formal schooling, he quit at age 13 to serve as a foremast boy on a 1-year journey aboard a ship. On his return in 1856, he worked briefly as an apprentice printer before striking out for San Francisco to prospect for gold. After years trying his hand at many different jobs, often living in extreme poverty, he eventually embarked on an uneven career as a journalist, writing for and editing numerous San Francisco papers. In 1861, he married Annie Fox, with whom he had four children.

By the mid-1870s, George became increasingly interested in questions of political economy and social justice, especially as he experienced personal poverty and witnessed growing labor unrest in California during the depression of 1873–1877. Despite his lack of formal education, George read widely, especially the classics of political economy. He was also an evangelical Christian who came to view his reform impulse in almost messianic terms and laced much of his writing with biblical references.

Fundamentally George was worried about the deleterious effects of industrial capitalism on American democracy. Why, he wondered, were the many indisputable benefits of industrial progress accompanied by an increase in the number of people living in poverty? Could the defining features of the nation's republican ideals and institutions—liberty, equality, and opportunity—endure in a society increasingly dominated by large corporations and powerful millionaires like Jay Gould and William K. Vanderbilt?

Deeply troubled by these questions and committed to answering them, George began writing *Progress and Poverty* in 1877 and completed it 2 years later. Land monopoly, explained George, caused modern industrial society to produce “an increase of want

with [an] increase of wealth.” Real estate speculators and land monopolists, he asserted, siphoned off a major portion of the wealth created not by them but rather by the collective labors of the community. Monopolists grew rich on these unearned profits while a growing number of society's producers toiled in poverty with little opportunity for advancement: Hence, the growth of poverty amid progress.

The solution, asserted George, was for the government to appropriate these profits through a uniform land value tax or what his supporters eventually took to calling the “single tax.” With the rewards of speculation eliminated, undeveloped land and resources held by speculators would be made available to those seeking to develop them. Economic opportunity would once again flourish, and poverty would decline. Tax revenues would rise, allowing for the construction of parks, schools, libraries, and other institutions dedicated to public benefit.

George offered his readers this vision of a future utopia but also one of apocalyptic horror should society fail to heed his warning. “This association of poverty with progress,” he wrote at the beginning of his book, “is the great enigma of our times.... It is the riddle which the Sphinx of Fate puts to our civilization, and which not to answer is to be destroyed.” If unchecked by radical reform, *laissez faire* industrial capitalism would ultimately destroy the American republic.

While radical in many respects, especially for his challenge to private property rights, George was not a socialist. In many ways he offered his single-tax program as an alternative to both *laissez faire* economics and socialism.

Initially *Progress and Poverty* drew almost no attention from readers and critics. Undaunted George decided in 1880 to move to New York City to raise his profile and draw attention to his book. There he met influential people and delivered lectures to reform-minded groups. He also joined the Land league, an Irish nationalist organization dedicated not only to winning Ireland's independence from Great Britain, but to abolishing the landlord system that left most of the Irish people in poverty. Although not Irish, George joined the cause because he saw the Irish struggle against land monopoly as a test case for his single-tax reform. In 1881–1882, he traveled to Ireland as a special correspondent for the *Irish World* (New York), reporting on the progress of the struggle for land reform. Before long working-class Irish Americans were some of George's greatest admirers.

Indeed working-class Americans of all ethnicities emerged as George's strongest base of support in those early years. As one labor leader put it, *Progress*

and Poverty taught them that “poverty is an artificial condition of man’s invention,” and not an inevitable aspect of human existence. “Workingmen and women, learning all this,...commenced to wrestle with their chains.”

Progress and Poverty also attracted a wide readership among intellectuals and middle-class reformers in the United States and Great Britain. His tours of Ireland and Britain in 1881–1882, 1884, and 1885 brought him into contact with many prominent figures, such as Herbert Spencer. He later became a correspondent with Leo Tolstoy, who admired his writings on land reform.

From 1883–1886, George continued to write and lecture on the ideas expressed in *Progress and Poverty*. In 1883, he agreed to write a series of articles on social problems for *Frank Leslie’s Weekly*, one of the most popular journals of the day. These were eventually collected into book form and published as *Social Problems* (1883). By this time George had also become a staunch proponent of free trade, a highly contentious issue in the Gilded Age, eventually publishing *Protection or Free Trade; An Examination of the Tariff Question, with Especial Regard to the Interests of Labor* (1886).

In 1886, a year of unprecedented labor unrest, workers in New York City nominated George as the United Labor party candidate for mayor. George conducted a spirited campaign in a race that drew national attention. On election day, George outpolled the republican candidate, the 27-year-old Theodore Roosevelt but lost narrowly to Democrat Abram Hewitt. George and his supporters hoped this strong showing was the sign of greater things to come, perhaps even the establishment of a national reform or labor party and a presidential campaign in 1888. But infighting, some of it generated by George’s decision to purge the movement of socialists, led to the collapse of the United Labor party in 1887.

For the rest of his career, George found his strongest base of supporters among middle-class reformers. By 1889, they had established 131 single-tax clubs across the country to promote his ideas. In 1890, George went on a world tour, delivering lectures and meeting land reform advocates. By the mid-1890s, single-tax clubs sprang up in Great Britain, Canada, Ireland, Australia, Denmark, and Hungary. He suffered a stroke in late-1891 and curtailed his travels in favor of writing. He started writing the *Science of Political Economy*, a book not published until after his death in 1897. In 1892, he published *A Perplexed Philosopher*, a book in which he vented his ire at the British political economist Herbert Spencer for turning against land reform. Over the next few years, George opened his Manhattan house as

a salon for progressive-minded people to meet and talk.

In 1897, New York City reformers again turned to George to run for mayor as a candidate of the Thomas Jefferson party. In poor health, George died five days before the election. Running in his place, his son, Henry George, Jr., still managed to garner 5% of the vote.

The influence of *Progress and Poverty* extended far beyond the life of its author, shaping the consciousness of many prominent late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century reformers, including Jacob A. Riis, Ignatius Donnelly, Fr. John A. Ryan, and Robert LaFollette. The book is still in print, and Henry George schools and single-tax organizations operate in at least 22 countries.

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GERMANS

Germans have played a distinctive and substantial role in American labor history, particularly during the peak of the American industrial revolution in the last-third of the nineteenth century. This period coincided with the highest wave of German immigration to the United States as well as with intense political ferment and organizational innovation within labor circles in Germany. Thus large in number, German immigrants also brought with them political ideas and organizational models that figured prominently in the history of American workers even when the volume of German immigration subsided after the turn of the century.

Germans and the International Reach of German Culture

There are Germanic peoples spread throughout central Europe; and they have never been encompassed within the boundaries of one nation state to the extent of the English, French, and Spanish. Today most German-speaking people are included in the three

nations of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland; but there are pockets of ethnic Germans in northern Italy, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Russia. Small remnants of their former selves, most of these enclaves derive from the Austro-Hungarian Empire that dominated central Europe for centuries before it was broken up after World War I. This multi-ethnic empire made German the most common language of business and government for much of central Europe. Thus the German language, and through it German culture, had a considerably wider reach than the German nation founded by Otto von Bismarck in 1871 that people today typically equate with Germany and the Germans.

Migration patterns reinforced this extensive influence, particularly for working people. European journeymen, including those from Scandinavia, traditionally wandered before settling down in one city. German was the most useful language for both traveling and learning a trade within central Europe. It even served workers well in the United States. Samuel Gompers, the most important American labor leader before the 1930s, was of Dutch and Jewish extraction; but he grew up in London and New York City, where he worked in a small cigar-making firm whose workers spoke mainly German. In the 1870s, a Swedish cigar maker translated the *Communist Manifesto* for the young Gompers, who was so interested in German socialism that he taught himself the language so he could read German labor thinkers.

Founding a German Nation and Exporting *Émigrés*

Germans were late in founding a nation state in comparison to the English, French, and Americans. The efforts of Germans to build a nation in the nineteenth century profoundly influenced the emigrants who left and thus their role in American labor history as well.

Since Germanic people were so dispersed, they lacked a common culture and in many respects, a common language because they spoke so many dialects. Even within the area united by Bismarck, there were 39 separate states and free cities. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, German intellectuals tried to standardize the language and build a more unified culture as the first step in building a nation. They also created numerous voluntary organizations to promote cultural unity and patriotism. This combination of cultural and political goals was evident in the popular Turner societies, which

were designed to form the citizens of the new German republic through physical exercise, primarily gymnastics, cultural activities, and political action. The ubiquitous mutual benefit societies, whose main goal was providing insurance, also sometimes pursued similar cultural and political activities. Familiar with such groups, German immigrants, especially artisans, brought with them to the United States organizational models and experience useful for promoting the culture and politics needed by labor movements. *Émigrés* informed by the efforts to found a German nation were particularly important carriers of these traditions.

In the midnineteenth century Germans made two attempts to found a modern nation state in the area roughly between Switzerland and Austria to the south and the Baltic Sea to the north. In 1848, a wave of popular uprisings swept Europe, and their one unifying characteristic was opposition to monarchy and aristocracy. Opinion about a desirable new order ranged from conservative constitutional monarchies to radical republics. Within the numerous contemporary German states, artisans—particularly journeymen—took part in these revolutions, pushing the revolutionaries toward re-ordering society and the economy, not simply the political order. Yet the established powers counterattacked and crushed the revolutions, inaugurating a reactionary period in European history and sending waves of political refugees abroad, including to the United States.

Known as the “48ers” in American history, these political *émigrés* quickly assumed leadership positions in the German immigrant communities already established in American cities. The skills at organizing and agitation they had honed in Germany served them well in the United States amid the political ferment of the 1850s. For the 48ers the Civil War was a second chance to fight and defeat aristocracy, this time in the form of southern slaveholders. They enthusiastically led their followers, many of whom were German craftsmen, in support to the North and the Republican party. During the war the 48ers and their allies advocated emancipation sooner than mainstream Republicans, and during Reconstruction, they pushed for the radical transformation of the southern social and political order. They were usually friendly to the numerous unions that emerged in the North during the war, and some of them helped lead the movement for an 8-hour workday afterward. Although not typically workers themselves, the 48ers helped integrate working-class German immigrants into American politics; and they gave German-based labor organizations energy and a distinct political direction.

While Americans were preoccupied with the Civil War and Reconstruction, Bismarck led Prussia into

a series of military conflicts that resulted in the founding of the Second Empire in 1871, following the decisive defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War. At the same time Ferdinand Lassalle organized the first German labor movement.

His movement was rooted in a network of social and political clubs appealing mainly to craftsmen and lower level professionals, not in labor unions, principally because there were so few unions within the German states at the time. Industrialization, and consequently unions, had not advanced in Germany so far as in Great Britain or in the northern United States; and in addition Lassalle's political movement fit into the ferment created by Bismarck's nation building politics. Strong unions did emerge in Germany as did a core of Marxist labor leaders. Both provoked intense debates in the late 1860s and 1870s about the role of unions and political parties within the labor movement as well as about how labor should address Bismarck's reactionary monarchy. These debates produced the vital German labor thought that so impressed Gompers. Many of the debaters themselves fled to the United States when Bismarck's government passed the Antisocialist Laws, which were in force from 1878–1890.

This whole period from the mid-1860s through the 1880s sent a stream of German labor and political *émigrés* to the United States comparable in size and influence to the previous generation of 48ers, although the newcomers tended to be more radical and more embedded in labor organizations and culture. In 1869, such *émigrés* as Friedrich A. Sorge helped found the International Workingmen's Association, as the American branch of the First Communist International. They were prominent in subsequent labor initiatives like the Workingmen's party of the United States as well as in the anarchist labor movement that played such a large role in the Haymarket Affair of 1886. The same wave of exiles helped found and maintain a web of unions, Turner societies, newspapers, political clubs, and mutual benefit societies that sustained German-language labor movements within New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Milwaukee. The existence of such movements illustrated the unusually large role of German immigrants in the workforces and economies of American industrial cities, particularly those in the Midwest. German-language labor movements by no means encompassed all or even most German workers in these cities, but they enlivened and emboldened Germans who belonged to English-language unions and political parties. The culture sustained by these movements also inspired German workers in smaller cities.

The Mass Migrations

The 48ers and the post-Civil War labor *émigrés* were numerically tiny elements in a massive international migration of Europeans in the second-half of the nineteenth century. People from the area encompassed in Bismarck's Reich constituted the largest national element in this European exodus, and the highpoints of German emigration mirrored those of all Europeans. With the advent of the twentieth century, the patterns of German and European emigration diverged.

From 1840–1900, people from Ireland, Scandinavia, and central Europe dominated the European emigration. After 1900, the origins of the emigrants shifted to the east toward Russia and south toward Italy and the Mediterranean. In the nineteenth century there were three waves of European immigrants arriving in the United States, peaking in the mid-1850s, the late 1860s, and the mid-1880s. The third wave was the largest and the second the smallest, though still very substantial. The volume of emigration from the area defined by Bismarck's Reich corresponded exactly to these three larger waves from Europe, with the peak years for the Germans being 1854, 1869, and 1882. During the whole 60-year period, Germans always constituted from a quarter to a third of all the foreign-born in the United States.

The Germans settled disproportionately in the mid-Atlantic and midwestern states where the contemporary growth of American industry was concentrated. The Midwest also offered enough available farmland to attract a substantial proportion of the Germans to the countryside. Nonetheless the strong demand from industry attracted even more to urban areas: In 1890, two-fifths of Germans lived in cities, almost double the figure for native-born Americans.

Both the geographic origins and kinds of people leaving Germany changed substantially from 1840–1900. Those leaving before the Civil War came largely from the Rhine River valley, that is, from west central and southwestern Germany. Economic dislocation and political turmoil prompted people to leave, and the Rhine offered convenient transportation to international ports in Holland. The emigrants tended to be peasants and artisans who, while desperate at the time, were not economically destitute. They had the resources to make an international journey; and they often traveled in families, intending to settle permanently in the United States. When they did so, they created German enclaves in both the countryside and cities that became models for defining ethnic culture in America.

The relatively small excess of men over women in mid-nineteenth-century German districts illustrated

the intent of the people to settle and create communities. In contrast when immigrants planned to work and then leave, as in mining camps, men dramatically outnumbered women. German women in cities entered the labor market in smaller proportions than did women of many other nationalities, preferring to contribute to their families' income by taking in boarders or helping out in family-owned shops or businesses. The proportion of German women entering the labor market in the United States did increase toward the end of the nineteenth century; and they showed a growing preference for factory work, particularly in the garment industry, over domestic service, which originally had been their most typical occupational choice. Women also began to take a more prominent role in the labor movement.

After the Civil War the origins of the emigrants began to shift to the north and east within Germany, encompassing larger German port and industrial cities as well as vast East Prussian agricultural areas dominated by large noble landowners known as *Junkers*. Thus more and more emigrants were both experienced urban workers and impoverished rural laborers, who did not have the resources to set themselves up on farms in the United States. These trends among the German emigrants reflected the advancing industrial revolution within Germany and the expansion of a transatlantic labor market using innovations in transportation and communication, such as steamships and the telegraph. Thus a higher proportion of the post-Civil War German emigrants followed leads in an international labor market in pursuit of wage labor rather than a farm or their own workshop, which were increasingly unlikely objectives given the development of the American economy. The experienced urban workers among them, women included, were more likely to emigrate by themselves rather than with families. In the twentieth century practically all German emigrants were workers of this type.

By the early twentieth century, the German industrial revolution had developed so extensively that Germany itself was importing workers, commonly Poles from the East. The era of mass German emigration was over, since most German migrants went to their own country's burgeoning industrial cities. Meanwhile new waves of immigrants were arriving in the United States from eastern and southern Europe, making the first decade of the twentieth century the highpoint of European immigration to this country, although this time the Germans did not mirror the larger trend. While German immigration remained significant after 1900, it was modest by former standards.

From German Immigrants to German-American Workers

The diversity, volume, and timing of German immigration in the second-half of the nineteenth century accentuated the impact of Germans on American labor history. German immigrants came from a huge European region encompassing an extensive range of economic development, from backward rural areas to advanced industrial cities. Experienced urban workers combined with the post-Civil War *émigrés* to provide leadership to Germans new to both cities and the labor market. The Germans also came in huge numbers comparable only to the Irish at the time. This mixture of quantity with diversity created the possibility for German-speaking labor movements within the United States. The possibilities for such movements were enhanced by the success of German entrepreneurs in dominating whole economic sectors in American cities, such as brewing and distilling, baking, tailoring, and furniture making.

The timing of the German mass migration was as important as its diversity and scale. The highest German waves coincided with the most dramatic and traumatic phase of American industrialization when everyone, whether immigrant or native-born American, was trying to understand and build a place for him/herself in a modern industrial society. Anyone with a viable model or cogent idea at least got a hearing. Because of this ferment, Germans were able to make an unusual contribution toward defining the shape of American labor institutions by adapting their experiences and traditions to American conditions. This process required both imagination and sacrifice.

Social-Democratic politics could not perform the same unifying role in the United States as it had in Germany, where it functioned as a cultural and political touchstone for defining and unifying the German industrial working class. In the different American political culture, Social-Democratic politics could not even unite German immigrant workers, much less link them in a larger movement with other immigrants and native-born Americans. At the same time in the United States, the German models of union organization and cultural institution building became especially important even as Germans provided the largest constituency for various socialist political parties as well as for the anarchist movement of the 1880s. Thus Germans contributed mightily not only to the American left but also to defining and sustaining bureaucratically organized craft unions and business unionism generally.

The twentieth century brought a profound crisis to Germans in the United States, and not only because

the German mass migrations were over. The corporate reorganization period in the United States from 1898–1904 not only set up the model for the new corporate economy but also weakened the German-dominated sectors of the U.S. urban economy. Caught up in a new economic order and lacking a sustaining stream of immigrants, German labor movements were no longer viable. For all Germans, not only workers, the early twentieth century posed the fundamental problem of how to be first of all American but of a distinctive German cast. Ethnic folk culture provided one option, but there were others that did not rely on the German language or distinctive cultural markers. Among them was “municipal socialism,” the American term for Social-Democratic politics, which became prominent during the Progressive Era, particularly in midwestern cities. Another such option was building craft unions, usually with substantial benefits and often with left-leaning politics, within the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The anti-German patriotic feeling unleashed by World War I made these options for being a German-American worker even more important because they were less visibly German.

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See also Anarchism; Bakery and Confectionary Workers Union; Berger, Victor L.; Central Labor Unions; Craft Unionism; Gompers, Samuel; Haymarket Affair; Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965; International Cigar Makers Union; International Workingmen’s Association; Marx, Karl; Socialist Labor Party; Sorge, Friedrich; Spies, August Smith; Strasser, Adolph; United Brewery Workers

GI BILL

Signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt in June of 1944, the GI Bill, or Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (SRA), delivered a cornucopia of benefits to 7.8 million veterans of World War II at a cost of \$77 billion. Hailed as an expression of the nation’s gratitude to those who had rendered military service during the war, the GI Bill was just as fundamentally a labor-market intervention designed to prevent a postwar depression. Most Americans recognized that barring some external stimulus, when hostilities ended and the military discharged 16 million American servicemen into the civilian economy, the number of workers would far exceed the available jobs. The specter of idle, hungry workers waiting in endless lines for government handouts struck fear in the hearts of a population that had grown accustomed to the high wages

and creature comforts made possible by the booming wartime economy.

At first glance the GI Bill appeared to offer something to every veteran of the Second World War. Qualifying veterans received federally backed, low-interest loan guarantees for housing, businesses, and farms; tuition for education and vocational training, as well as unemployment and self-employment subsidies and services. The education and training benefit for which the GI Bill is best-known offered veterans one year of full-time training at colleges, trade schools, and business and agriculture programs in addition to time equal to their military service, for a maximum of 48 months. Federal subsidies reaching \$500 a year flowed through the Veterans' Administration to universities and trade schools. So enthusiastic was the response that by 1947 veterans comprised 49% of college students. Many were the first in their families to seek higher education. At Rutgers College in New Jersey, the influx of ex-GIs swelled enrollment from 750 in September 1945 to 4,200 2 years later and set the stage for an explosive expansion in facilities. Less academically oriented veterans who qualified might get seed loans to start farms or businesses. Still others (59%) cashed in on a special unemployment fund, claiming \$20 a week for up to one year. Not only did the GI Bill launch the careers of a generation of doctors, lawyers, teachers, academics, and businessmen, it also birthed a generation of skilled laborers.

A central premise of the GI Bill, namely, that the federal government had a responsibility to take an expansive role in the postwar economy, came straight out of the New Deal. The National Resources Planning Board (NRPB) had been conceived by Harold Eckes in 1933 to coordinate the efforts of the Public Works Administration. Once the war began, its focus shifted to attaining full employment after the war. In 1943, the NRPB released two pamphlets detailing its vision of postwar social provision. In *After the War—Full Employment*, Alvin H. Hansen, the nation's leading Keynesian and a member of the Harvard Economics Department, advocated aggressive deficit spending and an increase in personal and corporate income tax to allow the federal government to continue after the war to prime the demand side of the economic equation. In *Security, Work, and Relief Policies*, members of the NRPB proposed a range of social supports administered by the Federal Security Administration to meet the employment, housing, and educational needs of all Americans. The report endorsed federal programs to put money into the hands of the poor through expanded unemployment insurance, general assistance, and a massive, ongoing public works' program, as a means to stimulate the economy.

To many on the labor-left, the prospect of universal social security seemed not just morally desirable, but fiscally sound as well as politically realistic. Organized labor—represented by the newly swelled ranks of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and independent unions—welcomed the NRPB reports. The Socialist party and the National Farmers Union also endorsed the plans. Champions of the rights of the disenfranchised, among them Clark Foreman of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare and Lester Granger of the National Urban League, likewise cheered the proposals as overdue amendments to such New Deal programs as the National Labor Relations Act and the Social Security Act. Written in the 1930s to the specifications of southern Democrats and a handful of Republicans whose support was necessary, these programs had excluded many of the nation's poorest citizens, leaving as much as one-third of the African-American labor force, as well as a wide swath of white workers, without any safety net. Essentially the NRPB proposed demobilization of the armed forces as a double opportunity: to remedy gaps in New Deal social provision and set the economy on stable footing.

Critics derided these postwar plans as pie-eyed and worse. To the *Wall Street Journal*, the postwar proposals looked like “a halfway house to socialism!” Congressional conservatives like Senator Robert Taft of Ohio jeered that the plans for full employment had been hatched in a den of Marxism. Editors at the *New York Times* fanned the flames encircling the NRPB, condemning the proposals as “Bismarkian.” Altogether the response revealed that the fragile consensus that had held through the late 1930s would not survive the challenge of postwar planning. Results of the midterm elections of 1942 had only emboldened the anti-New Deal cohort in Congress. Midwestern voters in particular had elected Republican candidates committed to the return of private enterprise as the engine of a healthy economy. Their ascendancy meant that FDR lacked the political capital, if he ever had the will, to effectuate the NRPB's ambitious plans. Weeks after the group released its reports, Congress cut off its funding. Plucked from their New Deal roots, postwar plans grew energetically, but in a decidedly different direction.

Having kicked the NRPB to the curb, conservatives in Congress turned to the American Legion, the nation's largest veterans group, for its vision of postwar federal planning. Founded in 1919 by veterans of World War I descended from some of the nation's oldest families (including Teddy Roosevelt, Jr.), the American Legion gained national attention in its first year of existence in a lethal face-off with the Wobblies

in Centralia, Washington. It was a fitting *entrée*, since the legion, whose members—unlike its leadership—were mainly middle-class white men living outside the nation’s cities, maintained close ties to the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers and would develop a track record of support for immigration quotas, veteran bonuses, racial segregation, strike breaking, and loyalty oaths through the next several decades.

Congressman John E. Rankin of Mississippi introduced a legion-authored version of a GI Bill of Rights in the House. Rankin’s endorsement alone spoke volumes about the limits of the proposal. Chairman of the House World War Veterans’ Committee and a southern Democrat *par excellence*, Rankin mingled his support for the rights of veterans with outspoken racism, anti-Semitism, and antipapism. Just as he and other southern Democrats had left their mark on federal legislation during the 1930s, crafting policy palatable to white southern interests because it excluded the mostly African-American domestic and agricultural workforce, Rankin and his colleagues insisted that postwar veteran legislation likewise accommodate the racist political economy of the South.

Like the bulwarks of the welfare state that preceded it, the GI Bill emerged race and gender neutral on its face. But both the design and implementation of the law guaranteed *de facto* discrimination. Rankin, and his Senate counterpart, Missouri Democrat Bennett Champ Clark, a founder of the American Legion, insisted on an omnibus bill that combined the bill’s diverse features (concerning housing, education, unemployment insurance, and so forth) into a single provision and vested loose administration of the funds in the Veterans’ Administration (VA) under General Omar Bradley, a reliable ally.

From the perspective of Republicans and southern Democrats, the genius of the bill hinged on local control of federal funds. Since the federal government guaranteed only loans and reimbursed tuition, veterans had to apply to local, typically white-run institutions. Loan applicants who lacked collateral or credit encountered grim odds. The VA offered no hope, hewing as it did to the segregationist policies of the Federal Housing Authority, which mandated that, “properties shall continue to be occupied by the same social and racial classes.” Institutionalized racism also limited the ability of veterans of color to access the education provision of the GI Bill. Of the South’s 647 colleges and universities after World War II, only 102 admitted blacks. Theoretically the situation improved as one moved north. Yet in 1946, 46 African-American students joined nine thousand white coeds in classes at the University of

Pennsylvania—making it among the least restrictive schools in the Ivy League.

But some of the problems associated with the GI Bill ran deeper than discriminatory implementation. Even if bankers and college administrators had treated all veterans fairly, beneficiaries of the legislation would still have been disproportionately male and white because on balance, most veterans fit this demographic. Under the guidance of Director General Louis Hershey, the Selective Service Administration had enlisted Americans in numbers disproportionate to their representation in the population. For example women’s participation in the military topped out at 2%. For African-American males, generations of inadequate health care and education compounded by discriminatory draft boards that conspired to keep their numbers down. Since only half of young black males, as compared to three-fourths of whites in the same age bracket, entered the armed forces during the war, even in the absence of racism, proportionately fewer African-Americans would have qualified for benefits.

Arguably women workers paid the highest price when the legion’s version of the GI Bill edged out plans for a broader entitlement. Administrators at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) described the “imbalance between wartime additions to the labor force and industry’s normal demand for women workers.” Absent a federal plan for full employment, corporations righted the imbalance themselves, turning out their female wartime hires in droves. Anecdotal evidence on this point abounds. At the Federated Press, a leftist news service in New York City, journalist Betty Goldstein (later Betty Freidan) lost her job to a veteran. Records from the U.S. Employment Service (USES) confirm that along with the Veterans’ Re-employment Act of 1946, the GI Bill shunted women workers, especially those in manufacturing, to the end of the job queue or into lesser-paid, pink-collar jobs. From July of 1945 to April of 1946, nearly 3.5 million women exited the labor force, while almost 3.8 million men (re-) entered.

According to popular wisdom, women had joined the workforce “for the duration” and looked forward to leaving their jobs when it had ended. Of course millions of women already worked for a wage before the war, and a survey by the Women’s Bureau suggested that 75% wished or needed to do so after the war. Even in the midst of the longest strike wave in American history, management and unions colluded with the federal government to force women workers out. They greeted the flurry of pink slips as a return to normal labor market conditions—not as evidence that the GI Bill had boosted some workers over others.

Through the mid-to-late 1940s and across the spectrum of the labor-left, a smattering of organizations condemned the exclusivity of the GI Bill as anathema to American ideals. Progressive and Communist veterans bored into the American Legion, by then over one million members strong, hoping to weigh in on post-war plans—before being expelled. At the University of Chicago, social scientist St. Clair Drake founded the United Negro and Allied Veterans. Goals of the group, including “protection of lives and property of veterans in the Deep South,” and “enforcement of federal laws governing Negro rights and benefits,” spoke volumes about the status of many black veterans. Declaring themselves “citizens first, veterans, second,” diverse veterans, including cartoonist Bill Mauldin and civil rights pioneer Medgar Evers, joined chapters of the American Veterans’ Committee (AVC). Members of the AVC picketed the offices of Metropolitan Life, principal backer of the Levittown developments constructed across the country for the benefit of white veterans. Before being neutralized by anticommunism, many of these groups pressed federal lawmakers to expand on a universal scale the benefits the GI Bill had enshrined for some veterans.

Despite its partiality, fans of the GI Bill have always drowned out its critics. Many veterans did use the provision as a bridge to a more comfortable existence. But because of the way the law was written, many other veterans and nonveterans could not. In relative terms their position actually worsened as a result. It is even possible that the broad entitlements outlined in the GI Bill actually undercut efforts to win universal opportunity and equality of citizenship. Today the 1944 GI Bill is remembered not as an entitlement program, but rather as a patriotic gesture. The effect perpetuates the belief that when at midcentury a generation of white men stepped into coveted jobs, schools, and neighborhoods, they did so by merit alone rather than by explicit design.

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GILDED AGE

The Gilded Age, referring to the years from the 1870s to the end of the nineteenth century, constituted a formative period in American labor history. These years witnessed very rapid economic development, urbanization, and the growth of immigration. The period also saw the growing social polarization of American society, expressed not only in socio-economic segregation in cities and the growth of both poverty and great wealth, but also in bitter and often violent strikes that punctuated the period. Finally the era saw the emergence of key labor institutions like the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the national trade unions, the growth and then decline of an alternative model of labor organizing, the Order of the Knights of Labor (KOL). The central paradox of the Gilded Age, the extremely rapid economic growth and generation of wealth on the one hand and the growth of social inequality and poverty on the other hand, was effectively summed up in the title of a widely read 1879 book by the social reformer Henry George: *Progress and Poverty*.

Economic and Technological Change

By the end of the Gilded Age, the United States had become the leading industrial nation in the world, decisively overtaking its rivals, England, France, and Germany. American factories, mines, and mills turned out products on a scale that would have been incomprehensible to an earlier generation, while new inventions, like the telephone, typewriter, and electric lighting, reshaped American life. In 1890, for the first time in American history, the value of manufactured goods overtook that of agricultural products.

The U.S. economic growth in this period was based in part on its vast natural resources. Farmland provided food for a growing urban workforce, while extensive coal reserves, iron deposits, and mineral resources supplied the raw materials to feed mills and factories. Federal policies, such as banking acts

(which established a stable currency), high tariffs (which gave protection from foreign competition to infant industries), and large federal loans and land grants to railroad companies, also provided important spurs to industrialization.

A massive surge of railroad construction lay at the center of American economic growth in this period. From 1873–1893 over 100,000 miles of track were laid, giving the United States the most extensive transportation system in the world. Railroad building stimulated industrialization directly by generating a huge demand for iron, steel, coal, and lumber and indirectly by linking the diverse regions of the country into a vast national market, thus offering potentially huge profits to industrialists who could provide this market with manufacturing goods.

Improvements were also made in the quality of rail transportation. By the end of the 1880s, all the nation's railroads maintained a standard gauge, permitting cars to be transferred easily between tracks owned by separate companies. Such technological improvements as the Westinghouse air brake allowed trains to move more safely at faster speeds, though accidents, especially in cities, left many urban residents injured or dead each year and engendered much hostility to the railroads. Railroad companies even divided the nation into its present time zones to increase the regularity of service.

By increasing the speed of transportation and the quantity of goods that could be shipped, these developments helped set off a revolution in industry by encouraging manufacturers to adopt techniques of mass production. In the new steel industry for example, manufacturers introduced the most important invention of the period, the Bessemer converter, which increased the speed of steel production dramatically and allowed the output of steel to one-half million tons in 1877 to nearly five million tons in 1892. By the end of the nineteenth century, the United States was the greatest steel-producing nation in the world. The output of copper and crude oil increased dramatically as well. Steelmaker Andrew Carnegie captured the rapid pace of change dramatically in 1885 when he observed: "the Republic thunders past with the rush of the express."

The Gilded Age was a period of tremendous inventiveness. By the 1890s, there were over 300,000 telephones, which Alexander Graham Bell had invented in the 1870s, in use around the country. Thomas Edison, who produced his first electric lamp in 1879, was manufacturing over a million light bulbs a year by 1890. But most industries that gained prominence in this period produced capital goods rather than consumer goods like telephones and lights. Though the pre-Civil War phase of industrialization had revolved around

such consumer industries as clothing and shoes, this phase was based on manufactured goods that would be used by other industries—above all the railroad.

But for all its impressiveness, economic growth in the Gilded Age was marked by profound uncertainty. While the years from the end of the Civil War to 1873 were tenuously prosperous, the so-called Panic of that year threw the nation's entire financial system into chaos and led to 4 years of the most severe depression the nation had yet seen. An upswing in the late 1870s brought a return of good times, but this was followed by another (less severe) depression that lasted from 1882–1885. Worse than either of these downturns was the depression of 1893–1897, which scarred towns and cities across the nation with massive unemployment and sharply falling wages. For workers this newly prominent "business cycle," a pattern of several years of rapid economic growth followed by several years of economic downturn accompanied by widespread unemployment and declining wages, became a source of tremendous concern.

Many U.S. workers toiled in the factories and workshops of the Midwest and the Northeast, the industrial heart of the nation in these years. It was the economic core stretching from Massachusetts and Maryland in the east to Illinois, southern Wisconsin, and eastern Missouri in the west that felt the greatest impact of industrialization. The scale of the workplace also changed dramatically. In the 1870s, only a handful of factories that employed over 500 workers existed in the country. Manufacturing took place mainly in small and medium plants. By 1900, there were over 1,000 American factories that employed over 500 workers. In Pennsylvania there were three steel-making facilities that employed over 8,000 workers.

The period was marked by the dramatic growth of big business in a number of sectors of the economy but most notably on the railroads. The railroad network created a national market, and the railroads themselves became the nation's first truly large business, employing thousands of people and pioneering new organizational structures in the process. Large business organizations also emerged in iron and steel, the electrical industry, oil drilling and refining, and farm machinery manufacture. Huge enterprises like the Pennsylvania Railroad, Standard Oil, and International Harvester not only became household names, but also began to exert tremendous political power in the nation.

Not every part of the nation was affected equally by these changes. In the South for instance, while important manufacturing cities like Atlanta and the new steel center of Birmingham emerged and while large coal-mining and lumbering operations became

important, much of the economy still turned on agriculture, where black and white sharecroppers and tenant farmers eked out a meager living on the land. Cotton, so central to the early phase of American industrialization, remained dominant in the region even if slavery no longer existed. New Orleans, the South's great city, developed as the port of this region, with a variety of black and white workers laboring on the city's docks and in its warehouses. So, too, in the Far West, extractive industries like lumbering and mining remained critical in these years. Along with the rapid growth of farming on the Great Plains and on the Pacific Coast, this increased the population of the region significantly, while not leading to the kind of great industrial cities that emerged in the East and Midwest.

In global terms this was a very significant period. In the last-quarter of the nineteenth century, a true world economy came into being. International trade grew rapidly along with the movement of both people and capital across national borders. Food and raw materials of various sorts produced around the globe found their way to the industrializing economies of Europe and North America. All of this was inextricably connected to developments in the United States and particularly to the heavily immigrant composition of its growing working class.

The Working Class: Composition and Conditions

Not surprisingly given this rapid economic expansion, the size of the American labor force grew dramatically over these years. This growing labor force was made up partly by the movement of those Americans from agriculture to industry. Though agriculture expanded dramatically in the late nineteenth century, especially on the Great Plains, millions of black and white rural Americans sought jobs in rapidly growing cities or found industrial wage work (coal mining, railroad building and track maintenance, lumbering) in rural areas. But massive immigration from Asia, Mexico, and especially in these years, Europe was one of the most important facts of the whole period. From 1870–1900, nearly 12 million immigrants entered the United States. By 1900, 10.4 million American residents were foreign-born, representing 13.6% of the total population. The working class was even more heavily immigrant than the population as a whole.

At the beginning of this period, immigrants from northern and western Europe (particularly Germany, Scandinavia, Britain, and Ireland) tended to dominate the flow. Especially after 1890, immigrants

from southern and eastern Europe (Italy, Russia, and the Austro-Hungarian empire) grew important, a trend that would reach a peak in the early years of the twentieth century. Though less significant in total numbers, migrants from Mexico played a critical role in the Southwest, constituting an important part of the labor force in mining and smelting, railroad maintenance, and large-scale agriculture. Immigration from China, which had been crucial to the California economy in the 1860s and 1870s and to the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869, was curtailed by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. A product of an intensely xenophobic anti-Chinese movement, the act led to an increase in immigration from Japan, while also tracing the shape of restrictive immigration legislation that would be widely adopted in the twentieth century.

The high levels of immigration in this period made the American working class the most ethnically and racially diverse in the world. A similar diversity could be found in workers' labor conditions and standards of living. For the working class as a whole, steadily falling prices and advancing wages from the 1870s to the 1890s led to an important rise in standards of living. Yet there remained a wide gulf in the living standards of different groups among workers, particularly between highly skilled workers whose wages allowed them to live in some comfort and those of less skilled and prosperous urban or rural workers.

But life for even the relatively prosperous workers remained extremely precarious in this era. The absence of pensions, compensation for on-the-job injuries, or any form of unemployment insurance meant that workers lived in constant fear of injury or layoffs. The length of the working week (60 hours or more for many) and the intensity of work was also a source of dissatisfaction for many workers. But perhaps most galling was the obvious disdain with which middle-class and upper-class Americans viewed the working class. This disdain reflected important shifts in the larger ideological context within which the labor movement operated.

Ideological and Legal Context

The Gilded Age was among other things a period of significant ideological change. In earlier periods many American writers and politicians had expressed concern about the potential of economic growth to produce social inequality, monopolistic abuses of economic power, and political corruption. Though such concerns did not entirely vanish in this era, they were supplanted by an emphasis on the links between economic growth

and upward social mobility: American capitalism was increasingly praised as paving the way for the self-made man. This linkage made the otherwise troubling rise of large-scale industrial capitalism seem fully compatible with American democracy.

This ideological shift was reflected in rulings by state and federal courts (including the U.S. Supreme Court) that gave business important new rights while providing a major challenge to workers and the labor movement. In particular the courts increasingly moved to a position that allowed no room for state laws (including for instance maximum-hour laws) that tried to regulate business. Workers' rights by contrast were limited to nothing more than "liberty of contract" and "ownership of the capacity to labor." The due protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, originally designed to enable the federal government to overturn state laws that violated the rights of citizens, was transformed in a series of court decisions to emphasize the rights of corporations.

This trend culminated in 1905 when in the *Lochner v. New York* case, the Supreme Court overturned a state law that limited the working hours of bakers, declaring that the law "interfered with the right of contract between employer and employee" and thus violated individual freedom. But even in the Gilded Age, the trend in the law was increasingly clear and sharply limited the ability of the labor movement to achieve some of its most important objectives.

Strikes and Conflict

The rapid pace of economic change along with the deep social inequality characteristic of this period led to considerable labor conflict. In some famous strikes, workers went down in defeat, though in many local strikes, especially in the building and metal trades, worker gains were not uncommon. There were notable peaks in strike activity during these years (particularly 1885–1886 and 1892–1895), but beyond this Gilded Age, strikes demonstrated a clear pattern over time: Strikes became more organized and more likely to be coordinated by unions. And one particular type of strike, the sympathy strike, in which a group of workers went out in support of another group, was particularly prominent in this era.

The period in addition was marked by several very large strikes that focused the attention of much of the nation on what was called the "labor question." In July 1877, wage cuts on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad triggered a walkout by railroad workers in Martinsburg, West Virginia, and wage cuts by the Pennsylvania Railroad triggered a nationwide

railroad strike that spread across the entire nation. After the Philadelphia militia fired on strikers in Pittsburgh, killing 20 people, railroad workers, supported by local ironworkers and other city residents, responded by up setting fire to the property of the Pennsylvania Railroad there. Spreading to cities as far away as Galveston, Texas, and San Francisco, the strike remained peaceful and orderly in some localities. In St. Louis for example, a general strike, drawing support from both black and white working-class residents, virtually shut down the city for several days. But in others localities, such as Chicago, the actions of heavily armed police and eventually troops in working-class districts, led to tremendous violence. In San Francisco white working-class racism came to the fore as a crowd meeting to discuss action against the railroads ended up rampaging through the city's Chinatown, burning buildings and killing several residents. The strike, which lasted two weeks, came to an end only with the introduction of federal troops on the side of the railroads.

The rapid growth of the KOL (see the following paragraphs) and the revival of trade unions in the late 1870s and early 1880s prepared the stage for another period of intense class conflict in the middle years of this decade. The trigger this time was the demand for the 8-hour day. Coordinated especially by trade unionists through the Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions, a lobbying body they established in 1881, the movement first took the form of campaigning for state laws that mandated the 8-hour day. But the ineffectiveness of laws that were passed led many workers to turn to direct action. A series of large demonstrations and strikes across the nation that began on May 1, 1886, won shorter hours for many workers while generating considerable fear among middle- and upper-class Americans. When Chicago police moved to break up an 8-hour meeting in Haymarket Square, a bomb thrown into the ranks of the police (and killing one officer) focused middle-class fears on the threat of anarchism. The execution the following year of four men (all radical leaders but none of them implicated convincingly in the actual murder of the police officer) won much enthusiastic support from the middle-class press while convincing many in the labor movement that a grievous miscarriage of justice had been perpetrated.

The 1890s saw industrial conflict on an even larger scale. In 1892, steel maker Andrew Carnegie, determined to break the power of the local Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers' lodge at his giant steelworks in Homestead, Pennsylvania, initiated a massive lock-out of the union workers that led to months of conflict, occasioned by gun battles between workers and Pinkerton detectives. This bitter conflict ended

in November of that year with a complete victory for Carnegie, who was now on the road to achieving a completely nonunion operation.

Not all industrial conflicts ended this way. On the New Orleans docks, a dynamic center of biracial unionism in spite of the racism of many white workers and the segregation of blacks and whites off the job, a struggle of African-American teamsters and white packers and scale men for shorter hours culminated in a successful general strike in 1892 that gave union workers one of their most significant victories in the nineteenth century. But in the wake of the depression that began the following years, it became much more difficult for workers to win strikes or improve their position, a point most clearly visible in the great Pullman strike and boycott of 1894.

The background of this conflict was the rapid growth of the American Railway Union (ARU), an industrial union led by Eugene V. Debs that embraced workers from a wide variety of different railroad occupations across the country. At its convention in June 1894, workers then on strike at the Pullman Car Company's manufacturing operations in Illinois asked the ARU to support them by refusing to handle Pullman cars (luxury sleeping cars) on tracks anywhere in the country. The convention agreed, and the Pullman boycott (essentially a large-scale sympathy strike) ensued. By early July a strike of massive proportions had spread across much of the Midwest and West, leading to equally massive intervention by the federal government. An injunction was handed down against the strikers, Debs was imprisoned, and armed troops across the nation (along with a declaration of martial law in Chicago) brought defeat to the Pullman workers and eventually destruction to the new ARU.

Labor Organizations

Underneath and related to the intense industrial conflict of this era, many workers were attempting to build labor organizations to improve their position. In the early 1870s, several groups of workers, especially anthracite (hard) coal miners and coopers, had some notable successes in building such unions, though these were mainly wiped out by the depression of the middle years of the decade. In the mid-1880s, which saw the nineteenth-century peak of membership in labor organizations (with nearly a million members of trade unions or KOL assemblies in 1886), dock workers, meatpacking workers, bituminous (soft) coal miners, and iron and steel workers also made

important strides, joined by railroad workers and workers in the building trades in the early 1890s. Building and maintaining such unions though necessitated a constant struggle, not only with employers, but with fellow workers, for it involved asserting a mutuality and solidarity in the face of the individualism that was at the center of the ideology of the period.

In addition to unions representing workers in particular occupations, there were also efforts to bring workers across occupational lines into larger umbrella organizations. The National Labor Union, in the Civil War era, had been an important example of such an organization, but the NLU collapsed in the early 1870s. Building on the traditions of the NLU, but much more significant during this period was an organization called the Noble and Holy Order of the KOL, which, in membership terms, was the largest labor organization in the nineteenth century. Much more than a labor union or federation of unions, the KOL represented a truly massive expression of working-class opposition to the social inequality and political corruption of the Gilded Age. In its heyday in the mid-1880s, the Knights expounded a cooperative and mutualistic philosophy that ran counter to the individualism and materialism that dominated the era.

Founded by Uriah Stephens and a small group of his fellow garment cutters in Philadelphia in 1869, the Knights were at first closer to a secret fraternal society than a labor organization. But as one of the few organizations of workers to survive the depression of the 1870s, the order put aside its secrecy in 1878 and embarked on the building of a national labor reform movement. Led now by Terence V. Powderly, a former machinist and the mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania, the Knights sought to create an organization that would encompass all members of what they called the "producing classes." In fact the Knights did organize across lines of skill, gender, religion, and nationality. Female factory and mill workers for example, though excluded from the order in the 1870s, forced Powderly and other leaders of the KOL to recognize their right to join following a successful 1881 strike by female shoemakers in Philadelphia. By the mid-1880s, women constituted one-tenth of the KOL membership, and female organizers like Leonora Barry and Elizabeth Rodgers were highly visible leaders of the order.

Race proved to be a greater hurdle. In the Far West in fact the organization expressed racial animosities openly, often spearheading the powerful white working-class movement against Chinese immigrants in this region. The KOL leaders praised the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act as a victory for American workers. During the 1880s, members of the KOL

participated in San Francisco boycotts of Chinese-made cigars and in a race riot in Rock Springs, Wyoming, that left 28 Chinese workers dead.

The Knights' relationship to African-American workers however was quite different. In spite of considerable white working-class hostility to African-Americans, the KOL both admitted and attracted many southern African-American members, numbering approximately 60,000 by the summer of 1886. The order's national convention of that year, held in Richmond, Virginia, asserted the willingness of the organization to organize southern African-American workers despite the intense opposition from southern elites. African-American Knights continued to face discrimination within the organization, and a true biracial unionism never emerged, but the order continued to represent a vehicle for the expression of African-American working-class aspirations through the entire decade of the 1880s.

The Knights were also actively involved in American politics. Though they never established a political party of their own, members of the KOL were full participants in an explosion of independent working-class political activity that spread across the nation in the years from 1885–1888. But beginning the middle of the decade, employers, supported by the government and the press, resisted further union growth and broke strikes, weakening the order in fundamental ways. The Haymarket incident and the antiradical sentiment that followed on its heels also hurt the order despite Powderly's strong opposition to anarchism. Finally the KOL experienced serious internal divisions as many members shifted their allegiance to unions affiliated with the new American Federation of Labor (AFL). As a result the order's membership fell from a peak of 700,000 in 1886 to just 200,000 in 1890; by the turn of the century, it was all but dead.

As the Knights declined however national unions of a variety of workers, particularly cigar makers, carpenters, iron molders, iron and steel workers, printers and coal miners, continued to grow. The growing strength of these new national unions, and more particularly, the jurisdictional disputes that erupted between these unions and the KOL, led them to establish the AFL in December 1886. Building on the foundations of the earlier Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (by now virtually dead), the AFL differed from the Knights in asserting the fundamental right of each national union to control its trade. Led by Samuel Gompers, a cigar maker and former socialist, Adolph Strasser, and Peter J. McGuire, the AFL set an agenda of building new national unions and mobilizing workers in a new campaign for the 8-hour day. Gompers and other

AFL leaders urged workers (especially skilled craftsmen who were the federation's main constituency) to avoid what they saw as "utopian" movements to abolish the wages system.

While the AFL was much smaller through this period than the Knights had been, the willingness of highly skilled craftsmen to use the strike (and especially the sympathy strike) to achieve their ends made the AFL and the national unions the dynamic center of the labor movement by the opening years of the 1890s. The depression and bitterly fought strikes of this decade weakened the organization in the years from 1893–1897. But as economic growth returned in the years after the end of the depression, the AFL was positioned to grow, and trade union membership grew dramatically in the years from 1897–1904. Important victories in bituminous coal mining (1898) and the metal trades (1901) increased the appeal of the AFL, though these would also help trigger the anti-union open-shop drive that dominated the first part of the Progressive Era.

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GLOBALIZATION

The U.S. labor history has been marked by shifts in the manner in which global capitalism organizes itself to accumulate and distribute profits. Such shifts result in historic periods that are not only economic but also political. A shift to a new period presents unique challenges to workers attempting to organize themselves. The phenomenon known as globalization represents the most recent period in these terms.

Viewed as a system for the accumulation and distribution of capitalist profit, globalization has a number of dimensions. Central to this system is a high mobility of capital achieved through an extensive worldwide credit system and the development of new technologies. The technologies include the ability to break up the production of goods into small parts and produce each part in a different location. Globalization has also been institutionalized through such supranational institutions as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Changes in domestic laws that include economic policies; privatization; the elimination of barriers to foreign goods, services, and capital; and deregulation of business are also part of the institutionalization of globalization. Most importantly for labor, globalization involves a search for “flexible labor markets” that are defined in terms of the reduction of many high-wage jobs, elimination of costly benefits, the eradication of many work rules, and the removal of barriers to part-time and temporary labor. Because this system represents an historic shift, a proper understanding of globalization requires that we trace its development over time.

The Historical Context of Globalization

The industrial revolution represented a shift that led to the formation of the earliest U.S. labor unions. In the early twentieth century, another shift occurred that was generated by a new form of production process that included huge factories with assembly lines that engaged in mass production. This so-called

“Fordist” period led to a new form of labor organization based on entire industries. In the U.S. this shift initially generated the organization of the International Workers of the World (IWW) and later the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The economic crisis of the 1930s and the growth of mass-production industries led to a high degree of labor union militancy. That militancy resulted in concessions from the government, which passed legislation to sanction the right to organize and bargain collectively (Wagner Act of 1935). The militancy subsided during World War II but picked up again thereafter. It was at this point that there was a distinct shift to a new period that would enable Fordism to become a global system. This shift was initiated at a conference attended by representatives of 44 nations in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in July of 1944.

The Bretton Woods Conference resulted in an agreement that was to govern global capitalism until 1971. It put the United States in a position to be the dominant player in world commerce through its role in the rebuilding of Europe and Japan in the wake of the destruction of World War II. The key features of the system included making the U.S. dollar the international medium of exchange, with its value relative to other currencies fixed and redeemable in gold. The World Bank was established to offer loans largely for the rebuilding of Europe, and the IMF offered short-term loans that enabled nations to avoid inflationary pressures that could interfere with the reconstruction process. A protocol, called the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), was also established to avoid trade wars.

Initially the need for postwar rebuilding and the Bretton Woods Agreement created a huge demand for U.S. products. But the system needed two things for it to sustain itself. One was the ability of the United States to extract cheap resources from the developing world. A challenge from the growing Soviet Union undermined this ability and became the context for the Cold War and U.S. foreign policy from 1945 to 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed. The second need was for continuity in the U.S. production process, which required an end to militant trade unionism and unpredictable strikes. As a result the U.S. government essentially offered labor a share of the profits of the postwar system in return for support for U.S. foreign policy and some guarantee that production would not be disrupted by untimely strikes. This was the context for the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 that limited organized labor’s tactics. The deal also led to the merger of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) with the more militant CIO in 1955 and the expulsion of some of the more militant union leaders throughout the 1950s. The AFL-CIO

also established overseas institutes that supported U.S. foreign policy objectives in many developing nations.

In return labor received concessions of its own through a strong alliance with the Democratic party. The larger labor unions negotiated long-term contracts that often tied wages to productivity. Unions disciplined their members to eliminate work stoppages during the term of the contract. These contracts were protected by the government, and there was an informal yet universally honored agreement that workers engaged in legal strikes would not be replaced. Furthermore government economic policy emphasized employment growth. The Employment Act of 1946 called for policies to promote “maximum employment, production and purchasing power.”

The Birth of Globalization

In the 1960s and 1970s, a number of forces combined to unravel the Bretton Woods system. For one thing the postwar rebuilding process was complete, and Europe, Japan, and the Soviet Union all emerged as serious challengers to U.S. economic dominance. Wars of national liberation in colonies and the emergence of a nonaligned nations’ movement in the developing world undermined easy access to cheap natural resources. The loss of the Vietnam War in 1975 confirmed the decline of U.S. hegemony in the developing world. Domestically during the 1960s, the Civil Rights movement challenged the fact that people of color had often been left out of the benefits of the old Bretton Woods system.

These forces began to manifest themselves both economically and politically. Economically there were wide-spread economic crises throughout the world. In the United States in the early-to-middle 1970s, this took the particularly virulent form of “stagflation,” a previously unknown phenomenon of simultaneous high unemployment and high inflation. In 1971, a run on the dollar, whose value was guaranteed in gold under the Bretton Woods Agreement, caused President Nixon unilaterally to cancel that guarantee by not honoring demands for gold for dollars. In 1973, President Nixon unilaterally announced that the exchange rates of all currencies would fluctuate and be determined by supply and demand. This action canceled a central tenant of the Bretton Woods system. In 1974, a cartel of oil-producing nations (OPEC) restricted oil output of its members, thus driving up the global price of oil. This act fueled global inflation, adding to the growing economic

crisis. A second such “oil shock” occurred in 1979, deepening the crisis even further.

Inside the United States, the growing antiwar movement and the civil rights movements were gaining momentum at the very time that the post-World War II prosperity period was ending. In some of the major industries like auto and steel, caucuses within unions were forming, demanding equal treatment for people of color and women and in some cases, an end to the blanket support unions were giving to U.S. foreign policy.

Meanwhile beneath the radar screen of most working people, there were other developments under way that were paving the way for the major political and economic shift now known as globalization. One was the flow of dollars in the form of loans to the developing world. The U.S. government and those of other developed nations began to try to win spheres of influence in the increasingly independent-minded developing world by giving loans—often propping up regimes that were friendly to the West. In addition with the collapse of the gold standard and floating currencies, many banks were caught with a glut of dollars, which were loaned out with abandon to developing nations. As a result debt in the developing world began to skyrocket. From 1973–1984, debt in developing nations increased from \$100 billion to over \$900 billion. But in 1982, the global economic crisis was pressing hard on the developing world, and there began a series of major debt defaults that included Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and India, as well as such smaller nations as Ghana, Zaire, Bangladesh, and Somalia.

In the face of global debt default, the IMF stepped in offering 10-year “bridge loans” that would enable these nations to pay their debts. But in return the IMF imposed what became known as structural adjustment programs (SAPs) that required these nations to open up their economies to foreign goods and capital and to restructure their economies to emphasize production for export markets. The SAPs also included internal economic policies that emphasized inflation reduction, such as tight money, social spending cuts, and wide-scale privatization. The World Bank followed suit by offering long-term development loans with similar strings attached. In addition associations of lenders—both governments and banks—played a role in monitoring compliance with these terms. Over time economic policies of many developed nations were fully under the control of the United States and other developed nations as well as their banks.

Another important development going on behind the scenes on the world stage were a series of informal meetings and funded research projects that were being

carried on by global elites and their governments to attempt to formalize and further institutionalize the emerging world order. One of the most significant forums was the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which consists of government officials of the richest nations of the world. A series of reports by the OECD beginning in 1977, led by U.S. economist and presidential advisor Paul McCracken, spelled out the goal of “labor market flexibility.” The so-called McCracken Commission traced the world’s economic woes to the lack of such flexibility and set out a series of policy goals that included reduction in excessive wages, benefits and work rules, and an end to barriers to the use of part-time and temporary labor. The McCracken report and a series of other reports by OECD and other elite associations, such as the Trilateral Commission, began to spell out a broad policy alternative to the Bretton Woods system. These initiatives were followed by some clear policy shifts in the United States that clearly ran counter to the Bretton Woods era deal with labor.

In 1978, the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act was passed, reaffirming the priorities of the 1946 Full Employment Act. But 2 years later the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank effectively nullified this act of Congress by pushing up interest rates to halt inflation even though it meant that unemployment would soar to nearly 10%. From that point forward, U.S. economic policy shifted from one that emphasized fighting unemployment to a priority on lowering inflation even at the expense of employment and job growth. A second policy shift that ended the Bretton Woods era labor policy came when President Reagan fired striking air controllers in 1982 and announced that they would be permanently replaced. This act sent a signal to employers that it was now politically acceptable to replace striking workers. And employers took that signal and began using permanent replacement workers to break strikes.

Globalization in Practice

The shifts in domestic economic policy are not solely aimed at organized labor. They also reflect the key role that finance plays in the emerging phenomenon of globalization. As noted earlier, high capital mobility is central to the definition of globalization itself. Debt is one aspect of this. Not only is debt a mechanism to regulate and control economic policies in the developing world that are favorable to mobile capital, it has become a major industry. Since the spike in debt of developing nations to \$900 billion in 1984, that

debt now stands at approximately \$2.5 trillion. But debt is not limited to the developing world. Within the United States debt has become a key way to prop up standards of living. In 1949, U.S. household debt as a percentage of personal income was 29.5%. By 1979, it was up to 63%, and only half of that was due to mortgages. By 1989, that percentage was up to 76%, and today it is over 90%. Similarly credit card debt has spiked during this period. Not only has the business of making loans expanded, but debt itself has become a commodity. Various kinds of debt are now packaged and sold in global capital markets, their price being a function of how much return can be realized by collection and sales of debt. A secondary market for debt has expanded rapidly during this period in which speculators buy debt instruments in anticipation of its value at some specified future date. One measure of this growth is the relative importance of such financial futures contracts at the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT). While in 1975 such contracts comprised only 1.5% of CBOT business, today they are over 80%.

The biggest risk to creditors in a system where there is strong political control over the economic policies of debtor nations and where there is a strong secondary market for debt itself is inflation, because it lowers the value of dollar-denominated financial assets. That is why domestic economic policies in the United States place such a priority on keeping inflation rates low even at the expense of employment. But capital mobility is also a key part of globalization in other ways. The structural adjustment policies that accompany debt open economies to foreign investors who not only invest in plants and equipment, but also in foreign stocks and bonds. Such portfolio investment represents over a third of capital flows into the developing world. It now averages about \$47 billion a year, up from only \$5 billion two decades ago. These trends combined with technological developments in process, transportation, and telecommunication technologies make it possible for large corporations to pursue a search for flexible labor markets all over the globe. The production of goods can be broken into pieces and carried out in different locations, with final assembly at a different location altogether. These same forces have also enabled service industries to source workers globally. The growth of such information technology workers as programmers in India is but one example.

In the U.S. these developments have led to a sharp decline in manufacturing jobs and more recently in selected service industries. During the 1990s, 1.5 million manufacturing jobs were lost in the United States. From 2000–2003, another 3 million jobs have disappeared, many due to the 2001 recession, but

manufacturing job loss continued throughout the so-called “jobless recovery.” Service jobs are just beginning to leave the country, so there is still a net growth. But highly skilled computer programmer jobs and entry-level call center and telephone operator jobs are already leaving the country. Estimates of the number of service jobs in the United States that are at risk range from 3 to over 14 million. These trends are not confined to the United States. A number of countries that initially benefited from the movement of production jobs are themselves experiencing rapid job dislocations. Globalized agricultural markets and SAP-imposed trade policies have led to the decline of agriculture jobs in countries like Mexico and India. At the same time many of the factory assembly jobs in Mexico’s *maquiladora* sector (see References) that came from the United States have left for Bangladesh and China. And India is also experiencing the dislocation of many of its textile and apparel jobs.

In the United States the fact of capital mobility and the present political and policy climate that are also part of globalization have encouraged employers to use more aggressive tactics toward organized labor. A study of union-organizing efforts found that from 1992–1995, over half the employers surveyed had used the threat of closing and/or moving production during union-organizing drives. The average annual number of organizing efforts has declined from about 300,000 in the mid-1970s to less than 100,000 by the mid-1990s. The percentage of private-sector U.S. workers in unions is now under 9%, down from over 40% in the 1940s. The percentage has fallen more than five points in the last decade alone.

Meanwhile the institutionalization of globalization has continued over that same decade. Beyond the continuation and expansion of the SAPs by the IMF and World Bank, there have been a series of so-called trade agreements that have further strengthened the programs embedded in the SAPs. These agreements include the lowering of barriers to trade, but more importantly, they have opened many nations to a regulation-free form of capital mobility. The largest such agreement involved replacing the Bretton Woods era GATT with the WTO in 1995, which enforces a broad array of global rules that bind more than one hundred nations. The NAFTA between the United States, Canada, and Mexico, which contains even more stringent rules, went into effect in 1994. In addition there have been dozens of bilateral and multilateral agreements including nations in Africa and Latin America.

There have also been continuing changes in U.S. domestic policy that reinforce the policy trends discussed earlier. Changes in welfare and job-training legislation have encouraged a movement of workers

into nonunion employment where wages are below federal poverty standards and benefits nonexistent. These jobs are often in the temporary help industry, representing a successful effort to establish flexible labor markets in the United States. Recent changes in labor legislation allow replacement workers hired during a strike to decertify the union if a strike lasts more than a year. Appointments to labor relations’ boards that hear complaints about violations of labor law have further weakened organized labor.

Historically a shift to a new period has meant a response from labor. And that response is well under way, although it is far from complete. The challenge yet to be met is how to organize in a climate where firms can replace striking workers, decertify their unions, and take production of goods and services out of the country. Organized labor has begun to meet the challenge by opposing further institutionalization of globalization. While many major trade agreements and SAPs have gone forward over labor’s efforts to stop them, there have been some successes as well, and nationally the form of globalization has become a political issue. Organized labor has also eliminated its old overseas institutes and formed coalitions with labor unions in other nations to stop SAPs and trade agreements and also to present internationalist alternatives. Finally there have been efforts to ally with community organizations and other nongovernmental organizations around issues of economic and social justice—to broaden the constituency of the unions beyond their own membership base.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Civil Rights; Maquiladoras; Taft-Hartley Act

GOLD RUSH

The discovery of gold in California commenced the greatest of the American mineral rushes and provided the model for all future precious metal strikes in the United States. In January 1848, one week before the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo formally ended the Mexican-American War and ceded California to the United States, gold was discovered on the American River. Slowly word spread back East and then around the world. In the spring of 1849, thousands of men set off by boat and the Overland Trail for the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. In the 1850 census, three-quarters of California's population of 85,000 were American-born; fewer than 1,000 of the Americans were blacks. The largest foreign-born delegations were from Mexico, England, Germany, France, China, and Chile. The forty-niners were of varying social background. The adventurers, as the press dubbed them, were, in an oft-repeated phrase, "of all classes of men." Passenger lists of ships heading for California from American ports show that the majority were skilled and semiskilled manual workers. The expense of the journey was too high for laborers to come. There were also large contingents of nonmanual workers and farmers. While ethnically and occupationally the miners were diverse, in one respect those who came to the West Coast were remarkably uniform—they were overwhelmingly male. Ninety-three percent of California's population was male; almost three-quarters were males aged 20–40.

The gold was found mostly in placers, deposits of sand and gravel along the banks of rivers and creeks. Placer mining was hard, muddy, work. The period in which miners could profit by individually panning gold was short, and by 1849 most worked in groups. Typically one or two men would dig gravel from the riverbank and place it in a sieved device known as a cradle; another man would rock the cradle as a third poured water into it to separate the gold from the rock. The physical labor mining demanded tended to blur the line that separated social classes in the East. All were now manual workers—the eastern notion that "hand work" was undignified was discarded. Miners of middle-class background often abandoned the tenets of respectable society and drank, gambled, and brawled in ways eastern workers would have found familiar. A potent solidarity resulted. Miners

stuck closely together. It was almost unheard of for companions to desert each other, and injured or sick gold hunters were tenderly cared for by other forty-niners.

Membership in the fraternity of miners was open only to whites. Occasionally native-born Americans opposed all other groups in the mines, including French and German immigrants, but usually it was the color line that mattered. Stories of exceptional solicitude to fellow white miners in diaries and reminiscences are interspersed with accounts of savagery to people of color. Mexicans, "greasers" in miners' parlance, and Chileans, were targets of white miners' wrath. Although Chileans had been the first to mine a promising stretch of the Calaveras River, in December 1849 white miners forced them to leave, precipitating a violent confrontation the press called "the Chilean War." In the struggle a Chilean and two Americans were killed. In retaliation the American miners took the Chileans involved into custody, executed three by firing squad, and cut off the ears of three others. Though the numbers of Chinese miners were small in the early rush, they were targets of ferocious prejudice, foreshadowing later anti-Chinese activities by white California workers.

Over 400 million dollars worth of gold was extracted in California from 1849–1855. Making \$10 or even \$15 a day was common in 1849, huge sums by eastern standards. But supplies were extraordinarily expensive, and it was difficult to accumulate much money. Only a very few struck it rich. By 1850, easily worked deposits were becoming scarce. Miners began to build dams to divert rivers and then dig up the riverbed. This required larger groups of men and considerable capital. "To get gold, you must employ gold," the expression went. In 1851, there were said to be 10 dams on the Feather River, each costing around \$8,000. Mining was becoming a business, and investment companies formed in California and the East. In addition to river mining, entrepreneurs turned to hydraulic mining in which a powerful stream of water was aimed at a hillside and the muddy runoff directed into a sluice to separate the gold. Underground mining operations were begun. The shift that had taken several decades in the East from small groups of men working by hand to large capitalized operations with many employees was accomplished in California in a few years. The days of the independent prospector clearly were over; "mining is now reduced to a system," one disgusted adventurer wrote. Many of the forty-niners returned East or decided to try their hand at prospecting elsewhere in the West.

Mining companies in the mid-1850s began hiring workers for three or four dollars a day. Given the high living expenses, employees often did little better

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than break even. Bosses increasingly turned to immigrants to work at such wages. Chinese were hired in growing numbers, as were Irish and Germans. Almost everywhere mining was carried on in the United States there were Cornish miners, and the Golden State was no exception. The 1860 census showed 82,000 men employed in mining in California, making it by far the largest occupation in the state. Those dissatisfied with wages or working conditions usually simply quit to find a better job either in another mine or in another occupation; it was only in the 1870s that the first miners' unions were formed in California. The amount of gold dug peaked in 1852, after that it declined fairly quickly before leveling off in the mid-1860s. By 1880, there were still 37,000 miners in California, exceeded only by the number of laborers.

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GOLDMAN, EMMA (JUNE 27, 1869– MAY 14, 1940) Anarchist

Emma Goldman, the anarchist writer and lecturer for freedom in all realms of life and champion of the cause of the oppressed—like many American anarchists—had a complex and paradoxical relationship to labor. On the one hand, she supported the rights of labor, but on the other, she believed that even the 8-hour workday was a concession to a capitalist system, the lifeblood of which was largely dependent on the exploitation of the working class.

Goldman was catapulted into political action as a young garment worker and recent *émigré* to Rochester, New York, from Kovno, Lithuania, in the aftermath of the dramatic trial and execution of the anarchists blamed for the violence that erupted at a labor demonstration at Chicago's Haymarket Square. Determined to give voice to those who had been silenced, she moved to the Lower East Side radical enclave of New York City in 1890. The Russian Jewish immigrant found her first

constituency with non-English-speaking immigrant workers—especially German anarchist militants and clusters of Jewish and Italian anarchists. Goldman searched for a place within the American Left and strongly identified with those who simultaneously supported the rights of labor, were impatient with gradualism, and believed that the power structure of the labor unions themselves bred corruption. Goldman herself had worked in garment factories and like most militant anarchists was a member of the International Working People's Association (IWPA, known as the Black International), a federation of loose-knit autonomous groups of mostly German workers (a group—reconstituted as the IWMA—that she rejoined in 1922 on leaving Russia and with whom she continued to be affiliated when she worked with the anarchists during the Spanish civil war from 1936–1938). She believed that labor agitation at the workplace, on the streets, at public meetings, and demonstrations was integral as a strategy for a complete transformation of society.



Emma Goldman on a street car. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-B2-4215-16].

Although Goldman supported militant labor unions' efforts to win their demands, she was critical of the union structure itself, viewing it as a bargaining agent that ultimately rigidified the antagonistic dichotomy between workers and bosses. In her lectures, she encouraged workers to question the various hierarchies within their unions: and to recognize the divisive impact of the distinctions among the trades, the practice of ethnic and racial exclusion, and the generalized insensitivity to the plight of the unemployed not only among unions but in a culture that celebrated "labor's day" in times of tremendous unemployment. She worked closely with the unemployed movements of 1893, 1908, and 1914—and even went to jail for 10 months (1893–1894) for addressing a crowd of demonstrators ostensibly with the call: "You demand bread, and if you cannot acquire it through peaceful means you will get it by force. Unite and take it by force, if you cannot take it peacefully." Goldman characterized this incident in her autobiography as a punishment for encouraging the poor to take food from the palaces of the rich as their sacred right. Ever the gadfly, she had no qualms about riding the strength of an organized movement nor playing devil's advocate; the conscience, the truth-teller, the thorn in the side of liberals and of some union reformers, Goldman was ever-ready to push it further to the left. In her acceptance of the fact that work was basic to life she argued that "everyone should do that which he likes best, not merely a thing he is compelled to do to earn his daily bread" (in an interview with Nellie Bly, 17 September 1893). Though she never officially became a member of any union in the United States, the horrific work conditions and brutal reprisals against organizers and strikers outraged Goldman and prompted her to devote a great part of her life to raising awareness of the plight of labor. Many moderate union negotiators publicly distanced themselves from Goldman and the anarchists even though they appear to have sanctioned militant activists who boldly practiced direct action tactics—like work slowdowns or even the use of dynamite—to bolster the union's ability to flex their muscles on the bargaining table. Still Goldman maintained close ties to various labor organizers and consistently rallied support and legal defense funds for strikers.

Support for Industrial and Trade Union Labor Struggles

Among the many unions she spoke before—in the years from 1891–1901—were the American Labor Union in Newark, New Jersey; the Glass Blowers'

Union in Monaca, Pennsylvania; the Brewers' and Malsters' Union, the Painters and Decorators' Union, and the Scandinavian Painters' Union in Chicago, Illinois; and the United Labor League in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In spite of ideological differences and sporadic tensions, Goldman marched in the 1891 May Day parade with the Working Women's Society of the United Hebrew Trade (UHT) Organization. But when in 1892 Alexander Berkman, her closest comrade, shot and stabbed steel magnate Henry Clay Frick as a symbolic act of labor retaliation for his role in the Homestead Plant Pinkerton's shooting of locked-out striking workers, the UHT chose not to come to his defense. Berkman was sentenced to 22 years in prison, during which time Goldman worked almost incessantly to build ties to as many unions as she could rally across the country and in Europe to lobby for the commutation of Berkman's sentence (who was released after 14 years when a law applying to corrupt politicians inadvertently was applicable to his case). Among the unions that joined her campaign were the United Mine Workers, who passed a resolution in 1900 demanding Berkman's release, and some smaller unions, including the Central Labor Union and the Brewers' Union. After 14 years, Goldman's (and others') efforts on Berkman's behalf succeeded—and he was released.

Her agitation for Berkman's release included working with delegates from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) even though she was critical of its policies with the focus on trade unions of skilled workers, its exclusion of many new immigrants, and its general aversion to anarchists. Goldman was especially reproachful of its president, Samuel Gompers, whom she labeled "the great mogul of the American Federation of Labor," characterizing him as the epitome of conciliatory leadership ("Letters from a Tour," *Sturmvoegel* 15 December 1897–February 1898). Even with her various complaints, her behind-the-scenes lobbying effectively prompted the drafting of a resolution at the 1896 AFL conference to the Pennsylvania Board of Pardons condemning Berkman's sentence as excessive and moved Gompers himself to write to Senator Boise Penrose requesting that he intercede on Berkman's behalf.

Those Central Labor Unions that had considerable numbers of anarchists in their ranks opened their doors to Goldman, especially in Boston, Massachusetts, and in Detroit, Michigan. Genuinely committed to labor, in spite of her critique of the shortcomings of the union movement, she spoke out about the all-too-common brutality of her times against striking workers, emphasizing incidents like the horrific Hazelton–Latimer massacre of 1897 to expose the bitterness of the battle. Her lectures

included “The Struggle between Capital and Labor,” “Cooperation, an Important Factor in the Industrial Struggle,” “The Failure of So-Called Free Unions,” and “The Right to Be Lazy.” She delivered her talk on “The Effect of the War on the Workers” in England in 1900, as part of a general critique of England’s role in the Boer War. During her time in Paris in 1900, as she awaited the commencement of the banned International Revolutionary Congress of the Working Peoples where she attended several secret meetings, she was impressed with syndicalist ideas emerging from the French labor movement. By 1907, when she attended the Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam, anarchists were engaged in formal discussions about the incorporation of syndicalist tactics into anarchist practice along with their more general debate about the efficacy of individual and collective action; Goldman spoke in favor of the complementarities of both strategies. In 1913, in Goldman’s pamphlet on the possibilities and influences of Syndicalism, she contrasted, as she did all through her life the young and relatively underdeveloped American labor movement to the sophistication and power of its European counterparts.

In 1901, just after the assassination attempt on President McKinley by a man who claimed to be an anarchist influenced by Goldman’s ideas, she found herself devastatingly isolated from most of the labor movement. Most unions and radicals distanced themselves from anyone associated however wrongly with the act. Restrictive anti-anarchist laws that followed, intended to further isolate anarchists, actually created a free-speech advocacy link between radicals and middle-class liberals that was in some ways a greater force than either had experienced before. Goldman’s power to articulate these issues and to reach the American public on the issue of free speech became an extraordinary asset to the ongoing battle for free expression and the right to organize at the workplace.

Goldman’s fight for free speech also included voicing the desire to free people from the prison of conventional mores—especially the public’s fear of unharnessed sexuality. The ongoing cultural war was often perceived as, or manipulated by conservatives to appear to be, more threatening than the challenges of labor unrest or even of the raging ideological political battles—including the anarchist critique of government—to the fragile stability of the social order. Goldman defined anarchism as a philosophy that advocated the possibility of a harmonious social order outside the bounds of law and government; it included free speech, sexual freedom, birth control; a critique of the nuclear family, prisons, war, the economy, church, schools; and a response to “the call of labor” in her bold assertion of labor’s right to defend itself. Goldman supported and spread information

about labor struggles in the United States, and abroad in her magazine *Mother Earth* (from 1906 until it was banned in 1917). In its very first year of publication in 1906, she wrote about “The Idaho Outrage”—in which Western Federation of Miners’ militant union officials Haywood, Moyer, and Pettibone were extradited from Colorado and charged with the murder of ex-Idaho governor Frank Steunenberg. She collected money for their defense at her meetings, wrote an obituary for Pettibone in 1908, and by 1913, befriended Bill Haywood. A reading of the “Fund Appeals” in *Mother Earth* along with the documents that track Goldman’s collections at meetings include an impressive range of labor defense funds, including the Aberdeen Free Speech Fund (1911), the Alexander Aldamas Defense Fund (1912–1913), the Wheatland Case (1913), the Colorado War Fund (a 1914 collection to purchase arms for striking workers in and around Ludlow), the Free Speech Fight (Everett, 1916), and the Ingmar Defense Committee (March 1916).

Wobblies and Anarchists

Although some historiography associates anarchists and anarchism with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), Goldman’s particular relationship to the IWW was far from unreservedly enthusiastic. From her perspective the IWW seemed to have begun as a predominantly socialist union in 1905, and although Goldman adhered to its advocacy of the inclusion of all workers, she detested its hierarchy—often considering the IWW a front for socialists engaged in a factional fight to gain power. Unlike some anarchists who did join the IWW, Goldman stayed clear of any formal organizational ties—a decision she held to even in 1908 when the IWW abandoned its actual support for mainstream political movements (although the organization debated the issue for years). Not until 1909, when the IWW’s active and often violent direct-action free speech fights spread across the West Coast, did Goldman offer her public support. She went to San Diego in 1912 to join the IWW Free Speech Fight with her manager, Ben Reitman. Vigilantes dragged him into the desert, covered him in tar and sage brush, and the police promptly escorted her out of town. Her brush with mob violence against the Wobblies was an indelibly horrific experience that in the end made her remarkably effective in speaking out against the rampant brutality against those who dared to organize labor.

Her tendency toward sectarianism on labor issues was muted and in many ways, countered by

responsibilities to her journal, which was created in part to offer a space for information and support of movements that meshed with her anarchist principles and strategies for change. Thus while she voiced her support for the IWW free speech fights in San Diego, Goldman also opened the pages of *Mother Earth* to an article about the Butte, Montana, labor struggles by William Z. Foster, who was then associated with the short-lived Syndicalist League of North America. This group (which included the anarchists Jay Fox and Lucy Parsons, who left the IWW with the intention of revolutionizing the AFL from the inside) practiced the French tactic of working within the existing union structure. They identified themselves as a militant minority within the AFL and adhered to the strategy of “boring from within” rather than working in a separate union like the IWW. Later in 1915 and 1916, Goldman opposed the IWW’s movement toward centralization within the organization. But Goldman herself who never engaged in the micro-factions within the unions also began to express a comradely loyalty to the IWW, in part because it was becoming clear that the government had redirected much of its suspicions and violence away from anarchists toward the Wobblies. This phenomenon, symbolized by the murder of Joe Hill, was a travesty of justice to which she added her voice in a chorus of outrage and continued to support both IWW-led strikes and their retaliatory actions.

Intellectual Proletarians, Women, Theater, and a New Rapprochement with Industrial Labor

Goldman’s definition of workers and of class oppression extended beyond the parameters of the industrial labor force to what she labeled in her 1914 lecture and essay “the intellectual proletarians”—writers, artists, professionals—whose material privilege often masked the weakening effect of the system on them. However she saw the potential in this stratum to hold to a vision beyond basic needs and to go to the people as the Narodnaya Volya group of Russia had before them. Such a rapprochement with labor could be expressed in action and in their common template for a more just world. In part influenced by the ambiance and literature of the Russian revolution and by her own experience as a woman, Goldman also saw the potential of women, especially middle-class American women, as an eventual force of liberation—not on the basis of their fight for suffrage but for their remarkable attunement to internal oppression, which held its own universality. As her audiences expanded

beyond her immigrant anarchist circles, she rode the wave of the woman’s movement and as she had in the labor movement, tried to move them further to the left. Her ideas on the power of women and of the middle class made her an anomaly to most union activists—whose struggle for labor justice was often so all-consuming that it was difficult to reach farther than their more immediate economic goals.

But Goldman believed that the struggle for freedom extended beyond material necessities. She hoped to bring her ideas on cultural issues, including the social significance of modern drama, not only to those who traditionally frequented the theater, but also at least once to workers on lunch break deep within a mine shaft. She sometimes used the characters in plays, especially those in the works of Henrik Ibsen, to underscore the value of single heroic acts—whether expressed in interpersonal relations or in public actions. In so doing she reinforced the strength and potential of the people who attended her lectures, no matter where they fell on the social hierarchy of power and money.

She referred to the power of the theater to affect change as the dynamite capable of bringing down the old and of building toward the new. And yet the metaphor of dynamite had other ramifications in Goldman’s political lexicon. Believing that American workers were in the midst of a vicious social war, with institutional force from industry, government, and police virtually relentless, Goldman asserted both overtly and covertly that the right of retaliation, of using force against force was a necessary strategy—borne both of desperation, hope, and the desire for self-respect.

Supporting Militancy

Regardless of their guilt or innocence, she supported the McNamara brothers after the 1910 *Los Angeles Times* explosion—a position she articulated in her 1914 essay “Self-Defense for Labor.” The suspected suppliers of dynamite for the McNamaras, Matthew Schmidt and David Caplan, benefited from Goldman’s efforts on their behalf: She harbored Schmidt and raised funds within and outside the unions for both Caplan and Schmidt when they were arrested. And yet it is important to note that of the hundreds of fund appeals to help those in battle with the law over their militant actions, hers was not a blanket support; all of her efforts were connected first and foremost to labor’s right to defend itself and to actions she perceived that would in some way further the anarchist cause.

In July 1916, when Goldman planned to lecture in San Francisco on “Preparedness: The Road to Universal Slaughter,” a bomb went off at the Preparedness Day parade. Militants within the San Francisco labor movement were prime suspects. The Antipreparedness Movement was not only in defense of the young working-class men who were sure to be drafted into military service for World War I, but it was a union-initiated movement that also feared that the influx of an armament industry would break the strength of the city’s renowned closed shop. Although Goldman was less acquainted with union activists imprisoned in relation to the bombing than her comrade Alexander Berkman, she did know some of the local union organizers. While others hesitated, unsure about associating with the act and fearful of reprisals, Goldman and Berkman quickly mounted a campaign on both the East and West coasts to raise funds and support from unions for the arrested suspects in the Preparedness Day bombing. By August they had revived the International Workers Defense League, and by December 1916, Goldman addressed a large crowd on the subject at a rally in New York City’s Carnegie Hall sponsored by the UHT. When Berkman was threatened with extradition from New York to San Francisco as a suspect in the bombing because of his close association with the militant unionists, the UHT joined a support committee—and not only published the pamphlet “They Want to Hang Alexander Berkman,” but also donated over a thousand dollars to his defense.

At this time Goldman’s interest in helping labor activists close to the IWW who had become targets for arrests culminated in the formation of the League for the Amnesty of Political Prisoners—a group whose manifesto was published in the March 1918 issue of the IWW paper, *Labor Defender*. In part for their work in linking issues of labor with the anti-conscription sentiments that were growing as the United States prepared to enter the First World War, both Goldman and Berkman were arrested in New York in 1917 and ultimately deported to Russia in 1919.

Conclusion

Although she never abandoned her commitment to the working class—and documented her own dreadful experiences in New York’s garment factories in her autobiography *Living My Life*—she was never a Mother Jones or an Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. Goldman was a propagandist, an articulator of challenging

ideas, an arouser of consciousness, more than a day-to-day organizer or operative in a larger structure—even if that structure for change was a union that held within it a template of the concerns and practices of the society she hoped to create.

Some of her rigidity with regard to unions and to cynicism about progressive labor laws eased over the years. When Goldman was allowed back into the United States for a 90-day visit in 1934, she modified her blanket critique of legal reform by applauding President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s plan for social security in the United States, which she viewed as a positive change, within the limits of government, a bold expression of sympathy with, and interest in, protecting the nation’s workers. And from 1936–1938, during her many visits to Spain to work with the Spanish anarchists, she allied herself fully with their union movement: In this case to the CNT-FAI anarchist labor federation—an act of allegiance to a union that had no precedent in her relation to the union movement in the United States. This anarchist workers’ federation supplied the unifying vision and promise that felt more in synchrony with what she referred to as her beautiful ideal.”

When Goldman died in 1940, unions from across the globe sent their respects. A Communist newspaper in the United States accused her of being an agent of the government because of her vocal critique of the Soviet experiment (specifically her strong opposition to the submergence of the Soviets and unions into the Bolshevik system and the loss of free speech that culminated in the brutal attack by the Red Army on the Kronstadt sailors who demanded union and Soviet autonomy). She was ultimately lauded for being true to her belief in the power of critical thinking, in questioning authority and ingrained assumptions—and even for her critique of unions struggling for the same justice to which she devoted her life.

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See also **Berkman, Alexander; Foster, William Z.; Haymarket Affair (1886); Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Hill, Joe; Industrial Workers of the World; Syndicalism**

GOMPERS v. BUCK'S STOVE AND RANGE CO. (1911)

Although it did not establish a significant precedent within labor law, *Gompers v. Buck's Stove and Range Co.* was arguably the most highly publicized court case involving unions during the Progressive Era. American Federation of Labor (AFL) leader Samuel Gompers was threatened with jail; the case figured prominently in the 1908 presidential election; and many citizens believed that free speech for unionists and the successful incorporation of workers into the polity were gravely threatened. In the end the outcome of the case was anticlimactic, but it nevertheless galvanized significant changes within the labor movement.

The case began at almost the same time that labor suffered a significant blow to its ability to conduct secondary boycotts in *Loewe v. Lawlor* (better known as the Danbury Hatters case). Indeed the same bitterly anti-union organization, the American Anti-Boycott Association (AABA), instigated both *Loewe* and *Gompers*. In the latter case however, the players were much more prominent.

Buck's Stove and Range was a powerful St. Louis firm; its chief executive, James Van Cleave, was also president of the National Association of Manufacturers. In 1906, Van Cleave refused to adhere to a union-employer agreement that effectively standardized wages and hours throughout the stove industry. The AFL retaliated by placing Van Cleave's company on its We Don't Patronize list.

Van Cleave had long been spoiling for a fight with unions. With the aid of the AABA, he sought an injunction to prevent AFL leaders from carrying out their boycott. He won a temporary injunction that did not technically prevent the boycott but prevented any written or oral communication that might spread it.

Despite the threat it represented, Gompers embraced this opportunity as an affront to labor's rights. The AFL leader had been preparing an offensive against the organization's enemies, hoping to strictly limit or even outlaw the labor injunction. Such a campaign might not only strengthen organized labor, but at a time of considerable socialist opposition

to his moderate policies, cement Gompers's position within the AFL.

Gompers and his lawyer Alton Parker (the 1904 Democratic presidential nominee and a president of the American Bar Association) formulated a strategy that would garner maximum public support. The AFL formally dropped Buck's Stove from its boycott list but continued to speak out against Van Cleave as unfair. This was still a conscious violation of the injunction, but for many it turned the case into a clean free speech issue.

In July 1908, Gompers, AFL Vice-President John Mitchell, and AFL Secretary Frank Morrison were held in contempt. Gompers, worried that the very existence of the AFL might be in danger, scrambled to gain as many progressive allies as possible. In a historic turn, the AFL repudiated its nonpartisanship and latched on to the Democratic party for protection from rapacious capitalists and especially tyrannical judges.

Republicans, recognizing a possible public relations disaster in their generally antilabor stance, maneuvered to ensure that the case would not be heard until after the 1908 presidential election. Soon thereafter, reckless and corrupt judge Daniel Thew Wright of the District Court for the District of Columbia shocked the nation by sentencing Gompers to a year in jail on the contempt charges (Morrison received a six-month sentence; Mitchell, nine months). Appellate decisions upheld Wright, although bail allowed the three unionists to stay out of prison.

By the time the cases (one on the legality of the injunction and one on the contempt charges) were combined and reached the Supreme Court in 1911, an unexpected twist stole much of the episode's thunder. Van Cleave had died the previous year, and his successor at Buck's Stove quickly settled the boycott—which had been having a devastating effect on the company. The injunction issue was thus rendered legally moot. In turn the court overturned the contempt charges against Gompers and his colleagues on a technicality. Judge Wright forced a tragicomic coda to the case when he sought to institute criminal, as opposed to the previous civil, proceedings against the AFL leaders, but the Supreme Court rebuked him again in 1914 in the case of *Gompers v. U.S.*

Labor celebrated a victory in these two cases, but their legal triumphs were actually quite narrow. Instead the AFL's greatest achievement in *Buck's Stove* flowed from the political vindication that came from its defense of free speech. With labor's increasing legitimacy came a newfound political power that then mildly blossomed during the administration of Woodrow Wilson.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Gompers, Samuel**

GOMPERS, SAMUEL (1850–1924) Founder, American Federation of Labor

Samuel Gompers, founder and president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) for 37 years, was both extraordinary and exemplary of many skilled workers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Born into a family of Dutch Jewish immigrants in London in 1850, Gompers attended four years of school before leaving formal education to join his father on the benches of a cigar shop at the age of 10. In 1863, the entire Gompers family used the Cigar Makers' Society of England's emigration fund to immigrate to New York City. Arriving at the New York City docks in the midst of the Draft Riot of July 1863, the Gompers family settled into a typical immigrant existence in New York. The Gompers men, including young Sam, soon found employment as cigar makers and joined the U.S. cigar makers' union. At the age of 17, Gompers married Sophia Julian, who proceeded to give birth to at least nine children.

Like many other young immigrants, the teenaged Sam Gompers quickly became immersed in New York City's immigrant, intellectual, and fraternal life. From 1863–1880, Gompers belonged to, and participated in, the early Cigar Makers' International Union (CMIU), the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Knights of Labor, the International Workingmen's Association, Felix Adler's Ethical Culture Society, the debating club at Cooper Union, and many others. Though Gompers generally eschewed organized religion, his Jewish background gave him another level on which to identify with the Jewish immigrants pouring into



Labor leader a voter—Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, casting his ballot in his home district. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-117862].

Manhattan's industries at the time. From this mix of influences, Gompers began to develop his ideas about the best form and function possible for unions.

The young Gompers quickly became active in the CMIU, both locally and nationally. During the 1870s, he managed the union's aggressive campaign to abolish tenement house cigar making in New York City, ultimately achieved through the passage of state legislation making such production illegal. Gompers carried the insights and skills he had gained in the anti-tenement-house fight in the CMIU into the new attempt at a national organization of unions, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU), in 1881 becoming the head of FOTLU's legislative branch.

In 1886, Gompers attended the Ohio meeting that transformed FOTLU into the AFL. Based in large part on his reputation as head of FOTLU's only effective branch, the assembled union delegates elected Gompers to the presidency of the new organization.

He would be re-elected to that position every year except one up until his death in 1924.

Gompers often spoke of the lessons he learned from one of his early coworkers and mentors, Ferdinand Laurell. In his autobiography, Gompers wrote, "Time and again, under the lure of new ideas, I went to Laurell with glowing enthusiasm. Laurell would gently say, 'Study your union card, Sam, and if the idea doesn't square with that, it isn't true.' My trade union card came to be my standard in all new problems" (*Seventy Years of Life and Labor: An Autobiography*, 1925). Throughout his life, Gompers used this concept to make decisions about both his own actions and those of other unions and their leaders.

Gompers brought his experiences in the CMIU into the AFL and based many of his early actions and decisions in that organization on his old mentor's advice. Throughout his years in leadership of the AFL, he would stress the importance of the autonomy of individual national unions and their need to focus on economic goals and fiscal stability. From his own union experiences, Gompers truly believed in the efficacy of craft unionism, the organization of workers along occupational lines, the establishment of a system of dues and corresponding benefits, and the necessity for union leaders to maintain control over the actions of their members and therefore over the payment of such things as strike benefits. Along with these principles came Gompers's defense of the autonomy and jurisdictions of the individual national unions. In this view the AFL itself was supposed to be a helpful support for national unions and those workers hoping to establish such unions. In return Gompers expected those unions and their members to demonstrate the kind of careful self-discipline he himself had learned in the CMIU.

In the early years of the AFL, Gompers and his fellow AFL officers succeeded in large part in carrying out this vision of American unionism. Faced with an economy still dependent on the skills of a minority of workers within the working class, the ideals of craft unionism worked to protect and maintain unions for these workers who could afford craft union dues. Gompers also believed in the early years that this basic structure of unionism could simply be extended to workers in other less-skilled occupations. Unskilled laborers, semiskilled factory workers, women, African-Americans, and immigrants could all achieve successful organization if they just followed the pattern set by the skilled-craft unions. This required first and foremost that these workers be prepared to keep up the payment of regular dues to their union and that they then accept the control of the union over fiscal disbursements. While Gompers could at times express sympathy with those workers

who could not afford to pay dues at the level paid by skilled workers, his sympathy often ended with the belief that they simply could not be "good union members of good unions." Without financial stability and tight fiscal discipline, the craft unions of Gompers's vision would not survive.

Gompers's early years in New York also set the roots of his attitudes about strike mediation and negotiations. Tied closely to his conception of union self-discipline, Gompers believed that the most constructive resolutions of strikes came out of a bilateral discussion of the workers' interests. The presentation and debate of strike issues would create greater understanding by both sides. The resulting compromises and agreements provided what Gompers believed to be the most lasting conclusions to strikes, contributing to an increasingly solid base for future union demands and negotiations. Accordingly Gompers spent considerable amounts of time presenting himself as a mediator for unions in strike situations. Whether he was dealing with garment workers in New York or workers elsewhere, Gompers would attempt to set forward strikers' demands to employers in as rational a manner as possible. Once Gompers or some other union leader successfully worked out a compromise, Gompers expected union members to understand the importance of union stability and ratify the agreement accordingly. Later in the AFL's history, Gompers would carry this concept over into his dealings with the National Civic Federation when he became one of the first union leaders to join this national organization, which sought to mediate labor disputes before they erupted into open conflict.

At the fourteenth annual convention of the AFL in 1894, the always-simmering debates over socialism within the organization boiled over into open and often rancorous disputation. In the heated political atmosphere of the preceding year, the 1893 convention had asked member unions to vote on a detailed "political programme" for the national organization, the platform of which included Plank 10, calling for "the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution." Gompers led the charge against the programme and particularly Plank 10 at the 1894 convention, contributing to the ultimate defeat of both. The other planks of the programme were ratified, leaving the organization with a range of issues to address but without an official political stance. In the aftermath of the two-day-long debate, the convention voted to replace Gompers with John McBride of the United Mine Workers as president of the AFL.

Gompers's one-year hiatus from the presidency ultimately led to several important changes in the AFL itself. Gompers would spend the year traveling

both internationally to meet with various European trade union leaders and nationally to continue to support U.S. workers' organizing efforts. His meetings with British and other European unionists provided Gompers with additional examples of the benefits of constructive craft unionism and the drawbacks of irresponsible socialism. Travel throughout the United States and in particular, a long southern swing on behalf of the United Garment Workers, reinforced Gompers's basic beliefs about union organization: Organization along craft or trade lines coupled with the financial responsibility and organizational self-discipline of both workers and their unions. Throughout his life Gompers would not waver from these concepts. Neither would he countenance vacillations on the part of the AFL itself. In many ways this marks the beginning of his growing conservatism over questions of union structure and form.

During Gompers's sabbatical year, as he called it, McBride moved the AFL's headquarters to Indianapolis, Indiana, far from Gompers's original base in New York. When the AFL re-elected Gompers to its presidency at the convention of 1895, Gompers temporarily moved to Indianapolis to take back the office. He did not move his family from New York City at this time, believing that this first year back with the AFL would prove the organization's fate. On reelection again in 1896, Gompers, firm now in his conviction that the AFL had chosen to follow his vision of trade unionism, moved the headquarters to Washington, D.C., in 1897. In so doing Gompers affirmed his belief in the endurance of the AFL as an actor, both economically and politically, on the national stage.

Biographer Bernard Mandel suggested that "Gompers's trade union policy for the twentieth century marked the end of the A.F. of L.'s youthful militancy and the beginning of its conservative middle age" (B. Mandel, *Samuel Gompers, A Biography*, 1963). When Gompers moved the AFL headquarters (and his family) to Washington in 1897, he himself was 47 years old, the father of six, and the leader of the most powerful organization of workers in the country. Gompers had more than 30 years' experience in the union movement by this time. His future efforts on behalf of the AFL and its members would continue to be based on these early experiences. Fewer and fewer men would be able to shake him in his beliefs.

The years immediately preceding the AFL's move to Washington had seen a growing number of judicial moves against the union movement. In Gompers's first years in Washington, legal decisions became increasingly important in his work. Gompers had been wary of employers' use of injunctions dating from the early 1890s. In fact this wariness had led him to

oppose the passage of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act in 1890. Despite many unionists' support for the act, Gompers insisted that it was written in such a way that it would be used against unions. He had then had to grapple with the invocation of the act against unions time and time again. In Gompers's eyes, the entire legal system became suspect. In the early twentieth century, Gompers would become entangled in two key court cases: That of the Danbury Hatters and that of Buck's Stove and Range Co. In both cases national business organizations provoked and supported the lawsuits. Both cases also would ultimately land in the Supreme Court. These cases as well as his own legal liabilities in each helped convince Gompers that the AFL had to enter politics in order to obtain relief from the power of injunctions.

On March 21, 1906, Gompers and other AFL representatives presented an eight-point Bill of Grievances to President Theodore Roosevelt, the speaker of the house, and the president *pro tem* of the Senate. All three politicians immediately rejected its consideration. Prepared for this reaction, the AFL threw itself into political activity. While they did not desert completely their previous nonpartisan stance, Gompers and other union leaders began to take a much stronger political stand than they had previously. Gompers had already stated his opinion that the unions should "Reward [their] friends and punish [their] enemies." This basic belief would now be carried out with much more vigor. In the summer of 1908, Gompers would appear before the platform committees of both the Republican and Democratic national conventions, failing to influence the Republican party but succeeding in gaining some support from the Democrats.

Unlike the political programme of 12 years earlier, the 1906 Bill of Grievances contained no overtly socialist points. Gompers assured friends and colleagues that economic activities remained the prime purpose of the labor movement and that these political demands would never detract from the efforts of constructive trade unionism. The AFL's entrance into the political arena in 1906 provided a model for union voluntarism, or careful nonpartisan political participation. Rather than highlighting the AFL's long and tortured relationship with socialists, the 1906 Bill of Grievances represented more its newfound points of complicity with the Progressive movement of the time. Ultimately this political move would lead Gompers to endorse Woodrow Wilson for president in 1914 and thereby ensure Gompers's ultimate involvement in World War I planning and execution.

At the same time that Gompers and the AFL were becoming increasingly involved in politics, a new labor organization was creating new problems for

the craft union movement. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), established in 1905, contained many of the ideas (and individuals) from the Left that Gompers had come to hate most heatedly. On top of calling for an end to capitalism and advocating sabotage and violence if necessary, the IWW also threatened to organize less-skilled workers into unions, embodying the antithesis of Gompers's constructive craft unions. Garnering considerable publicity through their innovative tactics, the IWW quickly became widely known and discussed. Gompers probably felt personally threatened by the IWW's new tactics and publicity. The IWW's penchant for violence in language if nothing else as well as its pacifist stance toward World War I would soon place the organization even more at odds with Gompers and the AFL. Newly linked with a sitting U.S. president, Gompers would support the U.S. efforts in the war and encourage AFL unions and their members to cooperate with war efforts both military and industrial. Mirroring President Wilson's path into the world war, Gompers moved through neutrality to preparedness and finally endorsed the United States becoming a belligerent in the war. Through cooperation with the war efforts, Gompers expected the AFL to gain respect from all sides: The public, government, and businesses. He would advise the White House on labor conflicts in the United States during the war, oppose the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and travel through the war zone in Europe.

Did Gompers feel that his cooperation with the war effort had been worth the effort? While he would continue to defend his wartime work, the events of the immediate postwar years belie his generally rosy view. The War Labor Board was discontinued after the war ended, and the new Communist Party U.S.A. would soon become a hotbed of dual unionism. In 1924, Gompers supported Robert La Follette's independent campaign for president as a protest against the established parties' continued spurning of the AFL's support. By the end of the war in 1919, Gompers was 69 years old. His vision was failing and his hearing weakening. His wife suffered a stroke that year, dying in May of 1920. Gompers then married a divorcee some 30 years his junior in 1921. By all accounts, she made his life miserable for his remaining years.

Gompers would continue to run the AFL, refusing to let any but his closest friends and employees know of his weakening health. In November 1924, Gompers presided over every session of the Forty-Fourth Annual Convention of the AFL in El Paso, Texas, his last. For months he had been declining from kidney problems and a weakening heart. He knew this would be his final convention. William Green read

Gompers's prepared statement for him at the convention's opening. In this statement, Gompers reminded delegates that he had been with the AFL since its beginnings in 1881 and urged them to remain committed to his vision of craft unionism. On adjournment the entire convention went to Mexico City for the inauguration of the first labor President in North America and the ensuing Pan American Federation of Labor meeting. On December 8, Gompers took to his bed. He was then rushed back to San Antonio, Texas, where he died on December 13. He was buried in Tarrytown, New York, on December 18, 1924.

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See also American Federation of Labor; American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Craft Unionism; Industrial Workers of the World

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Graduate teaching assistants (TAs), along with other forms of contingent academic labor, such as adjunct or part-time instructors, have become increasingly important in the modern university. According to the American Association of University Professors, the number of graduate students who also serve as classroom instructors rose by 35% from 1975 to 2000. As the number of graduate students employed as teaching assistants and instructors has grown, a movement in favor of organizing TAs into unions has arisen. While the earliest TA union was founded in the late sixties at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UWM), this phenomenon did not become common until the 1990s. Today academia is one of the few areas of union growth, and the movement to organize graduate students has led to jurisdictional disputes, especially between the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the United Auto Workers (UAW).

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

The first graduate teaching assistant union, the Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA) at UWM was originally founded in 1966 as an outgrowth of antiwar and New Left activism on campus. It slowly evolved into a union throughout the late sixties, and in 1970, the TAA led a successful four-week strike in order to pressure the university into bargaining with them in good faith. The major issues that motivated the TAA were a desire to ensure job security and complaints over teaching conditions, particularly workload and class size. Despite the success of the TAA, graduate teaching assistants at other universities did not follow the example of the UWM students.

Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s however, a series of unions were formed at state universities across the country. This increase in academic unionization paralleled both the unprecedented growth in the number of graduate student instructors and the increasingly tight academic labor market. In addition the fact that unionization campaigns on academic campuses were much more likely to succeed than the national average encouraged a number of unions without a history of academic organizing to encourage the unionization of TAs. With the decline of unionization in their traditional industries, such unions as the UAW, the Communications Workers of America (CWA), and the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE) all became involved in TA organizing drives. These drives have been largely successful, and as of 2003, TA unions existed at around 25 public university campuses, representing almost 40,000 graduate students.

The success of TA organizing on public universities was not paralleled on private university campuses however. Private universities fall under the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), which held until 2000 that graduate teaching assistants were primarily students rather than employees and that therefore they were not entitled to unionization. However in 2000, the NLRB ruled in favor of the right of graduate students at New York University (NYU) to organize a union of teaching and research assistants. This ruling seemed to throw the door open for further unionization of teaching assistants on private campuses. However in 2003, a new NLRB, led by three Republicans appointed by President George W. Bush, reversed its earlier decision, ruling that graduate teaching assistants at Brown University were not primarily employees and thus were not entitled to union representation. The board based this decision primarily on the 25-year precedent that preceded the NYU decision and had consistently denied TAs at private universities union recognition.

Despite the general lack of success of organizing efforts on private campuses, TA unionization is a

growth industry for unions. Surprisingly the UAW is the largest player in the graduate employee union movement, with over 40% of the TA union members belonging to the autoworkers' union as of 2003. This has led to some criticism of the UAW by others within the labor movement and has opened TA unionization efforts to criticism from the outside as well. The movement of some unions, especially UAW and the United Steelworkers of America, away from their traditional bases into such sectors as retail and academia has drawn criticism from the unions that traditionally served those areas. And these sorts of jurisdictional disputes have on at least one occasion sparked contentious organizing drives between the UAW and AFT on the same campus. More importantly perhaps the image of the UAW as a blue-collar, mass-production union has been used against it during a number of TA organizing drives. Some have attributed its loss at Cornell in 2003 to, among other things, the fear that the autoworkers' union would not be as effective in an academic environment as a more traditional teaching union, such as the AFT.

AARON MAX BERKOWITZ

See also **American Federation of Teachers**

GREAT DEPRESSION: 1930s **The Initial Impact of the Economic Collapse**

In the American popular imagination, the Great Depression began on Black Tuesday, October 29, 1929, when the stock market crashed. Indeed that dramatic event marks a fitting end to the Roaring Twenties, a decade remembered for its frenetic embrace of modernity and all its material and cultural products. But for American working people, the beginning of the Great Depression is much harder to pinpoint. Beneath the glittering surface of the 1920s prosperity lay a deep vein of poverty affecting entire regions and large numbers of people. The working people associated with the so-called "sick industries"—agriculture, mining, textiles—never did participate in the good times. But the overall magnitude of the crisis as it unfolded after the Crash made misery nearly universal for working people. As the economy collapsed, the unemployment spike was stunning: From 3.2% in 1929 to 24.9% in 1933. Seesawing throughout the 1930s, unemployment still never fell below 14%. Workers who were lucky enough to hold on to their jobs frequently took sharp pay cuts; in 1933—87% of

businesses reported that they had lowered wages since 1929 by an average of 18%, and many more had reduced hours.

The aggregate statistics on unemployment hide a great deal of variation by region, by industry, by such demographic factors as gender, race, and ethnicity. Southerners for example sometimes claim that they never even noticed the Depression; they had been poor so long it looked normal. Per capita income in the South was already just 50% of the national average in 1929. But it got even worse: Income from cotton, still the backbone of the southern economy, fell by more than two-thirds by 1932. Sharecroppers and tenant farmers were devastated, with black farmers doubly so. By 1933, over 12,000 black sharecroppers had been forced off the land, and a new urban migration was underway. In the region's chief industry, textiles, extreme competition from the mid-1920s on drove down prices and deep wage cuts became endemic.

The heavy-industry belt of the Northeast and Midwest took a major hit. The Depression arrived a little later in this sector, with sharpest contractions occurring after 1930. By 1932, unemployment in Chicago was 40%; on Minnesota's Mesabi Range, an astonishing 70% of the iron miners were out of work. New England textile workers shared the fate of their southern brethren. The electrical industry fell in slow motion; General Electric (GE) workers for example first lost the perks of welfare capitalism, then saw wages and hours spread thin; then half of them lost their jobs. Steel and auto were laid low. In Detroit unemployment stood at nearly 50%. Midwestern farmers suffered, too. In Wisconsin dairy farmers striking for higher prices ambushed their neighbors on country roads, dumping milk into the dirt. And farmers on the Plains saw their prices fall first and then their topsoil take off in the wind, settling eventually in such unlikely places as downtown Memphis and the decks of ships at sea.

The legacy of racism intensified the troubles of minority populations. In California xenophobia ratcheted up as jobs became scarce. Mexican and Mexican-American farm workers were pushed out to make way for white migrants from the distressed South and Plains states, and hundreds of thousands were deported and repatriated against their will. Further up the coast, recent Filipino immigrants, technically U.S. citizens as colonial subjects, were reclassified as aliens in 1934 and pressured to repatriate. African-Americans nationwide once again found themselves first out the door and last in line for relief.

Women's experience was complex. The service industries where most women work were less severely affected than heavy industry, and in fact by the end of

the 1930s, that sector had expanded and with it the numbers of women employed. In some respects the very rigidity of the sexual division of labor preserved women's jobs. Seldom were men, however desperate, willing to take women's work. An exception was teaching, where women's share of jobs fell from 85% to 78% over the decade. Still women's already too-low wages were cut, and job scarcity created enormous cultural pressures on women to leave the workforce and cede their jobs to breadwinners. The pressure was particularly hard on married women. Many municipalities and businesses fired women with employed husbands. At its 1931 convention, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) re-affirmed its conviction that women's proper place was in the home and declared that employment preference should be given to those on whom others depended, a seemingly gender-neutral category that nevertheless signaled men. Work relief programs as they developed in the mid-1930s were constructed with the male breadwinner as model; few programs were designed for women and those that were reinforced traditional women's roles by emphasizing domestic occupations like housekeeping and sewing. Minority women were additionally disadvantaged by New Deal programs—Social Security and the Fair Labor Standards Act, for example—that excluded agricultural and domestic workers.

The Early Response to the Crisis

American institutions and the political establishment were singularly unprepared to cope effectively with a crisis of this magnitude. Among industrialized nations, the United States was notably resistant to the notion of the state's responsibility for social provision. Veterans' pensions constituted the sole legitimate entitlement of any kind. In the face of mounting unemployment, no federal or state program existed to provide relief or in any way aid the unemployed. A handful of large corporations had instituted private unemployment programs, but they were few and their benefits meager. General Electric, for example, had installed a program based on mandatory employee contributions partially matched by the company; the plan carried GE workers through the harsh winter of 1931 but crashed that April.

The lack of government assistance reflected the widespread notion, especially popular in elite circles, that poverty, whatever the cause, was most likely an individual moral failure, not the byproduct of a flawed system. President Herbert Hoover, though not quite so callous or naive, nevertheless believed staunchly that direct relief by the federal government

would corrode the moral fiber of free individuals. Hoover believed that the proper sphere for such activities was local government and the voluntary contributions of private individuals. The face-to-face interaction of benefactor and recipient could weed out the slackers from the worthy poor. Relief tended to be in kind rather than in cash and frequently had some small, meaningless, manual task attached as a moral tonic. As the logical outgrowth of this orientation, breadlines and soup kitchens became the relief form of choice, ubiquitous in cities, run by private charities and individuals and agencies of local government. But such sources were overextended and rapidly exhausted. Still Hoover resisted calls for relief until the final months of his administration when he signed the Emergency Relief and Construction Act that allocated \$300 million for loans to states.

At the beginning of the crisis, radicals on the Left were the only groups actually taking action to aid the desperate. The Communist Party, USA (CPUSA) was first to act; even before the market crash, Communists were organizing in the cities among the poor and unemployed, so by 1930, when unemployment began to become a mass phenomenon, the party was well-positioned to respond. On March 6, 1930, the CPUSA organized unemployed demonstrations in major cities that mobilized several hundred thousand marchers, much to the party's surprise. The size and energy of the demonstrations put the problem on the national radar scope for the first time and inspired the Communists to create a national organization, the Unemployed Councils of the USA. At the national level, the council lobbied, organized petition drives, and staged two national hunger marches. But the councils' greatest impact remained at the local level, where they responded to the particular local grievances of the unemployed. Local councils intervened to assist relief applicants for example and to pressure local officials for more adequate relief without the humiliation of intrusive investigations. When relief took the form of jobs, the councils agitated for better compensation and working conditions. But their most dramatic and popular actions were eviction protests. Council members vigorously and physically resisted police attempts to enforce eviction orders, mobilizing whole neighborhoods very effectively.

Other Left groups were slower to respond but eventually as successful as the Communists. The sclerotic Socialist party did nothing until stung into action by the young activists of their League for Industrial Democracy (LID). The LID was quite successful though less confrontational than the Communists, favoring negotiation over the more flamboyant and disruptive council tactics. The socialists, like the Communists, were attentive to the particular distress

of minorities; both groups were interracial in composition and leadership and worked to raise awareness about the higher rate of unemployment among African-Americans and persistent discrimination in relief programs as they developed.

The third major radical group addressing unemployment were followers of A. J. Muste. The Musteites crafted what they called an American approach to the problem, wedding self-help and patriotic appeals to form the Unemployed Citizens' League. The league, whose first incarnation was the vigorously effective Seattle Unemployed Citizens' League, grew particularly well in small cities and towns, notably in the mining towns of Pennsylvania and West Virginia and steel towns of Ohio, where the main street values of patriotism and self-help resonated strongly.

With the beginning of the New Deal and the advent of federal relief programs in 1933, and especially the extensive work programs of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935, the orientation of radical unemployed activism changed. The New Deal Administration became the focus of unemployed workers' hopes and expectations, and as attention shifted from local to national, the unemployed groups did likewise. And they began to cooperate with each other across the factional lines that ordinarily divided them. The CPUSA's inauguration of the Popular Front did much to foster cooperation, and in 1935, the three groups merged to create the Workers' Alliance. The alliance began to function more on the national level, as a pressure group attempting to influence policy formation, particularly working toward enactment of federal unemployment insurance.

The radical response to unemployment was a critical contribution to the federal programs that eventually emerged. The radicals defended the rights and dignity of working people as citizens, defined the problem as systemic, and insisted that the federal government take on the responsibility for social provision. Their ideas and orientation influenced the leftish wing of the New Deal relief administration and the shape of programs that they designed. Many of the unemployed activists took their new skills and moved on into other arenas, especially the industrial union drives that erupted in the late 1930s.

The New Deal

Franklin D. Roosevelt's energetic attack on the massive problems created by the Depression presented a vivid contrast to Hoover's cautious restraint. Roosevelt took office in March 1933; within the first three months, the famous 100 Days, the New Deal

Administration had crafted and launched relatively bold initiatives to provide temporary relief to the suffering citizenry and stabilize the reeling economy. Among the agencies created to provide relief to poor and working people were the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and finally the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The New Deal's initial programs to stabilize agriculture and industry, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and the National Recovery Administration (NRA), also inaugurated programs that deeply affected farm and factory labor.

Roosevelt's relief programs were structured as federal-state collaborations, with the money flowing from the federal spigot but distributed by the states. This arrangement was intended to secure state-level political support and to give states discretion in identifying and addressing needs, but it also opened the door to distortions. Southern administrators for example were often able to sustain discriminatory policies, a two-tiered approach, that entrenched racial inequality. New Deal relief policy also favored work over direct relief, a nod to the cultural predisposition to distrust the able-bodied unemployed. But New Deal work relief was not the degrading, punitive "make work" of traditional relief but rather socially useful projects that restored pride and won widespread public acclaim.

The FERA, enacted May 12, 1933, was primarily a direct-relief program providing one federal dollar for each three put up by the states, a provision necessarily waived often due to the insolvency of the states. The CWA was a short-term experiment in public works created in the fall of 1933 and intended to help the unemployed survive the winter. An ambitious project headed by Harry Hopkins, the CWA put 3.5 million workers on jobs in the first six weeks. In its short lifespan, the CWA workers constructed over 500,000 miles of roads and began many construction projects later completed by the WPA. In addition the agency created projects to address needs of women workers—sewing, of course—and white-collar workers. The CWA was quite popular despite the brevity of its existence and functioned as a precursor to the much-larger WPA.

Young people were disproportionately affected by the crisis, and the CCC was for them or at least the males among them. The CCC had the dual purpose of taking care of young men and repairing the devastation resulting from a century of unregulated environmental exploitation by industry and agriculture. The young men were paid \$30 per month, with \$25 sent directly to their families, to provide for their support. At its peak the CCC enrolled 500,000 young men who

lived in camps and performed a dazzling array of tasks. They built roads and campsites in parks, planted millions of trees, fought forest fires, built irrigation systems, fought soil erosion. Like most New Deal programs however the CCC had its racist dimension. Young blacks were allowed to enroll in the corps but into segregated units and unlike white youth who often traveled far from their homes to work, for instance, on western projects, the black youths were kept primarily in the South. They were also subjected to a quota system rather than admitted according to need.

The most famous and controversial initiative was the WPA, enacted by executive order on May 6, 1935. The WPA was an election-year project truly massive in scale, averaging over two million workers on the monthly payroll for the entire 6 years of its existence. The WPA supported a diverse range of occupations from the typical construction worker to artists and writers. The bulk of the projects were aimed at reconstructing and completing the national infrastructure. The WPA workers constructed over 500,000 miles of roads, like the beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway that snakes over the Appalachian peaks from Virginia to Georgia, and numerous public buildings, including 85,000 courthouses, 5,900 schools, and over 1,000 airports.

Roosevelt's programs to stabilize agriculture and industry also had tremendous impact, by no means all positive, on working people, particularly in the South. There the AAA moved to aid farmers by creating mechanisms like production control subsidies, price supports, and credit that would keep farmers on the land and limit agricultural output until commodity prices recovered. Local committees administering the program allowed landlords to pocket the allocations, giving them the capital to begin mechanization, while putting tenant's land into the acreage-reduction scheme. Displaced sharecroppers and tenant farmers migrated to the cities where New Deal relief kept them afloat until harvest time when their labor was again in demand. It was a sweet deal for landowners—not so good for already-impoorished sharecroppers and tenants. Thousands migrated from the region.

Organized Labor and the New Deal

The labor movement was at low ebb when the Depression began. A decade of open-shop repression had vitiated the gains made during WWI, and in 1929, the craft unions of the AFL could claim only 3.6 million members, 11% of the nonagricultural

labor force. By 1941, membership had grown to 10.5 million, nearly 28% of the workforce. The stunning growth is indicative of a remarkable decade in U.S. labor history. In the course of the Depression, the U.S. labor movement was transformed structurally and demographically, augmenting the craft union structure of the AFL with a new industrial unionism embodied in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) that embraced the multitudes of unskilled and semiskilled operatives, many of them ethnic, and racial minorities and women, who populated the vast mass-production industries. Labor also transcended the AFL's traditional distrust of political engagement during the decade. From the federation's founding in 1886, the state had been little more than an engine of repression; by 1941, for better or worse, organized labor had become a vital element in the Democratic party's New Deal coalition. And finally the movement came out of the Depression thoroughly enmeshed in a new, state-regulated labor relations regime.

Labor's change of fortune began with passage of the Norris-LaGuardia Act, signed by Hoover in 1932, which addressed some of the more egregious anti-union practices of the modern era. The act outlawed the infamous "yellow dog" contracts that required workers to eschew unions as a condition of employment, and it restricted the use of the hated federal injunctions that had been used promiscuously against strikes and boycotts. Norris-LaGuardia was very important but quickly eclipsed by the passage of Roosevelt's industrial recovery program, the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) passed on June 16, 1933, that set up the National Recovery Administration. The NIRA required that industries write codes to govern all elements of the production process, from wages and prices to market shares, as a means of eliminating the cutthroat competition that had undermined prices. The act also mandated that certain new rights be extended to workers.

Section 7(a) established workers' right to bargain collectively with their employers through representatives of their own choosing, opening the door to union organization as a means of improving workers' wages and consumer power. Workers all over the nation responded with what employers considered unseemly enthusiasm, organizing in droves and petitioning for AFL charters. In the year following the NIRA passage, the AFL signed nearly one million new members.

But the AFL could not or would not adapt to the very different organizational needs of the disparate workforces of mass industries, so they cut skilled workers from the new unions, annexed them to appropriate craft unions, and generally neglected the remaining unskilled and semiskilled workers whose occupations fell outside traditional craft jurisdictions.

In the process they undermined workers' strength in the industrial workplace.

By late 1934, employers' refusal to recognize their employees' unions plus the ineffective response of the AFL had exposed the flaws of Section 7(a) and discredited AFL leadership. Heightened expectations met massive obstacles, and frustration erupted in strikes across the nation involving 1.5 million workers, including the Textile Strike of 1934, the largest strike in U.S. history, and an astonishing outburst from the long-oppressed "lintheads" of the South. The 1934 strikes were an accurate barometer of rising working-class anger after years of comparative passivity, and the active leadership of radicals in many of the struggles once again raised red flags in the centers of power, from corporate boardrooms to Washington, D.C.

Within the AFL key leaders sympathetic to the desire for industrial organization began to push hard for the federation to adapt to the new form. Chief among them were John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers (UMW), Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), and David Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). All three headed unions that were industrial in structure, and they were thus inclined to respond favorably to the demand for industrial organization raised by workers in the industrial core. Together they launched the Committee for Industrial Organizations on November 9, 1935, and began to issue industrial union charters. The committee stayed within the AFL until November 1938, when it left and formed a rival federation of industrial unions, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

In May 1935, the NIRA was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, and Section 7(a) expired. But employers' refusal to abide by its labor provisions had inspired Senator Robert Wagner (Democrat-NY) to develop a new bill to remedy the weaknesses of Section 7(a). The National Labor Relations Act, known as the Wagner Act, was passed July 5, 1935, and reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in 1937. Wagner was much tougher and more explicit in its advocacy of workers' right to organize. The act expanded worker protections, outlawed key employer antiunion practices, and created a three-member National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) with meaningful enforcement power. Most importantly the act established mechanisms for conducting representation elections and required that employers bargain with winning unions.

Armed with this new weapon, and in the very favorable political climate created with Roosevelt's landslide re-election in 1936, the CIO went to town,

fielding a veritable army of skilled and dedicated organizers, many of them Communists. The CIO launched dramatic campaigns from 1936–1937 that succeeded in organizing the heart of the industrial core. The autoworkers' victories in the winter and spring of 1936–1937 truly energized the movement.

The critical event was the famous six-week sit-down strike conducted by auto workers in Flint, Michigan, against General Motors, the largest and most profitable U.S. corporation. The autoworkers' stunning victory there came to symbolize CIO solidarity and militancy, galvanizing not only autoworkers but all labor. By the end of the decade, workers in auto, steel, rubber, the electrical industry, and many more had organized industrial unions and affiliated with the CIO. In an era when the stress of hard times easily divided people, the CIO formed unions that were inclusive, organizing all workers in a given industry regardless of race, ethnicity, or sex or skill. Stung by the CIO's success, the AFL began to compete vigorously, and in the end the established federation outdid the CIO, emerging from the Depression nearly twice the size of the younger organization.

Legacy of the Great Depression

Roosevelt's programs did much to alleviate the distress despite their flaws and limitations, but the New Deal is not generally credited with ending the Great Depression. That honor goes to World War II. By 1939, war in Europe prompted rearmament in the United States, and American workers went back to work. Much had changed. Though much of the New Deal was intended to be temporary, some legislation had established permanent changes that benefited working people. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 established minimum wages, maximum hours, and new standards governing child labor. The Social Security Act provided some measure of old-age security and a system of unemployment compensation. Both acts typically discriminated against minorities but still established the framework for a minimal system of social provision that continued to improve for the next four decades until rolled back in the Reagan revolution. Unions, existing tenuously on the borders of legitimacy at the beginning of the Great Depression, had achieved a degree of institutional stability that was to be solidified through the war years. The state was now an active agent in the new, regulated regime of labor-management relations. The "rule of law" was introduced into the workplace.

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GREAT MIGRATION

The Great Migration of the World War I era witnessed the geographical relocation of 450,000 to 500,000 African-Americans from the states of the South to industrial cities in the North; during the 1920s, another wave of migration brought an additional 700,000 black southerners to northern cities. While African-Americans had never been stationary, the scale of the Great Migration was unprecedented. As such it was accompanied by considerable public scrutiny and at times, social conflict. African-Americans, like their white counterparts, discussed and debated the causes, character, and impact of the movement of so many people; unlike their white counterparts, they tended to understand and even

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celebrate the movement as a decisive move toward a better life despite the obstacles to advancement that blacks encountered in the North.

If the movement of southern blacks “came as a surprise, to North and South alike,” as the white periodical, the *Contemporary Review*, put it in 1918, “its causes were of long standing.” African-Americans’ reasons for migrating were straightforward. So-called “push factors” prompting the decision to leave the South included grinding poverty, widespread antiblack violence, the denial of political rights (capped by a wave of disfranchisement laws and constitutional provisions), the lack of educational and other opportunities, and the day-to-day humiliations that the system of white supremacy and Jim Crow imposed on black southerners. As largely rural sharecroppers, southern blacks were often mired in debt and poverty, exercising little control or influence in the economic realm. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 cut off the European market for southern cotton exports, contributing to an agricultural depression, while flooding and a growing boll weevil infestation of southern cotton crops initially hurt southern farmers and sharecroppers. Economic, social, and political conditions in the South then convinced many southern blacks to undertake the risky move of re-establishing their lives in the North.

While the magnitude of the World War I era migration was unprecedented, black mobility was not. Within the South a steady stream of African-Americans migrated to southern cities and more often engaged in local geographical moves in search of better economic opportunities. The need to earn cash led many black southerners to embrace a strategy of seasonal migration that took black men to timber, railroad construction, or turpentine camps or to brickyards or coal mines, where they engaged in wage labor for brief periods of time before returning to their families in rural communities. For their part, some black women engaged in limited migration to work as domestic servants or washerwomen. In some instances spontaneous or organized campaigns promoted the migration of black southerners. Following the final collapse of Reconstruction, as many as 25,000 former slaves from Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi took part in what contemporaries referred to as an exodus to Kansas in 1879–1880, despite fierce opposition from both black leaders and white elites. Known as “exodusters,” these people made explicit their desire to escape from political and economic violence and seek opportunities outside of the South. Over a decade later in the 1890s, tens of thousands of southern blacks made their way to the Oklahoma Territory when the federal government opened the region to non-Indian settlers.

One of the strongest obstacles to black migration to the North in the pre-World War I decades was an absence of jobs open to black workers there. Northern businessmen shared much of the racial prejudice of southern businessmen and planters. With an alternative labor supply in the form of significant numbers of eastern and southern European immigrants, northern businessmen erected and maintained racial barriers to employment that relegated the relatively small number of northern blacks to unskilled jobs in industry or to domestic service or other service jobs, moves endorsed by skilled white workers. When the start of World War I in 1914 led to a dramatic reduction of immigration from Europe however, the northern employment situation for blacks in the North slowly changed. Labor shortages led employers to begin hiring small but growing numbers of black workers by 1915–1916; when the military draft and voluntary enlistments heightened the labor shortage in 1917 and 1918, employers increasingly turned to black labor, particularly southern black migrants, as a solution. For the first time, the industrial sector of the North—including packinghouses, steel mills, and automobile plants—began hiring thousands of black male (and in the case of packinghouses, female) workers, while black women found jobs in lumber and railroad yards and numerous smaller factories. The new availability of work in the North constituted a powerful “pull factor” drawing southern blacks to the region.

Southern blacks learned of these new opportunities from a variety of sources. Labor agents representing several railroad companies (including the Erie, Pennsylvania, and Union Pacific railroads) actively recruited black men for jobs laying or repairing railroad track in the North and West. While many historians have argued that labor agents played only a minor role in spurring migration, southern whites were convinced that agents were stirring up trouble and contributing to a labor famine in their region. Accordingly municipalities and state governments passed laws to restrict or ban labor recruiting, and local police departments harassed agents and migrants alike. More important in promoting the migration process were northern African-American newspapers like the *Chicago Defender*, which publicized abundant job openings in the North, condemned southern racial practices, and portrayed the North in positive terms as a land of hope and promise. Although white officials sometimes sought to prevent their distribution in the South, black newspapers made their way into countless black homes. Finally black southerners who successfully established new homes in the North communicated through letters to, and return visits with, their relatives and friends

left behind, reinforcing the clear message that migration North led to social and political advancement and economic prosperity.

Conditions for African-Americans in the North in many ways represented a sharp improvement over those in the South; blacks could often vote without harassment and could participate in a wide range of rich cultural, religious, and fraternal organizations, for instance. Yet migrants encountered considerable racial hostility and discrimination in their new homes. Skilled white workers, many of whose unions had long barred African-Americans from membership, resented the arrival of so many potential black competitors; in some cases, they refused to work with blacks or resorted to work stoppages to block their introduction into previously all-white labor forces. Striking white workers in East St. Louis, Illinois, took out their fury on black migrants during a bitter labor conflict in July 1917. Although no precise figures are available, contemporaries estimated that from 40 to 200 blacks were killed by white rioters, while 6,000 blacks were driven from their homes. Described by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as the “massacre of East St. Louis,” the organization blamed white trade unionists for the violence and condemned the city police and state militia for doing little to protect those under attack. “Mr. President, Why Not Make America Safe for Democracy?” read the NAACP’s protest signs during a silent march of 10,000 demonstrating against the violence.

Conflicts over employment were not the only source of racial discord during the era of the Great Migration, for housing issues proved contentious as well. Housing markets were often highly segregated, with blacks relegated to specific geographical sections of cities and to markedly inferior housing stock. Black efforts to move into better white neighborhoods were almost uniformly met with opposition and even violence.

In the aftermath of World War I, whites across the country expressed hostility to black wartime gains and in some cases, vowed to roll back the clock. The year 1919 witnessed a massive strike wave affecting many of the country’s industrial centers, the repression of newly formed chapters of the NAACP, and a rise in racial violence. (There were approximately 76 lynchings of black Americans that year.) During the summer of 1919, brutal race riots occurred in many cities, including Washington, D.C. and Chicago, where whites, led by street gangs, spent five days assaulting black Chicagoans. In Elaine, Arkansas, planters unleashed a reign of terror against sharecroppers who had organized the Progressive Farmers’ and Household Union, killing a minimum of 25

people (and possibly several hundred) and arresting many other participants.

The vehemence of the white reaction can be attributed in part to resentment of black advances and evidence of a new disposition among black Americans. The migration itself disquieted southern white planters who feared a loss of control over their black labor force. Although few southern whites honestly admitted to the brutality of their labor and racial systems that prompted black departures, African-Americans often did not hesitate to point out inequality or identify oppression as a source of the migration. Some even described the outflow of southern blacks as “a silent protest” against southern oppression or as a “Great American Protest” against “the unbearable living conditions” in the South.

That new disposition also manifested itself in a new willingness by blacks to challenge racial inequalities directly. Even before the war, white observers had detected a “growing race consciousness” among northern blacks. By the war years, talk of the emergence of the “new Negro” was common. African-American socialists A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen began publishing the *Messenger* magazine during the war, a journal that harshly attacked American racial practices, capitalism, participation in the war, and moderate black leaders too willing to compromise. While few blacks adopted such a radical stance, many did reveal what black government official George Edmund Haynes described in 1919 as “a new consciousness.” Howard University’s Alain Locke concluded that the “younger generation is vibrant with a new psychology; the new spirit is awake in the masses” (*The New Negro*, 1983). What this meant in practice was a growing willingness on the part of many African-Americans to engage in more direct protest and to insist on citizenship rights. Although the rise of Marcus Garvey’s short-lived Universal Negro Improvement Association is often viewed as the primary vehicle for black protest in this era, it had considerable company in many other quarters. The NAACP, initially a middle-class organization, grew tremendously during the war years, attracting many working-class black members in the South. By the end of the war, the association could boast of 90,000 members, up from only 6,000 or so in 1914. The black club women’s movement also grew considerably in these years, undertaking social-uplift programs, lobbying efforts, and the campaign for women’s suffrage. Even trade unionism attracted a growing number of black participants in these years despite the movement’s often-hostile stance toward African-Americans. The wartime and postwar Stockyards Labor Council in Chicago and the United Mine Workers of America in Alabama, which welcomed

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blacks as members, may have been interracial exceptions to the broader rule of white union hostility, but thousands of black workers joined all-black unions to pursue their own agendas and protect their own interests. Gulf Coast longshoremen, Florida phosphate workers, Mobile commercial laundry workers, Birmingham district coal miners, southern domestic workers, timber workers in Louisiana and East Texas, and railroad firemen, brakemen, Pullman porters, dining car waiters, and freight handlers formed or joined union locals (usually all-black) during the war.

The postwar “racial counterrevolution” halted and in many cases wiped out many if not all of the wartime black advances. Southern NAACP chapters were driven out of existence, many black (and white) unions were destroyed, and local challenges to the racial order were met with white violence. But try as they might, whites could not fully reestablish the pre-war racial status quo. Black migrants lost economic ground in the industrial sector immediately after the war, but they retained their foothold in the dynamic core of the nation’s economy. During the 1920s, migration again picked up, ultimately surpassing that of the war years. Black communities in the North, particularly Harlem in New York and Chicago, expanded dramatically in size, offering a modicum of cultural and political independence and creating the foundation for a new black politics in the 1930s and 1940s, characterized by a new grassroots militancy that would itself establish the groundwork for the emergence of the modern civil rights movement that ultimately brought down the Jim Crow order.

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See also Disfranchisement; Elaine, Arkansas Massacre (1919); National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Randolph, A. Philip; Sharecropping and Tenancy; South; Stockyards Labor Council; World War I

GREAT SOCIETY/WAR ON POVERTY (1960s)

In the era of the 1960s, the U.S. government sought to tackle the vexing phenomenon of substantial poverty within the world’s wealthiest society. *The Other America*, written by democratic socialist Michael Harrington and published to wide attention in 1962, shocked Americans by informing them that a great deal of poverty remained amid the general affluence of American society. At least 20% of the U.S. population fell below the U.S. government’s official poverty line in the early 1960s. At a time of rising liberalism and surging idealism, poverty became a prominent item on the nation’s agenda for action. At the high tide of this liberal idealism, during the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson (1963–1969), the ambition to reduce poverty levels was enfolded in the far broader agenda of social improvement that went by the name “the Great Society.” Antipoverty efforts, like other elements in the Great Society that mainly benefited the middle class, persisted through the 1960s and most of the 1970s under both Democratic and Republican administrations in Washington.

By 1970, the national poverty rate had fallen to less than 13%, and this trend continued for several years. Although the Great Society and specifically the War on Poverty would become controversial in the

ensuing decade, the achievements of these programs were substantial. So why did these programs stir such controversy? Part of the explanation is political. Although the organized labor movement was a key element in the Democratic party coalition led by presidents John F. Kennedy (1961–1963) and Johnson, its concerns—and more broadly, those of the working class as a whole—were not much taken into account in developing these programs. This lack of connection set the stage for rightist efforts to detach labor from the Great Society coalition.

From Kennedy to Nixon

Kennedy was aware of the stir caused by Harrington's book, but he already had authorized an antipoverty initiative by 1962. Embodied in the Area Development Act of 1961, Kennedy's effort sought to address the widespread privation that afflicted Appalachia. Kennedy had witnessed this poverty first-hand while campaigning in the Democratic presidential primary race in West Virginia in 1960. Addressing Appalachian poverty through a governmental program carried little political risk—something that was surely taken into account by the hardheaded pragmatists and politicians of the Kennedy administration—as this was largely white poverty. The specter of technically driven unemployment also began to loom large at this time. In response Kennedy signed into law the Manpower Development and Retraining Act (MDTA) in 1962. This act provided matching funds to state governments that financed programs to teach marketable skills to workers rendered jobless by automation. The MDTA was not presented as part of a poverty policy, but its focus soon shifted from those thrown out of work by automation to young men, especially African-Americans, who had never had good jobs in the first place.

When Johnson became president following Kennedy's assassination, he took Kennedy's antipoverty effort much further. In his January 1964 state-of-the-union address, he declared “unconditional war on poverty” in America. This marked the rhetorical high point of liberal hopes to eliminate the contradiction of “want amid plenty.” As had Kennedy, Johnson presented unemployment and poverty as two distinct problems. Johnson's war on poverty included a wide array of programs, including job training, legal assistance for the poor, and support for early childhood education, known as Head Start. In later years critics of the War on Poverty often conflated it with the Great Society. But the Great Society programs were distinct

from the War on Poverty. They aimed to benefit the broad middle class and included an astonishing array of initiatives, among them the improvement and beautification of America's highways, the creation of public television, the large-scale sponsorship of the arts, and federal aid to elementary and higher education. Some of the Great Society programs did benefit the poor in particular. The most important such instance was Medicare, the program created in 1965 that provides medical care to all elderly Americans regardless of income or wealth. Medicaid, created at the same time as Medicare, offered health coverage to the poor of all ages. But the quality of Medicaid varied from state to state because the federal government allowed the states to administer the program and set benefit levels, and it pegged its own contributions to what the individual states were willing to spend.

Less than a decade after Johnson's stated commitment to eradicate poverty, most of his antipoverty program was gone, and the War on Poverty was routinely scorned by those on the right (as well as some in the center) as the embodiment of misguided 1960s-era big government. Yet paradoxically Johnson's successor, President Richard M. Nixon (1969–1974), continued to increase government spending to alleviate poverty even as he shut down Johnson's program. Nixon approved a large expansion of the food stamp program, and at his most ambitious, he proposed guaranteeing a minimum income to all American families. This Family Assistance Plan was defeated in Congress after it was attacked both from the right (for the usual reasons) and from the left (for its parsimony).

When discussing 1960s antipoverty efforts, commentators often paint with a broad brush, portraying these efforts simply as a series of handouts to the poor. Such portrayals are inaccurate. In fact there were three different types of antipoverty programs in existence in the 1960s. One type was indeed public assistance or welfare, mainly in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), which was first created as Aid to Dependent Children in the 1930s. Its caseload grew more than threefold from 1960–1975; most of this growth occurred under Nixon, not under Johnson. A second type was the War on Poverty, administered through the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). It was composed not of welfare programs but of service programs designed to help the poor gain decent positions within the productive economy. As the OEO slogan put it, the government was offering a “hand up not a handout.” The third type was social insurance, composed of universal or entitlement programs that provided benefits to rich and poor alike. The main entitlement

programs were Medicare, created in 1965, and Social Security, which was created in the 1930s and augmented under Johnson and Nixon.

Structural Unemployment or a Culture of Poverty?

In the 1960s, two ideas dominated analyses of poverty: “Structural unemployment,” which focused on economic factors, and the “culture of poverty,” which focused on the behavior and attitudes of the poor. Harrington popularized both ideas in *The Other America*; both concepts at that time were associated with the political left. Structural unemployment was not the result of the regular downturns in a capitalist economy. Rather it was created through changes in economic geography that placed certain populations that at one time had had access to employment outside the region of good opportunities. Generating economic growth would thus not solve the problem of structural unemployment; targeted governmental efforts were required. Despite the widespread awareness of the existence of structural unemployment in the United States, this concept became the orphan of the War on Poverty.

The culture of poverty theory saw the poor as trapped by hopelessness. Prolonged deprivation had left them dispirited and apathetic, incapable of envisioning a better life and thus unable to take action to improve their own lot. While conservatives tended to view poverty as impervious to government-administered cures, liberals intended the service programs of the War on Poverty to break down the culture of poverty. The OEO, under the leadership of Sargent Shriver, was charged not just with helping prepare the poor for productive work, but also with involving the poor in finding their own, local solutions to their problems; this was the purpose of the Community Action Program (CAP). Some hoped that CAP, by bringing the poor into the political process, would give them a sense of empowerment and agency and in this way undermine the culture of poverty. But CAP proved highly controversial in ways that its planners had not envisioned. City governments found themselves besieged by militant activists demanding better and more costly services for the poor. The chieftains of local political machines, some of them allied both with the national Democratic party and with labor unions, were appalled to find that the people making trouble for them were sometimes supported by CAP funds. When these political bosses complained about CAP to the White House, there was little doubt that

their unhappiness would count for more than the opinions of social scientists, poverty advocates, and the poor themselves. This political conflict helped to dim Johnson’s enthusiasm for OEO early in its history.

Jobs or Job Training?

From the start leftist critics viewed the War on Poverty as a halfway measure at best. They were likely to point out that from 1964–1967, OEO spent only \$6.2 billion, less than 1% of the gross national product in those years, to address the problems of one-fifth of the population. They also were disappointed with Johnson’s unwillingness to consider large-scale job creation through New Deal-style public-works programs, or the redistribution of income (by taxing the well-off and giving cash payments to the poor). To Johnson such approaches were politically impossible. He did not fear criticism from his left so much as attacks from his political right. In this apprehension Johnson was at least partly correct, since Nixon and his conservatives allies did dismantle OEO as soon as they had the opportunity.

Antipoverty policy debates in the 1960s first intersected with the concerns of the labor movement during the early months of the Johnson administration when various government appointees worked at Johnson’s behest to develop proposals quickly for his consideration. Few of the key players in this process had links to organized labor, and for the most part, they did not think about antipoverty policy in terms of a job’s policy. The exception was Johnson’s secretary of labor, Willard Wirtz. He pressed the idea that job creation was the best antipoverty policy, echoing views that had been expressed earlier by Kennedy’s first secretary of labor, Arthur Goldberg. While Wirtz advocated a public-works program to expand government employment, he did not see this as the only method for reducing poverty. But he thought it should be part of the policy mix, establishing the federal government as the “employer of last resort.”

Johnson’s response to this proposal is highly instructive: He was coldly silent. He was a “budget hawk” and had no intention of spending large sums of money on the War on Poverty. Johnson also had no appetite for a confrontation with private businesses, which since the 1930s had fiercely opposed big public-works projects, viewing them as competition for workers, which would drive up wages. The job-creation idea was dropped, never coming back into policy discussion at high levels. Job

training would be the dominant theme in the employment dimension of the War on Poverty. Johnson administration officials proposed involving the craft unions, which ran their own apprenticeship systems, in job-training efforts aimed at young male African-Americans, whose unemployment rate was especially high and whose representation in the craft unions, especially the building trades, was very low. This linkage between the craft unions and the War on Poverty's job-training program created considerable friction. Two important elements in the Democratic party's political coalition became locked in bitter conflict, ultimately damaging the fortunes of that party.

Conflict with the Trade Unions

After the rioting by young African-Americans in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles in 1965, the Johnson administration felt a more urgent need to address the problem of joblessness among the black urban population. Government requirements for nondiscriminatory hiring by government contractors, which affected construction trade unions, were tightened. This effort dovetailed with the War on Poverty's job-training emphasis, since the government sought voluntary cooperation from the lily-white building trades in job-training programs that would bring young black men into the trades. The craft unions in general sought to fend off any infringement on their members' control over entry into the unions. The building trades had an especially stark history of keeping African-Americans out, as civil rights leaders pointed out forcefully and often. When Johnson's efforts to bring change with a minimum of coercion brought paltry dividends, threats of tougher action—with specific hiring goals and timetables (which the union described as quotas)—followed.

When Nixon became president, he made good on those lingering threats. In 1969, his secretary of labor, George Schultz, announced the implementation of the Philadelphia plan, which mandated hiring goals and timetables for government construction contracts around the country. The new, tougher policy resulted in a significant increase in the representation of people of color in the skilled trades in the 1970s. The policy also provided Nixon with a political dividend by worsening the conflict between skilled white labor and African-Americans, a traditional social cleavage that already had worked to Nixon's advantage in the 1968 election. Even though Nixon was aiding black workers in this instance, his hostility to other elements

in the civil rights agenda helped him reap the benefits of the growing "white backlash" of the era.

Increased Assistance, Declining Poverty

Despite criticism on all sides of the alleged ineffectiveness of the War on Poverty, it is sensible to see the decline in poverty in the 1960s and 1970s as the result of three factors: Antipoverty efforts; the expansion of universal entitlement programs; and the unusually high levels of overall economic growth that characterized the mid-to-late 1960s and early 1970s.

Poor relief grew enormously during Nixon's presidency through the expansion of food stamps and other programs. Why the numbers of people drawing AFDC payments grew so much during the 1960s and 1970s is a matter of interpretation. Most scholars attribute the growth to a new assertiveness among the poor who, influenced by the civil rights and other movements of the 1960s, claimed the governmental assistance to which they were entitled but for which many poor Americans in earlier decades had been too intimidated to apply. Some of the stigma traditionally attached to welfare had dissipated in the 1960s, a development that commentators on the right lamented and those on the left viewed positively.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the expansion of government support for the poor that had occurred under Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon came under serious and successful attack. Just as poverty rates had declined in the era of the 1960s when poor relief had been increased, so poverty rates rose in the 1980s and 1990s as government policy toward the poor became stingier. Great Society entitlement programs, which tied the fate of the poor to that of the middle class to some degree, were less vulnerable to attack.

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See also **Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); Welfare Rights**

GREAT UPHEAVAL

“Great upheaval” is a term used by historians to describe an upsurge in labor and political activism beginning in mid-1885. Historians differ on when it ended, with some opting for as early as 1888 and others as late as 1890. The Great Upheaval represented a serious challenge to the emerging hegemony of industrial and investment capitalism. For a brief moment, it appeared possible that capitalism itself could be supplanted by (or have to compete with) alternative economic systems. In the end capitalism prevailed but in compromised forms that ultimately blunted some of its harshest aspects.

The great upheaval is an analytical construct that emerged from the “new social history” of the 1960s and 1970s. Earlier histories often neglected the narratives of working people, immigrants, women, and minorities in favor of political narratives that saw power as a top-heavy process in which decisions filtered down to largely passive masses. The “bottom-up” focus of the new social history altered such interpretations and forced historians to pay more attention to factors like race, class, ethnicity, and gender. This led to a serious re-evaluation of the 1880s, which had traditionally been viewed as a conservative period. In older narratives the 1886 Haymarket riot in Chicago stood as an aberration that was quickly and effortlessly subdued. By looking at local politics, reform movements, labor unions, and immigrant associations, social historians reinterpreted the 1880s as a restive period that produced serious challenges to the elites who dominated political, social, cultural, and economic life after the Civil War.

The term great upheaval is sometimes applied to the cataclysmic 1877 railroad strikes, but most historians now restrict it to the mid-to-late 1880s and see 1877 as part of an overall pattern of discontent that reached its fullest expression a decade later. Nearly all historians agree that the Knights of Labor's

(KOL) unexpected strike victory over Jay Gould's Southwestern rail system in August 1885 was the opening salvo of the great upheaval. The KOL's triumph gave hope to dispirited workers at a key moment in time.

Labor organizations struggled after the Civil War. Various labor congresses produced manifestos that were more sound than fury, 8-hour leagues met with little success, and the National Labor Union failed to materialize as the potent nationwide labor federation its founders had hoped. It, like many trade unions, perished in the aftermath of the severe Panic of 1873, an economic downturn that stretched into 1878. The railroad strikes of 1877 ended in a rout for capital, which, coupled with hysteria over arrests of alleged Molly Maguires in 1876, contributed to a general repression of labor and reform organizations. Third-party attempts, like the Greenback-Labor party, which hoped to fuse the concerns of farmers, urban workers, and monetary reformers, generated local success in the late 1870s but also faltered as national movements. The KOL, founded in 1869, had just over 28,000 members in 1880, hardly enough to challenge the power structure. The Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions (FOTLU) formed in 1881 but was practically moribund by 1884, due in part to another recession in 1882–1883.

By the 1870s, it was clear that new forms of capitalism based on industrial output, speculation, and investment were supplanting older forms of wealth based on land, rent, agricultural production, and proprietorships. The logic of new capitalist schemes was even harsher than that of older paternalist models. Most workers toiled long hours, often under dangerous conditions, for poverty-level wages. Moreover the ideology of social Darwinism justified both rapacious capitalism and poverty by positing business success as an expression of a survival-of-the-fittest biological imperative and impoverishment as a personal, moral failing. Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner called the period of ruthless capitalist speculation the Gilded Age, a label that stuck.

Gilded Age speculators and captains of industry faced a serious challenge in the mid-to-late 1880s. Capitalism, though ascendant, was still viewed with suspicion by many Americans. During the great upheaval the very logic of wage earning was attacked. Agrarian reformers associated with farmers' alliances and many urban workers appealed to older ideals of an independent yeomanry, thus renewing calls for land reform. Groups like the KOL set up cooperative production and retail enterprises in which the price of goods was determined by the labor theory of value, not the profit motive, and called for an end to the wage systems. Various socialist and anarchist

organizations also called for an end to capitalism, some advocating the use of violence if necessary. Even many trade unions, on the rise again after 1884, called for the ultimate abolition of wages, all the while seeking to raise them in the short term.

Gilded Age social and cultural norms were also challenged. Women's suffrage and feminist groups gained momentum, temperance groups won new members, and African-American leaders lobbied for civil rights. Within religious institutions, early adherents of the Social Gospel movement began to challenge social Darwinists and denounce the hypocrisy of well-heeled congregants who repressed laborers. On a less salutary note, reformers often also demanded immigration restriction, especially of the Chinese.

The KOL's dramatic victory over Jay Gould gave hope to millions. Gould, who once bragged he could hire half of the working class to kill the other half, was the epitome of a robber baron. As the principal stockholder of Western Union, he crushed the KOL and telegraphers' union in an 1882 strike. He was also the architect of the sprawling Southwestern Railway system, a conglomerate that controlled thousands of miles of track and individual rail lines in the Midwest and Southwest. Gould was known as a brutal employer, even by the Gilded Age's debased standards. The KOL workers along Gould's lines fought off wage cuts in 1884, then endured a May through August strike in 1885 that forced Gould to capitulate. When the details of the settlement were released in September, working people rushed to join the Knights under what proved to be the illusory assumption that if Gould could be defeated, labor could prevail against any foe.

The KOL saw its membership surge from fewer than 112,000 to between 729,000 and a million in a single year. Many workers who had never before been union members joined the organization, including increasing numbers of African-Americans and women. So many workers rushed to join the KOL that it was forced to declare a moratorium against chartering new locals until existing applications were processed, a task it never completed. Both Knights and workers outside the organization took matters into their own hands, with 1886 seeing an upsurge of strikes; whereas 1885 saw 645 strikes idling 159,000 workers, in 1886 more than 407,000 workers walked off in 1,436 separate work stoppages. For the next 10 years, there were more than a thousand strikes each year except for 1888. Many of these involved the KOL, even though the KOL officially opposed strikes except as a last resort. The general tenor of the times was such that the KOL's leaders were unable to control the zeal of their own rank-and-file, a situation that ultimately crippled the organization.

The most infamous moment of the great upheaval occurred in Chicago in early May 1886. A nationwide strike had been called for May 1—the inaugural International Workers' Day—in which workers would walk away from their jobs in a show of strength designed to foist the 8-hour day on recalcitrant employers. May Day was actually a bust as a national movement, since the KOL and several trade unions refused to sanction an event organized largely by anarchists and Marxists. Rather than the millions organizers hoped would protest, fewer than 300,000 actually struck on May 1. About one-fifth of the total took to the streets of Chicago, where the 8-hour protest coincided with an ongoing strike against the McCormick Harvester works. When police killed two workers on May 1, a protest in Haymarket Square was called for May 4. As the last speaker was finishing his speech, police cordoned off the area and began advancing on the crowd when a bomb was hurled, and the police opened fire. Seven officers and four protestors died, and more than 50 were wounded.

The Haymarket bombing and the subsequent arrest of eight anarchists touched off demands by elites to repress radicals, but it galvanized labor groups and reformers just as fervently as it did the Gilded Age power structure. Millions decried the arrest, trial, and conviction of the anarchists as a travesty of justice, and massive protests erupted in the United States, Canada, and Europe. The ballot box became another focal point to express dissatisfaction. Third parties proliferated in advance of state and local elections, the most-famous being the United Labor party, which put forth single-tax architect Henry George as its candidate for New York City's mayor. George finished a close second in New York, but across the United States, numerous working-men's candidates won local races. Knights of Labor candidates were elected in at least 58 different towns and cities and wielded significant political power in large cities like Milwaukee and Richmond, and in smaller towns like Rochester, New Hampshire, and Rutland, Vermont.

Trade unions were also revitalized by the great upheaval. In December 1886, Samuel Gompers and Adolph Strasser reorganized the FOTLU as the American Federation of Labor (AFL), an umbrella organization that saw the strike as a primary weapon in the struggle between capital and labor. Given the rise of the AFL and the reconstituted membership of the KOL, 1887 was destined to be a strike-plagued year. Many workers embarked on job stoppages heedless of warning signs that the 1885 victory over Gould would prove difficult to duplicate. The KOL was already reeling from losses in the Chicago stockyards and in a second strike against Gould in 1886.

Strikes in 1887 by New England shoemakers, New York and New Jersey dockworkers, and Reading Railroad employees all ended badly and touched off bitter battles between the KOL and trade unions with each accusing the other of betrayal.

Although incompetence and broken solidarity played a role in lost strikes, their overall significance has been exaggerated. In truth organized labor underestimated the power of capitalist foes and failed to anticipate the strength of the backlash it launched to counter the great upheaval. Four of the Haymarket men were hanged in November 1887, and labor was already on the defensive by 1888, the year Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward* inspired the birth of the quasi-socialist Nationalist movement. A strike loss by rail workers on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy line proved traumatic. By then the KOL was in steep decline, and the AFL proved more adroit at winning jurisdictional battles against the Knights than in defeating employers.

Moreover capital proved itself better organized than labor. Many of labor's 1886 electoral victories were undone from 1887–1890, due in part to well-funded oppositional campaigns. Republicans and Democrats often put forth fusion candidates to avoid vote splitting and where necessary, even used gerrymandering processes to isolate labor's ballot box potential. Capitalists did not hesitate to use heavy-handed tactics when political maneuvers failed. The use of labor spies, scabs, and Pinkerton detectives was commonplace in workplaces where unions appeared strong. The KOL was especially vulnerable, since it represented more workers in mass-production industries controlled by wealthy investors than the AFL, whose skilled workers tended to be found in smaller workshops. Equally at risk were ideological radicals, especially anarchists who found themselves frequent victims of repression.

By 1890, the year the lost New York Central strike eviscerated what was left of the KOL's presence in the urban United States, the great upheaval was largely a spent force. Labor's dreams of jettisoning the wage system gave way to the AFL's focus on pure-and-simple unionism, a strategy that confined itself largely to negotiations over wages, hours, and working conditions. The 1890s was a particularly brutal period in American labor relations in which the full blunt of the capitalist backlash played itself out in dramatic strikes, such as Homestead (1892) and Pullman (1894), and in exercises of raw power like the Lattimer massacre (1897).

Although it is tempting to view the great upheaval as a failure, such a conclusion is overly pessimistic. It was a turning point in history in which sincere

alternatives to competitive capitalism were put forth but failed. Nonetheless turning points seldom yield simplistic either/or results, and the great upheaval was no exception. The events of the 1880s, followed by the unsettled and violent 1890s, led many Americans, especially among the rising middle classes, to embrace the cause of social reform, repudiate *laissez faire* business practices, and battle against corruption. In retrospect the great upheaval was both the swan song of social Darwinism and a precursor of the Progressive Era.

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GREENBACK-LABOR PARTY

The Greenback-Labor party (GLP) was the first nationally organized third-party movement since the close of the Civil War that combined various local electoral coalitions, some of which were labor parties.

Origins

What came to be called "greenbackism" was rooted in antebellum labor reform ideology. Albert Brisbane, Josiah Warren, William B. Greene, and, especially, Edward N. Kellogg advocated the exchange of value through a paper medium. By the 1850s, they argued that the manipulation of the money supply, coupled to cooperation, might transform the social order.

Far more broadly though, the federal government financed the Civil War in part through the printing of paper "greenbacks." Wartime spending and the inflation that resulted helped farmers minimize indebtedness, fueled business investments, and contributed to employment and in parts of the work force, prosperity. After the war reform-minded leaders of the Democrats, nationally the minority party, were eager to focus on new issues like "the Ohio idea" that the government should continue to print limited amounts of paper money.

Greenbackers

Postwar labor reformers took up the issue along with the demand for a legislated 8-hour workday. By 1868, adherents of the National Labor Union (NLU) formed state labor reform parties in New England and, in 1871 moved the NLU to call for a new party. In February 1872, the National Labor Reform Party (NLRP) convened in Columbus, adopted a remarkably uninspiring platform centered on the reform Democratic position on paper money and nominated Illinois Democrat David Davis in an effort to influence his nomination by that party. When Davis declined, a delegated interim committee of the NLRP simply endorsed the straight-out Democratic candidate, who received so few votes that it is doubtful the ranks of the NLU followed the endorsement.

The Panic of 1873 politicized the mass organizations of midwestern farmers, like the Patrons of Husbandry or the Grange. Illinois farmers built a Peoples' Antimonopolist party, and a similar Independent party formed in Indiana. By 1874, such parties formed in Missouri, Michigan, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, and Wisconsin. While these insurgents had been divided on paper money, on June 10, 1874, the original two state parties held coordinated state conventions that adopted paper money. A November 25 convention in Indianapolis united the new insurgents with former NLRP groups from Connecticut, Illinois, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Although NLRP leaders favoring a broader platform met in Harrisburg on March 3, 1875, the meeting generated little interest. The new organization called itself the Independent party or the National party (as opposed to the state parties), but the press called it the Greenback party.

Congressional passage of the Specie Resumption Act (1875) authorizing the elimination of greenbacks by 1879 threatened further economic hardships and seemed to offer the insurgents a common grievance just as the Kansas-Nebraska Act a generation before inspired the rise of the Republican party. The nominating convention that gathered on May 15, 1876, in Indianapolis was as dominated as the former NLRP by large delegations from Ohio and Illinois urging a nomination to influence the Democrats. Under the urging of a small New York group, the convention named the aged Jacksonian Peter Cooper and California Senator Newton Booth, the latter later declining and being replaced by Samuel F. Cary of Ohio. Once more, the Democrats were not interested, and the official count gave Cooper only 81,740 votes.

Laborites

After the NLRP debacle of 1872, the more radical participants turned to the International Workingmen's Association, which self-fragmented along ethnic lines in short order. In 1874, various suspended sections combined with a Newark labor party to launch the Social Democratic Workingmen's Party of North America, which merged with some midwestern organizations in 1876 to form the Workingmen's Party of the United States (WPUS).

The brutal and bipartisan repression of the railroad strike of 1877 inspired a wave of mass working-class protest votes. The railroads announced yet another round of pay cuts that July, and their desperate employees walked out, detonating what became a national general strike. The federal authorities, often over the objection of local officials, sent troops to break the strike.

After this workers' organizations grew quickly. Most remarkably, the Knights of Labor abandoned secrecy in 1882 and began absorbing trade unions and other workers' associations. Sometimes in conjunction with the socialists and sometimes in competition with them, local labor parties contended for office. From New Haven to St. Louis, Milwaukee to Covington, workers began electing socialist and labor nominees to office. In other places they became Greenbackers or formed a natural alliance with other insurgents.

The GLP

On February 22, 1878, a small convention in a bitterly cold Toledo schoolhouse united the Greenbackers with representatives of many of these local independent labor groups. This was what called itself the GLP.

A number of important groups remained aloof. The Union Greenback Clubs declined to merge into the GLP. The socialists ignored the development and transformed their WPUS into the Socialistic Labor party (SLP) at the end of 1877. In the South a number of independent splinters from the Democrats took place with the triumph of white "redeemer" Democratic governments, with Virginia's Readjusters' party in the forefront. The Workingmen's party of California remained focused on the exclusion of the Chinese, who were vilified for having brought down wages and standards of living. Finally an association of freethinkers launched a National Liberal party.

The GLP assumed the same community functions in places as those of the Grange. The party gained

GREENBACK-LABOR PARTY

some serious pockets of strength outside the Midwest, offering a real possibility for a fusionist strategy. When the GLP elected officials in parts of Republican New England, Democrats offered fusion. So, too, where the GLP gained ground in northern Alabama, fusion with the Republicans offered a greater opportunity for victory.

The GLP Strength

The off-year national election of 1878 produced what was proportionately the largest third-party movement in U.S. history not to result in the displacement of a major party. From 802,000 to 852,000 votes went to exclusively Greenback, Independent, Independent Greenback, or National candidates, with another 25,000 divided between the socialists and prohibitionists. Those running with either Democratic endorsements or no Democratic opposition got another 303,400, with another 217,000 going to insurgents who seemed to have Republican support. Independent Democrats running against Democratic candidates had another 150,000 and independent Republicans over 18,000. This totaled an insurgent vote of between about 1,000,000 and counting the results of fusion, 1,600,000. The numbers sufficed to elect 22 independents to Congress, including future members of the Bellamy socialist clubs, Reverend Gilbert Delamater of Indiana, and James Baird Weaver of Iowa, and the St. Louis labor reformer, Nicholas Ford.

In June 1880, a national convention at Chicago expanded the GLP platform. Among other things it endorsed woman suffrage and adopted the SLP's resolution: "We declare that land, air, and water are the grand gifts of nature to all mankind, and the law or custom of society that allows any person to monopolize more of these gifts of nature than he has a right to, we earnestly condemn and demand shall be abolished." The party nominated Republican Weaver for president and the elderly Texan Barzalai J. Chambers for vice-president. The candidate actively stumped the country, campaigning not only against a monopoly over the money supply, but over land and the means of transportation as well. Weaver also became the first American presidential candidate to defend without qualification the rights of all workers to organize.

Despite its promise, the national campaign faltered and failed on the strategy of fusion. Officeholders in Maine hoped to retain their positions through an alliance with the Democrats even though such a coalition would be disastrous in Alabama. Weaver warned against the strategy and found himself

marginalized, misreported, and then rendered invisible in the nation's press. Fusion in Maine, adopted in spite of his protests, eventually reclassified the 65,310 ballots cast for mostly GLP electors into officially Democratic votes. The official national totals gave Weaver-Chambers a mere 306,867 votes, a radical falling-off from the 1878 numbers.

Legacy

After 1880, the focus of political insurgency shifted from the Midwest and its currency issue. The National Antimonopoly party in 1884 and the Union Labor party in 1888 pre-empted the remnants of the GLP, which opted merely to endorse the candidates of other parties.

The labor attitude to the Populists after 1890 radically colored the memory of the GLP. Now organized by the American Federation of Labor rather than the Knights, workers remained far more skeptical of the Populists than they had been of the GLP. For ostensibly different reasons, the organized socialists similarly kept their distance.

MARK LAUSE

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See also **Antebellum Era; Brisbane, Albert; Civil War and Reconstruction; Green, William**

GUATEMALANS

The first large wave of Guatemalan immigrant workers in the United States occurred in the early 1980s, when many *campesinos* (peasants)—as well as liberal and progressive professionals—were driven from their homes by the violence of Guatemala's 36-year civil war between a right-wing military dictatorship in charge of the country since a U.S.-led coup in 1954 and a Marxist-led guerrilla army. Altogether the violence of that war, cresting in the period from

1978–1982 with the razing of entire Mayan villages deemed too sympathetic to the insurgency, left some 200,000 casualties and nearly one million displaced persons. Many of the latter would find their way to the United States, particularly the West Coast, Texas, and Florida, where they initially found work alongside Mexicans and other Central Americans as agricultural laborers. Soon they were drawn to more urban, industrial employment as well, particularly food processing, construction, landscaping, and ultimately, low-wage service jobs. By the early 1990s, as the civil war wound down toward an eventual formal peace agreement between government and guerrilla factions in 1996, the earlier stream of war refugees gave way to a chain migration of economic refugees (from a land with nearly 40% unemployment) drawing on family and village ties. Both groups of migrants fled by foot, bus, and van rides across Mexico, crossed the border of Texas or Arizona, then generally headed west to pick crops in California and/or east to do the same in Florida. From these initial ports of entry, they engaged in secondary migrations to find work. Kansas, Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Colorado, as well as Toronto, British Columbia, and even Prince Edward Island, Canada, all reported significant clusters of new Guatemalan arrivals by 2000. By 2002, an estimated 1.2 million Guatemalans were living in the United States.

For a brief time the Guatemalans actually possessed a special employment advantage under U.S. immigration and refugee law, even over other Latin American laborers. Beginning in the fall of 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) affected would-be immigrants in important ways. On the one hand IRCA implemented a generous legalization program for some two million undocumented immigrants who had arrived prior to 1982; on the other hand it both beefed up border surveillance and established tough new sanctions for employers who hired more recent, illegal aliens. While throwing a new obstacle in the way of undocumented Mexicans and others, the new rules left a slight window ajar for Guatemalans and other *émigrés* from war-torn Central America in the form of appeals for asylum under the Refugee Act of 1980. To be sure the initial opening was not very inviting; less than 1% of Guatemalans for example who filed for asylum from June 1983 to September 1986 were granted protection. Especially after the Immigration and Nationalization Service (INS) entered into a settlement agreement with advocates for both Salvadoran and Guatemalan asylum applicants in *ABC v. Thornburgh* in 1991, the INS not only guaranteed due process under more lenient guidelines (that is, “without consideration of

nationality”) for future claimants but agreed to re-adjudicate the claims of every Salvadoran and Guatemalan applicant who had previously been denied relief. In the wake of *ABC*, a tide of Guatemalan asylum applications poured in; given the huge backlog of such applications, applicants (and their employers) could count not only on an initial, temporary work permit but also on regular annual renewals pending a distant asylum hearing. This welcome mat was withdrawn when new restrictions were announced with the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Restriction Act (IIRAIRA), authorizing the “expedited removal” of “inadmissible aliens,” in 1997. Though softened in impact by administrative mandates for a few years, the events of 9/11 led to strict enforcement of IIRAIRA provisions and generally a new climate of fear and insecurity among the still largely undocumented Guatemalan working-class in the United States.

While largely unorganized and situated in decidedly nonunion areas of the U.S. labor force, in selective cases, Guatemalan immigrants have displayed a capacity to blend informal community ties with labor union mobilization. The rise of a newly powerful Los Angeles labor movement in the 1990s—including the Service Employees International Union’s (SEIU’s) Justice for Janitors campaign, the Hotel and Restaurant Employee’s New Otani drive, and other efforts led by drywallers, house framers, and tortilla makers—found political refugees from the previous decade’s struggles in Guatemala and El Salvador taking important grassroots roles. In Morganton, North Carolina, a location otherwise remote from union influence, for example, the Case Farms poultry plant, with some 80% Guatemalan workforce, witnessed nearly a decade-long unionizing campaign. Winning a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) representation election in 1995 but failing thereafter to secure a collective-bargaining contract, this laboring community effort devolved into a Worker Rights Center, struggling at once for work place protections and better immigration laws.

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GUTMAN, HERBERT (1928–1985) Historian

Born the son of left-wing, Jewish immigrant parents in Queens, New York, Herbert G. Gutman became one of two leading voices (the other is David Montgomery) of what became known as the new labor history—effectively an intellectual renaissance in the field—that began in the late 1960s. Perhaps best known for his essays that highlighted the roles of ordinary workers in previously little-examined industrial communities of the Gilded Age, Gutman had established a reputation as one of the nation's premier historians of African-American as well as labor and social history before his untimely death from a heart attack in 1985.

Gutman's intellectual interests developed both from his training and his reactions to the world around him. A product of New York City public schools, he advanced from Queens College, where he studied history alongside his journalism major, to Columbia University, where his emergent social history interests met the disinterest of his advisor, Richard Hofstadter, to the University of Wisconsin, where left-wing heterodoxy flourished and where he began a widespread set of inquiries about American working-class history, culminating in a 1959 Ph.D. dissertation, inelegantly titled, "Social and Economic Structure and Depression: American Labor in 1873 and 1874." Professionally Gutman moved from Fairleigh Dickenson College to the State University of New York at Buffalo to the University of Rochester and finally to appointments at both the City College of New York and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

As a historian Gutman's literary legacy is several-fold. Though for years avid readers searched for his essays either in relatively obscure state historical journals or pressed friends for unpublished copy circulating only in manuscript form, two significant anthologies now facilitate access to Gutman's work: *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* and the posthumous collection edited and supplemented with a fine introduction [on which this entry heavily relies] by Ira Berlin, *Power & Culture: Essays on the American Working Class*. In addition those who wish to appreciate, and reckon with, Gutman's work and characteristic method should read *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* and *Slavery and the Numbers Game: A Critique of "Time on the Cross."* Finally his influence is palpably evident in the two-volume textbook that was initiated under his direction on the American Social History Project,

Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's Economy, Politics, Culture, and Society.

For most readers the first hint of new directions in the field of labor history arrived with Gutman's "The Workers' Search for Power: Labor in the Gilded Age," in *The Gilded Age: A Reappraisal*. Previously labor history, with its disciplinary origins rooted in the institutional economics of the Progressive Era, had focused almost entirely on labor unions and their leaders. Now Gutman focused attention on the lives, and willed self-activity, of ordinary working people, both at their workplaces and in the larger social, religious, and political life of their communities. Distilling the evidence from the several case studies of his dissertation, Gutman emphasized the public skepticism with which the small-town United States greeted industrial capitalism as well as the effectiveness of alliances hatched between workers and shopkeepers to keep corporate power at bay. The seeming openness of the political system to alternative trajectories at a key moment in the modernization of American life challenged assumptions about a unified, liberal American ideology common to the postwar consensus school of American historiography. That Gutman's discoveries occurred just as domestic contemporary politics themselves became embroiled in the conflicts of the civil rights, student, and antiwar movements lent outside fuel to the fires of a conflict-oriented school of social history. Publication of the British neo-Marxist E. P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working-Class* in 1964 lent inside support—and an inspiring model—to the same cause.

Both Gutman's skills as a social historian of *histoire totale* and his preoccupation with the puzzle of U.S. class consciousness (or what many have called the problem of "American exceptionalism") are on display in many of his signature articles, such as "Labor in the Land of Lincoln: Coal Miners on the Prairie," written in 1966–1967 and published posthumously in the Berlin-edited anthology. The themes of town building, immigration, class structure, social mobility, standards of living, women's place in community protests, racial divisions, and class and ethnic structure all receive extended treatment even as the author follows two Scottish-born miners, John James and Daniel McLaughlin, through a narrative focusing on labor conflict and political organization. Though Gutman convincingly documents the strength of local, immigrant-based worker solidarity in the union stronghold of Braidwood, Illinois, across the 1860s and 1870s, he also uncovers patterns that would frustrate such solidarity over the long haul. The nearby town of Streator, for one, failed to maintain the strike discipline of the Braidwood miners. For another

erstwhile union stalwart John James moved up the ranks in area coal companies and ended up as anti-union mine superintendent. Long after he had written the Braidwood manuscript, Gutman, in a 1982 address to the Organization of American Historians, implicitly returned to such dilemmas. He identified a “central tension in all dependent groups over time” as that “between individualist (utilitarian) and collective (mutualist) ways of dealing with, and sometimes overcoming, dependence and inequality.”

Gutman’s single most influential argument for labor and social historians was likely that contained in his 1973 *American Historical Review* essay, “Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815–1919.” The result of his own assimilation of the cultural Marxism and cultural anthropology, Gutman here emphasized the continuous cultural clash of a largely rural and immigrant-derived working class with the discipline imposed by the factory system. At once upholding the integrity of pre-industrial traditions and insisting on the peculiarities of an American working class continually re-made by great immigrations and internal migrations, he countered the dominant notion of immigration historians (as centrally defined by the work of Oscar Handlin) that immigration necessitated an immediate breakdown of old values in order to assimilate to consensual American norms.

The emphasis on cultural persistence and resistance, as particularly transmitted through family ties, central to “Work, Culture, and Society,” also fundamentally informed Gutman’s next great research project on the history of the black family in slavery and freedom. Provoked by the contemporary debates that tied the 1960s-era wave of urban crime and violence to the pathology or breakdown of African-American family in slavery, Gutman extended an initial critique of the Moynihan Report into a far-reaching empirical probe. His own late

nineteenth-century data on multiple urban sites, for example, indicated that the great majority of black workers lived in nuclear families with both parents present. Now with an extensive sweep of plantation records, he documented the thick and very African-influenced bonds of kinship that sustained the enslaved peoples during their greatest trials. The post-Civil War determination to reunite families broken by slave sale attains an heroic centrality in Gutman’s work. Overall, he argued, the family functioned as a central agent of resistance, and class formation, within the African-American community. Such emphasis on lower-class agency helped to spark a long-running argument (one might better say feud) with Gutman’s former Rochester colleague, slavery historian Eugene D. Genovese. Though both drew heavily on Marxist influences, the latter’s top-down emphasis on ruling-class hegemony proved inimical to Gutman’s core emphasis on, and sympathies with, ordinary working people. In any case, their disagreements for a time fueled insightful but also painfully vitriolic exchanges over the direction of American social history.

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See also **Historiography of American Labor History**

H

H-2 PROGRAM

Named for a provision of the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (McCarran-Walter Act) that permitted the temporary admittance of foreign workers, the H-2 Program allows U.S. agricultural producers to import foreign laborers to work in the fields on a seasonal basis. Growers who wish to participate first must demonstrate that they are unable to hire sufficient domestic workers, as certified by the U.S. Department of Labor. Upon receiving certification, growers' organizations may contract directly with foreign governments to import workers on a temporary basis. The program requires that growers pay for workers' transportation to the work site and back (which can be recouped if the worker does not work the entire season), provide free housing for workers, pay a minimum wage called an Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) designed to ensure that imported labor does not depress wages for domestic workers in the same industry in a given region, and offer workers employment for at least three fourths of the workdays covered by the contract. Meanwhile, laborers who enter the United States via the program—sometimes called H-2 workers—must work where assigned by the sponsoring growers' association and are expected to return to their home countries once their contract expires. On the surface, the program appears to satisfy the needs of growers in need of a stable, but temporary, labor force; U.S. government officials hoping to stem the tide of illegal immigration; foreign governments seeking to supply their citizens with access to jobs; and workers hoping to avoid the pitfalls of

immigrating illegally. In reality, however, the program has never fully pleased its participants.

The modern H-2 Program—also referred to as the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Program to reflect the distinction between temporary agricultural workers and other temporary workers created by the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA)—has its roots in the World War II experience. Wartime exigencies created labor shortages in many agricultural regions. In August 1942, Congress established the Mexican Labor Program in response to demands from western growers for access to more labor. The Bracero Program, as it came to be known, permitted the recruitment of Mexican citizens to work on U.S. farms on a temporary basis. All told, the wartime program—which lasted until 1947—brought nearly 220,000 Mexican workers to work in U.S. agriculture. In 1943, Congress created a similar British West Indies (BWI) Labor Program in response to pressure from eastern growers eager to obtain foreign workers. The program provided for the recruitment of workers from Jamaica, the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, and Barbados, but unlike braceros, BWI workers could work in industries other than agriculture. Most of the roughly 70,000 workers who came between 1943 and 1947, however, worked on farms from New England to Florida. In 1947, when unable to justify the program as a wartime necessity, federal authorities gave growers' organizations the authority to contract directly with foreign governments to import workers.

In 1951, citing a critical shortage of agricultural workers, Congress formally re-established the Mexican

H-2 PROGRAM

Labor Program by passing what came to be known as Public Law 78. From 1951 to 1964, when abuses led Congress to bring the program to an end, hundreds of thousands of temporary Mexican workers came to the United States through the program each year. At the request of East Coast growers, Congress left BWI workers out of this program and instead permitted these workers through a provision in the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act, Chapter 1, section 101, paragraph H, part 2—hence the shorthand of H-2—of the law allowed for temporary admission of aliens into the United States “to perform other temporary services or labor, if unemployed persons capable of performing such services or labor cannot be found in this country.” Unlike Public Law 78, which provided for formal agreements between the U.S. and Mexican governments as to the conditions under which workers might be imported, this law provided broad approval for U.S. employers to import workers under conditions to be determined by the attorney general in consultation with the Department of Labor. Modeled after European “guest worker” programs established to allow for the temporary admission of workers for postwar reconstruction work, the H-2 provision codified a special class of non-immigrant workers in U.S. immigration law for the first time.

U.S. agricultural interests, many of whom had been importing workers all along following the end of the wartime program, stepped up use of the imported labor after passage of the law. East Coast apple and Florida sugarcane growers, especially, came to depend less on native migrant workers—the traditional source of seasonal farm labor along the eastern seaboard—and more on imported Caribbean guest workers. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, tens of thousands of Jamaicans and Bahamians came to the United States on temporary visas to pick apples and cut sugarcane. While the use of H-2 workers appeared to be declining in the 1970s and 1980s, agreements made in the early 1990s between U.S. growers and the Mexican government, which at first had refused to allow its citizens to participate in the program because of the abuses of the Bracero Program, once again expanded the program. In 1999, roughly 96% of the more than 28,000 visas issued for the program went to Mexican citizens. By this time, tobacco growers, who hired roughly 42% of the H-2 workers, had replaced sugarcane and apple growers as the greatest employer of imported foreign labor, although H-2 workers continue to be employed in a diverse number of agricultural enterprises, from picking strawberries in Florida to herding sheep in Wyoming.

Despite its increasing popularity, the H-2 Program has created a number of problems and encountered criticism from a number of sectors, even from those

who are generally supportive of its work. Growers complain that the program’s regulations, especially its Adverse Effect Wage Rate, create an undue burden and have called for reductions in government oversight. Farmworker advocates, meanwhile, have responded that growers have benefited from the program by both eliminating the need to offer higher wages to attract local workers and preventing the movement of H-2 workers from one farm to another, effectively working around the laws of supply and demand that guide labor markets. At the same time, workers have reported numerous instances of employer misconduct, including, among other things, failure to pay the AEWR, failure to provide livable housing, and violence against workers. At the same time, critics of illegal immigration have noted that, despite the program’s promise of stemming the flood of immigrants entering the United States illegally, it has instead provided a conduit for increased illegal immigration. A 2001 study of H-2 workers in North Carolina, for example, found that upwards of 40% of workers left their assigned job sites before finishing their contracts, an act that made their very presence in the country illegal.

It is expected that use of the H-2 Program will grow further in the coming years. While H-2 workers make up only a small percentage of farmworkers at the present time, an increasing number of U.S. agricultural producers have expressed interest in participating in the program. In addition, an increasing number of elected officials have voiced support for expansion of the program as a way of providing a stable agricultural labor force without the pressure of illegal immigration. If the program expands, it is a certainty that temporary workers will become a permanent feature of American agricultural production.

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See also **McCarran-Walter Act (1952)**

HALEY, MARGARET (1861–1939) Founder, Chicago Teachers’ Federation

Margaret Angela Haley was the founding leader of the Chicago Teachers’ Federation, the first teachers’ association to affiliate with organized labor. As the Federation’s paid business representative for 40 years, Haley organized over half of the city’s women elementary teachers into a powerful political unit, while promoting teachers’ activism around the country. An advocate for women teachers’ rights as workers and for educational reform, Haley was both a charismatic local union leader and a nationally known educational and political activist.

Margaret Haley was born in Joliet, Illinois, to Irish immigrant parents. Her father had labored with other Irish workers in the construction of the Illinois and Michigan canal and was a member of the Knights of Labor and the Irish National Land League. Haley began teaching in rural Illinois schools as a teenager and later moved with her family to Chicago, where for 16 years she taught elementary school in the heart of the Stockyards district. During that time, she studied progressive education at the Illinois Normal School, where she read Henry George’s *Progress and Poverty*; the Cook County Normal School, where she studied under the progressive teacher educator Francis Parker; and Catholic summer schools for teachers, where she learned about liberal Catholic social movements.

Haley began her political activism in a Catholic women’s fraternal insurance organization, where she led a revolt against an authoritarian leader. In 1898, she joined the recently founded Chicago Teachers’ Federation, which organized to advocate for improved pensions and salaries. The Federation represented only women elementary teachers, who comprised the great majority of the Chicago teaching

force and who worked under a separate salary scale from predominately male administrative and secondary school staff. In 1900, Haley left the classroom to become the paid business representative, lobbyist, and administrative leader of the Federation, a position she held until her death in 1939. Catherine Goggin, a founding member of the Federation, shared leadership with Haley until her death in 1916.

Haley shaped the nascent women’s organization into a powerful political force. Drawing on her observations of the Chicago labor movement, Haley argued that public school teachers had the right to shape their own working conditions, and she developed professional supports and education for teachers with representative councils, classes on progressive education, a regular news bulletin, and monthly membership meetings. Early on, Haley recognized that disenfranchised women teachers’ demand for improved salaries carried little weight with the elected officials who controlled the public purse. Supported by John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), Haley convinced her membership that affiliation with labor was the only way that women teachers could gain political leverage. This was a difficult sell because it went against the public perception that women teachers were middle-class professionals who should be above the belligerent masculine politics of industrial labor unions. Furthermore, many male unionists suspected that women workers would dilute the labor movement. In 1902, the Federation affiliated with the CFL. For over a decade, the Chicago Teachers’ Federation played an active role in the CFL, as well as the Illinois State Federation of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, and the Women’s Trade Union League.

In 1916, Haley joined the Federation with seven other teachers’ organizations to form a national unit, the American Federation of Teachers. As the oldest and largest of the groups, the Chicago Federation was designated Local 1. This affiliation was short-lived, however, when the Chicago Board of Education enacted a series of regulations that effectively prohibited its teachers from membership in labor unions. In 1917, the Federation withdrew from all of its local, state, and national labor affiliations.

Haley’s vision of teacher organization reached beyond bread-and-butter issues to a wide range of social and educational reforms. First among these was her advocacy of school finance reform. An advocate of Henry George’s single tax, Haley argued for the enforcement of taxation laws on private corporations, and she lobbied against private interests’ contributing to the curriculum, funding, and management of public schools. Haley’s most celebrated accomplishment within the Federation was her investigation and successful legal challenge of corporate tax deductions

that had lowered Chicago school board income so that teachers were denied a long-promised raise. Haley led the legal battle of the widely publicized “tax case” between 1900 and 1904, and it led her to work for other municipal reform movements including electoral reform, municipal ownership of basic utilities, and women’s suffrage.

Haley argued that teacher unions should advocate for democratic practices in educational management and that women teacher union members should be key players in educational policy making. Haley traversed the country to promote political activism among the nation’s predominately female teaching force, pressuring the powerful, administrator-dominated National Education Association to include the representation of women teachers. In her 1904 speech before that group, “Why Teachers Should Organize,” she argued not only for the organization of protective unions for teachers, but also for an expanded notion of teacher professionalism that included the democratic participation of teachers in school management. Haley fought against powerful textbook companies’ influence on the curriculum, objected to vocational education, which she believed narrowed the opportunities of working-class students, and led campaigns against what she called the “factoryization” of education through economic restrictions, standardized curriculum, and centralized leadership.

Haley was a charismatic leader and a dynamic speaker, who strategically played off of her appearance as a petite middle-aged Irish school marm in her campaigns for fiscal equity and teachers’ rights. She was an expert at maneuvering high-profile political figures to support her cause. Yet she was also known for her stubbornness and inability to compromise, and she resisted changes in the city’s teaching force, ignoring the needs of the increasing number of male and African-American teachers. The Federation declined in power and prestige through the 1920s and refused to join with the more inclusive Chicago Teachers’ Union in 1937.

As a woman who played a central role in labor, civic, and educational politics, Haley was an extraordinary figure in American history. She is unique as a woman labor leader who made the unprecedented link between progressive education and teachers’ working conditions, arguing that the two were interdependent.

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See also **Chicago Teachers’ Federation**

HAMILTON, ALICE (FEBRUARY 27, 1869–SEPTEMBER 22, 1970) Physician

A physician and leading expert in the field of industrial toxicology, the study of work-related illnesses and the dangerous effects of industrial metals and chemical compounds on workers, Alice Hamilton became one of the most important advocates for federal regulation of the workplace for workers’ health and safety. Her studies of lead poisoning in enamel workers, carbon monoxide poisoning in steelworkers, mercury poisoning in hatters, and “dead fingers” syndrome among laborers using jackhammers raised awareness and led to major improvements in the work environment that saved countless lives. Her death in 1970 at the age of 101 came just three months before the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA).

Hamilton was also a social activist for women’s and workers’ rights, and an internationalist who worked for peace and human rights on a global scale. Her progressive views were shaped by her experiences as a resident of Hull-House, the social settlement founded by Jane Addams and where Hamilton was a resident for four decades.

Born in New York City to Montgomery Hamilton and Gertrude (Pond) Hamilton, the second of four daughters, she was raised in her father’s hometown of Fort Wayne, Indiana, where Hamiltons had been founders. Her father, a Princeton graduate unsuccessful in business, was an intellectual who provided his daughters with opportunities for critical thinking and delved into theological and philosophical subjects. Her mother was less analytical but passionate about issues of social justice, speaking out against the lynching of African-Americans, child labor, and cruelty to prisoners. Willing to think outside Victorian conventions, she impressed upon Alice her belief that every woman had a right to privacy. Alice and her sisters were tutored at home in languages, history, and literature, and received a superior education.

Following Hamilton tradition, the four sisters attended Miss Porter’s School in Framington, Connecticut. Returning to Indiana, and to the reality that

she would need to be self-supporting, her biographer Barbara Sicherman writes that Hamilton selected medicine because it was the only profession open to women that would allow her to be both independent and useful. Lacking a rigorous science background, Hamilton was tutored in physics and math before she entered Fort Wayne College of Medicine, which prepared her for study at the University of Michigan. She interned at hospitals in Minneapolis and Boston (1893–1894) and then returned to Ann Arbor in 1895 to assist in the bacteriology laboratory of her former professor, F. G. Novy. Hamilton next studied in Leipzig and Munich. She did postgraduate work at Johns Hopkins Medical School.

In the fall of 1897, she became a professor of pathology at the Woman's Medical School at Northwestern University in Chicago and also a resident at Hull-House. The settlement's involvement with the antisweatshop movement radicalized her. "At Hull-House one got into the labor movement as a matter of course, without realizing how or when," Hamilton explained (*Exploring the Dangerous Trades*, p. 80). Soon she was volunteering for the early morning [strike] picket "because the police were much less in evidence then" and she was "in mortal fear" of being dragged about if arrested (p. 82). She began to investigate the work and living conditions in the neighborhood realizing that labor unions were so caught up in efforts to safeguard wages that nothing was being done about industrial hygiene.

In 1902, she accepted a position at the new Memorial Institute for Infectious Diseases in Chicago. Hamilton adapted the Hull-House method of social investigation to her interest in public health issues. Just as Florence Kelley had investigated the sweatshop system and mapped household wages in the neighborhood, Hamilton investigated the incidents of typhoid and tuberculosis. She wrote articles and gave popular lectures to disseminate her findings and soon was appointed to public health committees.

In 1908, Hamilton was appointed to the Illinois Commission on Occupational Diseases, the first state to have such a commission. Hamilton's findings, published in 1910, led to Illinois establishing laws requiring job-related safety measures. As a result, the U.S. Bureau of Labor asked Hamilton to do a federal survey of occupational diseases in 1911. Hamilton continued her investigations for the bureau, but maintained her residency at Hull-House, and her independence. She became a pacifist and joined Jane Addams in the 1915 Women's Peace Conference at The Hague. Both she and Addams found time just 10 days prior to their journey abroad to testify at hearings in Springfield, Illinois, on child labor.

In 1919, Hamilton became an assistant professor of industrial medicine at Harvard University Medical School, the first woman appointed to its faculty. She asked for a six-month annual contract so she could maintain her connections with Hull-House and the freedom to pursue her own work. Hamilton began to publicize the dangers of the new industrial poisons that she discovered as new processes proliferated following World War I. Her book *Industrial Poisons in the United States* (1925) was the first American text on the subject and established her as one of the two leading authorities in the world. She instigated the U.S. surgeon general to call national conferences on tetraethyl lead (1925) and radium (1928).

Deeply disturbed by the conservative backlash in the 1920s, Hamilton protested the treatment of aliens and restrictive immigration laws. She joined the campaign to obtain commutation of the death sentence for Sacco and Vanzetti.

After her retirement from Harvard in 1935, Hamilton became a consultant in the Division of Labor Standards of the Department of Labor. In 1943, she wrote her autobiography, *Exploring the Dangerous Trades*. She served as president of the National Consumers' League (1944–1949) and remained a respected advisor to Hull-House. As an anti-Cold War liberal protesting the infringements on civil liberties at home, she was considered "dangerous" by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1949. The FBI kept an active file on Alice Hamilton through the 1960s; she protested the war in Vietnam in 1963.

RIMA LUNIN SCHULTZ

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HAPGOOD, POWERS (1899–1949) **Socialist Party Activist**

Powers Hapgood was an important figure in the industrial union movement and the Socialist Party who won widespread recognition as a crusader for industrial democracy, civil liberties, and social justice during the first half of the twentieth century. His political odyssey was representative of an important historical relationship: connections between reform-minded elements of the middle class and the working class that provided vital support for the growth of the labor movement during the Progressive Era and the New Deal. Hapgood also wrestled with many of the key issues that have historically challenged the American labor movement and was a rare public voice that questioned the direction of industrial unionism and liberal politics at the outset of the Cold War.

Born into one of the Progressive Era's most prominent liberal families (his uncles were leading muck-raking journalists and his father ran an Indiana company that won widespread praise as a model of industrial democracy and workers' control), Powers Hapgood was deeply influenced by familial commitments to service, sacrifice, and social responsibility. Following graduation from Harvard in 1920, he worked in coal mines, where he encountered class-conscious workers with an almost religious faith in their union, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), and a work culture rooted in values of self-reliance and solidarity that he found lacking within the middle class. He also discovered a mentor in John Brophy, a Pennsylvania UMWA leader whose advocacy of a "larger program" for the union based on public ownership of the mines, aggressive organizing, and workers education became the foundation for Hapgood's own brand of labor politics. Hapgood's prominent role in a bitter 1922 miners' strike in western Pennsylvania won him respect from workers and public recognition from liberals. It also led to his becoming a trusted interpreter of working-class struggles to middle-class audiences.

However, Hapgood's hopes of rising to a position of leadership in the union were dashed following the strike when he openly challenged the powerful UMWA president, John L. Lewis. Lewis contended that as a perpetually besieged institution, unions could not afford the luxury of democracy, while Hapgood insisted that democratic unionism was essential to provide workers the opportunity for civic participation and present industrial democracy as a legitimate alternative to corporate capitalism. This

conviction, fundamental to Hapgood's vision for the labor movement, led him to manage John Brophy's unsuccessful bid for the UMWA presidency in 1926. In retaliation, John L. Lewis had Hapgood expelled from the union.

Hapgood spent the next decade on the political margins. Recruited to join the Communist Party (CP), he rejected its invitation because he doubted the party's democratic commitments. Instead, he became a leader within the Socialist Party but in contrast to many anti-Communist leftists, continued to defend the CP's legitimacy within the labor movement. Hapgood persisted in his quest to nurture industrial democracy by supporting insurgent efforts against John L. Lewis, seeking to extend workers' control within his father's company and aiding an interracial tenant farmers union in the southern United States. Demoralized by the failures of these efforts, Hapgood decided to submerge his qualms about centralized, top-down labor leadership and became one of the first three organizers hired by John L. Lewis in 1935 to help direct the Committee for Industrial Organization's (CIO) efforts to organize workers in America's mass production industries.

Hapgood emerged as one of Lewis's most trusted lieutenants, joining with other CIO organizers to provide critical strategic support that helped rubber workers in Akron, Ohio, and auto workers in Flint, Michigan, win some of the fledgling organization's most significant victories over powerful corporate opposition. Yet by the beginning of World War II, Hapgood feared that the democratic spirit of industrial unionism was being blunted by the growing centralization of union leadership and the new legalistic system that was emerging to govern industrial relations. In a personal effort to reclaim the CIO's early promise, Hapgood, now serving as a union leader in Indiana, aggressively sought to organize African-American workers and pressed the labor movement to combat discrimination within its own ranks. He also foresaw that Cold War-inspired attacks on the Communist Party would have a chilling effect on liberal politics and fought for the rights of Communists, a stance that eventually cost him his job, with a CIO bent on purging its ranks of CP-leaning unions.

Hapgood's premature death in 1949 cut short his efforts to recast labor and liberalism. His career remains significant, however, as an example of the social empathy and personal commitment that made cross-class alliances such a powerful political force during the first half of the twentieth century.

ROBERT BUSSEL

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See also **Brophy, John; United Mine Workers of America**

HARRINGTON, MICHAEL (1928–1989) Socialist Intellectual

Michael Harrington was the best-known American socialist of his generation, and as such was one of the few prominent intellectuals in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to identify himself as a strong supporter of the labor movement.

Harrington was born in St. Louis on February 24, 1928, into a staunchly Democratic, middle-class Irish-Catholic family. He was educated in the city's parochial schools and its elite Jesuit-run St. Louis University High, before going off for higher education at Holy Cross College in Worcester, Massachusetts, at the age of 16. He graduated from Holy Cross three years later, enrolling for a year in Yale Law School (where he made law review but decided against a career as a lawyer). In 1948–1949, he attended the University of Chicago, where he received his master's degree in English. He moved to New York City at the end of 1949, intending to become a writer.

With the outbreak of the Korean War in the summer of 1950, Harrington's life underwent a dramatic transformation. A crisis of faith and conscience led him in 1951 to join the radical pacifist Catholic Worker movement, a group founded and led by Dorothy Day. Harrington spent the next two years living amongst and caring for the poor in the Worker's "House of Hospitality" on New York's Lower East Side.

In time, Harrington grew disenchanted with the Catholic Worker's other-worldliness, feeling that the movement was putting the spiritual perfection of its adherents before the larger goal of changing society for the better. As his Catholicism waned, he was drawn to socialist doctrine, joining the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL) in 1952 and helping found the even more radical Young Socialist League (YSL) in 1954, which functioned as the youth affiliate of Max Shachtman's Independent Socialist League

(ISL). He worked for a time as executive secretary of the Workers Defense League (WDL), a left-wing legal advocacy organization, but increasingly supported himself as a freelance writer, contributing frequently to publications like *Dissent*, *Commentary*, and *Commonweal* magazines.

For much of the 1950s, Harrington's political activities were bound by the musty confines of radical sectarianism. In the later years of the decade, however, he was drawn into some of the early civil rights protests through his association with the black radical activist Bayard Rustin. In 1959, the ISL merged with the Socialist Party (SP)/Social Democratic Federation led by Norman Thomas, and the following year Harrington became editor of the SP's newspaper, *New America*. He also coedited a collection of essays with radical journalist Paul Jacobs on the contemporary labor movement, *Labor in a Free Society*, published in 1959, his first book.

It was Harrington's second book, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*, published in 1962 by Macmillan, that would make him famous as "the man who discovered poverty." Making extensive use of U.S. Census data, Harrington argued in *The Other America* that a quarter to a third of the American population lived below the officially defined poverty level. An expanding economy was not enough, Harrington believed, to lift this "other America" out of poverty, for they were bound to their condition by a "culture of poverty." The poor were "people who lack education and skill, who have bad health, poor housing, low levels of aspiration and high levels of mental distress. . . . Each disability is the more intense because it exists within a web of disabilities." The book, which went on to sell over a million copies, helped inspire President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. Harrington was invited to take part in some of the early strategy sessions in Washington to draw up the legislation that would become the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

In the 1960s, Harrington forged ties with leading figures in the labor movement, including United Auto Workers president Walter Reuther. He also worked closely with leading civil rights activists, including Martin Luther King Jr., and would help with the planning for King's Poor People's March on Washington in 1968, before King's assassination.

Harrington's political dream was to bring together a great coalition of labor, the poor, and civil rights, liberal, and student activists that he would refer to as "the left wing of the possible." But this dream was shattered by the explosive conflicts over the war in Vietnam and racial separatism of the later 1960s. Younger left-wing activists were dismayed by

Harrington's reluctance to break with the Johnson White House on the issue of the war in Vietnam. And they were mystified by his allegiance to the labor movement, discredited in their eyes by AFL-CIO president George Meany's belligerently prowar views. Harrington's support in 1968 for the United Federation of Teachers in the conflict over community control of schools in New York's Ocean Hill-Brownsville school district alienated many younger activists and intellectuals whom he looked to as natural allies.

Harrington also found himself increasingly at odds with many of his SP comrades, who reacted to the controversies of the 1960s by turning rightward, some of them becoming influential figures within the neo-conservative movement. When the Socialist Party refused to back George McGovern against Richard Nixon in the 1972 presidential campaign, Harrington decided he could no longer remain a member of the party; the following year he led a split which resulted in the founding of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), with Harrington as its chair.

DSOC and its successor organization, Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), enjoyed modest successes in the 1970s and 1980s, growing to a peak of about 5,000 members and enjoying close ties with the UAW and other liberally inclined unions. Harrington continued to publish extensively (writing 16 books on political topics before his death in 1989) and enjoyed a reputation as an eloquent public speaker. He also joined the political science department at Queens College and became a member of its American Federation of Teachers local.

MAURICE ISSERMAN

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HARVARD UNION OF CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS

The Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW), organized in 1988, represents 4,800 workers at Harvard University. The union's members are 70% women, and HUCTW has developed what its leaders call a "feminine model" of unionism. This model takes the union to be a vehicle not only for winning economic gains, but for building a community at work and promoting worker participation in

a wide variety of workplace decisions. It pursues these goals through direct, person-to-person contact among members and a program of labor-management cooperation or "jointness" with the university administration.

Organizing the Union, 1973–1988

HUCTW won legal recognition in 1988 after an organizing drive that lasted nearly 15 years and faced strong opposition from Harvard. Sympathetically chronicled in works by the journalist John Hoerr and the economist Richard W. Hurd, the drive began in 1973 among research assistants in the Harvard Medical Area, which comprises Harvard Medical School and the Harvard School of Public Health. The drive was fueled by young, female workers frustrated by sexist treatment, a lack of career mobility, and low pay. Many workers, inspired by the women's movement, saw the union drive as an expression of feminism. The campaign took place alongside a wave of union organizing among women office workers and public-sector workers during the 1970s and 1980s.

Led by the research assistants Leslie Sullivan and Kristine Rondeau, both of whom eventually left their lab jobs to work as full-time organizers, the Medical Area workers held two unsuccessful union elections in 1977 and 1981. After the 1981 election, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), at Harvard's behest, ruled that the Medical Area was not an appropriate bargaining unit and that the workers needed to organize all of the university's 3,500 clerical and technical workers—a task considered nearly impossible. Rondeau launched a universitywide organizing drive in 1984, and the union won the election on May 17, 1988, in a close vote of 1,530 to 1,486. Harvard recognized HUCTW in November 1988 after an unsuccessful NLRB challenge.

The organizing drive was a grassroots affair that involved workers, students, and faculty. On campus, HUCTW was known for its creativity and sense of humor. Workers organized actions such as Hollywood-style bus tours of administrators' homes, and rallies featured parodic songs by the union's singing group, the Pipets.

Harvard conducted sophisticated anti-union campaigns before each election, using captive-audience meetings, one-on-one meetings between workers and supervisors, and a barrage of anti-union letters. Harvard's president, Derek Bok, a labor law scholar considered sympathetic to unions, sent anti-union letters to every worker in 1977 and 1988. During the 1981



Washington School for Secretaries. Students at Washington School for Secretaries at typewriters. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Theodor Horydczak Collection [LC-H824-T-1215-003].

election, Harvard stationed armed guards around the voting site.

HUCTW's national affiliation changed twice during the organizing drive. In 1974, it affiliated with the industrial union District 65 because of its interest in women workers and its willingness to let the Harvard workers direct their own drive. District 65 affiliated with the United Automobile Workers (UAW) in 1979, and the organizers developed conflicts with that union's organizing model. They ran the campaign independently from 1984 to 1987, when they affiliated with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

“Women’s Way of Organizing”

HUCTW developed an unusual organizing philosophy, which Rondeau has since promoted as “women’s way of organizing.” Whereas most unions conduct rapid organizing drives to limit the development of employers’ anti-union campaigns, HUCTW slowly met workers one-on-one and focused on building relationships in the workplace. They used no literature, believing that it could become an easy but

ineffective substitute for person-to-person contact. Organizers did not ask workers to sign union cards until the last stages of the campaign, maintaining that card signing did not build commitment to the union but should be the culmination of an organizing process that developed that commitment. Relationship building was not simply a tactic; organizers believed that women wanted a community at work and that creating one should be a central function of a union. This unorthodox approach caused the 1984 break with the UAW. By contrast, it impressed AFSCME, which later sent HUCTW staff to organize workers nationwide.

HUCTW’s leaders maintained that organizing around specific concerns—low pay, sexist treatment, or anything else—invited the employer to quickly fix those problems to defuse the organizing effort. Instead, HUCTW organized around the idea that workers should be able to participate in decision making about their jobs. By “participation,” HUCTW’s leaders meant labor-management cooperation in determining workplace policies. Their philosophy of “jointness” or “codetermination” between workers and management found expression in an early slogan, “It’s not anti-Harvard to be pro-union.” Union leaders maintained that they wanted Harvard to function

well and that they could help it do so if they had an institutional voice. According to HUCTW, there was no necessary opposition of interests between workers and management.

During the drive, the workers' energy and Harvard's hostility partially obscured the union leaders' commitment to labor-management cooperation. Many saw the union as jocularly confrontational because its public actions freely poked fun at Harvard. However, organizers did not promote anger at Harvard or position the union as the university's opponent.

HUCTW's leaders maintained that their nonoppositional approach came from the natural inclinations of women workers, who they believed were averse to aggression and conflict. The union's philosophy of "jointness" also had roots in the UAW, whose leadership had helped make labor-management cooperation the ascendant model in the automobile industry during the 1980s.

A minority of HUCTW members has consistently opposed jointness, however, arguing that it reflects not gender difference but a conciliatory political orientation. These members have maintained that women workers as much as men have conflicts with employers that are based on their opposing interests. They have run opposition candidates in union elections, winning up to 40% of the vote.

Jointness has proved contentious not only within HUCTW but in the U.S. labor movement as a whole. HUCTW, like the leadership of the UAW, has occupied a place at one end of a national debate about whether labor-management co-operation is a strategy for worker empowerment or a cooptive program for cultivating consent in the workplace. Elsewhere in the labor movement, jointness gave rise to mass rank-and-file opposition, most notably the 1980s New Directions movement within the UAW.

Jointness in Action, 1989–2004

HUCTW's contracts have produced strong gains in pay and benefits, with the average member salary rising from \$20,000 in 1989 to nearly \$36,000 in 2004, and the top of the pay scale reaching above \$60,000 in 2004. HUCTW has also won strong family-oriented benefits, including generous maternity and paternity leave, subsidies for child care and after-school enrichment, domestic partner benefits, and flexible scheduling.

HUCTW's commitment to jointness has made its accomplishments dependent on the attitudes and interests of administrators. Between 1989 and 1991, Bok chose the Harvard economist John Dunlop to

oversee relations with HUCTW. Dunlop, an architect of postwar industrial relations in the United States, had become an advocate of labor-management cooperation, which he believed could contain industrial conflicts that might otherwise destabilize the U.S. economy. Dunlop and Rondeau led the 1989 negotiations that produced HUCTW's unusual first contract. The contract provided significant economic gains, but in a departure from traditional labor practice, did not contain a grievance procedure, job classifications, seniority provisions, or rules governing transfers, promotions, or layoffs. HUCTW's leaders explained that they did not want a workplace governed by rigid rules, but one in which workers and managers creatively solved problems using moral reasoning.

The contract replaced the traditional grievance procedure with a "problem-solving procedure" in which workers first aimed to resolve conflicts with their supervisors and, failing that, turned to labor-management "problem-solving teams" to negotiate solutions. The contract also created joint councils and committees to discuss policy issues on an ongoing basis. HUCTW leaders argued that the problem-solving process and joint bodies allowed workers to address a broader range of issues than would a grievance procedure, which is designed to enforce only written contract provisions. The sociologist Susan C. Eaton argued in 1996 that joint processes helped HUCTW members change their relationships with supervisors, faculty, and students. However, she suggested that they were not effective at changing workplace policies. At best, they let workers decide how to implement managerial objectives.

The labor-management relationship ruptured in 1991, when Bok resigned and Neil Rudenstine became president. Rudenstine's administration took an adversarial stance toward HUCTW; in response, the union became more oppositional. Between 1992 and 1998, a large minority of joint councils did not function because of managerial hostility. HUCTW negotiated three contracts amid protracted conflicts, most significantly a successful fight from 1995 to 1997 to defend part-time workers' health benefits. The union also won financial support and internal hiring preferences for laid-off workers. In retrospect, HUCTW leaders express pride in their victories but lament the existence of conflict and describe this period as unproductive.

In 1999, a different group of administrators assumed responsibility for relations with HUCTW, and both sides renounced labor-management conflict. In 1999, HUCTW won membership for 1,000 workers whom Harvard had deliberately misclassified as contingent or managerial employees. Contracts ratified in 2001 and 2004 created new training and education

programs to provide job skills and liberal arts education during work time. The contracts also created “New Work Systems at Harvard,” a project to restructure jobs such as the “team concept” restructured auto assembly beginning in the 1970s. The project aims to train workers in a variety of skills and organize them into teams that function with minimal managerial supervision. The team concept, associated with the idea of jointness, has been hotly debated in the labor movement since the 1970s. HUCTW leaders maintain that teams give workers independence; New Directions members argued that they were co-optive.

In addition to its contract campaigns, HUCTW conducts a high level of internal organizing using one-on-one meetings. In 2004, women constituted 14 of HUCTW’s 15 executive board members and three quarters of its 190 area representatives and joint council members. HUCTW staff have also successfully organized, and represent, workers at the University of Massachusetts-Memorial Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts, and are organizing clerical and technical workers at Tufts University.

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See also **American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Clerical Work and Office Work; Coalition of Labor Union Women; Dunlop Commission; Gender; Industrial Democracy**

HAWAII

Known to Portuguese as *terra nova*, “new land,” or Chinese as *tan heung shan*, “the fragrant sandalwood

hills,” workers migrated to the islands of Hawaii throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in search of new possibilities. Work on the sugar plantations and other industries in Hawaii undoubtedly provided opportunities for many immigrants, but for all, the work was long, arduous, and poorly paid. Indeed, the gap between working-class expectation and experience frames much of the restive history of labor in Hawaii. Over the last two hundred years, Hawaii’s working class has negotiated the rapid transition between indigenous community, colonial plantation economy, transpacific hub for people and commodities, and destination for tropical tourism.

The Emerging Plantation Economy

Prior to contact with European and American traders, work and production in the Hawaiian Islands were largely self-sufficient and shaped by kin networks and the powerful Polynesian monarchy. Migrating north from the Marquesas Islands to Hawaii between 500 AD to 700 AD, Polynesians imported crops like taro, sweet potatoes, and most notably, sugarcane. Along with these important food crops, settlers also brought sophisticated techniques of cultivation and technologies for oceanic transportation. Early anthropological accounts suggest the centrality of agricultural life. The significant imprint of agricultural work, for example, was evident in the social stratification, the geographic dispersal of villages, and even the naming of children. Hawaiians also maintained a vast knowledge of trade routes in the Pacific Ocean, exchanging goods like sandalwood throughout Oceania.

Contact with North America and Europe had significant implications for the conduct of trade, work, and production in Hawaii. Europeans’ “discovery” of the islands in 1778 instantly established Hawaii as an important resupply point for Pacific whaling vessels. In turn, Polynesian natives “discovered” new markets for their wares, which led to a boom in the sandalwood trade to Asia. Despite these changes, the native economy remained largely intact for much of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries under indigenous control. The establishment of Hawaii’s first sugar plantation, in Koloa, Kauai, and the advent of large-scale private land ownership, known as the “Great *Mahele*” in 1848, transformed the social and economic conditions of Hawaii. For agricultural capitalists, like Koloa’s operator William Hooper and his financiers, Ladd and Company, sugarcane was “to serve as an entering wedge” that would split the

indigenous economy, opening the way for modern agricultural capitalism. The reticence or open resistance of the *maka'ainana*, or planter/worker class, to new systems of work and labor was evident in the consistent complaints of managers about native indolence, laziness, or irregular attendance in the fields. Increasingly unsatisfied, workers staged the first labor strike in 1841 over low wages and payment methods. Given the inconsistent labor supply, landowners' lack of expertise, and insufficient capital investment, early attempts to establish large-scale sugar production were quite unsuccessful, but they foreshadowed the future to come.

Unable to satisfy their enormous appetite for labor in the islands, sugar planters looked abroad for workers. Thousands of contract laborers from China arrived in 1852 under the newly established Master's and Servant's Act. When the global flow of coolie laborers dwindled, groups like the Planter's Labor and Supply Company, founded in 1882 and the predecessor to the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association, began to recruit heavily in Japan. Pushed off their land by conflict, drawn by the exaggerated promises of labor recruiters, and following previously established networks of migration, contract laborers believed Hawaii held promise. The migration of workers eventually brought nearly 46,000 Chinese and 180,000 Japanese to the islands. These two foundational populations would later be supplemented by 66,000 Filipinos, as well as workers from Portugal, Norway, Sweden, and Korea. The importation of labor and the subsequent explosion of sugar production in the islands, from 3 million pounds in 1850 to 24 million pounds in 1875, established Hawaii as a significant hub in the network of oceanic trade and helped cement the United States' presence in the Pacific.

Life on the Plantation

Hawaii's new residents struggled to create opportunity and develop a sense of community, despite the strenuous conditions of life in plantation work camps. Workdays in the sugarcane fields were long and difficult. Few tasks on the plantation were mechanized, and workers were strictly supervised by foremen, known as *lunas*, from the early morning to around 8:00 p.m. Plantations were largely a male homosocial world, until the turn of the century when contract laborers increasingly came to Hawaii as permanent settlers rather than sojourners. After *pau hana*, "quitting time," workers participated in community organizations, familial groups, and formed mutual aid societies, like the Japanese *tanomoshi*. Immigrants also

maintained many of their cultural practices, celebrating important religious and national holidays or preparing traditional foods.

To maintain order and ensure productivity on plantations, landowners employed a variety of methods, ranging from benevolent paternalism to heavy-handed repression. Nearly all aspects of the Hawaiian economy were consolidated within the hands of five companies, commonly referred to as the Big Five, which allowed landowners a tremendous degree of control in the islands. Moreover, plantation owners often insisted on racial segregation in work camps to discourage interracial solidarity. Planters offered workers free housing, medical care, and recreation, a package of benefits known as the perquisite system. In exchange, bosses demanded obedience to the plantation system, high productivity, and justified paying low wages. When these perquisites failed to satisfy workers' demands, plantation owners openly relied upon violence. Instances of physical abuse were not uncommon, and organized protests were often violently suppressed, as in the case of the lynching of a Japanese worker in 1899, the mass arrest of Filipino strike organizers in 1924, or the infamous Hilo Massacre in 1938, when police shot 50 unarmed demonstrating workers.

Resistance and Organization

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, workers in Hawaii acted to improve the difficult conditions of plantation life, though often in hidden and unorganized ways. Much to the chagrin of their supervisors, fieldworkers regularly attempted to assert control over their work schedules through diffuse methods like absenteeism and foot dragging. Workers also endowed cultural practices like singing, poetry, and language with political meaning. Japanese work songs, known as *hole hole bushi*, or the common language among fieldworkers, pidgin, provided a medium for messages of working-class resistance and often reflected experiences of hardship and race and gender discrimination. Instances of organized resistance did occur. Chinese workers staged several work stoppages in 1891 and 1899, and Japanese workers conducted large-scale labor actions involving more than one thousand strikers in 1900, 1906, and 1909. Ethnic and racial divisions, however, consistently proved to be the greatest roadblock to successful labor organizing. The first multiplantation strike on the island of Oahu in 1920 united more than 12,000 Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino workers within the Hawaii Laborers' Association and

suggested the power of interracial unity. But after five months, the strike came to an end due to the unwavering strength of plantation owners and a growing racial schism between the Japanese and Filipino leadership.

For Hawaii's workers, the 1930s and 1940s marked the beginning of successful long-term labor organizing. In 1935, after carefully monitoring the spread of industrial unionism along the Pacific coast of the United States, a group of longshoremen in Honolulu applied for a charter to the International Longshoremen's Association, the progenitor of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). In 1937, backed by the organizing strength and experience of the ILWU, fieldworkers on sugarcane and pineapple plantations fought for union recognition. Despite the impediment of World War II, the union grew rapidly during the 1940s and eventually represented more than 30,000 agricultural workers by 1946. The distinctiveness of labor and the working-class relations in Hawaii was evident throughout the ILWU's organizing campaign. The ILWU relied upon its prior experience organizing multi-ethnic working-class communities and workers. In addition to its traditional repertoire of tactics, in preparation for the "Great Sugar Strike" in August of 1946, the union developed a number of distinct strategies, such as organizing and lobbying in workers' native communities in the Philippines and Japan and forming multinational and global alliances with other sugar workers. By the end of the decade, the ILWU's campaign to organize Hawaii had been so successful that by some accounts, nearly one in eight working Hawaiians were represented by the union.

The 1940s also marked the beginning of labor's enduring impact on the islands' politics. For the first 40 years of territorial governance, the Big Five and a landed elite held firm control over Hawaiian politics. Political enfranchisement, public education, and most notably, the new power of organized labor began to undercut this oligarchy. Under pressure from labor unions, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) recognized the right of many plantation workers in the territory to organize unions in 1945. Originally excluded from this decision, fieldworkers won the right to collectively bargain later that year when the ILWU secured passage of the "Little Wagner Act," the first recognition of its kind in the United States. With momentum from these victories and backed by the power of labor unions, the Democratic Party swept statewide elections in 1954, instituting a progressive tax system in 1957, a sweeping land reform bill in 1959, and later, significant environmental protections and a comprehensive health insurance plan. Legislation in

1970 allowed public employees to collectively bargain, opening the door for groups like the Hawaiian School Teachers Association, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), and the Hawaiian Nurses Association.

Challenges to Hawaiian Labor

Despite organized labor's overwhelming political successes, however, charges of a communist conspiracy stunted the power of organized labor and particularly the ILWU. Throughout the 1950s, the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted numerous interviews with labor activists, and 66 residents were called before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in April 1950. Many refused to testify and were indicted for contempt, earning them the title "the reluctant 39." When several ILWU members, namely Ichiro Izuka and Jack Kawano, publicly broke with the Union and provided federal investigators with details about communist activities in the islands, anticommunist groups, such as Imua, leveled strident claims against labor activists like Jack Hall, Bob McElrath, David Thompson, Levi Kealoha, and Tadashi Ogawa. In the most infamous incident, seven labor leaders were convicted and imprisoned for several months under provisions of the Smith Act for conspiring to teach the overthrow of the U.S. government. Despite the strength and vigor of the "red hunt" in the islands, the memory of labor's strike victories in the late 1940s and more recently in 1951 and 1952 remained strong. Working-class Hawaiians demonstrated their support for Hall and others, staging protests and work stoppages. In 1958, anticommunist organizations lost support and faded from public politics.

Since 1950, tourism has been the most dominant force of change for Hawaii's working class. Prompted by local calls for economic diversification and fueled by low-cost air travel, service sector jobs exploded in the late 1950s and 1960s. Meanwhile, union jobs in the sugar industry declined precipitously, from a peak in 1940 of 35,000 jobs to just 17,000 in 1957. Organized labor struggled to keep pace with rapid economic change. Several jurisdictional disputes in the grocery and retail sectors broke out between the ILWU and AFL-CIO in 1958 and 1959. To lessen the impact of the decline in sugarcane, unions sponsored job-training programs to help displaced workers transition from plantation work to the burgeoning tourist industry. Many workers have found new jobs in the service industry, but the struggle for union control has been difficult. In December 1970, ILWU workers

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organized the longest strike of hotel workers, 75 days. Other unions, such as Local 5 of the Hotel Workers' union (Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, HERE), have confronted large hotel chains' reliance upon nonunion labor, leading work stoppages in 1952, 1966, and a large strike of 7,500 workers in 1990.

Although tourism has largely replaced the agricultural economy, the early experience of plantation work has left an indelible mark upon the islands. Hawaii's population remains tremendously diverse, and unlike many other states, working-class organizations continue to influence the character of Hawaii's social, economic, and political life.

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See also **Hawaii Laborers' Association; Japanese Strike in Hawai'i (1909)**

HAWAII LABORERS' ASSOCIATION

The Hawaii Laborers' Association (HLA) was founded in 1919 as the Japanese Federation of Labor or the Federation of Japanese Labor. The Association and the strike it initiated in 1920, often referred to as the "dual strike," are notable in the history of labor in Hawai'i because both represent the first effort on the part of Japanese and Filipino workers to organize across ethnic lines for the common good of sugar plantation workers. The dual strike was the first strike in Hawaiian history in which the two largest groups of workers attempted to work together to press for their demands. When the Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) and local politicians accused workers of being agents for the Japanese government during a strike on the sugar plantations of O'ahu, the Japanese Federation of Labor changed its name to the Hawaii Laborers' Association to symbolize its commitment to higher wages and better working conditions for all sugar plantation laborers.

The Japanese Federation of Labor was an umbrella organization founded by delegates from local labor associations in the Islands' plantation communities. These smaller organizations formed in the wake of a 1909 strike to protect the interest of plantation workers. In spite of the vast distances between plantation towns, they were able to stay organized by taking advantage of an existing network of community organizations. In smaller plantation towns, they often used religious organizations such as the Young Buddhist Association to meet and discuss the labor situation on the plantations. In 1919, representatives from these organizations met in Honolulu to discuss the economic situation of plantation workers. In the face of rising costs driven by wartime inflation and stagnating wages, Hawai'i's sugar workers demanded a raise in pay from 77 cents to \$1.25 per day. In a formal petition to the HSPA, they articulated their demands: in addition to a raise, they asked for an eight-hour workday, paid maternity leave, and better health care and recreational facilities.

Filipino workers also began to organize in 1919. The Philippines became the newest source of labor for the plantations after the United States restricted Japanese immigration under the terms of the 1908 Gentleman's Agreement. As a protectorate of the United States, the Philippines offered plantation owners easy access to a large labor force. In the decade between 1909 and 1919, the number of Japanese workers on sugar plantations had declined from approximately 64% to 44% percent. During the same decade, the number of Filipino workers increased from a few hundred to nearly 10,000 workers, about 20% of the total workforce.

Because Filipinos had not been in the islands very long, they lacked the social networks of community organizations that facilitated labor organizing. However, they were led by a charismatic union organizer named Pablo Manlapit. Manlapit, who had arrived in Hawai'i from the Philippines in 1918, organized the Filipino Labor Union, which formed a loose affiliation with the Japanese Federation of Labor. Manlapit was to act as a go-between for the Japanese Federation and the Filipino workers. However, language and cultural differences impeded smooth cooperation between the two groups.

After the HSPA rejected the demands for higher wages, the Japanese Federation set out to plan its strike. Having learned from previous experience, the Japanese workers had planned to strike in the spring of 1920 as the sugar cane was ripening in the field and ready for harvest. It was thought that if their profits were rotting in the fields, sugar plantation owners would be more likely to negotiate. In addition, by not striking right away, they allowed themselves

the several months it would take to raise the money for a strike fund to support workers and their families for the duration.

Filipino workers, however, jumped the gun and walked off several O'ahu plantations in January of 1920. This forced the hand of the Japanese Federation and a general strike was called for February, long before they were ready. Although they attempted to present a united front, there was no question that Japanese and Filipino workers and union leaders were at odds with one another over strike tactics, money, and the duration of the strike.

As it had in the past, the HSPA refused to negotiate and used its control over local politics, government, and media to undermine the workers, their union, and turn public opinion against them. Using spies and speculation, the HSPA fueled the ember of anti-Japanese sentiment by suggesting that the union was acting on the orders of the Japanese government. Through rumormongering in the press, they accused Federation officials of taking advantage of innocent workers in order to "Japanize" the islands. In response to these constant attacks, in April of 1920, the Federation changed its name to the Hawaii Laborers' Association to signal their independence from any foreign government and to deflect the accusation of "racialism."

The Japanese and Filipino workers also used publicity to attempt to encourage public support for the strike. On April 3rd they organized a "77 cents parade" through the streets of Honolulu, timed to coincide with the local celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Protestant missionaries in Hawai'i. Even as the local Protestant community was celebrating the triumph of Christianity in Hawai'i, women and children marched in Honolulu carrying picket signs that said, "God has created us equal" and "My Papa 77 cents a day. My Mama 58 cents a day."

As effective as their strategies were, the strike was broken after six months by the HSPA. Even local religious leaders had failed to bring the HSPA to the table. Once the strike was over, the HSPA and the local government worked to abolish the union by prosecuting its leadership. After the strike, 21 leaders of the Hawaii Laborers' Association were charged with conspiracy in the bombing of the house of a plantation translator named Sakamaki. Although there was little physical evidence to link the men to the crime, 15 were convicted and served from four to 10 years in prison. Upon their release, many returned to Japan.

The Hawaii Laborers' Association did not survive much beyond the strike of 1920 due to the organized strength and control of the HSPA. The strike and the

Association were, however, influential in future labor organizing and demonstrated both the need and potential for cross-racial union organizations in Hawai'i.

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See also Japanese Strike in Hawai'i (1909)

HAYMARKET AFFAIR (1886)

On May 4, 1886, at about 10:30 p.m., a protest rally near Chicago's Haymarket Square was about to end when six columns of police (176 officers in all) marched to the rally site on Desplaines Street and ordered the meeting's participants to disperse. The rally had been called by the city's anarchists, who were organized into the International Working People's Association, a group composed mainly of German and Bohemian immigrant workers. The purpose of the May 4 meeting was to protest an event that took place the night before when Chicago police intervened to stop strikes from assaulting strikebreakers leaving the McCormick harvester works on the South Side. In the fighting that ensued, the police shot and killed four strikers.

The city's leading anarchist organizer, August Spies, had opened the Haymarket meeting calling for a peaceful protest, though he had at many other times told workers to arm themselves and prepare to use dynamite bombs if and when the police and militia attacked. Like the other main speakers that night, Albert Parsons and Samuel Fielden, Spies was a visionary who believed that the workers' struggle for power would lead to a social revolution that would be violent because the ruling class would use all of its forces to put down any uprising or revolt.

Sam Fielden, the last speaker of the evening, did not call upon the crowd to attack the police, but he did say that workers should "throttle" and "kill the law." Hearing these words, plainclothes policemen reported to their commander, Chief Inspector John Bonfield, that Fielden was making incendiary remarks.

HAYMARKET AFFAIR (1886)

Although the mayor of Chicago, Carter H. Harrison, had told Bonfield that the rally was peaceful and that he should send police reserves home, the chief still decided to march on the rally and to disperse the small crowd that remained.

When the police arrived, Fielden objected to the command to disperse, saying, "But we are peaceful." Then he reluctantly agreed to end the meeting. Just then, a bomb was thrown into the police ranks; it exploded with terrific force. Wild gunfire erupted from the police revolvers, and according to police witnesses, firing came from the crowd as well, although this fact was disputed by many other eyewitnesses. One police officer died within minutes of the explosion, and six others died later from their wounds, although it is not clear how many were killed by the bomb fragments or by bullets, and it is not clear how many of the gunshots came from the police officers' own revolvers, though many probably did. At least 60 officers were wounded, along with unknown numbers of civilian bystanders (at least three of them were confirmed dead as a result of police gunfire).

The Haymarket bombing created hysteria in Chicago and across the nation, and led to the nation's first red scare. The *Chicago Tribune* blamed the mayor for allowing free speech for the anarchists and insisted that the government deport them and exclude any other "foreign savages who might come to America with their dynamite bombs and anarchic purposes."

In the aftermath of the bombing, Chicago police arrested scores of workers suspected of being anarchists, raided homes and offices without warrants, and stopped all public meetings. Immigrants were intimidated by the red scare and scapegoating that followed; it was a time when newspapers and public officials created a terrifying image of the European immigrant as a potential anarchist murderer—an image that endured in the popular imagination.

The red scare also had a chilling effect on the insurgent labor movement of the time, one that had propelled more than 300,000 workers into the streets on May 1, 1886, in a mass strike for the eight-hour day. Chicago was the epicenter of a storm of strikes that had been building for nearly two months, as skilled and unskilled, native and foreign-born men and women joined together in what they thought of as a freedom movement to gain precious hours of "their own time" from employers who arbitrarily insisted on at least 10 hours' work five days a week plus at least a half day on Saturday. Indeed, thousands of workers had already gained shorter hours in April as a result of strikes and demands on employers, including some by workers who demanded an eight-hour day with no reduction in pay.

There were political tensions in the strike movement, especially in Chicago where a strong anarchist-led body, the Central Labor Union, opposed the city's mainstream Trades and Labor Assembly. The former group, composed mainly of German and Czech



The Anarchist Riot in Chicago—A Dynamite Bomb Exploding Among the Police [McCormick Strike, Haymarket Square]. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-796].

immigrants, saw the eight-hour reform as a means of uniting workers toward a more revolutionary end, whereas the city's craft unions, led by American, Irish, and English moderates, regarded shorter hours as an end in itself. Tensions also existed between the anarchists and the reform leaders of the Knights of Labor. Some Chicago Knights shared the fears of their national leader, Terence V. Powderly, that a mass strike for eight hours would heighten class conflict and lead to violence.

However, as of May 3 the strikers had remained unified, and their strikes had remained nonviolent. This peaceful period ended that night when the police killed the strikers at the McCormick works, an event that led directly to the Haymarket rally on May 4 and to the violence that followed there.

Within a few days after the bombing, most of the eight-hour strikes had ended, as many trade unionists, like Samuel Gompers of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, blamed the Haymarket bombing and its aftermath for killing the shorter hours movement. There were other reasons the movement receded, notably the actions of aggressive employer associations and the ambivalent attitudes of many union officials, but the Haymarket bombing nevertheless marked a turning point in labor history, one that signaled the rapid decline of the Knights of Labor in most cities and industries.

The trial of the eight Chicago anarchists indicted for the bombing began in Chicago on June 22, 1886. At the time, few outside the anarchist movement displayed any sympathy toward the defendants, who were assumed by the press to be guilty and worthy of hanging. The trial was a sensational affair that lasted most of the summer and attracted international attention. Then, as the proceedings wore on, more and more trade unionists and other citizens began to worry that the jury seemed to be packed with jurors who were biased against the defendants when the prosecution produced only circumstantial evidence that the accused anarchists were directly responsible for the bombing. Indeed, none of the anarchists were actually charged with throwing the lethal hand grenade; the prosecution charged them as accessories to murder because the anarchists had allegedly conspired with the bomber and abetted the bombing with their words and actions. Even sympathetic observers realized, however, that whatever the weaknesses in the state's case, the jury would find the defendants guilty.

Still, many observers were shocked when the jury members joined the announcement of their guilty verdict with a death sentence for all seven anarchists they had tried: August Spies, Michael Schwab, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, and Louis Lingg (all

German-born workers), Samuel Fielden (an Englishman employed as a teamster), Oscar Neebe, and Albert Parsons (both American-born tradesmen).

All of these men had been active and effective union organizers and eight-hour strike leaders as well as dedicated anarchist agitators and propagandists. Indeed, August Spies and Albert Parsons had become nationally known figures in labor and radical movements of the time. Spies, the publisher of the nation's largest anarchist newspaper, *Chicagoer Arbeiter Zeitung*, was an author of the historic Pittsburgh Manifesto, a revolutionary document issued in 1883 by socialist militants who had given up on electoral politics and the gradual overthrow of capitalism; and Albert Parsons was a legendary speaker and organizer much in demand as an orator and agitator.

Soon after the verdict was rendered in the Haymarket case, many labor union members, especially immigrants, began to feel that the anarchists had been tried and sentenced to death, not for the bombing, but for their militant words and actions on behalf of the working class. The anarchists' lawyers appealed for a new trial, complaining that the proceedings and the jury were blatantly biased against their clients. However, in October 1886, the judge who tried the case, Joseph E. Gary, sentenced three defendants (Fielden, Schwab, and Neebe) to 15 years in prison and condemned the other five men to death on the gallows. Before Gary issued his final edict, the anarchists delivered highly charged speeches to the court that would later be published, translated, and disseminated in many nations.

During the legal appeal of the death sentence to the Illinois and national supreme courts in 1887, concern and sympathy for the condemned men grew across the United States and in Europe, culminating in a massive petition campaign in November aimed at the governor of Illinois, Richard J. Oglesby, who was asked to commute the anarchists' sentences to life imprisonment. Workers, especially union members, generated most of the support for clemency, but the campaign attracted a few noted writers like the muckraker Henry Demarest Lloyd as well as many leading citizens of Chicago, including some who feared that executing the anarchists would make them martyrs to the revolutionary cause.

Scores of people descended upon the Illinois State capitol in Springfield as the execution date approached in November 1887. Governor Oglesby accepted petitions for clemency signed by thousands of citizens and heard many appeals, including an especially powerful argument for clemency made by Samuel Gompers, president of the newly formed American Federation of Labor, who also feared that the executions would confer martyrdom on the five

condemned revolutionaries, who would be remembered as heroes who died fighting for freedom of speech.

As the governor pondered his decision, one of the anarchists, Louis Lingg, reportedly exploded a small dynamite cap concealed in a cigar in an apparent attempt to commit suicide. As Lingg lay dying, Governor Oglesby announced his decision that Spies, Parsons, Engel, and Fischer would be executed on November 11, as ordered by the court.

After the hangings took place on that day, long known to anarchists as “Black Friday,” an intensely emotional reaction followed among workers, especially immigrants, and among anarchists and socialists in Europe. A few noted Americans like the writer William Dean Howells also expressed dismay over what the famous novelist called a “judicial murder” in Chicago.

The Haymarket case refused to die in the public imagination, especially in Chicago, where some citizens were haunted by the fear that a grave injustice had been done. The feelings of regret surfaced in June 1893 when an impressive monument was unveiled at the grave of the five anarchists in Waldheim Cemetery, outside of Chicago, and when the governor of Illinois, a Democrat of German birth named John Peter Altgeld, pardoned the three surviving anarchists serving time in prison. Altgeld’s famous pardon included an expression of outrage over what the governor regarded as the injustice of the anarchists’ 1886 trial.

In the late 1890s, the anarchists, now regarded by socialists and anarchists as the Haymarket martyrs, seemed to fade from view as radical and labor movements declined during the ensuing depression and the repression that followed the defeat of the Pullman boycott of 1894. And yet, the memory of the Haymarket anarchists proved to be remarkably resilient, especially in Spain and Italy, where the celebration of May Day as the international workers’ holiday after 1890 was used to recall the sacrifice of Chicago revolutionaries who were remembered as having died for the eight-hour day. This memory endured even longer in Latin America, especially in Mexico where May 1 was known as the “day of the Chicago martyrs.”

The memory of the Haymarket martyrs was also revived in the United States when socialists and anarchists celebrated May Day in the years between 1907 and 1917; it reappeared in 1937 after the Memorial Day massacre in Chicago, when police killed 10 unarmed picketers and the newspapers blamed it all on a Communist-inspired riot; and it resurfaced during and after the centennial on May 1, 1986, when a stream

of plays, songs, poems, posters, documentaries, and historical essays retold the unforgettable Haymarket story.

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HAYWOOD, WILLIAM D. “BIG BILL” (1869–1929) Cofounder, Industrial Workers of the World

Perhaps the best-known member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), William D. “Big Bill” Haywood cofounded and helped run the legendary union, the pre-eminent radical organization of its time. Previously, Haywood had been a leader of the militant Western Federation of Miners (WFM) and the Socialist Party. He still is recalled for his commanding presence, speaking style, and leadership.

Born in Utah Territory in 1869, Haywood grew up in a working-class family. Haywood first worked in a mine at the age of nine, the same age at which he lost one of his eyes (in a boyhood accident); his one-eyed visage later contributed to his imposing persona.

From 15, he worked in a series of mines—following the boom-and-bust industry. Along the way, he married and fathered two daughters; his wife became an invalid from difficulties in labor, and they drifted apart.

The WFM was at the forefront of Gilded Age labor strife, resisting increasingly powerful mining corporations in the Rocky Mountain West. Haywood joined the WFM in 1896 when working in Silver City, Idaho, moved up the ranks of local leadership, and relocated to Denver in 1902 to help lead the union. The 40,000-strong WFM became steadily more militant, violent, and leftist in response to intense corporate and governmental attacks.

This struggle expanded when Frank Steunenberg, a former governor of Idaho and noted anti-unionist, was murdered in 1905. Haywood, along with two other WFM leaders, was accused of the crime. The murderer confessed but claimed that Haywood and the others had hired him. Thus began the era's most celebrated case, ending in the acquittal of all three—primarily because the prosecution provided no evidence to corroborate the murderer's testimony.

That same year, 1905, Haywood helped found the IWW. Many socialists and radical unionists believed that the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was

far too conservative. By contrast, the IWW—with Haywood chairing what he termed a "Continental Congress of the Working Class"—was committed to organizing all workers (regardless of their craft, gender, nationality, or race) in industrial unions and overthrowing capitalism. Haywood came to such radical notions from his own experiences as a miner, unionist, and organizer. As Haywood reportedly said, "I've never read Marx but I've got the marks of capitalism all over me."

Haywood became an IWW leader, especially during the period from 1912 to 1918. For years Haywood had struggled within the Socialist Party, but in 1913, he largely abandoned it for the more job-focused Wobblies. One of his most famous battles was the 1912 "Bread and Roses" textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. After the first group of leaders was arrested on bogus murder charges, Haywood and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn led the 25,000 workers, mostly immigrant women, to a stunning victory. In 1913, while leading 30,000 striking silk workers in Paterson, New Jersey, Haywood captivated another group. New York City's bohemians, denizens of Greenwich Village, were enthralled by Haywood, who they said was a true working-class hero. He was known to them for his many quotable sayings,



W.D. Haywood leads Lowell strike parade. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ggbain-10357].

including his quote that the IWW is "socialism with its working clothes on."

With Haywood at the helm from 1914 to 1917, the IWW dramatically expanded. The IWW organized workers in war-related industries that experienced intense labor shortages (thereby giving workers more power). The 1910s experienced a surge in unionism and radicalism, not just in the States but in nations worldwide. Though many Wobblies argued that working-class men did all of the fighting and dying in all armies, the IWW, true to its anarchist leanings, left support of or opposition to the war to its members' consciences. Nevertheless, the IWW was widely considered to be an antiwar organization.

The IWW's radicalism and power made it a target, resulting in federal raids on IWW offices nationwide in September 1917. The following year, one hundred Wobblies were defendants in what became the longest trial in U.S. history. After four months, the jury came back in under an hour, finding all the defendants guilty on all counts. Haywood was sentenced to 20 years in a federal penitentiary. The Wobblies claimed they were tried on their beliefs—and no evidence of a planned general strike to undermine the nation's war effort ever has been uncovered.

After serving a year in Leavenworth, Haywood was freed temporarily in 1921 pending appeal, jumped bail, and fled to the Soviet Union. Haywood's actions were highly controversial among Wobblies, many believing he had abandoned the struggle. Haywood did not see the point in remaining in a capitalist jail, when he could join the world's first nation to overthrow capitalism. Moreover, Haywood was in failing health, his diabetes and ulcer having worsened dramatically while jailed.

Haywood's decade in the Soviet Union was troubling. He contributed little to his newly adopted home. Haywood could not return to his beloved homeland, did not speak Russian, and became an alcoholic. He died in 1928. Half of his ashes were placed inside the Kremlin's walls; the other half went to Chicago's famed Waldheim Cemetery, where the Haymarket Martyrs are buried. His memoir, *Bill Haywood's Book*, likely ghostwritten, was released in 1929.

Big Bill Haywood's life is typical and atypical of working-class Americans of his time. Like many poor boys, he had little formal education, instead entering the workforce. Subsequently, he experienced the insecurities, hard work, and dangers of such an existence. Like millions of others, he joined a union because he believed that he was powerless to protect his interests otherwise. Like hundreds of thousands, unionism and corporate hostility further radicalized him. He looms large over American labor history.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley; Industrial Workers of the World**

HEIGHTON, WILLIAM (1801–1873)

William Heighton's career as an activist cleaves into two stages, one as a labor radical and one as an anti-slavery advocate. Born in 1801 in the village of Oundle in Northamptonshire, England, Heighton emigrated with his family around the War of 1812, settling in Philadelphia, where he married (Ann Beckley) and plied his trade of shoemaking in order to support a growing family. Little was heard from him until the second half of the 1820s, when he steered the Quaker City's struggling workers in a new direction.

The deterioration of the crafts attendant upon the acceleration of the market revolution plus the influence of political economists turned Heighton by the mid-1820s toward Anglo-American radicalism. Though he was familiar with the work of Thomas Paine, Heighton was especially impressed with the more recent writings of David Ricardo as well as John Gray, the primitive socialist who argued that working-class poverty stemmed from economic exploitation and political oppression, not simply the latter, as earlier radicals believed. In 1827, Heighton became the city's leading labor activist, delivering the first of three major addresses over the next two years, which were printed in pamphlet form and widely distributed within the city and to other urban centers. His spring and fall speeches in 1827 were hard-hitting polemics based on the labor theory of value along with a comprehensive plan for economic reconstruction and working-class organization. Heighton depicted an economic landscape populated by "producers," and "accumulators," or the many and the few. The former group, which consisted of working people, farmers, and others working with their hands, were the creators of wealth; the latter, which consisted of bankers, merchants, and manufacturers, were

among the nonmanual workers who appropriated the wealth created by producers. Accumulators prevailed in the political arena as well as in the economy because they had seized control of the political machinery in the wake of the Revolution. They maintained power by keeping producers ignorant generally and unaware of their own economic interests.

Heighton's remedial plan caught on. Between his two addresses, he had worked with a committee of comrades to draft the constitution and bylaws of what would become the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations (MUTA). In January 1828, shortly after his second address, delegates from about nine trade unions ratified the new document, formally launching the nation's (and arguably the world's) first citywide organization of trade unions. Some members of the MUTA's leadership, including Heighton, doubled as the editorial committee of the *Mechanics' Free Press* (MFP), the union's official organ, which appeared in January 1828. Not long afterward, a meeting of the MUTA gave rise to nominating committees, which became known as the Working Men's Party, the first labor party in the nation. The Working Men got off to a rough start in 1828 but drew enough interest in 1829 to hold the balance of power; they ran even better in 1830 but lost the balance of power and disappeared entirely after the 1831 campaign. The new party faced the same obstacles that would hinder political insurgencies for the rest of the antebellum era, including thin resources and weak organization. In addition, the Democratic Party in the city of Philadelphia proved to be rather more flexible than its counterparts elsewhere, making room for working-class insurgents and selectively borrowing from their agenda.

Heighton took the 1830 election very hard, denouncing the "blindness" and "sappiness" of working people and leaving the city in a huff (MFP, October 29, 1830, and March 2, 1831). He wound up in rural Salem County, New Jersey, possibly with the idea of starting life anew. He remarried in the mid-1850s following the death of his first wife in the 1840s, and in the early 1860s he set aside his shoemaker's kit to pursue farming. He seems to have eschewed labor activism but retained his animus for the Protestant clergy (they were accumulators who also kept workers in darkness). He also took a growing interest in land reform, a nostrum in the 1840s that attracted a good number of labor advocates from the 1830s. In addition, the rusticated radical established a name among abolitionists, though it is not known when he became concerned about slavery (having published a single antislavery piece in the MFP) or if he joined the American Anti-Slavery Society or its New Jersey affiliate. By the Civil War, he was known well enough in

abolitionist circles to be asked to contribute a short essay in 1865 for a book being prepared by George L. Stearns, the Medford, Massachusetts, linseed manufacturer and radical abolitionist who a decade earlier had been a member of the "Secret Six" who supported John Brown in Kansas and then in Virginia. In a letter he called his "political daguerrotype," Heighton argued that if "you wish to uproot slavery, break up the land monopoly" of the Old South. Otherwise, the "barbarous land-barons," in the region would "vent their spleen on the innocent and helpless freedmen" (Stearns, p. 43).

The one-time labor radical and autodidact and now radical abolitionist found himself in the eminent company of Wendell Phillips and Frederick Douglass. He had come a long way since leaving behind the labor movement. Future scholars would do well to chart that course.

BRUCE LAURIE

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See also **Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations of Philadelphia**

HENRY, JOHN

The story of John Henry follows from a song. John Henry was a giant—a powerful black man who worked on a tunneling gang on the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) railroad. He drove a “nine-pound hammer” into a steel chisel, hitting it so hard that “every time he brought his hammer down, you could see the steel going through.” As the chisel buried itself into the side of the mountain, John Henry sang to match the beat:

Ain't no hammer
in these mountains,
rings like mine,
rings like mine.

The tunneling gang worked to pierce a million-year-old mountain in western Virginia that separated the east from the west. But the task seemed impossible. When John Henry first saw it, he feared he would fail. “The rock was so tall and John Henry so small that he laid down his hammer and he cried.” Progress was slow, and the work was perilous. An inventor came up to the mountainside with a steam drill, which he declared was faster than any tunneling gang. John Henry challenged the steam drill to a race. The steam drill hammered on one side, John Henry on the other. John Henry sang while he hammered. His buddy had a stack of chisels, replacing each one as the tip dulled. John Henry and his hammer moved like a blur.

While the steam drill was powerful, John Henry was a “mighty, mighty man.” At the end of the contest, John Henry “drove in fourteen feet, the steam drill only made nine.” Then, just as John Henry finished, “his head spinning 'round,” he fell. He knew where he was going, and asked for a cool drink of water before he died. Such a powerful man was John Henry, such an important man, that they took him to the White House and buried him in the sand. Even the steam engines paid their respects to the grave of John Henry, for “every locomotive come a roarin' by, said yonder lies a steel-drivin' man.”

If a hundred people saw a contest between a hammer man and a steam drill in the early 1870s, there are more than a hundred versions of the song, the ballad of John Henry. By the 1880s, white men in the Appalachian Mountains knew it as a “Negro banjo pickers' melody.” By the 1930s, it was so popular in the mountains of Virginia and Kentucky that the earliest country musicians, including Fiddlin' John Carson and the

Skillet Lickers, had versions of the song. Every blues musician in eastern Virginia and along the Mississippi River could play it. In the middle 1930s, the folklorists Guy Johnson and Louis Chappell, with a small regiment of graduate students, traveled around the South to find the traces of John Henry. They discovered contradictory versions of the John Henry legend, placing him in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Texas, and Jamaica. The folklorists and their students followed the story as well as they could, published their results, and moved on. There was something here: the Chesapeake & Ohio railroad *was* built through the mountains of western Virginia between 1870 and 1872. Steam drills had been tried there. Men and women knew of the many lives lost building those tunnels. But the records were lost, and the stories were contradictory.

By the 1920s, the song had become an anthem among members of the Harlem Renaissance, the American Communist Party, and white textile mill workers in the American South. For Communists, the John Henry ballad seemed to express exactly the Communist Party's view of black workers' struggles. Finally, in the 1960s, as black power activists became interested in his story, John Henry became more expressly a symbol of the battle against white power structures, while for musicians at the Newport Folk Festival he represented their opposition to new technologies like electric guitars and amplifiers. In the 1960s, John Henry became the focus of an event in West Virginia called the John Henry Folk Festival, a celebration organized by Ed Cabbell, an African-American musician, schoolteacher, and self-made expert on the story of John Henry. Cabbell's festival has gained new popularity due to the novel *John Henry Days* by Colson Whitehead, who visited the festival and explored how the story of John Henry's life could be shaped for commercial exploitation, appeal to jazz musicians, and become a kind of anthem for the epidemic of crack cocaine.

Scott Nelson has argued that John Henry was an actual person, a convict from the Virginia Penitentiary who participated in the construction of the Lewis Tunnel on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad. That tunnel was built between 1871 and 1873, and Nelson has demonstrated that John Henry, the convict, was shipped to the mountains to work on the railroad beginning in 1868, and that steam drills were used at the Lewis Tunnel site between 1872 and 1873 alongside the convicts from the penitentiary. Nearly two hundred workers died in the construction of this tunnel and were apparently all returned to the Virginia Penitentiary because of a stipulation in the employment contract that the C&O had to pay a \$100 fine “for each prisoner not returned.” The bodies

appeared to have been returned, only to be buried in the sand next to the old white house of the Virginia penitentiary. This, according to Nelson, accounts for the final verse of many of the songs:

They took John Henry to the White House,
And buried him in the san'
And every locomotive comes roarin' by,
Says there lies a steel drivin' man,
Says there lies a steel drivin' man.

These bodies were only recently discovered, in 1992, when contractors dug up the grounds of the penitentiary to make room for new construction.

SCOTT NELSON

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HERSTEIN, LILLIAN (APRIL 12, 1886– AUGUST 9, 1983) Union Activist

Lillian Herstein, whom *Life* magazine described as "the most important woman in the American labor movement" in 1937, was a public schoolteacher, union activist, advocate of workers' education, and candidate for national political office. Herstein was born on April 12, 1886, on the west side of Chicago, the youngest of six children. Her Jewish parents, Wolf and Cipe, emigrated from Lithuania, then part of Tsarist Russia, to the United States shortly after the American Civil War. Her family owned a bookstore in Chicago. She attended Northwestern University, where she gained a degree in Latin and Greek and obtained an M.A. from the University of Chicago in 1924. After graduating from Northwestern University in 1907, Herstein, like many college-educated women at the time, became a schoolteacher. She taught in

high schools in Franklin Grove, Illinois, and Mount Vernon, Indiana, before entering the Chicago public school system in 1912. She initially taught in high schools and then in junior colleges for the rest of her career in Chicago. Like most women teachers of her generation, Herstein never married.

Influenced by her sister Gusta, a sales clerk who was active in the labor movement, and by the reform work of Margaret Haley and the Chicago Teachers' Federation, Herstein became a union activist. She joined the newly formed Federation of Women High School Teachers in 1914, a local affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Herstein represented her union in the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) and was for 25 years the only woman on the executive board of the CFL. She became active in the Chicago branch of the Women's Trade Union League. The League, formed in 1903, set out to organize women into unions, to establish workers', education programs, and to bring about legislation for shorter hours and protection for women. The organization was one in which schoolteachers like Lillian Herstein, middle-class reformers like Jane Addams of Hull-House and Mary McDowell of the University of Chicago settlement house, and labor leaders like Agnes Nestor worked together.

In addition to teaching in the Chicago public schools for 36 years, Herstein spent her evenings, weekends, and summers active in workers' education. In the 1920s and 1930s, Herstein taught English and public speaking at the Chicago Labor College run by the CFL and the Chicago Women's Trade Union League. She also taught at the University of Wisconsin, the University of Chicago, and the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry. Herstein went on to head the Chicago Works Progress Administration workers' education program in the 1930s.

To pursue her belief in democracy and social justice, Herstein became active in local and national progressive politics. She joined the Labor Party after World War I and then participated in the Farmer Labor Party, formed in 1920, which sought, unsuccessfully, to become a third-party alternative to the two major parties. In 1932, Herstein ran unsuccessfully for Congress in Illinois on the Progressive Party ticket, calling for old-age pensions and unemployment insurance. In 1936, she supported the re-election of President Franklin Roosevelt and directed the speaker's bureau of Labor's Non-Partisan League in Illinois, an organization formed to help win the re-election of Roosevelt. In the summer of 1937, President Roosevelt picked Herstein to serve on the U.S. delegation that attended the International Labor Organization (ILO) meeting in Geneva, Switzerland.

In the late 1930s, Herstein became active in the Chicago Teachers' Union (CTU), formed in 1937 by a merger of Herstein's union, the Federation of Women High School Teachers, and three other teacher unions. Chicago public schoolteachers had suffered from nonpayment of salaries in the early years of the Depression and from pay cuts throughout the 1930s. Nearly two thirds of the Chicago public schoolteachers joined the CTU, led by the high school teacher John M. Fewkes, making it the largest teachers union in the country. Herstein saw the union as a vehicle for reforming the public schools and in particular removing the political influence of Mayor Edward J. Kelly and the Democratic machine from the school system. She served on the executive committee of the CTU, participated in the work of the American Federation of Teachers, and ran for president of the AFT in 1938 but lost to Jerome Davis.

Herstein became disillusioned with the CFL and the CTU in the late 1930s. John Fitzpatrick, the leader of the CFL, moved the Federation closer to the Chicago Democratic political machine led by Mayor Kelly, and became more authoritarian in running the organization. The CTU became dominated by John M. Fewkes and his supporters, who wanted to eschew the social reformism of Herstein and embrace bread-and-butter unionism. In January 1940, Lillian Herstein resigned from the executive board of the CTU, accusing Fewkes of not consulting with the rest of the leadership. When she retired from teaching at the age of 65 in 1951, Fewkes unceremoniously removed her as CTU representative from the CFL.

During World War II, Herstein devoted herself to the war effort. She became a member of the War Production Board in 1942 as its woman's consultant on the West Coast and helped obtain child care and other facilities for women workers until the end of the war. When the war ended, Herstein returned to Chicago and helped expose the corruption and patronage that blighted the public school system and joined the campaign to remove Mayor Kelly from office. In December 1946, Kelly announced he would not run for re-election, and his supporters who ran the public schools at his behest resigned their posts.

After her retirement from teaching, Herstein worked for the Jewish Labor Committee, formed in New York in 1934, which opposed anti-Semitism and racism. The committee later became very involved with race relations in the United States, and she became a member of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, initially formed in 1943 as the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations, and campaigned to racially integrate the building trades. Herstein continued to teach for local unions, wrote for

labor journals, and campaigned for reform politicians against the Chicago Democratic machine. Herstein died on August 9, 1983.

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See also Addams, Jane; Hull-House Settlement (1889–1963); Nestor, Agnes; Women's Trade Union League

HIGGINS, MONSIGNOR GEORGE G. (1916–2002) Catholic Labor Activist

Beginning in the early twentieth century, a number of Catholic clergy became active in and on behalf of American labor unions. For 60 years, Monsignor George G. Higgins exemplified the ideal of the "labor priest." His strong public presence and his status as an official in the Catholic Church's bureaucracy lent credence to the view among Catholics and others that the Church was friendly toward the goals of organized labor. Similarly, his vigorous participation in the labor movement promoted the same idea among union officials and members. In this way, Higgins exerted significant influence on the character of the relationship between labor and the Church in the United States—a relationship considerably more confrontational in many other national contexts.

A native of Chicago, Higgins was ordained a priest for that archdiocese in 1940. He obtained master's and doctoral degrees in economics and political science from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, where he wrote his dissertation on "Voluntarism in Organized Labor in the U.S., 1930–1940." In Washington, he became involved with the Social Action Department of the National

Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC), the national organization of the United States Roman Catholic bishops. Through the Catholic University and the NCWC, he became acquainted with and influenced by key figures in American Catholic social reform, including Bishop Francis Haas, Father Raymond McGowan, and Monsignor John A. Ryan.

Following completion of his studies in 1944, Higgins joined the staff of the Social Action Department, eventually succeeding Ryan and McGowan as its head and as author of the weekly column, "The Yardstick." Higgins retired from the bishops' conference in 1980 and concluded his career by teaching theology at the Catholic University. At his death, he was widely lauded by officials in both organized labor and the Church.

Higgins was an ardent supporter of organized labor, writing, speaking, and frequently acting in favor of workers' demands. His syndicated column and occasional articles appeared throughout the Catholic press, and his lecture engagements included the first Congress of Solidarity in Poland. He led prayers at innumerable rallies and strikes.

As the head of the bishops' social policy arm, Higgins played an important role as liaison between the Church and labor unions. He knew personally most of the major labor figures of the time, including Walter Reuther, Philip Murray, and George Meany. He supported the merger of the AFL and CIO and delivered the invocation at the first joint meeting of the new conglomerate in 1955.

He was appointed by the bishops to a committee charged with mediating the late-1960s dispute between César Chávez's United Farm Workers (UFW) and California grape owners, and was instrumental in bringing Church support to Chávez. When the Teamsters sought a separate arrangement with lettuce growers, Higgins opposed the action and defended the UFW. "My involvement in the farm labor problem has given me greater satisfaction than almost anything else I have done," he wrote later. Chávez, for his part, said in 1980, "I doubt that anybody has done as much for us as Monsignor Higgins has."

He also sought to influence labor in a fashion consistent with Catholic morality by, for example, arguing against unions' taking of positions in favor of abortion rights and by denouncing union corruption and racism. He supported congressional committees formed to investigate union abuses in the 1950s. "Unions cannot count on the support of the Church," he wrote in 1977, "when they discriminate against blacks, Hispanics, or other minority groups, when they engage in unjustified strikes, when they resort to violence, racketeering, or other lawless practices."

Yet Higgins insisted that the majority of American unions were not guilty of such offenses: "In general they are on the side of the angels . . . and are deserving of the support [of the Church]." Many Catholics, however, contested Higgins's vocal advocacy of union activity. During the UFW struggle, the vicar general of the Diocese of Monterey addressed a letter to all the priests in the country, criticizing Chávez and denouncing the "poorly informed churchmen" who supported him.

While defending organized labor against conservatives in the Church, Higgins had simultaneously to justify the Church's role in the labor movement against critics on the left who viewed Higgins and his allies, such as the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, as harmfully conservative forces within American labor.

The popularity of Higgins's positions waned with the decline in union membership in the 1980s and 1990s. The labor priest model of Catholic engagement of social questions was increasingly beleaguered by criticism from various directions: conservative, communitarian, and socialist. Higgins recognized the decline in the power of unions and their popularity in the Church in his 1992 autobiography, but he remained optimistic about the future of organized labor.

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See also **Catholic Church**

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL/ HIGHLANDER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER

The Highlander Folk School stands as a beacon of social activism in Appalachia and the American South. Yet the school's origins were hardly propitious. Miles Horton, the school's founder and leading light for much of the twentieth century, established

Highlander during the midst of the Great Depression and in one of the poorest counties of the nation. Started in 1932 in the Grundy County, Tennessee, town of Monteagle, Highlander ultimately served as a meeting place and training ground for local and national leaders in the union movement, the civil rights movement, and the Appalachian Alliance. Though the school was sometimes compartmentalized into its various iterations, Horton insisted that Highlander was one school, simply targeting different groups over the first 75 years of its existence—CIO organizers in the 1930s and 40s, civil rights leaders during the 1950s and 60s, and Appalachian activists during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Thousands of grassroots activists have attended Highlander’s training workshops and residential programs, as have scores of national leaders, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Pete Seeger, Fannie Lou Hammer, Ralph Abernathy, Woody Guthrie, Andrew Young, Julian Bond, Stokely Carmichael, Septima Clark, and Esau Jenkins.

Horton envisioned Highlander as a center for social change where education would lie at the heart of the school’s mission. The education would not involve traditional learning, where teachers impart knowledge to their students. Rather, Horton believed that knowledge resides in the experiences of people, that people know what their problems are and through discussion can come to viable solutions. To the extent that Highlander staff “taught,” they did so through analogy, peer teaching, and storytelling. Horton was convinced that grassroots leadership entailed drawing on one’s own experiences and learning to make collective decisions in seeking solutions. Horton knew, though, that experiences constituted nothing more than the raw material of learning. As he told Bill Moyers in a PBS documentary, “You only learn from the experiences you learn from,” and “An experience you don’t learn from is just a happening.”

Workshops at Highlander followed a standard pattern. Small groups of roughly 25 to 30 people from specific institutions or movements came together to tackle fundamentally transformative issues, not simply to engage with smaller infrastructural issues. In his edited collection *Teaching for Social Justice*, William Ayers noted that workshop attendees collectively probed which problems needed solutions, what they needed to learn in order to resolve their predicament, and how group members would implement the decisions on their return to their respective communities (Ayers, p. 154). The curriculum was always based on the experiences that the students brought with them, their awareness of the problems facing their communities, and the relationship of that problem to conflict. They might, as Horton

commented in his autobiography, “have been opposed by mine owners or government, prevented from eating in some restaurants or denied their fare share of public resources” (Horton, p. 148). During workshops, Highlander staff generally re-inforced notions that working people deserved more than what they were getting, be it union recognition, more pay, better working conditions, political rights, or improved educational facilities for their communities. The staff further encouraged participants to assert control over the processes through which they could achieve these objectives.

In addition to community workshops, Highlander ran a variety of other programs. Some involved more intensive residential programs that lasted from six weeks to two months. Students came from unions and cooperatives and were expected to return to their communities better able to deal with the problems of their organizations. Other initiatives took Highlander’s regular staff out into the field in outreach programs. Highlander’s former students and other schools involved in leadership training drew on the Highlander staff to help with educational programs. Throughout all these activities, Highlander and its staff saw themselves as instruments to empower people.

Cultural activities like dance, drama, and especially music formed an integral part of the Highlander program. Horton believed that these cultural forms nourished the soul, created camaraderie, fostered determination, and developed pride in Appalachian and southern culture. In his autobiography, Horton credits his first wife and trained pianist, Zilphia Johnson Horton, for invigorating the cultural curriculum at Highlander. After learning the church hymn, “I’ll Overcome Someday,” from members of a South Carolina Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) Food and Tobacco Workers Union in the mid-1940s, she reworked it into the influential activist song, “We Shall Overcome” (Horton, pp. 77–78). Other singer-songwriters, like Pete Seeger, Guy Carawan, and Leadbelly, popularized songs like “No More Mourning” and “Bourgeois Blues” in a wide range of labor and civil rights settings.

Horton told Bill Moyers in his PBS interview that one measures people not just by their friends, but also by their enemies—that one needed “good, healthy enemies.” By this measure, Horton was a remarkably successful man. In the words of Bill Moyers, who wrote the preface to his autobiography, Horton had been “beaten up, locked up, put upon and railed against by racists, toughs, demagogues and governors” (Horton, p. ix). The animus that Horton and his social project evoked also confronted Highlander as an institution. As the civil right movement

gathered steam in the late 1950s, Highlander came under increasing attack. Unhappy with the ideas emanating from the institution, the governors of Georgia and Arkansas accused Highlander of being a communist training center where blacks and whites met as social equals. Without warning, the Internal Revenue Service revoked the school's tax-exempt status, and on July 31, 1959, Tennessee state troopers arrived at Highlander to search for evidence that would justify closure of the school. They ostensibly found three such rationales—that Highlander sold liquor without a license, that Horton operated the school for personal gain, and that the school was nonracial. Only the last charge had a basis in reality, but since Grundy County was dry, the presence of any intoxicating spirits provided a ready pretext for the state to padlock the doors and ultimately to revoke the school's charter and liquidate its property. Anticipating the failure of their appeals to these charges, Horton applied for a new charter, which he received in August 1961. The school re-opened as the Highlander Research and Education Center, based temporarily in Knoxville. A little more than a decade later, on February 11, 1972, Highlander moved yet again—this time to New Market, Tennessee, 25 miles east of Knoxville, on a farm in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains. As Horton reflected in a 1959 *Chicago Defender* article, recounted by Frank Adams, "You can padlock a building. But you can't padlock an idea. Highlander is an idea. You can't kill it and you can't close it in....It will grow wherever people take it" (Adams and Horton, p. 133).

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See also **Horton, Myles**

HILL, JOE (1879–1915) Songwriter

Undeniably one of the most well-known, yet nevertheless mysterious, figures in U.S. labor history, Joe Hill was a celebrated songwriter who became, in death, a legend. Hill was recognized for writing many of the songs in the *Little Red Song Book*, published by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) sometime around 1904, although it is not possible to date the first publication exactly. His fame only grew after he was arrested for murder and executed. In subsequent decades, his status has become truly mythic, for the life he lived, the songs he wrote, the manner in which he died, and the many songs and stories that encircled him.

Curiously, precious little is known about a man whose fame is so great. Born in Gävle, Sweden, in 1879, Joel Hagglund grew up quite poor in a very large Lutheran family. Like many poor, young Scandinavians, he moved to the United States in 1902, eventually anglicizing his name to Joseph Hillstrom and then Joe Hill. He moved frequently, joining the large migratory working class in America. Hill worked a variety of trades including longshoreman, logger, machinist, sailor, and musician. There are large gaps in our knowledge of Hill's whereabouts and activities for significant stretches of time, sometimes entire years.

Hill very much saw himself as steeped in the class struggle, in an era of intensifying industrial capitalism. The American West, relatively new to this powerful system, saw its land, resources, and peoples transformed and often destroyed. Like many others, he became increasingly hostile to capitalism, instead believing that a system that shared the wealth with those who produced it was far preferable. Around 1910, he joined the revolutionary, anticapitalist Industrial Workers of the World, nicknamed the Wobblies, and committed his life to the organization. He participated in strikes in British Columbia, the revolution in Mexico, and Wobbly organizing drives across the West.

Hill's fame was a result of his songwriting abilities, which he wielded for unionism and revolution. Hill became the leading folk labor troubadour, despite his status as a non-native speaker of English. Like many folksingers, Hill borrowed his melodies from popular songs of his day, so that anyone who might want to sing along would only need to learn the lyrics. As he made his way across the West, he wrote many songs for the famous IWW *Little Red Song Book*, which a worker could fit in his shirt pocket, cost a quarter,

and was an important Wobbly organizing tool. Among his many songs, some of the most famous include: “The Preacher and the Slave,” which attacked missionary Christians for promising people who suffered hope in an afterlife, thereby making them quiescent in this life; “Casey Jones, the Union Scab,” which assailed craft unions for putting their narrow interests above those of the entire working class; and “There Is Power in a Union.”

The impact of his songs was immense. The IWW is an important part of American history and culture not because of its large membership. Rather, the IWW was influential for the powerful ideals that it stood for, its members’ commitment to the cause, and the colorful methods through which the union spread its gospel. Where many movements are serious to a fault, the IWW was playful, humorous, and willing to poke fun at itself. The IWW used popular culture, including music and cartoon, to deliver its message. Hill’s songs were central to this effort.

Hill is known for not only his songs but also his still controversial demise. In 1914, a Salt Lake City area grocer was killed. Hill was convicted of the murder and sentenced to die. Hill steadfastly maintained his innocence, yet never produced a convincing alibi. Some have charged the state with not providing a fair trial. Others have suggested that Hill was set up because he was a radical Wobbly. While in jail, Hill remained in the public eye, receiving numerous visitors and supporters. One fellow Wobbly, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, became the recipient of a Hill-penned song that earned her the nickname, “The Rebel Girl.” Hill’s case became a national cause célèbre, taken up not just by radicals but the mainstream American Federation of Labor and many liberals.

Hill always saw himself as a member of the rank and file, an ordinary, if militant, workingman. When asked, while sitting in jail, about his own background, he demurred by calling himself a “citizen of the world” and “from a planet called earth.” Maintaining his innocence to the end, Hill was executed by firing squad. Famously, Hill penned his oft-cited “Last Will” and even more legendary final advice, “Don’t mourn, organize.” Per his request, his ashes were scattered in every state save Utah and across the globe.

The legend of Joe Hill lives on, appropriately, in songs and books about him. In 1936, Earl Robinson and Alfred Hayes published the song “Joe Hill,” with its introduction, “I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night.” The song describes a conversation between the singer and the spirit of Hill, who continually insists “I never died,” presumably as long as the ideas he espoused still are cherished. This song struck a chord with the

American public, particularly as sung by the noted African-American radical Paul Robeson, whose baritone defined the song through the 1950s. Hill remained in the limelight when the highly respected author Wallace Stegner wrote a novel in 1950 about the life of Joe Hill, in which Stegner contended Hill was guilty. In 1969, Joan Baez sang an elegiac version of “Joe Hill” at Woodstock and recorded it the following year, bringing the song to a new generation. The passion with which he is remembered is testimony to his ongoing importance.

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HILLMAN, BESSIE ABRAMOWITZ (MAY 15, 1889?–DECEMBER 28, 1970) Feminist and Labor Activist

Bessie Abramowitz Hillman reigned as one of the leading twentieth-century labor feminists for over 60 years. As a young immigrant woman in Chicago, Hillman led a massive strike that laid the foundation for the birth of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), the largest men’s garment workers’ union in the country. Following her marriage to the union’s first president, Sidney Hillman, Bessie defied cultural dictates by continuing to organize and educate union workers even after the birth of her children. In 1946, Hillman was elected an ACWA vice president and spent the last 25 years of her life advocating for workers’ rights.

Bas Sheva (Bessie) Abramowitz, the fourth daughter of Emanuel Abramowitz and Sarah Rabinowitz, was born during Passover in the tiny *shtetl* of Lino-veh, Belarus. Her father was self-employed as a commission agent, buying wholesale commodities from the trains passing through the station near the Abramowitz home and selling them to peasants in the countryside. Sarah supplemented the family income

by renting rooms to boarders. Bessie's parents hired a private tutor to educate their children at home.

In 1905, motivated by the probability of an arranged marriage to a local boy, Abramowitz decided to immigrate to America in the company of two cousins. Within days after arriving in New York, 16-year-old Abramowitz traveled to Chicago to stay with distant relatives who owned a boardinghouse. She took a job as a button sewer, hand finishing men's pants. Appalled by the sweatshop conditions, she organized and participated in a number of walkouts. In 1910, after obtaining work with Chicago's largest men's clothing firm, Hart, Schaffner and Marx (HSM), Abramowitz led a small group of women out the door of HSM Shop No. 5 and onto the streets of Chicago. At first, most workers laughed at the young immigrant women. But within three weeks, workers in other shops joined them. Margaret Dreier Robins, the president of the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL), donated thousands of dollars to the strikers and became a principal negotiator along with John Fitzpatrick, the president of the Chicago Federation of Labor. Eventually, even the men came out and the strikers' ranks swelled to almost 40,000, shutting down the entire industry.

Only the Hart, Schaffner and Marx workers won substantial gains, including the right to organize and the establishment of an arbitration board that set the precedent for collective bargaining in the industry. The majority of workers returned to their jobs in February 1911 after enduring frigid temperatures, police brutality, and near starvation without any concessions. Yet, the establishment of arbitration machinery, the cross-class alliances built between supportive progressive reformers and immigrant strikers, and the emergence of a core of strike leaders in the industry were extremely important developments. During the strike, Abramowitz met both Jane Addams, who became a mentor to her, and her future husband, Sidney Hillman, who became the first president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union that was born during the 1910 Chicago Garment Workers Strike.

When the ACWA was officially founded in 1914, Bessie Abramowitz became the first woman elected to the General Executive Board. She served as a union officer until her May 3, 1916, marriage, when she relocated to New York. Bessie Abramowitz Hillman remained active in the union after the births of her two daughters, Philoine, born in 1917, and Selma, born in 1921.

During the Depression, Hillman played an instrumental part in the campaign to organize the runaway shops. These shops, which manufactured primarily shirts, left New York and other metropolitan areas

to escape union jurisdiction. After the shops reopened in the rural regions of the northeastern states, the union sent organizers out to bring the workers into the union throughout the mid-1930s. Between 1937 and 1939, Bessie Hillman helped to organize the laundry workers in New York and became the first educational director for the laundry workers. Working closely with black workers for the first time in her life inspired Hillman to work on behalf of the civil rights movement. Labor rights and civil rights became synonymous in Hillman's mind for the rest of her life.

When World War II broke out, Franklin Roosevelt appointed Sidney Hillman to the Office of Production Management in Washington. Bessie stayed behind in New York to head the Amalgamated's War Activities Department, coordinating food, book, and blood drives for the troops overseas. Bessie Hillman helped to abolish the national Red Cross's blood segregation policy. The Hillmans had a personal stake in the war. Bessie Hillman lost 17 immediate family members as a result of the Nazi atrocities in Europe. Exhausted and disappointed when he was passed by for a position when the administration restructured its wartime agencies, Sidney suffered his fourth and final heart attack within a year after the war ended.

As she struggled to overcome the loss of her husband, in 1946, Bessie was re-elected to the General Executive Board as a vice president. Although she had finally achieved her rightful place in the union she helped to found, due to restrictions placed on women in the male-dominated ACWA, she found it impossible to act as she would have liked. Male union leaders assigned Hillman, the lone national female leader of a union where women composed the majority of workers, to ceremonial duties.

Bessie Hillman mounted intense campaigns for civil rights and for women's rights throughout the 1950s and 1960s. At the first Industrial Union Conference for women trade union leaders in 1961, Hillman berated the male-dominated hierarchies prevalent in trade unions, including her own. Token representation and lack of leadership positions was no longer acceptable to women unionists. Articulating her labor feminist agenda, she pressed for working women's full rights as workers, as union members, and as citizens.

In 1961, the President's Commission on the Status of Women chairperson Eleanor Roosevelt invited Hillman to serve on the Protective Labor Legislation Committee. Bessie used this national venue to continue to seek protective laws for women workers. In 1963, the commission published its report, *American Women*, and helped to lobby for the passage of the Equal Pay Act the same year. Hillman worked to

expand the opportunities for women and minority workers. In the last year of her life, she traveled to Puerto Rico to help organize men's garment workers, and when no other union would, Hillman and the ACWA organized the production workers at Xerox Company in Rochester, New York. Bessie Hillman died in New York on December 28, 1970.

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See also **Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America**

HILLMAN, SIDNEY (MARCH 23, 1887– JULY 10, 1946) Founder, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America

Sidney Hillman came out of Czarist Russia to help found the largest union of men's garment workers in the United States at the age of 27. During Hillman's 32-year tenure (1914–1946), the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) grew to one quarter of a million members. Under Hillman's hand, the labor movement was transformed by the introduction of industrial democracy that promised workers social and economic justice replete with full citizenship rights both on and off the shop floor. Hillman came of age just as the United States emerged in the international arena as an industrial power. Progressive reformers were among the first to recognize Hillman's talents as a premier mediator who could skillfully negotiate on behalf of labor with the owners of industry and government officials. He devised a strategy for a "new unionism" that accepted the principles of modern management in return for greater union control in the workplace. Consequently, Hillman's major accomplishments included the implementation of collective bargaining practices throughout the clothing

industry. Sidney Hillman encouraged the union's rank and file to participate in the organization's educational activities and in the political arena to elect representatives sympathetic to labor interests. Hillman helped to create a new working-class consciousness among garment workers that demanded improved living and working conditions for all workers.

Sidney Hillman was born into a Russian Jewish family in Zagare, Lithuania, a small town in the Russian Pale of Settlement on March 23, 1887. His parents, Schmuell Hillman, a merchant, and Judith Paikin, the owner of a small grocery store, expected him to continue the rabbinical family tradition by attending yeshiva. However, Hillman cut his religious training short to take a job where his contemporaries exposed him to the Jewish enlightenment movement (*Haskala*) as well as to the classic works of Darwin, Marx, Mill, and Spencer. At the age of 15, Hillman joined the General Jewish Workers Union, the Bund, and was jailed twice for his part in demonstrations during the Russian Revolution of 1905. The months he spent in prison strengthened his Marxist convictions, thus rendering him a "half-intellectual" in an increasingly secular culture.

After his second release from prison, Hillman fled to the home of his wealthy uncle in Manchester, England, where two of his three brothers were already staying. In 1907, Hillman arrived in New York, migrating soon afterward to Chicago, where one of his former Bund comrades had a pharmacy practice. Hillman worked in the warehouse, as a stock clerk and finally as a package wrapper at Sears before being hired as an apprentice cutter at Hart, Schaffner and Marx (HSM), the largest men's clothing firm in Chicago. While Hart, Schaffner and Marx had a reputation for modern Prussian-style management, it was no less oppressive as far as wages and hours than a small sweatshop.

On September 22, 1910, a group of young women who were frustrated by a series of arbitrary wage cuts walked off their jobs at Hart, Schaffner and Marx Shop Number 5. Hillman's future wife, 18-year-old Bessie Abramowitz, led the strike. Three weeks later, the male workers, including Sidney Hillman, who at first made fun of the mostly immigrant women strikers, joined them in the streets of Chicago. Workers from other shops swelled the strike ranks to almost 40,000. The workers who participated in the conflict endured an extremely harsh winter and police brutality. Due to the refusal of the xenophobic United Garment Workers (UGW), the only men's clothing union in existence at the time to support the strikers, and staunch employer resistance, only the Hart, Schaffner and Marx workers won strike concessions. The 30,000 workers in the other shops stayed on the

picket lines until February, many eventually losing their jobs, while the HSM employees returned to their jobs with the guarantee of union recognition and the establishment of an arbitration board.

Despite the mixed results spelling defeat for the workers outside the HSM shops, the strike proved pivotal for the men's garment workers. Hillman emerged as a leader and benefited immensely from the friendship of the labor lawyer Clarence Darrow. Over the next few years, both Darrow and John E. Williams, the first chairman of the Board of Arbitration under the HSM agreement, became important mentors to Hillman, schooling him in English and in the art of industrial mediation. The Board of Arbitration provided for in the strike agreement marked the beginning of a collective bargaining process in the men's clothing industry. Hillman and the other young strike leaders also made important connections to the Chicago reform community that unconditionally supported the strikers, including Hull-House residents Jane Addams, Ellen Gates Starr, and Grace Abbott; the Women's Trade Union League president Margaret Dreier Robins; the progressive lawyer Harold Ickes; and the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) president John Fitzpatrick. The solidarity built among the diverse ethnic groups of men's garment workers in Chicago laid the foundation for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. Hillman impressed all who observed him in action, earning a reputation as the leading labor statesman of his generation.

Following the strike, Hillman served as a business agent for the reconfigured Local 39 and also helped to organize workers in other Chicago shops. In 1914, he accepted an invitation from the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) to move to New York to administer its Protocol of Peace, the system for arbitrating grievances in the women's clothing industry. While in New York, Hillman spent some time with Louis Brandeis, a progressive lawyer who had helped the strikers in the 1910 Chicago Strike and was committed to the employment of arbitration mechanisms to achieve industrial peace. Several months later, Hillman received a telegram from a group of insurgent workers attending the UGW's convention in Nashville, enlisting him as the new president of the union they were in the process of establishing. After some hesitation, Hillman accepted the presidency in December 1914 and returned to Chicago to help get the Amalgamated Clothing Workers off the ground and to marry in 1916 Bessie Abramowitz. The Hillmans relocated to New York so that Sidney could work at the union's headquarters. Sidney Hillman devoted his early union years to organizing the many ethnicities in the leading

garment centers of Chicago, New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Rochester.

During World War I, Hillman worked to facilitate arbitration agreements guaranteeing collective bargaining practices in the military uniform industry. He extended his influence outside the labor movement, working closely with influential progressive leaders in and around the government including Florence Kelley, the secretary of the National Consumer's League, and Felix Frankfurter and Walter Lippman, both officials in the secretary of war's office.

In the postwar years, the ACWA embraced Hillman's vision for "new unionism," which combined the concepts of scientific management and worker cooperation. True to the ACWA slogan, "To touch the worker from cradle to grave," the union introduced social welfare benefits such as unemployment insurance for Chicago workers, and cooperative housing projects and banks in New York. Although offering an alternative to the welfare capitalist practices of some of the nation's largest corporations, the union faced a number of challenges during the 1920s that threatened its very existence. In the aftermath of the red scare, unions—particularly those with ties to Russia like the ACWA, led primarily by Russian Jewish immigrants who supported the Russian Revolution from abroad—were suspect. Sidney Hillman successfully battled the anti-union sentiment prevalent in American society. He defeated extortion attempts from union racketeers and power coups by a small group of leftists within the union. Hillman successfully purged the corrupt elements within the union's ranks by the end of the decade. He also encouraged the development of educational and cultural programs to forge a sense of solidarity among the diverse unionists. Programs that offered English and citizenship classes proved popular among immigrant workers. Gradually, separate foreign language locals were dissolved and replaced with locals based on job types.

The economic decline that began in the late 1920s spiraled out of control by the early 1930s, exacting a high price for the Amalgamated. The stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed virtually decimated the ACWA. Membership declined from 177,000 in 1920 to fewer than 110,000 by 1929. In the midst of the unfavorable political and economic climate, Hillman's 1931 proposal before the United States Senate Committee seeking the establishment of a national economic council representing agriculture, labor, and industry fell flat. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's election to the presidency marked the dawn of a new day for labor. Sidney Hillman recognized the opportunity for increased government responsibility and participation

in the lives of the workers in the overtures the new president made to labor.

During his administration, Franklin Roosevelt amassed a national coalition of reformers, manufacturers, and labor leaders that included Sidney Hillman. With remarkable speed, Hillman ascended from the margins of American society to a government insider instrumental in shaping labor policy. Roosevelt named Hillman to the Labor Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration (NRA) in 1933 and to the Industrial Recovery Board in 1934. Closer to the center of power, Sidney Hillman fortified labor's position by successfully advocating for the enactment of codes to standardize wages in the clothing industry. When the United States Supreme Court declared the National Industrial Recovery Act, with its provision for workers' rights to bargain collectively with their employers through representatives of their own choosing unconstitutional, Hillman helped to draft the Wagner Act. The 1935 passage of the National Labor Relations (or Wagner) Act guaranteed labor's right to organize and established collective bargaining practices as the foundation for industrial relations. The act also established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to help protect workers' rights by ensuring that they were free to choose to be represented by unions. Hillman also lobbied for the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, which provided minimum wage and maximum hour regulations for many American workers.

By the mid-1930s, Hillman attempted to solidify the ACWA's place in the labor arena by affiliating with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1933. But the Amalgamated was expelled from the AFL three years later. Due to the defeat of the industrial union resolutions at the 1935 AFL convention, Hillman became a founding member in the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). In 1938, the CIO held its first official convention and changed its name to the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Sidney Hillman became a CIO vice president. As the ACWA regained its strength, it supported the campaign for industrial unionism in the automobile, rubber, steel, and textile industries. In 1937, Hillman also helped to launch the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, which eventually became the Textile Workers Union of America. The rise of these new unions and the emergence of a new national organization, the CIO, marked the dawn of a new day for the labor movement.

Throughout the late 1930s, as labor and politics intertwined, Hillman established himself as a political entity. He made valiant efforts to coalesce the labor movement's varied political interests into a single association that would rally behind Roosevelt. In

1936, Hillman played a vital part in the founding of Labor's Non-Partisan League (LNPL). Roosevelt's re-election that same year represented a triumph for labor. As they worked to organize the industrial masses, Hillman and other CIO leaders hoped that someday labor could shepherd its own independent party.

During the war years, labor continued to make substantial strides under Hillman's guidance. As a member of the National Defense Advisory Commission (NDAC), he insisted that all government defense contractors obey labor laws and abide by a maximum 40-hour workweek. He encouraged the government to withdraw contracts from companies found to be in violation of existing legislation. In 1941, he achieved unprecedented power when FDR promoted him to the position of associate director of the Office of Production Management (which replaced the NDAC), where he was charged with guaranteeing a reliable supply of workers for the war effort. Yet 1941 marked a turbulent and strike-prone year for American workers that forced Hillman's hand and marked the decline of his influence in the Roosevelt administration. Appointed to the Labor Division of the War Production Board in 1942, he devised a plan for sweeping social and economic reform that ensured union security but failed to win the president over. In April 1942, FDR created the War Manpower Commission, bypassing the Amalgamated president and appointing the former governor of Indiana, Paul McNutt, to lead the agency instead. With his health impaired by the pressure of national defense work and worried about his family in war-torn Eastern Europe, Hillman suffered a major heart attack in the early summer of 1942 that left him hospitalized for months.

Out of a government post, nonetheless Hillman remained committed to Roosevelt and loyal to the Democratic Party. He created the CIO's Political Action Committee (PAC) in mid-1943 and immediately became its chairperson. He spent the remainder of the war years enlisting the CIO's political machinery in Roosevelt's name. The 1944 election elevated Hillman to the national spotlight when Republicans tried to discredit Roosevelt in the press by suggesting that the United States government was in the hands of a foreign-born Jew in the person of Sidney Hillman. The Republicans tried to create the impression that Hillman wielded unscrupulous power over the presidential administration. *The New York Times* reported that when the Democratic Party leaders asked for an endorsement of the vice presidential nominee, FDR supposedly replied, "Clear it with Sidney." Despite the negative publicity, Hillman was able to swing the labor vote to elect Roosevelt to an unprecedented

fourth term. As World War II came to an end, Hillman allied with the British Trade Union leader Sir Walter Citrine to create the World Federation of Trade Unions, an organization that sought an official advisory position in the postwar arena. Much to Hillman's dismay, as the victor nations scrambled to oversee the rebuilding of Europe, the organization and its goals were not taken seriously.

The intensity with which Hillman performed his work exacted an overwhelming personal toll. In the months following the war's end, the Hillmans learned that they had lost 17 immediate family members to Hitler's wrath. Exhausted, Sidney Hillman succumbed to his fourth heart attack at the age of 59 and died at his Point Lookout cottage on Long Island on July 10, 1946. In the struggle to establish a more egalitarian society, Hillman left a legacy of landmark labor legislation that continues to protect workers' rights and improve their living standards. He is remembered with a number of health centers honoring his name and with the annual presentations of the Sidney Hillman Foundation, established in 1950, which makes annual awards for excellence in media and publishing exemplified by the ideals of Sidney Hillman.

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HISTORIOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN LABOR HISTORY

For nearly three quarters of a century, between the 1880s and the 1950s, the writing of labor history remained primarily the province of academic labor economists and a handful of amateur historians

linked to specific trade unions and left-wing political parties. Sociologists also wrote numerous contemporary studies of working-class communities that drew upon knowledge of the past to illuminate the present. Before the end of World War II, however, few professionally trained, academic historians ventured into the field of labor history.

Because economists and partisans dominated the writing of labor history at first, it was usually written to promote specific public policies or special causes. Most of the amateur labor historians wrote on behalf of their unions or political parties, and enjoyed little readership beyond their own organizational circles. The labor economists had a different agenda. Nearly all of them, beginning with perhaps the first of the breed, Richard Ely, a professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin, advocated trade unionism and collective bargaining. They acted as social reformers and many of them were among the most prominent figures in the progressive movement of the early twentieth century, pioneers of the "Wisconsin idea," and of such concepts as workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, and social security. Their interest in public policy and their dual role as policy makers shaped the labor history that they wrote.

Labor history as a field of scholarship can best be said to begin with the work of John R. Commons, a protégé of Ely and the lead author of the first multi-volume history of labor in the United States. Commons orchestrated not one but two massive multivolume works devoted to labor history. He edited an 11-volume documentary history of U.S. industrial society from the colonial times to 1880 that covered nearly every aspect of labor history, including the place of indentured servitude and slavery. The 11 volumes provided a foundation for the narrative labor history written by Commons, his students, and those influenced by the "Wisconsin school" of labor history. Commons's four-volume history of labor in the United States, published between 1918 and 1935, defined and dominated the field for decades. Commons himself wrote only brief introductions to two of the four volumes; the remainder of the first two narrative volumes carried the story of labor from colonial times to 1896, and the third volume, a collection of essays on structural rather than historical aspects of the subject, was written entirely by students and faculty associates of Commons. The fourth and perhaps most famous volume in the series, a history of American labor from 1896 to 1932, was the work of Selig Perlman and Philip Taft, two of Commons's more notable former students, and themselves leading long-term scholars of American labor history.

The Commons volumes shared a teleological quality, presenting the history of labor as the unfolding of a tale in which working people shed their individualistic behaviors and aspirations in order to accept their place as a permanent, dependent wage-earning class that could best serve its own interests by uniting collectively in responsible trade unions that bargained with employers about how to distribute equitably the wealth created by capitalist enterprises. Selig Perlman, the most intellectually ambitious of Commons's students, provided a theoretical framework for the history he and other labor economists wrote. Perlman asserted that workers shared a scarcity consciousness that led them to stress job control and to create unions that regulated access to jobs through strict conditions of apprenticeship, rigid rules for union membership, and closed-shop agreements with employers. For Perlman, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) craft unions that practiced job control through tightly controlled memberships and closed shops reflected the scarcity consciousness and core beliefs of American workers. Inclusive unions that admitted all workers, promoted class conflict, and sought the abolition of capitalism were, for Perlman, the product of the fevered imaginations of intellectuals that had no purchase among ordinary workers.

Nearly all the labor history written between 1918 and the 1950s shared some part of the Commons-Perlman approach. The economics department at The Johns Hopkins University and the university's press, for example, published a series of books that examined historically how trade unions regulated the labor market, restricted their memberships, exercised their labor market power through strikes, boycotts, and union labels, and engaged in contract bargaining with employers. Robert F. Hoxie and Norman Ware, two labor economists who wrote partly outside the Commons-Perlman framework, in their histories of organized labor between 1860 and 1918, nevertheless treated labor movement opponents of job-conscious AFL-style craft unionism, whether the Knights of Labor or the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), as utopians whose visions lacked deep resonance among most workers and who were doomed to fail. Almost without exception, all the books written about labor history focused on the stories of individual unions, union federations, famous strikes, and routinized collective bargaining between unions and managements.

Even the most notable dissenter from the Commons-Perlman school, Philip S. Foner, a historian not an economist, wrote a multivolume history of labor in the United States and a myriad of separate studies that scarcely varied from the narrative model developed by the Wisconsin school. For Foner, like Commons, Perlman, Taft, and all the

labor economists, labor history was primarily the story of trade unionists, strikes, bargaining with employers, union politics and lobbying, material factors that could be measured and quantified and not cultural factors that fell outside the sphere of union institutions and that eluded easy measurement. Foner followed the original script but reversed its heroes and judgments. For him, the AFL, while an advance over the utopian Knights of Labor, represented a setback for the mass of working people. Its leaders were men who neglected or oppressed African-Americans, Asians, and even southern and eastern European immigrants, women, and common laborers. They collaborated with employers rather than battling them; they disciplined their followers rather than encouraging them to wage class conflict; and they made peace with capitalism rather than overthrowing it. Foner had his own teleology. In his narrative, labor history must lead ineluctably to the rejection of job-conscious unionism, the triumph of socialism (communism after November 1917), and the end of capitalism.

A French historian of labor, Georges Haupt, captured precisely the limitations of the interpretive model built by such scholars as Commons, Perlman, and Foner. Their history, he wrote, "narrows the dimensions of the workers world and encloses it within a framework that is fixed and congealed. It does not focus on the working class itself but on its organizational and ideological representations." Such studies, the Frenchman concluded, "affect at the very most a small circle of partisans or lovers of historical detail."

Toward a New Labor History

Although most histories of labor continued to be written by labor economists or by Marxist-oriented scholars like Foner and to focus primarily on white male workers, their unions, and their struggles, a number of sociologists, some influenced by Marxism, began to write about different aspects of the working-class experience. Even Commons and Perlman hinted at a more capacious version of labor history. Perlman noted that the history of unions reflected workers' constant adaptation to their environment, both material and mental, through which they struggled not as "a class-conscious proletariat" but as American citizens with their own ideal of liberty. Here Perlman presaged the concept of "republican citizenship" that evolved into a staple of 1980s new labor history. Another Commons disciple expressed sentiments that decades later might better be associated with the ideas of Herbert Gutman, who some credit as the founding

father of the “new labor history.” Alluding to the “great migration” of African-Americans north during World War I, the Commons team member noted, “their manner of living and their modes of thinking had to be recast. The readjustment from the *modus vivendi* of agricultural peasants to that of industrial wage earners involved as great changes in their lives as in those of European peasant immigrants to the United States” (Commons, vol. 3, p. 44).

Other scholars, however, seized such kernels of scholarly complexity and turned them into more expansive portrayals of labor history. Vera Shlakman and Caroline Ware treated the world of women workers in the New England textile industry, most of whom lived their daily lives beyond the reach of trade unions or other institutionalized manifestations of the labor movement. Shlakman and Ware probed the factors that moved women into textile towns and factories, how their experiences as full-time wage workers shaped their daily lives outside the factory as well as within its gates, and the particular kind of female culture these workers created. Other observers and scholars wrote a series of books that dissected the lives and cultures of southern textile workers, most of whom entered the mills as family units. Although many of these studies were inspired by a series of strikes that swept across the Southern Piedmont between 1928 and 1934, the vast majority of mill families remained beyond the reach of unions. For most of them, religion and the church occupied a far more vital and influential part of their daily lives than trade unionism, as the study by the sociologist Liston Pope, *Millhands and Preachers*, attested. Sterling Spero and Abram Harris wrote the first general history of African-American workers in the industrial age, and Horace Cayton and George S. Mitchell described in their *Black Workers and the New Unions* how the labor upheaval of the 1930s transformed the relationship between African-American workers in mass-production industry and unions, turning it from one founded on mutual antipathy and despair to one based on cooperation and hope. The Yale sociologist E. W. Bakke published two books that portrayed the daily lives, family relations, cultural values, political practices, and search for work by the unemployed in Depression-era New Haven. Alfred Winslow Jones did much the same for the rubber workers of Akron, Ohio, using opinion-sampling methods to uncover how that city’s industrial workers felt about such issues as corporate power, private property rights, religion, education, and politics. Had any historians paid attention to such scholarship in the 1930s and 1940s, they might have sensed a whole new way of writing the history of labor in the United States.

When historians, as distinguished from labor economists, industrial relations mavens, and sociologists, finally turned their attention to labor history in the late 1940s and 1950s, they concentrated on the staple agenda of traditional U.S. history. The big question asked by historians writing about workers was, did labor support Andrew Jackson? They questioned Arthur Schlesinger Jr.’s re-interpretation of Jacksonian Democracy, which claimed that the political movement drew its strongest support among workers in the nation’s eastern seaboard and interior cities, not among western farmers and frontiersmen. Most of the historians who asked the question answered in the negative and even doubted that workers in the Jacksonian era thought of themselves as a class and behaved as one. One of the young historians who joined the debate, Richard Hofstadter, later one of the nation’s most distinguished scholars, would forever remain linked to the “consensus school” of historical interpretation and to the notion that the United States was fundamentally a one-class, middle-class society. Alone among that group of historians, Edward Pessen continued to write books and articles about labor history, though that was never his primary interest.

What later came to be known as the “new labor history” emerged without proclamations, publicity, or even awareness that such a subfield existed. The three names most commonly associated with the creation of the “new labor history”—David Brody, Herbert Gutman, and David Montgomery—became linked to labor history only after its invention as a subfield of history. Indeed, the book that in some ways marked the birth of a new labor history, Irving Bernstein’s *The Lean Years* (1959), remained the work of an industrial relations scholar. A year later, when David Brody’s *Steelworkers in America: The Non-union Era* appeared, reviewers failed to stress its contribution to labor history. Instead, they treated the book largely as an addition to the growing body of literature on the impact of industrialization and immigration on the modernization of the United States. Only with hindsight can Brody’s book be characterized as the opening salvo in the historians’ emerging critique of the Commons-Perlman version of labor history. What made Brody’s book notable was its emphasis on a nonunion labor force and its comparison of the cultures and behaviors of immigrant common laborers and U.S.-born skilled workers. Brody highlighted the aspects of working-class experience that Commons, Perlman, et al. neglected; he opened the pathways that other historians of labor would soon follow.

Yet nearly a decade passed before the sort of history that Brody wrote in 1960 had a real impact on

professional history in the United States. During that time, omens of what later were characterized as the “new labor history” appeared. Most important perhaps were a brilliant essay and an epic book by the English historian Edward P. Thompson. His essay on the “moral economy of the premodern workers” and his larger book, *The Making of the English Working Class*, altered how historians came to understand and to write labor history. Thompson ended the sway of mechanical Marxists and nuts-and-bolts labor economists by endowing ordinary working people with nonmaterial customs, traditions, and beliefs, many of religious origin, that enabled them to resist their superiors and to act as their own historical agents in the making of a working class. Slowly at first and rapidly thereafter, historians of the United States would try to apply Thompson’s methods and concepts to the history of American workers. Little noticed at that time, a young American historian had been publishing articles in minor state historical journals that paralleled some of Thompson’s concerns and findings. That young scholar, Herbert Gutman, studied theretofore obscure events in labor history: strikes and riots in small railroad-dominated communities, a demonstration by unemployed workers in New York City, a comparison of a strike-torn coal-mining community and an iron enterprise-dominated city, and industrial conflict and social mobility in Paterson, New Jersey. In those articles, Gutman illustrated how workers viewed their world as well as the traditions and values that governed their behavior.

As the 1960s drew to an end, labor history still seemed to be peripheral to U.S. history’s dominant concerns. Reviewers treated the eminent labor historian David Montgomery’s first book *Beyond Equality* (1967) more as a re-interpretation of civil war and reconstruction historiography than as a venture in the writing of labor history. And they deemed Melvyn Dubofsky’s first book, *When Workers Organize* (1968), as primarily a contribution to the historiography of Progressivism. But then in a paper delivered in 1969 and published a year later, David Brody announced the coming of age of labor history, an event he associated with the publication of two books in 1969: Irving Bernstein’s *Turbulent Years* and Melvyn Dubofsky’s *We Shall Be All*. Soon Brody and others heralded a “new labor history” that they distinguished from the old history associated with Commons and Perlman. The “old” had limited itself to the story of unionized workers for whom AFL-style craft qua business unionism represented the sine qua non of labor history in the United States. The “new” took as its province the entire working class, the vast majority outside of unions as

well as the unionized minority; it treated neither the AFL nor business unionism as the be-all and end-all for organized labor and its history; it preferred contingency to determinism, and it treated workers as active citizens who made their own history.

Not only did the field of labor history flourish in the 1970s, but its practitioners also won greater respect within the larger discipline of history. Gutman, whose scholarship had appeared previously in peripheral journals or had remained unpublished, now found his work published in U.S. history’s two primary scholarly journals of record: the *American Historical Review* and the *Journal of American History*. In 1975, one of the most respected trade publishers released a collection of Gutman’s major published and unpublished essays and articles under the title *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America*. Allan Dawley won the Bancroft Prize in History for his book on the shoe workers of Lynn, Massachusetts, and by the end of the decade a bequest from the family of the late Philip Taft established a Taft Prize for the best book published annually in labor history.

A burgeoning series of community studies, meantime, sought to determine the realities of occupational and social mobility across the mid- and late- nineteenth century, the most famous of which were Stephen Thernstrom’s dissections of mobility among working people in Newburyport and Boston, Massachusetts. Other community studies challenged the “consensus school” of history, seeking to prove that a process of proletarianization in which artisans were separated from their tools of production created a distinct working class conscious of its subordinate position and determined to change it through collective action. Unlike the Commons-Perlman interpretation, which tightly linked class and trade unionism, the “new labor history” portrayed class consciousness as manifested in oppositional cultural, ideological, and religious ways that built on historical traditions and customs. Many of these younger labor historians saw themselves as disciples of E. P. Thompson and as scholars who had uncovered “the making of the American working class.”

If anything, the myriad of community studies, a stream that never slackened, led to confusion as much as to enlightenment. Rather than revealing a working class conscious of its own interests, such studies disclosed a working class fractured along lines of ethnicity (national origins), race, and gender. Instead of attesting to the “making of an American working class,” the new labor history revealed many working classes in a constant state of decomposition and re-composition. David Brody and David Montgomery sought to bring a measure of order out of the scholarly chaos in separate essay collections that focused

on the workplace as the site of a collective job consciousness (in Brody's case) and of a workers' control ethic based on the autonomy and manliness of the skilled worker (in Montgomery's). Yet, when workers returned to their neighborhoods from their places of labor, they separated themselves on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, and even politics. The more that was written and published about labor history, the more diffuse the subject grew. In 1984, the older and the younger practitioners of the "new labor history" met in a conference funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, at which they discussed how to bring synthesis to the field. That conference, which gathered at Northern Illinois University, went about its business in a metaphorical and literal fog. Rather than establishing the basis for a new synthesis in American labor history, the conferees further fractured the field by raising the subjects of gender and patriarchy. Now, not only did labor historians have to contend with workers divided by ethnicity, race, and religion, but they also had to recognize that Montgomery's manly craftsman and Brody's job-conscious trade unionist were but a part of a working class that must perforce include its women. After such scholars as Alice Kessler Harris and Mari Jo Buhle laid down the challenge at the 1984 conference to treat gender as a vital aspect of labor history, historians have written a flood of books and articles on women workers, women and the labor movement, and masculinity as a central characteristic of the male worker.

The large, new body of scholarship about gender has clarified how women's work, career, and life trajectories differed from those of men. It attempted to explain how women and their work were marginalized by men and their unions as well as in most of the extant literature about the history of labor. Its practitioners interrogated the concept of skilled labor, suggesting that gender (masculinity), not knowledge acquired through years of training, created skill. They argued that concepts of masculinity and femininity defined nearly all aspects of work and the differential beliefs and behaviors of male and female workers and union members. Several gender scholars even credited the labor movement's hyper-masculinity with the movement's Pyrrhic victories and too-frequent blatant failures. Yet many of the interpretations and conclusions drawn by the historians of gender rested more on putative theories and assertions than on careful analysis or firm evidence. Indeed, much of the scholarship on gender and labor could be read to re-inforce prevailing beliefs in the field of labor history rather than to transform core knowledge in the field. In fact, one might argue that

gender scholarship has served more to add to our knowledge of labor history than to reconceptualize how we perceive and comprehend the subject.

Goodbye to the New Labor History

As the twentieth century drew to its close, there was little new about writing "history from below," giving voice to the heretofore inarticulate, perceiving the diversity of working people, or introducing gender as a category of historical analysis. Not only had labor history created a valued place for itself in the larger discipline, it had become as diverse as the people and institutions that it studied. Labor economists and industrial relations authorities continued to write institutional histories of trade unions, labor markets, and collective bargaining. Sanford Jacoby, for example, wrote two of the finest books on the subject of corporate labor policies: *Employing Bureaucracy* and *Modern Manors*. Historians published books and articles about the rise and fall of trade unions and labor federations, among which the most notable might have been Robert Zieger's massive history of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, which delineated the lives of such labor leaders as John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, Walter Reuther, Jimmy Hoffa, and Samuel Gompers. Radical movements and industrial conflicts also remained essential parts of labor's story. Historians as well as sociologists persisted in studying local communities, and for them, as well as for many other scholars of labor, ethnicity, race, and gender remained vital parts of labor's history.

Two sets of scholars, however, dismissed the "new labor history" as old. One group, influenced by post-structuralism and postmodernism, rejected labor history's emphasis on measurable or quantifiable data, its focus on the material aspects of everyday life, and its acceptance at face value of the languages of trade unionism and working-class radicalism. These scholars became associated with what was known as the "linguistic turn" in labor history, a movement that borrowed from linguistic scholars, literary critics, and philosophers and that treated language rather than material factors as the source of human consciousness, including class consciousness. Language, rather than the forces and relations of production, constructed cultural meanings. Language thus created whatever sense of class existed. Hence, cultural studies rather than labor history held the key to understanding the working-class experience. Scholars attracted to the "linguistic turn" have been heavily involved in rewriting the history of gender, as attested to most

notably by Joan Scott's leading role and by the stress on language and culture in the writings of Alice Kessler Harris, Nan Enstad, and Elizabeth Faue, among others.

A second group, associated most closely with the writings of David Roediger, insisted that the key to opening the hidden history of American workers was the concept of "whiteness." For them, "whiteness" and American citizenship acted as synonymous terms. Those workers defined as white occupied a privileged position causing each generation of new immigrant workers to struggle to define themselves as white, a possibility denied to those of African, Asian, and Native American (thus many Hispanics) origins. Thus, race had to be as much about being white as being black, brown, red, or yellow. Like the scholars and historians who took the "linguistic turn," the historians of whiteness focused more on language and cultural practices, both of which they read in particular ways, than on hard, or measurable, archival and documentary evidence to prove that Caucasian workers treasured their white skins and the privileges it conveyed. Because most of the scholars of whiteness, Matthew Frye Jacobson and others as well as Roediger, rely for their evidence mostly on language, which can be read in multiple ways and malleable cultural concepts, their findings have been subject to withering criticisms, most notably by Eric Arnesen and Peter Kolchin.

Yet another group of scholars unwilling to jettison either the old or the new labor history set as its agenda the internationalization of U.S. labor history. Aware that the history of workers in the United States has its own peculiarities, these historians insist that there is little exceptional about the American experience. From early on in the nineteenth century, capital and labor circled the globe. In the heyday of industrialization (1870s–1920s), the labor force in the United States was overwhelmingly immigrant in composition, composed in the main of working people who carried with them traditions and customs as well as concepts about worker movements that originated in their lands of origin. And such immigrant workers, as countless new studies have proved, rarely broke their links to their original home places, continuing to communicate with those who remained behind. The late twentieth century saw this process repeated on an even grander geographical stage, with capital circulating around the world more rapidly than ever and peoples from all continents moving in search of jobs and income. For a new generation of American labor historians, then, transnational capital, worker, and labor movements became the subject of their research and writing.

If labor history at the start of the twenty-first century no longer carried the freighted charge it had

when its "newer" version was invented in the 1960s, it was well rid of that burden. Its practitioners have indeed restored voice to the previously inarticulate, turned those at the bottom of society into historical subjects with will and agency, and portrayed working people in all their ethnic, racial, gendered, and cultural diversity. They have continued to write solid institutional histories and substantial biographies; add more and more working-class communities to our knowledge base; broaden substantially our understanding of nonwhite workers; explore how gender has governed the behavior of workers; interrogate the language and cultural practices of working people; and probe the ever-changing relationship among workers, the state, and the law. Labor history has become a movable feast.

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HITCHMAN COAL & COKE COMPANY v. MITCHELL (1916)

At the turn of the twentieth century, labor unions were influencing the free market competition among coal operators in the United States. Nonunion companies in the South that paid their workers under union wages were outselling companies from the Midwest that employed union miners. The union operators that comprised the Central Competitive Field sought the assistance of the United Mine Workers (UMW) to standardize miners' wages to even the competition. Nonunion operators fiercely resisted the UMW's subsequent organizing campaigns in southern mines, generating a number of lawsuits. The definitive case that emerged out of this conflict was from West Virginia.

The lawsuit filed by the Hitchman Coal & Coke Company (HCCC) in 1907 against the United Mine Workers (UMW) executives was based on a history of volatile relations between the company and the union. In 1902, the HCCC opened a mine in Marshall County, West Virginia. Though it initially hired only nonunion miners, within a year, the UMW successfully organized the workers. That year and again in 1904, the miners went on strike over wages. Both strikes settled after several weeks, with the Company reporting significant financial losses after each strike. In 1906, the Hitchman miners went on strike again, this time in support of a strike called by the UMW over wage disputes by other regional miners. The HCCC responded aggressively.

The HCCC determined to transform its mine into a nonunion workplace. It re-opened and hired only those miners who professed they were not union members and agreed to keep the mine nonunion. These accords, commonly called yellow-dog contracts, included discharge as a penalty for violation. When UMW organizers attempted to persuade the new Hitchman miners to secretly join the union in violation of the yellow-dog contracts, the HCCC secured an injunction against UMW President John Mitchell and other executives barring them from soliciting the miners and initiating a strike.

In 1917, the United States Supreme Court upheld the legality of the yellow-dog contracts and the injunction. The majority held that the same liberty that

allowed workers to form unions allowed other workers to agree not to form unions. It acknowledged that workers had a right to unionize, but asserted it was not an absolute right, insisting that it must be balanced against the company's conflicting property right to compete in the free market. Only Justice Brandeis's dissent drew on the emerging Progressive legal theories that rejected the classical reasoning that privileged employers' right to compete over labor's right to organize and strike.

In 1931, Congress negated the holding in *Hitchman* by passing the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which outlawed yellow-dog contracts, validated labor's right to form unions, and prohibited federal courts from issuing injunctions against unions engaged in peaceful activities. The Supreme Court upheld the Act in 1938. The Act, however, did not settle the issue of whether laborers could establish a closed shop. Though the National Labor Relations Act (1935) did permit employees and employers who were covered by the Act to jointly agree to hire only union workers, the Taft-Hartley Act (1947) effectively outlawed the closed shop, supporting an employee's right to work and not join a union. Yellow-dog contracts, nonetheless, remained illegal.

GWEN HOERR JORDAN

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HOBOES

Hoboes were migrant workers—primarily men—who stole rides on freight trains to move about the country in search of work, from the time the economic crisis of the 1870s created the first wave of mass unemployment. They found their jobs in the highly seasonal occupations of the West: crop harvesting, logging, mining, and especially railroad construction and maintenance. During the winter slack season, they made temporary homes in the transient districts of Chicago, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Spokane, Denver, Seattle, and



Meal time at the homeless men's bureau (for unattached men). Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-010131-D].

Oakland. By the mid-1920s, this seasonal migration was in decline, but the Great Depression swelled the ranks of the hoboes and created a new lore of poverty, travel, and rebellion. A small number of people continued to “ride the rails” throughout the twentieth century, but poor workers increasingly favored travel by automobile.

The exact origins of the term “hobo” are not known, but the most likely guess is that it was a modification of a greeting among western railroad workers—“Ho, Boy!” Another possible origin is “hoe boy,” indicating an agricultural laborer. In the early twentieth century, the term “hobo” was frequently invoked as part of a hierarchy of vagrant workers. “Hoboes” were said to be those who traveled to find work, “tramps” were those who worked to support their travels, and “bums” were those who neither worked nor traveled. However, seasonal migrant laborers were just as likely to be known by varied occupational designations: harvest hand, lumberjack, and gandy dancer (railroad worker), to name a few.

Popular opinion associated hoboes with various social ills: crime, alcoholism, prostitution, and, more covertly, homosexuality. The seasonal workforce had its share of outcasts, dangerous criminals, and lost souls, but in the aggregate was a cross-section of working-class men in North America. As the labor

economist William Leiserson wrote in 1916, “practically every wage earner” was in the migrant labor pool at one time or another. The result was a wide personal familiarity with the excitement of hoboing, as well as with the deprivation, physical strain, and exploitation of seasonal labor. With the growth of transient districts in Chicago, Minneapolis, and the West Coast towns, the world of migrant workers became linked with that of nonconformist artists, radicals, and sexual minorities. These districts fostered the popular unease with migrant culture but also offered an opportunity for voyeuristic nonmigrants to dabble in the wild world of the outcast.

Between 1915 and 1924, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) made significant gains organizing migrant workers, especially in timber, wheat harvesting, and oil pipeline construction. In 1915, the organization formed the Agricultural Workers Organization (AWO) with the goal of unionizing the wheat harvest of the Great Plains. This annual work event drew upwards of 100,000 people to the wheat belt, where they worked a succession of jobs following the harvest northward from Oklahoma to Canada. The AWO (renamed the Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, AWIU, in 1917) quickly became the largest and wealthiest union within the IWW organization. Following its members into other seasonal trades, the

union funded organizing drives among lumberjacks in the upper Midwest and the Pacific Northwest, iron miners in northern Minnesota, and oil workers in the southern Great Plains.

This success drew the ire of employers and law enforcement officials, and the AWIU was almost completely suppressed between 1917 and 1919, with most of the organizers in jail. The union enjoyed a brief resurgence that ended with the IWW's factional split in 1924. By that time the seasonal labor market was in decline due to mechanization in wheat harvesting and construction, as well as a general decline in railroad building, and a shift toward automobile travel over trains.

The IWW drew many of its most memorable songs from these hobo workers, including *Hallelujah, I'm a Bum*, *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* (by Haywire Mac McClintock), and *The Preacher and the Slave* and *The Rebel Girl* (by Joe Hill). Their irreverent lyrics lampooned the religious missionaries and celebrated travel as much as they did the movement. Other activists learned to identify with the hobo world, even if their connections were scant. Although he was a commercial artist by training, Ralph Chaplin, the author of *Solidarity Forever*, highlighted his own youthful experiences in the harvest labor force. During the 1930s, country and western artists popularized the hobo song tradition, although with the exception of Woody Guthrie, most were not politically inflected.

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HOFFA, JAMES P. (1941–) International Brotherhood of Teamsters

James P. Hoffa assumed the leadership of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters on March 3, 1999. As general president, Hoffa attempted to reverse the decline in membership in one of the nation's oldest and most influential labor unions. The Teamsters union had been plagued by corruption, mob

influence, internal divisiveness, and ineffective leadership. Son of James R. Hoffa, a former general president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters who disappeared mysteriously in 1975, Hoffa aimed to rejuvenate the union's membership rolls, its public image, and political influence through stronger grassroots organizing. During his term as president, Hoffa led the highly controversial move to split from the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), ending the union's 50-year association.

Background

Born on May 19, 1941, in Detroit, Hoffa entered the labor force as a teenager in Michigan and Alaska, working as a loader, driver, and operator of heavy equipment. At the age of 18, Hoffa earned his first union card and was inducted into the Teamsters by his father. In high school, he played football and graduated with honors. In 1963, Hoffa attended Michigan State University, where he continued to play football and earned a degree in economics. He received a law degree in 1966 and the following year worked in the Michigan State Senate through a Ford Foundation Fellowship. Between 1968 and 1993, Hoffa practiced labor law, specializing in workers' compensation and Social Security cases, gaining increasing visibility in the union while representing Teamsters Joint Councils and union chapters. President George W. Bush appointed Hoffa to the Council on the 21st Century Workforce in 2002. Hoffa also held a seat on the Secretary of Energy's advisory board that same year.

Hoffa's first attempt at running for general president of the Teamsters was foiled by Ron Carey in 1996. Hoffa won his second bid for general president of the union in 1998 after Carey, accused of money laundering, was barred from running again. Vowing to boost membership in the Teamsters, Hoffa set out on a rigorous plan to rid the union of corruption and its association with organized crime. Hoffa claimed that years of internal strife and ineffective leadership, combined with the effects of a growing global economy, had contributed not only to a decline in Teamster membership, but to labor's influence on the whole.

General President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Upon taking office, Hoffa set several goals for the union, including strict fiscal reform and budgetary

accountability. He increased efforts in fighting unfair trade practices, specifically with nations such as Japan, Korea, and China, nations whose habit of dumping cheap goods into the American market hurt American workers. While he acknowledged that some aspects of globalization were unavoidable, Hoffa insisted the United States needed to insulate its strong, robust economy from the detrimental effects of outsourcing labor and importing cheap foreign goods. He advocated for stricter health and safety regulations, increased Teamster contract negotiations, and stronger enforcement of existing agreements. Although crediting the government in combating years of corruption, Hoffa concluded that such oversight had become unnecessarily oppressive and was no longer needed. Hoffa's term as general president can be characterized as one of increasing the union's self-determination, with a focus on building a strong membership base, thereby increasing its influence through support of local, state, and federal members' political aspirations. Hoffa achieved many of his goals for the union in the first few years of his presidency. The union's membership rolls increased, yet still remained below the 2 million members enrolled during his father's term as president. For the first time in 10 years, the Teamsters organization achieved a balanced budget. The Teamsters continued to fight for labor concessions, most notably for America West Airlines customer service representatives in 2005.

Controversial Split with the AFL-CIO

Hoffa's initial reforms, ambitious in scope and successful, were accompanied by heated controversy. In July 2005, and after 50 years of affiliation, the Teamsters' General Executive Board decided to end the Teamsters' membership within the powerful bloc of AFL-CIO-affiliated unions. In statements to the AFL-CIO president John J. Sweeney and to the Teamsters' union, Hoffa cited the AFL-CIO's focus on political influence over politicians as a major reason for the split. He accused AFL-CIO leadership of throwing money at politicians with no personal investment or experience in labor issues. He countered that the Teamsters would be more effective politically through increased membership and political involvement. He argued that labor could only become more effective through encouraging more union members to enter the political arena. In a sense, Hoffa was urging a return to labor's grassroots political activism reminiscent of his father's era.

The Teamsters and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) alone took approximately one

third of the AFL-CIO bloc's members with them. The AFL-CIO leader John J. Sweeney accused the Teamsters and other unions involved in the split of dividing the labor movement and creating a favorable environment for those who seek to reverse worker gains. Sweeney warned that splintering the larger bloc of unions would open the door for corruption and the return of mob influence on the local level, weakening labor's influence in the workplace and at all political levels. Despite the split with AFL-CIO over the vision for labor's future, Hoffa insisted that the Teamsters would continue to support other unions' activism. To emphasize this, Hoffa pushed for a Teamsters partnership with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) in 2005.

"Change to Win" Federation

Hoffa's Teamsters and the Service Employee's International Union's exit from the AFL-CIO culminated in the formation of a new federation of unions including the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union (UFCW), UNITE-HERE (a union representing hotel, restaurant, and garment workers), United Farm Workers of America (UFW), and the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA). Under the moniker of "Change to Win," the new bloc of unions issued a statement vowing to vigorously pursue and implement strategies to organize workers in the private sector.

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See also Hoffa, James R.; **International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

HOFFA, JAMES R. (1913–1975?) President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

One of the most notorious and controversial U.S. labor leaders in the twentieth century, James Riddle Hoffa began as a local union leader in Detroit in the 1930s and served as president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) from 1957 to 1971. During his career, he used aggressive organizing tactics to promote the union's growth while at the same time working to centralize its operations. Gains in wages and benefits during his tenure made him popular with the membership, but allegations of organized crime ties and corruption made him infamous with the general public. He came to symbolize for many Americans in the post-WWII era the problem of union corruption.

Hoffa's origins lay in the small-town Midwest. He was born in 1913 in southern Indiana, the son of a coal prospector of German-American heritage. His father's death in 1920 left his mother struggling to support four children by running a home laundry. In 1924, when Hoffa was 11 years old, the family sought better opportunities by relocating to Detroit. In an effort to supplement the meager wages his mother earned at an auto parts factory, Hoffa left school after completing the ninth grade to work as a stock boy in a dry goods store.

His first involvement with union organizing began in his late teen years. In the early days of the Great Depression, in 1930, the 17-year-old Hoffa took a job at a loading dock and warehouse run by the Kroger grocery store line. Although the 32 cents an hour Hoffa earned at Kroger's was a relatively good wage, he and the other employees there resented their working conditions. The men were paid only for time spent unloading freight, and usually they spent half their workday on-site waiting around to be assigned work. In addition, the supervisor, whom

they nicknamed "the Little Bastard," verbally abused his employees and often fired them for capricious reasons. Hoffa helped organize his fellow employees and led a job action, which they timed to coincide with a shipment of fresh strawberries; the danger of having the whole shipment spoil placed extra pressure on the company to come to terms with the strikers. The job action succeeded, and the company agreed to many of the workers' demands. Hoffa was elected vice president of the local union that emerged in the warehouse.

He began working for Teamsters Local 299 in Detroit in 1935 and within a decade became one of the IBT's most important leaders in the Midwest. When he began with the IBT, its local affiliates in Detroit were small, struggling organizations. Hoffa worked alongside older, local Teamster leaders, such as Owen "Bert" Brennan and Albert Squires, seeking to organize both trucking and affiliated warehouse workers. Detroit newspapers described the frequent use of violence in these organizing campaigns. According to these reports, employers were threatened, businesses were bombed, and nonunion drivers assaulted. These activities brought Hoffa his first criminal conviction. In 1940, Hoffa pleaded no contest to a charge of violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by helping to set up a cartel of union-organized carting firms that would control Detroit's waste paper hauling. The indictment included an allegation that one of the businesses that had refused to go along with this cartel had been bombed. These aggressive tactics, however, did bring results. The first major organizing breakthroughs came in the carhaul industry, firms that transported new cars from the factories out to the various dealerships. Later victories in local cartage and warehouse work brought in more members, and the two locals with whom Hoffa was most identified, Local 299 and its affiliated warehouse local, Local 337, grew dramatically. In 1937, the two locals combined had about 2,000 members, and by 1950, they had more than 20,000.

In this period, Hoffa was strongly influenced by his contact with the Minneapolis Teamster leader Farrell Dobbs, who was a Trotskyist socialist. Building on a dramatic victory over employers in Minneapolis in 1934, Dobbs had begun to create a regionwide organizing and bargaining structure in the upper Midwest. From Dobbs's campaigns Hoffa came to see how the newly emerged intercity trucking industry allowed the Teamsters Union to engage in a kind of leapfrog organizing. Unionized warehouse workers in one city could refuse to handle freight from nonunion trucks coming from another city, forcing those trucking companies to agree to a union contract. At the

same time, unionized drivers could refuse to deliver to a nonunion warehouse, forcing the warehouse employer to come to terms. Harnessing such tactics required the Teamsters to move away from the union's traditional localism and to create new regional levels of union governance, such as the North Central District Drivers Council, created in 1937 at Dobbs's urging. In such regionwide organizing, the union developed larger collective bargaining units, eventually creating a standard contract for Midwestern trucking industry employees in 12 states.

When Dobbs left the Teamsters in 1939, Hoffa became the leading force in the Midwestern Teamsters organization, pushing for regional centralization. He assumed Dobbs's post as the negotiating chairman of the Central States Drivers Council, the regional organization that had emerged out of the earlier North Central District Drivers Council. In the 1940s, Hoffa drew on the union's strength in the upper Midwest to organize trucking operations in the South. Using the leapfrog organizing technique, Hoffa wielded the threat of secondary boycotts to force southern nonunion trucking firms to sign collective bargaining agreements with the Teamsters. Hoffa then organized those employers into regional bargaining units, whose contracts were timed to expire at the same time as the Central States Drivers Council. By the end of the decade, the contract terms for union truck drivers from Louisiana to Minnesota were exactly the same. Hoffa had managed not only to breach the walls of the anti-union South, but had also won significant wage gains for southern truck company employees.

During this same period, Hoffa fought a number of jurisdictional battles in Detroit, and these inter-union struggles helped earn him a reputation for violence and ruthlessness. A series of violent feuds took place throughout the late 1930s and early 1940s, in which the Detroit Teamsters struggled against several unions, including the Brewery Workers Union, the Retail Clerks, and the Dairy Workers. Over the course of these conflicts, the staff of the Detroit Teamsters Joint Council, including Hoffa, became known for their affinity for street fighting. One of the most bitter and violent conflicts involved a Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) affiliate, the United Construction Workers Organizing Committee (UCWOC), formed in 1939 at the behest of John L. Lewis and directed by his brother Dennie Lewis. In September 1941, UCWOC launched a campaign directed at the heart of the jurisdiction of Hoffa's Local 299; UCWOC dispatched its organizers to sign up carhaul drivers. The Detroit Teamsters responded by fielding teams of their own organizers, who attacked UCWOC's people on sight. The resulting street

battles marked a high point in Detroit's jurisdictional battles in this era, and some accounts have claimed that Hoffa turned to a local Mafia leader, Santo Perrone, for support in this conflict.

Hoffa's reputation for fiercely defending the union's jurisdiction, as well as his organizing triumphs, helped speed his ascent up the ranks of the IBT hierarchy. The Teamster president Daniel Tobin appointed Hoffa an International Trustee in 1944, and he was elected to that position by the union's convention in 1947. Five years later, at the fairly young age of 39, he was elected to one of the union's International Vice President posts, making him a member of the IBT's General Executive Board, its ruling body. In addition, he held a number of significant local and regional posts.

His real base of power, however, lay in his work with the interstate trucking industry, where he had long served as the chief negotiator for the Central States Drivers Council. Through his leadership role there, he had played a pivotal part in organizing and bargaining with trucking employers throughout the Midwest, the South, and increasingly the East Coast as well. Gains achieved in wages and benefits drew him support from the Teamster rank and file in the trucking locals. At the same time, the expansion of the collective bargaining unit, which included more and more locals under one standard contract, gave Hoffa, who helped administer that contract, the ability to reward local officials who supported him and punish those who did not.

Having accumulated a strong following, Hoffa was poised to take advantage of the opportunity that emerged in 1957 when Dave Beck, Tobin's successor as president of the IBT, chose not to run for reelection. The U.S. Senate's McClellan Committee had held well-publicized hearings into union corruption in early 1957 that focused on charges of malfeasance involving Beck. The scandal that emerged badly damaged Beck's reputation, and his support within the union evaporated. Hoffa's prominence in the union made him a front-runner to succeed Beck, but in his effort to do so, Hoffa faced bitter opposition from the McClellan Committee. The Committee's chief counsel, Robert Kennedy, helped set up an FBI sting operation in early 1957 that appeared to catch Hoffa in the act of bribing a member of the Committee's staff for inside information on its investigations. When Hoffa won an acquittal at trial on those charges, the McClellan Committee responded by holding two sets of public hearings in the months leading up to the IBT Convention (where the election of national officers would take place) in an effort to discredit Hoffa in the eyes of the union's delegates. Those hearings raised allegations of Hoffa's links with organized crime

figures and of his improper involvement in a real estate development deal. The Committee also publicized a very lucrative truck leasing agreement between Hoffa's wife and a Teamster employer, an arrangement that amounted to an illicit gratuity for the Detroit Teamster leader.

The hearings made Hoffa a notorious figure, but they did not destroy his political position within the IBT. Neither in 1957, nor over the course of the next two years of repeated hearings on Hoffa, could the committee ever prove that Hoffa had taken an outright bribe to betray the interests of his members. Nor could it demonstrate that he had personally profited from any act of malfeasance involving union funds. To the extent that the McClellan Committee clearly had launched a crusade to end Hoffa's career, he could depict himself as the victim of a conspiracy by anti-union congressmen who disliked him for his vigorous efforts on behalf of his members. His support within the union was far from unanimous, but his opponents were a divided minority who faced difficult institutional barriers.

Meanwhile, the ability of Hoffa to survive the McClellan Committee hearings further increased his notoriety, and his case was used by many political figures to justify the need for stronger regulation of unions. The Landrum-Griffin Act, passed in 1959, was described by its supporters as a law that would respond to the threat posed by Hoffa and his type of union leader.

Hoffa's tenure as president of the IBT was marked both by his success in creating a national trucking contract and by his willingness to abet corrupt local leaders. In the face of stiff opposition from local unions that rejected the loss of autonomy it would bring, Hoffa gradually brought together all of the different regions and in 1964 signed the National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA). Covering workers involved in trucking and warehouses, Hoffa's NMFA created a standard set of wages and benefits all across the country. The achievement marked the high-water mark of his efforts to create a more centralized union. It also demonstrated his dedication to improving the working conditions of Teamsters in the freight industry. At the same time, however, Hoffa displayed an apparent indifference to other IBT members trapped in locals that were controlled by corrupt local leaders, many of whom had ties to organized crime. In Chicago's Local 777, for example, insurgents challenged their union's corrupt leader, Joseph Glimco, a reputed capo in the Chicago Mafia. They denounced Glimco's misuse of union funds and the local's failure to protect their working conditions. Hoffa reacted to their complaints by offering Glimco

every possible form of support, and he responded in similar ways to other local reform efforts.

His support for individuals such as Glimco was usually seen as evidence of his close ties to organized crime. An illegal FBI wiretap in the early 1960s indicated that Hoffa communicated almost daily with a Detroit Mafia figure named Anthony Giacalone. He had similar long-term relationships with organized crime figures in New York and Chicago. The precise nature of his relationship with organized crime remains unclear, but clearly he facilitated particular kinds of corruption within the union. By protecting mob-connected local leaders such as Glimco, he allowed them to exploit vulnerable local members and extort employers. Hoffa also abetted the efforts of organized crime groups to profit from the financial decisions of various Teamster benefit and pension funds. Loans made by the Central States Pension Fund, for instance, often required the applicant to make a kickback to an organized crime sponsor with ties to the Teamsters.

Under the leadership of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the Justice Department mounted a campaign to win a criminal conviction against Hoffa. The Department's efforts succeeded in 1964 when Hoffa was convicted of witness tampering and mail fraud. While appealing his convictions, Hoffa arranged for the creation of a new IBT post, a general vice president, who could function as a caretaker during his prison sentence. His goal was to maintain control of the union even during his jail sentence. At the IBT's 1966 convention, Hoffa supported the election to that post of one of his most trusted and seemingly least ambitious associates, Frank Fitzsimmons. Then, having exhausted his appeals, Hoffa began serving his 13-year prison sentence in 1967.

He disappeared four years after his release from prison in 1971. Hoping that it would improve his chances for parole, he resigned the union presidency in June 1971. Six months later, Richard Nixon granted him a presidential commutation that released him from jail. The conditions of that commutation barred Hoffa from any involvement in union affairs until 1980, but he soon began talking about running once again for the IBT's top post, possibly in 1976, when the next election was scheduled. Those plans may have been the cause of his death. Most accounts conclude that he was murdered at the behest of the Mafia in order to stop him from re-assuming leadership of the Teamsters. According to this theory, organized crime groups had found it easier to work with his successor, Fitzsimmons. On the day he disappeared, in July 1975, he had been scheduled to meet with the Detroit Mafia figure Giacalone. Hoffa's body has never been

found, and to this date the investigation into his disappearance remains an open case.

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See also **Beck, David; Fitzsimmons, Frank E.; Hoffa, James P.; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; McClellan Committee Hearings; Organized Crime; Tobin, Daniel J.**

HOME CLUB

Home Club is the name of a loosely confederated band of dissidents within the Knights of Labor (KOL) from 1882 to 1890. Some scholars doubt the existence of such a group, and others feel its influence has been exaggerated, but the Home Club was powerful enough to shape KOL policy between 1885 through 1888. It was not a unified conspiracy, rather a lightning rod around which disgruntled Knights could strike at the KOL administration, especially its international leader, Terence V. Powderly.

The term "Home Club" derives from a plan to purchase a retirement home for aged Knights, credited to Victor Drury, a French-born KOL radical. It is not clear whether Drury was serious about said plan, or if it was a smokescreen to disguise plots against the KOL's central administration that focused on disputes

over secrecy, ideological discord, and personality clashes. Some of these reflected contradictions inherent within the KOL from its 1869 inception.

The KOL was originally modeled on fraternal organizations, and it employed secretive, quasi-Masonic ritual practices. Secrecy both protected members from employer backlash and regulated the worthiness of members. Early on it was forbidden even to write or utter the organization's name publicly. This worked as long as the KOL was a small body whose membership was largely confined to Pennsylvania, but as the organization grew, ritual secrecy proved less practical. Discussion of altering secret practices emerged at the KOL's first national convention in 1878, the year Powderly succeeded the founder, Uriah Stephens, as head of the organization. Powderly, like many Knights, was a Roman Catholic who faced church sanctions due to the Vatican's prohibition against secret societies.

After years of debate, the KOL became a public organization on January 1, 1882, though its ritual remained a guarded secret. The decision to modify secrecy angered the traditionalists, many of whom accused Powderly of subverting the order's values. Brooklyn Assembly 1562 simply refused to abide by the decision. That same Brooklyn local was also the center of ideological and structural disputes that rocked the KOL.

As the KOL expanded into larger cities, it encountered a hodgepodge of ideology. Older Knights were mainly liberals, Greenbackers, or mild socialists, but New York City was a hotbed of more radical ideals. The KOL's dispute over secrecy coincided with a regional struggle between Marxian and Lassallean socialism. After 1882, most Greater New York locals were under the auspices of District Assembly 49 (DA 49). Local 1562 was composed of a large number of doctrinaire Marxists, several of whom precipitated a boycott against the Duryea Starch Company that was deemed without merit by the KOL's executive board. Key members, including Theodore Cuno and P. J. McGuire, were suspended from the KOL.

District 49 decided to make 1562's travails a cause célèbre, even though its leadership was composed mostly of Lassallean socialists and anarchists who rejected the Marxian precept that trade unions were latent revolutionary cells from which a new society could be formed. Instead, they called for independent political action and denounced trade unions as reactionary bodies that guarded the interests of skilled workers at the expense of class unity. This was a potentially explosive situation for the KOL, which contained both single-trade locals and "mixed" assemblies containing workers of various trades. Led by Victor Drury, an ex-Marxist convert to anarchism,

DA 49 launched a convoluted plan in which it appeared to champion suspended Marxists while, in fact, isolating them. The goal was to discredit the KOL's central administration, which Drury felt was too conservative and too sympathetic to trade unions. Plots and counterplots swirled from 1882 to mid-1886, with Powderly and others devoting enormous time and resources to combating the Home Club. Those efforts were hampered by the Home Club's successful cooptation of the secrecy issue. Drury and his New York allies actively recruited disgruntled Knights on behalf of the Home Club.

This meant that there was widespread discontent within the KOL at precisely the point in which it encountered a membership surge. Between 1885 and 1886, the KOL's official membership increased by nearly 700%, due largely to enthusiasm following the order's dramatic strike victory over the railroad baron Jay Gould. So many members poured into the KOL that it called a moratorium against new assemblies in March 1886 so that overstretched administrators could process applications. The KOL also convened a special assembly in late May to address the order's growing pains, including a spate of unauthorized strikes. That convention appointed six "auxiliary" members to the KOL's executive board, four of whom were critical of Powderly's administration. This gave anti-administration forces nine of the KOL's top 14 administrative posts.

That convention also investigated allegations of a Home Club conspiracy. Powderly surprisingly sided with a report that whitewashed the Home Club and decided to cooperate with the new executive board. He perhaps realized that the Home Club's base was too diffuse and bargained that he could divide it along ideological lines. Given that the special assembly convened just three weeks after the Haymarket explosion in Chicago, Powderly may also have decided to wait for the radical climate to cool before moving against dissidents.

In the interim, rejuvenated trade unions arose to challenge KOL supremacy, and Home Club Lassalleans steered the executive board toward an anti-trade union stance that divided the Knights. Trade-union supporters within the KOL, like Thomas Barry, Joseph Buchanan, P. J. McGuire, George McNeill, and John Morrison, made lurid charges about the Home Club and Powderly that further divided the Knights. The KOL soon found itself losing members nearly as fast as it gained them in the halcyon days of early 1886.

Despite a second whitewashed report in November 1886, the Home Club was on the defensive by early 1887, in part because the prostrike policy it endorsed in defiance of official KOL policy led to a series of

ill-advised job actions that ended in defeat. Nonetheless, leaders like Drury and James Quinn proved adroit at transforming the Home Club from an ideological clique to one that drew upon general discontent. By late 1887, Powderly denounced the Home Club, though malcontents accused him of coddling it. Drury re-organized his inner circle as The Class and renewed recruitment efforts and deflected anger toward Powderly. At the 1887 convention, Powderly's supporters once again attacked critics with more ardor than the Home Club.

By mid-1888, however, the Drury-led coterie had overplayed its hand. A bruising fight within District 49 isolated most of the Home Club old guard, and the fall convention saw a repudiation of Home Club anti-trade union policies, as well as a Drury proposal to return the KOL to secrecy. By then, though, the damage was done. Trade unions denounced the Knights, the order continued to hemorrhage members, and the secretary-treasurer, John Hayes, originally a Home Club appointee, began to wrest power from Powderly. By 1890, most of the Home Club inner circle had been purged from the KOL. Ironically, doctrinaire Marxists, including Cuno, regained control of District 49. They, in coalition with agrarian radicals, ousted Powderly in 1893.

Although one can be skeptical of how much power the Home Club formally held, its influence on the KOL was enormous. In the early 1880s, it consumed organizational time and resources that could have been devoted to more productive enterprises, and its influence on strike and trade-union policies between 1885 and 1888 proved disastrous. The Home Club stands as an unfortunate example of how a small group can disrupt large organizations.

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See also **Knights of Labor**

HOME ECONOMICS

Home economics traces its roots to the nineteenth-century work of Catharine Beecher, whose *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, first published in 1841, offered

practical advice to women on cooking, family, health, infant care, and children's education, along with observations on proper home management. Schools of cookery, like the one managed by Fannie Merritt Farmer in Boston in the 1890s, also served as precursors to the home economics movement.

The home economics movement took shape during a decade of conferences held at Lake Placid, New York, from 1899 to 1908. Organized by Ellen Richards, the Lake Placid conferences brought together several disparate groups that ultimately united to form the American Home Economics Association in 1909. Richards, a chemist trained at Vassar and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, led the domestic science faction that emphasized nutrition and sanitation along with training in institutional management. The household arts faction promoted instruction in cooking, sewing, and textiles. Proponents of domestic economy hearkened back to Catharine Beecher and focused on the housewife and her problems, particularly the difficulty in obtaining domestic servants.

Ellen H. Richards, who chaired the first Lake Placid meeting in the summer of 1899, acted as the "engineer" of the home economics movement. She sought to professionalize and upgrade home economics to provide a career path for college-educated women trained in science and to facilitate their employment in academics, social service, and industry. Her emphasis on rigorous research in the natural and social sciences led her protégées to become some of the most successful career women of their day. Among them was Marion Talbot, who parlayed her training in home economics at Wellesley College into a career in university administration at the University of Chicago. Early advocates of home economics sought to move women into public life, not to confine them to the kitchen. Home economics, which extended its domain into "municipal housekeeping," fed directly into the broader movement for social reform called for by its contemporaries in the Progressive Movement.

Ellen Richards's attempts to establish home economics in the prestigious Seven Sister schools of the East ran up against the opposition of M. Carey Thomas, the president of Bryn Mawr, who dismissed home economics as too gendered to be intellectually rigorous. Instead, home economics took hold in the co-educational land grant colleges in the Midwest and West. In some cases, male administrators used home economics to segregate women students. Iowa State launched the first home economics department in 1873, and similar departments soon followed in Kansas, Illinois, Florida, and California.

In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act, designed to improve life in rural America, provided funds for home economics through the Cooperative Extension Service of

the Department of Agriculture. Under the direction of Martha Van Rensselaer, the College of Home Economics at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, played a leading role in training home demonstration agents to work with farm women. In 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act funded home economics training on the college level for primary and secondary school teachers, making teacher training the central mission of collegiate home economics. While both measures provided needed funding for home economics, in the long run they proved a mixed blessing for the field: Smith-Lever tied home economics to rural life at the moment when the country was becoming increasingly urban, and Smith-Hughes promoted vocational training at a time when many colleges and universities increasingly valued research over teaching.

In times of national crisis, home economists used their professional training to advantage. During World War I, home economists helped the nation stretch its food resources, and in the depression of the 1930s, home economics advised women how to "make over and make do." But the reform ethos of the home economics movement lost steam with the demise of progressivism in the 1920s. Emphasis in the field gradually shifted to the individual home and family. In the 1920s, home economists entered business, running test kitchens and serving as mediators between their employers and female consumers. At the same time, self-styled experts like Christine Frederick (not a trained home economist) urged women to adopt scientific management in the kitchen, exhorting them give up the goal of a career and "come into the home."

In the long run, home economics, like nursing and other gendered professions, could never escape negative gender stereotypes. In the academy, not even a scientist of the stature of Agnes Fay Morgan at the University of California, Berkeley, could sustain her department. In 1955, a year after Morgan retired, Berkeley voted to dump its home economics department, leaving a more gender neutral "nutritional sciences" graduate program.

By the 1960s, home economics found itself increasingly beleaguered. In 1968, the Carnegie Corporation funded a study of the field, published under the title *The Changing Mission of Home Economics*. The author, Earl J. McGrath, confessed that he went into the study believing the field should be discontinued. Instead, he recommended its expansion. Nevertheless, universities continued to eliminate home economics or to hire male administrators, who quickly abandoned the gendered title in favor of terms like human development or human ecology. At the same time, a new generation of women who associated "home ec" with aprons and white sauce, attacked

the field as part and parcel of the feminine mystique Betty Friedan lambasted in her 1963 best seller. The feminist Robin Morgan, invited to speak to the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) in 1973, announced, “I am here addressing the enemy,” ignoring the reality that home economics had for decades provided careers for women and had served as the only bastion for women scholars in academia prior to the advent of women’s studies. Indeed, Cornell University offered one of the first women’s studies courses in the nation under the auspices of its College of Human Ecology.

In the ensuing decades, home economics struggled to redefine its mission and to escape the gendered stereotype of “stitching and stirring.” In 1994, the AHEA voted to change its name to the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). Today the organization defines its mission as “improving individual, family, and community well-being; impacting the development, delivery, and evaluation of consumer goods and services; influencing the creation of public policy, and shaping social change.”

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HOMESTEAD STRIKE (1892)

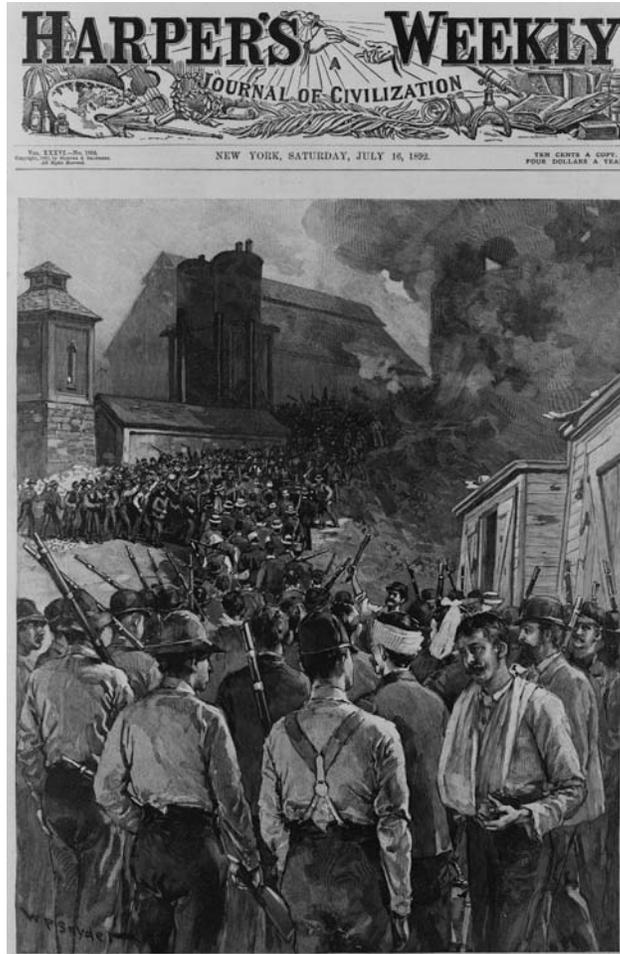
The episode that most late nineteenth-century Americans associated with the Homestead Strike of 1892 was a bloody battle that took place between three hundred Pinkerton detectives and thousands of citizens of Homestead, Pennsylvania, on July 6, a confrontation that culminated in the community’s violent retribution against the surrendering Pinkertons. Yet, as the historian Paul Krause has emphasized, to focus on the bloodshed of July 6 ignores the broader

context for the conflict that was in fact decades old between, on the one hand, workers committed to protecting a “competence,” or minimum standard of living, and on the other hand, industrialists dedicated to the primacy of the laws of supply and demand.

By the mid-nineteenth century, iron producers saw the Bessemer converter as the key to overcoming the workplace controls exercised by skilled workers, particularly puddlers, who carried on a long tradition of carefully and deliberately turning pig iron into wrought iron. The Bessemer process promised to make the work of puddlers irrelevant and to allow ironmasters a much freer hand in setting the terms and conditions of work for all mill employees. The process also created steel, a malleable metal that made possible the most important symbols and motors of industrial and national growth—a sprawling system of railroads, immense bridges and skyscrapers, and, for the U.S. Navy, battleship armor. Andrew Carnegie and other ironmasters saw progress in the new technology, but to steelworkers, these changes threatened to undermine their power and rights. Their relative independence, which, in their view, guarded the American republic against tyranny, was by the 1870s fast succumbing to the awesome political and economic influence of large-scale corporations.

The first salvo in the 1892 strike was fired nearly 20 years earlier in the 1874–1875 lockout of iron and steelworkers in the Pittsburgh area, where the factory town of Homestead was located. The lockout commenced after the puddlers’ union, the Sons of Vulcan, rejected Pittsburgh manufacturers’ call to tie their baseline wage to market prices for iron. The puddlers won, but with victory came their realization that they must renounce their traditional exclusiveness, as manufacturers had played on divisions of race and skill among steelworkers during the conflict, and the Bessemer process threatened the puddlers’ entire occupation. In search of protection, the Vulcans cooperated with skilled metalworkers in forming the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers (AAISW). In 1881, the AAISW opened its doors to skilled black workers, although, as the historian Dennis C. Dickerson has observed, most white unionists did so begrudgingly. Many steelworkers also joined the Knights of Labor (KOL).

Besides the issue of a “fair day’s wages,” the other chief issue animating steelworkers’ labor activism involved the anti-union measures that metal makers took in the wake of the Great Strike of 1877, especially the ironclad agreement, which barred employees from union membership. While the historian Harold C. Livesay has characterized Carnegie’s pre-1892 labor policies as an exception to this anti-union trend, in fact Carnegie aggressively sought to



The Homestead riot / drawn by W.P. Snyder after a photograph by Dabbs, Pittsburg. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-126046].

eliminate the influence of the AAISW and KOL in his mills. Certainly, in the wake of the 1886 labor unrest, Carnegie publicly expressed sympathy with unionism and criticized the practice of hiring strikebreakers to fill the places of strikers. Yet in 1887, he used Pinkertons and strikebreakers to defeat the AAISW and KOL at his Edgar Thomson Steel Works when workers refused his demand for wage cuts, a longer workday, and a reduction in the workforce. Carnegie then moved to implement these same changes at his Homestead Steel Works, which he had acquired in 1883. In 1886, he installed open-hearth furnaces, which effectively destroyed what little relevance puddlers held at the plant and reduced the skilled labor force. In May 1889, he announced that employees must accept a 25% wage reduction, a 12-hour day, and a three-year ironclad agreement.

In 1889, Homesteaders succeeded, as they had before. They united to physically eject strikebreakers from the town, who were mostly black, Southern

European, and East Europeans, and turned back deputies sent to assume control of the mills. The company's inability to fill orders weakened Carnegie's hand. In the end, he was forced to sign a three-year contract with the AAISW. The AAISW had also won a strike against the mill's previous owners in 1882. Geography can in part explain these victories: outsiders had limited access to the town, so citizens were more easily able to defend it from strikebreakers. Second, Homestead's AAISW lodges, in contrast to the national union, granted membership to the unskilled and maintained amicable relations with the KOL. Despite the strong nativist sentiment of some of the town's citizens and the close association between ethnicity and skill, East Europeans, "old" immigrants, and native-born focused on their shared religious and political traditions in opposing mill owners' power. However, Homesteaders' strength in 1889 was illusory. Its union victories were isolated ones. Elsewhere in western Pennsylvania, the AAISW and KOL were

unable to reverse a precipitous decline in labor's fortunes in the steel mills, mines, and the voting booth during the 1880s. Much was at stake, then, as Homesteaders well knew, in the 1892 conflict.

With the 1889 agreement set to expire on June 30, 1892, Carnegie turned to gaining full control over his Homestead workforce. In January, he ordered a survey of wage rates in Pittsburgh's steel mills, which found some skilled Homestead workers earning significantly more than their counterparts in Pittsburgh. Publicly, Carnegie's officials made much of these findings and the larger problem of a saturated steel market in explaining the call for wage cuts. They also claimed that the introduction of new technology had lightened the loads of skilled workers. In reality, Carnegie's foremost concern was unionism, as he made clear in his instructions to company officials.

In negotiating the new wage scales, Carnegie's representatives stalled repeatedly and insisted on impossible terms, such as a proposal that the contract end in the winter rather than the summer. The change was crucial. The collective power of steelworkers was weakest in the winter, when unemployment and the cost of living were highest. On the issue of wages, Homestead unionists objected to the notion that market forces rather than custom should govern workers' baseline income. They also viewed with alarm the company's proposition that it might reduce wage scales in any department that saw technological improvement. Contrary to company arguments that the plan would negatively affect only a small minority of workers, potentially, nearly all were at risk.

Henry Clay Frick, the chief of operations at Homestead, gave union leaders until June 24 to accept these terms. Once the deadline passed, Frick oversaw the construction of watchtowers and a barbed wire-topped fence on the steelwork's premises. He also sent for the Pinkerton agents and on June 29, ordered a lockout of the entire workforce. The AAISW Advisory Committee worked with local authorities in governing the town during the conflict, preventing damage to mills and blocking the entrance of strikebreakers. Despite strikers' orderliness, Frick succeeded in acquiring the county sheriff's aid in regaining the company's physical control of the steelworks. The Advisory Committee warned the sheriff that the arrival of nonunion men would bring violence. When a force of deputies arrived, townspeople showed them the unharmed mills and the way out of town. The next morning, when the Pinkertons attempted their well-known landing, Homestead's bitter, exhausted, desperate, but determined steelworkers, their families, and neighbors were waiting for them.

Ironically, most of the Pinkerton agents were unaware that the purpose of their journey was to

assist in the lockout. They arrived heavily armed in company-owned barges, the *Iron Mountain* and the *Monongahela*. Town scouts warned of the Pinkertons' approach in the predawn hours of July 6. The mass of men, women, and children who filled the river's shoreline in front of the company's mills paid little heed to the strike committee's prohibition of violence, and despite the plea of the strike leader, Hugh O'Donnell, to turn back, the Pinkerton's commander, the zealous Frederick H. Heinde, ordered his men to disembark. A fight quickly broke out between Homesteaders and the agents; someone—it is unclear who—fired the first shots, and the two sides frantically exchanged a barrage of bullets. As the number of dead and wounded workers mounted, events escalated. Some workers unleashed a cannon against the Pinkertons, while others repeatedly attempted to sink the barges. Homesteaders insisted that they would accept surrender only on condition that the agents face charges for the murder of workers killed in the melee. The Pinkerton agents agreed, but despite the strike committee's promise of protection, once on shore they endured a punishing march through crowds of vengeful bystanders, one the widow of a killed striker, who beat them unmercifully. While no Pinkerton died at the hands of the crowd, the press described the violence in lurid terms and characterized the townspeople's revenge upon the Pinkertons as the actions of an irrational, savage mob.

On same day that the Pinkertons suffered the crowd's outraged assaults, Carnegie was vacationing in his native Scotland, quite purposely avoiding direct involvement in the clash that he knew Frick's tactics would inevitably bring. He had entrusted the handling of the lockout to Frick and instructed him to not back down. When reporters finally located Carnegie, he gave Frick his full support. Carnegie privately regretted his manager's handling of the strike, probably because he recognized almost immediately that the hostilities at Homestead belied his public professions of admiration for workers and trade unions. More indirectly and gradually, Carnegie admitted his own culpability as Frick's supervisor and sponsor. That acknowledgment came after years of public criticism of not Frick, but Carnegie, for his hypocrisy and spineless retreat across the Atlantic while a subordinate did his dirty work.

For his part, Frick almost certainly understood that the induction of a private army to secure the mills for strikebreakers would provoke townspeople to violence and thus the state to intervene on the company's behalf. On July 12, 8,500 state militiamen descended on Homestead and enforced martial law for over three months. Within weeks, Frick, too, fell victim to violence. On July 23, anarchist Alexander Berkman badly wounded him in an assassination

attempt. The attack, and the ensuing association of the strike with it, further splintered the AAISW leadership. Less than three weeks later, 1,700 strike-breakers were running the mills at full capacity. On November 17, several hundred of the strikers returned to work, signaling the end of the lockout.

Labor repression, not labor reform, followed the Homestead debacle. While 13 states, including Pennsylvania, banned the use of nonresidents (that is, Pinkertons) as deputies, companies continued to employ private guards and local police officers to defeat striking or locked-out workers. In Homestead, the state made examples of strike participants and supporters. When a young soldier expressed glee at the news of Frick's brush with death, the militia's commander had him hung by his thumbs and dishonorably discharged. Carnegie's chief counsel, Philander Chase Knox (a Republican lawyer who went on to a career in national politics), aggressively pushed to convict over one hundred strikers of riot, murder, and conspiracy. Most eventually gained acquittal, but many who could not make bail were jailed during the long process, and a few were found guilty on questionable grounds and served time in prison. Knox also sought to bring treason charges against Advisory Committee members. While this legally groundless offensive failed, it demoralized labor activists and, as with the other legal charges, depleted strikers of energy and funds.

Although Carnegie's reputation deteriorated due to the lockout, the new management system that he imposed at Homestead helped make possible the spectacular rise of the Carnegie Steel Company, a consolidation of his various steel enterprises that formed in the midst of the strike on July 1, 1892. The new system was union-free. Ethnic and racial antagonisms among steelworkers, which amalgamation had tempered, quickly and violently came to the foreground. Not until the 1930s would unionism again make significant inroads in the steel industry.

THERESA CASE

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See also **Steel and Iron**

HORTON, MYLES (1905–1990) Founder, Highlander Folk School

Born in the southwest Tennessee town of Savannah in 1905, Myles Horton dedicated his life to the attainment of social justice for southerners, both black and white. In 1932, he founded the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee—an adult education center that brought pride and dignity to the people of Appalachia and that eventually helped to mold the leaderships of both southern unions and the civil rights movement.

Horton's early consciousness was powerfully shaped by experiences on farms and in mining and mill towns, along with a steady diet of Christian teachings. According to William Ayers, Horton once quipped, "I always liked the idea of Christianity, only problem was I never saw anyone practice it" (Ayers, p. 151). If Horton berated southern Christians for failing to act on their professed ideals, he nonetheless observed in his autobiography, *The Long Haul*, that he took to heart his mother's exhortation that "God is love, and therefore you love your neighbors" (Horton, *The Long Haul*, p. 7). In the opening pages of his autobiography, he further noted the pervasive influence of this simple tenet in his thinking and social practices. "If you believe people are of worth," Horton reflected, "you can't treat anybody inhumanely, and that means you not only have to love and respect people, but you have to think in terms of building a society that people can profit most from, and that kind of society has to work on the principle of love" (Horton, *The Long Haul*, pp. 6–7). Horton recognized that such idealism was easy to mouth. He would spend his life learning, studying, and teaching how to bring it alive in social practice.

Horton further honed his social philosophy by studying and discussing his ideas with some of the foremost social critics of his day. Starting his university education at Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, he continued it at the Union Theological Seminary in New York and at the University of Chicago. Between his junior and senior years at Cumberland, he spent the summer directing a Presbyterian vacation Bible school program in the town of Ozone, nestled in the Cumberland region of the east Tennessee mountains. When it became clear to him that the church hosting him was not meeting the needs of its congregants—people from mining and logging communities that were past their heydays—Horton instituted communitywide meetings where these working people could share their problems and seek joint solutions. Topics for discussion included how to build

sanitary privies, test for typhoid in the wells, and restore denuded forests. Congregants pooled their knowledge and sought additional information and assistance from county officials. This experience of relying on communal expertise would serve as a model for Horton's approach at the Highlander Folk School, which in turn came to form the basis of twentieth-century social activism in many southern communities.

Horton coupled his Christian beliefs and formative experiences in Ozone with intensive reading and intellectual discussions with the likes of Reinhold Niebuhr (the Union Theological Seminarian and socialist who related Christian faith to modern politics), Robert Parks (the University of Chicago sociologist who coined the phrase "human ecology" to understand the vitality of society), John Dewey (the Columbia University philosophy professor who believed that the skills and knowledge that students learned be integrated fully into their lives as persons, citizens, and human beings), and Jane Addams (the social reformer and founder of Chicago's Hull-House Settlement). As William Ayers notes, all of these mentors helped Horton develop his ideas about a school for life, where people could solve problems together in an informal setting, and where experience would be the main teacher (Ayers, p. 153).

From Horton's founding of the Highlander Folk School on the eve of the New Deal, to his death in 1990 as the Soviet Union collapsed and America's commitment to deregulation gathered steam, he worked to translate his philosophy into practice. (Horton officially retired in 1973 but continued to live and work at Highlander.) During the early years, he focused Highlander's resources on improving the lives of Appalachian timber, mill, and mine workers. Later, Horton and the institution he led established programs on citizenship, school desegregation, and voter education. This work earned Horton wide admiration from social activists and community members. But he increasingly attracted critical attention from local, state, and federal officials. In the 1950s and early 1960s, he faced a series of trumped-up charges, including allegations that he promoted the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor, and that he aided and abetted the Communist Party. This later charge had an ironic twist to it, since Horton was never a member of the Communist Party and eventually broke with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) partly over this issue. Of one charge, though, Horton stood proudly guilty—of operating a school that blacks and whites attended together. Once asked how he got blacks and whites to eat together in the segregated South, he responded, in words heard by

Rosa Parks and recorded by William Ayers, "All I did was put food on the table and ring the bell" (Ayers, p. 155). Horton's most significant legacies are a still-vibrant institution—the Highlander Research and Education Center (renamed in 1961)—and the powerful idea that oppressed people in America can effectively challenge their oppression through peer learning and collective action.

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See also **Highlander Folk School/Highlander Research and Education Center**

HOTEL AND RESTAURANT EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

The Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) has long represented groups that, until recently, were relatively rare in the labor movement: low-wage and often female service workers. Founded by food servers and bartenders, HERE expanded to include various hotel staff and, more recently, casino workers. Over the past century, the union has been wracked by internal conflicts and government probes into corruption, among other challenges. But HERE survived and still provides union representation for workers in the vast and growing hospitality industries.

Early Years

As early as 1866, waiters and bartenders in Chicago organized a union. By the 1880s, several such unions

had formed and joined the Knights of Labor, but the relationship was a strained one (the formally anti-alcohol Knights wanted to exclude bartenders). By the late 1880s, waiters and barmen began affiliating with the new American Federation of Labor (AFL). On April 24, 1891, the AFL chartered the Waiters and Bartenders National Union, the original incarnation of HERE.

HERE suffered the first of many internal power struggles in the late 1890s, between factions led by Chicago-based, politically ambitious William C. Pomeroy and the St. Louis-based, bureaucratically scrupulous Jere L. Sullivan. By 1899, Sullivan triumphed and, with AFL backing, went on to serve for nearly three decades as the union's all-powerful secretary-treasurer (early presidents were essentially figureheads).

Over the course of the next few decades, HERE directed its energy to organizing bartenders, following the AFL craft model of representing only better-paid, skilled workers. The bartenders seemed a better bet to Sullivan than the other elite of the culinary world, the polyglot, high-turnover cooks and the low-wage, mostly foreign-born workers who staffed dining rooms and hotels. HERE was quite successful in organizing bartenders, particularly in working-class taverns. Within just a few years, a majority of the 20,000-plus male bartenders in the United States were unionized. The International did much less, however, in the large urban hotels and restaurants that, as of 1900, employed more than 300,000 workers. Still, the union grew quickly thanks to various local organizing efforts across the country. By 1904, HERE hit an early peak of 50,000 members and more than 500 locals.

Prohibition and a New Era of Growth

Prohibition devastated HERE. The Eighteenth Amendment's ban on liquor sales in 1920 quickly cost the union a third of its membership. The employer open-shop drives of the 1920s contributed to the decline, and the bartender-dominated union failed to take advantage of growth elsewhere, such as in the cafeteria trade. Concern grew throughout HERE over Sullivan's narrow approach to organizing, and in 1927, President Edward Flore (1911–1945) spearheaded a movement to dethrone him. Sullivan's death the next year enabled Flore to re-organize the union, shifting power permanently from the secretary-treasurer's to the president's office. Flore turned to the West Coast locals, traditionally more radical and inclusive, for help in broadening HERE's base.

By the 1930s, amid the Great Depression and the historic rise of industrial unionism in the United States, HERE adopted mixed craft- and industrial-style organizing and enrolled bellhops, maids, busboys, and other lower-level hotel and restaurant workers across the country. The union's membership nearly doubled in 1933, the first year New Deal legislation encouraged unionization. Widespread strikes in 1936 and 1937 brought further growth, as did economic mobilization for World War II. By 1940, membership topped 200,000, and by 1950, 400,000. At mid-century, HERE achieved its highest rate of unionization, when a quarter of all hotel and restaurant workers were organized.

Women, especially waitresses, grew more prominent in HERE in these years. In 1900, 50 Seattle waitresses, led by Alice Lord, had formed Local 240, the first waitresses' local in HERE. Additional waitress-only locals soon appeared in several Midwestern cities. As Prohibition devastated the bartending craft, it hastened the feminization of table service, and by the end of the 1920s, waitresses were a fifth of the HERE membership. Though more mixed-sex locals opened to them, waitresses' separate locals grew increasingly powerful, with around 40,000 of HERE's members by the late 1940s. Women in various trades composed 45% of the union's entire membership by 1950.

In the 1930s and 1940s, too, racial barriers in the union began to recede. Segregated locals became less common, and the particularly virulent hostility reserved for Asian culinary workers declined. HERE made little effort, however, to combat the engrained patterns of racial discrimination in culinary work.

Postwar Challenges

Into the postwar decades, HERE for the most part stagnated, maintaining a membership of 400,000 to 500,000, while the hotel and restaurant workforce grew into several millions. Under presidents Hugo Ernst (1945–1954) and Ed S. Miller (1954–1973), HERE won better working conditions, wage increases, and health and pension plans for many members after World War II. Particularly important were hour reductions in an industry with longer working days and weeks than most. The union found some new frontiers, such as Miami Beach's resorts in the 1950s, the small but high-profile Playboy Bunny workforce in the later 1960s, and Las Vegas, where HERE claimed 10,000 members by the 1980s. But aside from such bright spots, HERE could not keep up in the expanding hospitality industry. Growth was concentrated in the hard-to-unionize Sunbelt and suburbs, and the

increasing number of part-timers also made new organizing difficult.

As total membership began to tumble in the 1970s, HERE underwent significant re-organization. A court determined in 1972 that the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which forbade sex discrimination in employment, rendered HERE's sex-segregated locals illegal. So ended seven decades of separate organizing by waitresses. The International soon decided to eliminate all craft-based distinctions as well. HERE thereafter was composed of amalgamated city locals containing workers from all hotel and restaurant trades.

Centralization of locals—and thus of power in the union—piqued federal interest in suspected mob influence over HERE. The government launched an official probe in 1976 of the union's alleged infiltration by organized crime. Mob involvement with some of the locals dated back to the era of Al Capone, but authorities believed it was spreading under the president, Edward T. Hanley (1973–1998). In 1986, a federal commission on organized crime named HERE among the nation's four most corrupt unions. Various investigations resulted in trusteeships for the large Atlantic City and New York City locals and a federal watchdog for the International from 1995 to 2000.

By the early twenty-first century, HERE's membership had fallen to 260,000, half its peak. But the union had a new president, John W. Wilhelm, renowned for his organizing skills, and in Las Vegas, one of the fastest-growing private-sector locals in the United States, with 50,000 members. In mid-2004, HERE joined with UNITE, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, to form UNITE HERE, representing more than 450,000 workers throughout North America. UNITE was itself the product of an earlier merger in 1995 of two other of the nation's oldest unions, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). The UNITE-HERE merger brought together unions that historically represented many immigrants and women—and still do. Purged of corruption and proud of its racially diverse and majority female membership, HERE had come a long way from its early days as a bartenders' craft union.

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See also Waitressing and Waiting/Food Service

HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE/DIES COMMITTEE

The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) was established as a permanent committee of the House of Representatives in 1946. Its predecessor, the Dies Committee (named after its chairman, Representative Martin Dies, a Texas Democrat), was founded in 1938 and initially focused its investigations on the Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi sympathizers. During World War II, the Dies Committee turned its attention toward Communist subversion within the New Deal. After the beginning of the Cold War, HUAC began to focus almost exclusively on investigating the influence of domestic Communists in various institutions, such as government agencies, labor unions, and Hollywood.

HUAC's most memorable hearings involved claims that domestic Communists were engaged in espionage within the United States government. The most contentious of these hearings involved Alger Hiss, a high-ranking State Department employee who was accused by a former Communist, Whitaker Chambers, of having been a spy for the Soviet Union. Hiss denied the charges but was later found guilty of perjury for having denied under oath that he was a spy. While Hiss maintained his innocence until his death and claims of his innocence remain popular among certain segments of the American left, a growing scholarly consensus has arisen, based largely on declassified American and Soviet intelligence reports, that Hiss was indeed guilty of espionage.

The committee also investigated Communist infiltration of the labor movement, particularly within the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Its investigations turned up over two hundred CIO organizers who were alleged to be members of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), and played an important role in strengthening the anti-Communist forces within the labor federation, which eventually purged 11 Communist-led unions by 1950. The most frequently cited HUAC investigation into labor, though, was the 1947 investigation of Communist subversion in the film industry, led by the committee's second chairman, John Parnell Thomas, a New Jersey Republican. This investigation became infamous when 10 members of the Screen Writer's Guild, the union representing writers in motion pictures and television, were cited for contempt of Congress because they refused to answer questions at HUAC hearings. In response

to these citations, the Hollywood film studios set up a blacklist to prevent known or suspected Communists from working under their own name or with screen credits. Some estimates have placed the number of blacklisted artists at over three hundred.

HUAC has been the recipient of considerable criticism, both from contemporaries and from later scholars. It has been accused of making wild and unfounded accusations against individuals, engaging in witch hunts, and selecting its targets out of partisanship. Much of this criticism is undoubtedly correct, and much of the committee's rhetoric was extreme and incendiary. Nevertheless, recent revelations from both American intelligence decrypts and newly opened Soviet archives have made some of the committee's claims more plausible. In particular, many of those accused of having worked as Soviet spies during the New Deal and World War II eras appear to have engaged in espionage.

During the 1960s, HUAC became considerably less influential and was widely criticized by large segments of the mainstream of American opinion. In 1969, it changed its name to the Committee on Internal Security and was eventually abolished by the post-Watergate Congress in 1975.

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HOUSEWORK

In pre-industrial America, housework was divided between men, women, and children. There was a sexual division of labor, though its development sometimes seems mysterious. For example, men made cider and mead, but women made beer, ale, and wine. Women made and mended cloth clothing, while men worked with leather. Women and men both carried out tasks that required brute strength. Men chopped and hauled wood and also pounded and hauled corn. But women did laundry, a long and grueling task with pre-industrial tools, and also made soap. There were also a number of tasks that both men and women performed, such as weaving, milking cows, and paring potatoes. The work of both men and women was focused on the home. However, households were still tied to the market economy, because there were always some goods and services each could not produce and had to barter for, but the

pre-industrial home was much more self-sufficient than its successor.

The historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has pointed out that the colonial American household did indeed rely on significant amounts of trade, and while the world of women was in some ways circumscribed by the borders of the family land, they were expected to seek out commerce that would benefit the home. Colonial women were manufacturers, agriculturalists, and traders—and the poorer the household, the more blurred the line between male and female work. Account books from the period often make trade appear as a male province, dominated as they were by both the names of men and the produce of their manufacture. But Ulrich has identified complex webs of barter and borrowing that women engaged in that composed a sort of informal, usually unrecorded, economy that was essential to the success of households. Her notion of the wife as “deputy husband” indicates that women were expected to do the work of men if necessary, although many tasks were normally gender specific. In colonial America, women were expected to accept a broad, and sometimes quite flexible, responsibility for the well-being of their families.

The historian Jeanne Boydston has argued that the early nineteenth century saw a shift from a gendered division of labor to a gendered definition of labor. As industrialization lured men outside the household and into the wage economy, the wage itself began to define legitimate work. This cultural devaluation of the household economy made the work of many women less visible just as the demands upon them were increasing. To make up for the often low wages paid to their husbands, wives had to be careful consumers and often avoided the marketplace if household production was possible. The industrial revolution that provided both the mass-produced goods and the wages for modern consumers to spend on them did not simply transform women into buyers and men into earners. Women built home furnishings and practiced cooking economies, for example, that made households viable, and they did so with decreasing help from men and children. The industrialization of the home during the latter half of the nineteenth century made up for this shortfall of human labor to some degree, but this transformation also produced new family demands on women while according them little recognition as workers. Like men toiling in factories, women houseworkers also became machine tenders, but the household had already been effectively removed from the cultural definition of work.

The historian Ruth Schwartz Cowan has argued that men increasingly left the household economy for wage work over the course of the nineteenth century because industrial-era household technologies made

men's work redundant, increased the load carried by women, and necessitated a cash income. She used the iron stove to illustrate these dramatic changes. This innovation became the first widely owned "consumer durable" and made an extraordinary impact on the standard of living, relegating the open hearth to the past. The iron stove did not require the expensive services of a mason to install, used less fuel, and could be placed centrally in a room to heat its occupants while cooking their food. Men had spent a lot of time chopping and hauling wood in the era of the open hearth, but these stoves required coal, so that household responsibility was eliminated. However, the stove meant more work for women, who did the cooking. The stove greatly increased the cook's control over heat and made it possible to work with multiple dishes simultaneously, and because of more efficient fuel, they could do so for a longer period. Cooking became more of an art, and family expectations rose along with houseworker preparation time.

Men had other tasks replaced as well. The cheap availability of fine white flour made baking bread more complex for women than it had been with meal, but it meant that men no longer had to haul and pound grain. The mass production of shoes and the rise of the meatpacking industry meant that men no longer needed to work leather or butcher animals at home either. But obtaining coal, flour, shoes, and meat now required a regular supply of money. This trend only increased as households, over the course of the twentieth century, became wired to an array of complex technological systems: electricity, central heating, the telephone, running water, sewage disposal, and so on. A break in the supply of money would spell disaster for the household, so someone needed to bring in that money full-time. Men assumed this role, in part, because so much of their housework had been made technologically obsolete. They went out to bring home wages, and the work environments of men and women often greatly diverged.

Cowan's assertion that the home underwent thorough industrialization raises a number of important observations. Houseworkers of the industrial era were much more isolated than many of their counterparts in the wage economy and were usually engaged in a much wider variety of tasks. They were also, of course, unpaid and therefore had far less autonomy and power in a cash economy. However, the productivity of both industrial houseworkers and industrial wage workers often relied on complex machinery they could not make or repair. Thus, many workers both inside and outside the home were alienated from the tools that made their labor possible. These tools relied on nonhuman sources of energy, such as petroleum or electricity, and thus were often part of large and

complex technological systems even further beyond their control. Yet, houseworkers have adopted machinery eagerly because it has usually raised the standard of living of their families and has made some tasks, such as laundry, far less grueling.

Americans tend to believe that the household, in the industrial era, became a unit of consumption and virtually ceased being a unit of production. While elements of the production of food, clothing, and health care have been removed from the home, others still remain. Also, examples abound to indicate that technological change has invented new types and standards of household production. The production of transportation services made possible by near universal access to the automobile by the mid-twentieth century was a major addition to housework. Pre-industrial households used to consume transportation services. Peddlers came to the door; retailers and service providers delivered and made house calls, but no longer. Delivery work shifted from seller to buyer, and thus houseworkers shifted from consumers to producers of transportation services. New standards, from the iron stove on, also created more work. Indoor plumbing made much higher hygiene standards possible and thus increased family expectations of the production of cleanliness by houseworkers. The historian Susan Strasser has noted that the impact of the automatic washer on doing laundry may have been to restructure, rather than reduce, the time required. As the process became far less arduous, families expected it to happen more often and to include clothing that previously would not have been deemed soiled enough to require washing. The evolution of the automatic dryer and synthetic fabrics yet further increased expectations, even as these innovations lessened hanging and ironing labor.

One study of families that had a comfortable standard of living in 1912 revealed that houseworkers toiled 56 hours per week. Subtract servants and add at least periodic wage or piecework employment, and the burdens on working-class women appear heavy indeed. In 1965, a study found that affluent houseworkers devoted 55 hours per week to household and child-care labor and their working-class counterparts devoted just two hours less. Thus, the workload for affluent houseworkers remained consistently high during the industrial era, though their households became thoroughly industrialized. Affluent women were also more likely to be working a "double day" in the latter half of the twentieth century, which working-class women had long known, while fulfilling housework expectations elevated by technological advances and doing so with considerably less servant labor. The basis of the economy shifted away from industry and toward services during this period,

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decreasing, but by no means bringing into equilibrium, the proportion and types of paid work coded as masculine and transforming the educational possibilities of women. These opportunities, where actually gained, were often hard won through movements such as the National Organization for Women, which pressured the government to expand and protect the economic rights of women during the 1960s and after. Even as women streamed in to the paid labor force in the latter half of the twentieth century, the cultural construction of housework as a full-time endeavor for women proved persistent. The industrialized household immeasurably improved the standard of living in the United States and made many crucial tasks less physically demanding for houseworkers, while also creating new types and standards of work and increasingly embedding it in ever more complex economic and technological systems.

ADAM J. HODGES

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HUDSON, HOSEA (1898–1989)

Hudson was born in Wilkes County, Georgia, and raised by his grandmother, Mrs. Julia Smith, a sharecropper. In 1917, he married Sophie Scruggs and continued work as a sharecropper until 1923, when at the age of 25 he became an iron molder, working in steel foundries in Georgia and Alabama. Their son, Hosea Jr., was born in 1920. In 1924, they moved to Birmingham and he began work as an iron molder. He worked at the Stockham Pipe and Fitting Plant in Birmingham, Alabama, from 1927 to 1932.

Unemployed in the late Depression days of the early New Deal era, he worked with the Alabama

Welfare Department and after that the Federal Works Project Administration (WPA) in 1933 and 1938. Here he helped to organize the unemployed in Birmingham through mass mobilizations and demonstrations.

Returning to the steel industry, he worked at the Wallwork Foundry, which belonged to the Tennessee Coal and Iron Railroad Company, from 1937 to 1938, the Alabama Foundry Company from 1939 to 1942, and the Flakley Foundry Company from 1942 to 1947.

In 1931, Hudson joined the Communist Party USA (CPUSA). The Party was organized on the club, cell, or unit level, and he soon became a leader of his primary unit. His first task was to organize workers at the Stockham Foundry, but when his Party membership was discovered by the owners, he was fired in 1932.

He became active in the Scottsboro Case in 1931, joining the worldwide campaign to free nine young black men falsely accused of raping two white women in Alabama. In 1932, he became active in the Unemployed Councils, where he became involved in neighborhood initiatives to keep landlords from evicting tenants. If the landlords refused, the Council would put the tenants back in the buildings and, in case of cold weather, would take apart empty buildings for firewood.

Realizing his organizational abilities, the Central Committee of the CPUSA brought him to its national Training School in New York City in 1934. Here Hudson spent 10 weeks studying Marxist economics and social theory. He also learned more about trade union history and leadership skills and saw how he could relate theory to practice and vice versa. He was then sent by the Party to Atlanta, where he organized under the pseudonym Larry Brown.

Returning to Birmingham in 1937, his next job was at the Tennessee Coal and Iron Railroad Company, where he was assigned to the hot and oppressive Wallwork Foundry. He joined the United Steelworkers of America union (USWA), which did not have a Local 1489 at another plant. He soon became its recording secretary.

Elected as a delegate to the Southern Negro Youth Congress's (SNYC) second convention in 1938, he met its early leaders, among them James E. Jackson Jr., Edward Strong, and Louis Burnham. When the SNYC established its national headquarters in Birmingham, in 1939, Hudson worked closely with its leaders and with Esther Cooper Jackson, who later became its executive director. There Jackson and her husband James, who was a Southern Region coordinator of the Communist Party, held daily sessions

with Hudson, helping him further develop his reading and writing skills.

Finding himself unemployed again in 1938, Hudson plunged into his new work with the WPA. He then became vice president of Local 1 of the Workers Alliance Union of the Birmingham and Jefferson County locals of the WPA. Working successfully to bring more worker projects and unemployment aid to Jefferson County (Birmingham), he soon became vice president of the Jefferson County Industrial Union Council.

Following that, he began work at the Jackson Foundry of the Flakley Foundry Company, where he organized Local 2815 of the USWA and became president of the local. He also found the Right to Vote Club of Birmingham. He held other various union positions within the Birmingham Industrial Council and the USWA from 1940 until 1947. In 1945, he continued his work in the mass movement as vice president of the Alabama People's Education Association.

Identified by the *Birmingham Post* as a member of the National Committee of the CPUSA in late 1947, he was expelled from the union and fired from his job at the Jackson Foundry. He also was banned from work in any other foundries, where he had for years worked as a molder in the beginning years of the McCarthy–Truman Cold War era. His marriage of 30 years ended in 1946.

Hudson developed extensive contacts with many groups during these Birmingham years. He organized black workers within the confines of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). He also played a role in fighting for black voting rights throughout the South. Blessed with a strong bass baritone voice, he also sang with church choirs and barbershop quartets and was best known for his rendition of the song, "I Just Want to Be a Leader."

Hudson attempted to continue his political work by organizing the United Political Action Committee, but like many Communists during the period, Hudson was finally forced "underground" in 1950. From 1951 until 1953, he worked as CP liaison to Party units in the South. He also lived and worked as a mason and other odd jobs under various pseudonyms in Birmingham until Eugene "Bill" Connor, the infamous Birmingham police commissioner, using the Klu Klux Klan and police, tracked Hudson down and forced him to leave the city for good under threat of death. Finally, in 1954, he moved north to New York and took odd jobs, the last being as a janitor in a restaurant.

In 1962, he married his second wife, Virginia Marson, and in 1965, he retired from the restaurant. They moved first to Newark, New Jersey, and then settled

in Atlantic City. His wife died in 1971, and he moved to Florida in 1984.

In the early 1970s, Hudson served as an adjunct professor at the Antioch College's Washington campus, and in 1972, he published his autobiography, *Black Worker in the Deep South*. Richard Arrington, the first African-American mayor of Birmingham, gave Hudson the keys to the city on February 26, 1980, which was also proclaimed Hosea Hudson Day. He wore the key around his neck on public occasions. He was a founding member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Hudson moved to Florida in 1984 and remained there until his death at 91.

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HUERTA, DOLORES C. (APRIL 10, 1930–) Cofounder, United Farm Workers of America

Dolores Huerta is the cofounder of the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), AFL-CIO, and the most prominent Chicana labor leader of her generation in the United States. For over 50 years, she has tenaciously devoted herself to the struggle for unionization of farm workers and dignity and justice for agricultural laborers, Mexican-Americans, immigrants, and women. Huerta's unwavering dedication to social change is celebrated in song, murals, newspaper articles, and magazines, through honors and awards, and in the lives of tens of thousands of union members and supporters. Still active and organizing, she is recognized as one of the foremost women in the U.S. labor movement, Mexican-American groups, progressive politics, and feminist circles.

A nationally admired labor leader, political activist, and supporter of women's rights, Huerta was born in the small mining town of Dawson in northern New Mexico. She was the second child and only daughter of Juan Fernández and Alicia Cháves Fernández. Her father was a miner, a fieldworker, and after the couple divorced, a union activist and briefly a member of the New Mexico state legislature. After her divorce,

Alicia Fernández moved her family to Stockton, California. As a single parent during the Great Depression, she experienced difficulty supporting her young family. While she worked at a cannery at night and as a waitress during the day, Huerta's grandfather watched the children. During the 1940s, her family's circumstances improved. Huerta's mother, who had remarried, owned and operated a restaurant and hotel that catered to a multiethnic clientele. While Huerta and her brothers and stepsister helped run the establishment, their mother instilled in them an ethic of community service and encouraged their participation in a variety of social activities. Reflecting opportunities made possible by her emerging middle-class lifestyle, Huerta took violin, piano, and dance lessons. She also sang in the church choir and was an active Girl Scout.

Prodded by parental ambitions, Huerta excelled in school. After her high school graduation, she enrolled at Delta Community College, briefly interrupting her studies for her first, short marriage in 1950 to Ralph Head. Soon divorced with two daughters, she returned to school to prepare for a teaching career. Frustrated with her inability to help her students with their urgent needs of hunger and poverty, Huerta yearned for a more direct way to deal with social injustice and inequality.

Social and Labor Activism

She soon discovered an outlet for her desire for social change in the new wave of labor, civic, and political activism then sweeping the country after World War II. She joined the Agricultural Workers Association (AWA) founded by her local parish priest in Stockton, California. It later merged with the AFL-CIO-sponsored Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC). Huerta won election as the secretary-treasurer of the group. Frustrated by the leadership and its policies, she eventually left. The postwar organization that would dramatically alter her life was the Community Service Organization (CSO), a Mexican-American self-help association that spread throughout the Southwest. The group asserted that grassroots organizing held the key to improving the conditions of the poor and politically disenfranchised barrio residents throughout California. A preferred strategy was the house meeting. The CSO recruited volunteers to teach citizenship classes, initiate voter registration drives in Mexican-American neighborhoods, and press for improved services in their communities. Because Huerta was outspoken, passionate, and determined,

the organization's leaders asked her to join the staff to advocate for CSO initiatives in Sacramento. Here she gained valuable experience as an organizer, activist, and lobbyist. During her tenure, she successfully lobbied for bills, including landmark legislation that allowed farm laborers to receive public assistance, retirement benefits, and disability and unemployment insurance, regardless of citizenship status. She also labored to end the Bracero (guest worker) program. Most significantly, she worked with César Chávez. The two were very different in temperament and had a contentious relationship throughout their association, but they shared an abiding commitment to social justice. Discouraged by the CSO's unwillingness to embrace the organization of farmworkers, the pair left to found the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), the precursor to the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), in Delano in 1962.

Undaunted by her estrangement from her second husband, Ventura Huerta, and the responsibility of raising her family of seven children, Huerta threw herself into the organizing effort. She remained in Stockton for several years to organize workers in the agricultural valleys of northern California before Chávez successfully prevailed upon her to move her family to Delano and to work directly with him. Despite the long tradition of male dominance in the labor movement, Huerta was the first vice president and maintained a highly visible profile. As second in command to Chávez, she exerted a direct influence on guiding the union. In the pivotal 1965 Delano grape strike initiated by AWOC and joined by the NFWA, she devised strategy and inspired workers with her determination and courage. Eventually, the two organizations merged into the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC). The only woman on the executive board, Huerta took charge of negotiations and secured the first contract with Schenley Wine Company. Her tenacity and unconventional tactics extracted major concessions from wineries, such as pay raises, pesticide regulations, paid holidays and vacations, unemployment benefits, sanitation facilities, clean drinking water, health benefits, and eventually pensions. In addition, the union hiring hall replaced the exploitive labor contractor system. This collective bargaining agreement challenged the traditional power relations between farm laborers and corporate agriculture. It served as the model for contracts with other wineries such as Almaden, Gallo, Paul Masson, Christian Brothers, Franzia, and Novitiate.

When table grape growers refused to bargain, the union resorted to the nonviolent boycott. Huerta became a prominent figure in 1968 as director of the boycott in New York City, the primary distribution

point for grapes, and then the East Coast director. Supported by a vibrant civil rights movement, she mobilized unions, political activists, ethnic and racial associations, students, religious supporters, environmentalists, and concerned consumers on behalf of “*La Causa*,” the farmworkers’ cause. In New York, Huerta also became aware of the growing feminist movement through her contacts with Gloria Steinem and other women’s activists. Consequently, Huerta began to incorporate a feminist critique into her human rights’ philosophy and sexual harassment clauses into her negotiations. Her passionate defense of farmworkers’ rights provided a compelling model for women, encouraging them to move beyond traditional roles to join picket lines, marches, and boycotts across the nation despite their own personal reservations and over objections of unsupportive fathers or husbands. After five years of striking, the growing power of this cross-cultural and cross-class grassroots coalition finally forced Coachella and Delano table grape producers to negotiate the historic contracts of 1970.

Even before the union could fully savor its victory, it immediately confronted the lettuce, Gallo wine, and table grape boycotts of the 1970s. It was during this decade that the union ceased to be the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) and became the United Farm Workers of America, or UFW. As in previous campaigns, Huerta’s charisma, energy, organizing skills, frenetic travel calendar, and prodigious speaking schedule renewed the national boycott. Huerta juggled her union responsibilities with growing family demands as she began her unconventional liaison with Richard Chávez, brother of César Chávez, which produced four more children. Frequent separations from her large family did not deter her from her number one priority, the union. Unlike her male colleagues, Huerta’s domestic arrangements departed from conventional expectations and drew criticism and comments from co-workers and observers in the media. She brushed off such concerns and focused on her work. Nevertheless, her constant travel, organizing, and publicizing contributed to the passage of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) in 1975, the first law to recognize the collective bargaining rights of farm laborers in California. This legislation raised expectations that the turmoil in the fields would come to an end.

The struggle between agribusiness and the UFW did not stop, but assumed a new legal dimension. The emphasis moved to elections in the fields and political organizing to protect the new legislation. As part of this effort, Huerta headed the union’s Citizenship Participation Day Department (CPD), the political arm of the UFW, as she fought to defend the law

in Sacramento. In the 1980s, Huerta directed her energies to another ambitious initiative, the founding of Radio Campesina, the union’s radio station (KUFW). This resource would become vital as the union faced an increasing conservative challenge from Republican administrations, including the Reagan presidency and the election of California Governor George Deukmejian, both allies of agribusiness.

Like other unions during this inhospitable political environment, the UFW lost hard-won contracts and experienced a declining membership. Huerta filled her schedule with speaking engagements, fund-raising, and publicizing the renewed boycotts of the 1980s. Appearing before state and congressional committees, she offered impassioned testimony on a variety of issues, including pesticides, the health problems of fieldworkers, Hispanic issues, and immigration policy. The 1985 Immigration Act she lobbied for provided amnesty and citizenship for over one million farmworkers who had lived, worked, and paid taxes in the United States. Her energy and commitment seemed boundless.

Huerta’s loyalty to the farmworkers movement claimed a personal toll—family sacrifices, more than 20 arrests, and a life-threatening injury during a 1988 peaceful protest against the presidential candidacy of George H. W. Bush in San Francisco. Clubbed by a police officer, Huerta collapsed on the picket line. She was rushed to the hospital with broken ribs, and her spleen was removed in emergency surgery. A legal suit forced the police department to revise its rules regarding crowd control and police discipline. The court issued an \$825,000 financial judgment as a consequence of her personal injury.

During her convalescence, Huerta took a leave from the union to work on the Fund for the Feminist Majority’s Feminization of Power Campaign. While crisscrossing the country recruiting and encouraging Latinas to run for office, she was stunned by the premature death of her longtime collaborator, César Chávez, in 1993. Huerta returned to the union. With Chávez’s untimely death, she became the revered elder. Always in demand as a speaker, she addressed a wide variety of labor, women’s, political, student, and community groups, assigning her honorariums to the union. She contributed to organizing campaigns, even returning to the strenuous demands of the bargaining table to pressure strawberry, tomato, and mushroom growers.

Later Political Activism

In 2000, the 70-year-old Huerta reluctantly decided to cut back on her union activities. That year, she chose

not to seek re-election to the union's Executive Board as secretary-treasurer. Her "retirement" did not mean abandoning her advocacy of labor, political, and women's issues. As the union's first vice president emeritus, she continued to speak on behalf of farmworkers, participated in the presidential campaign of Al Gore, and steadfastly supported women's rights. Toward the end of the campaign, she was suddenly stricken with an abdominal aneurysm that required surgery and massive blood transfusions. Confounding the medical community, but not those familiar with her fighting spirit, she recovered. After recuperating, she established the Dolores Huerta Foundation to train community leaders to advocate for immigrants, women, and children. Still drawn to politics, the Kerry/Edwards campaign appointed her to head up *Mujeres con Kerry* (Women with Kerry) in 2004.

Huerta's dedication to social change has been commemorated in murals and ballads; schools and parks have been named after her; and she has won numerous honors. The California State Senate awarded her the Outstanding Labor Leader Award in 1984. In 1993, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. President Bill Clinton bestowed the Eleanor Roosevelt Award upon her in 1998.

A tireless activist for farmworkers, Mexican-Americans, women, and social justice, Huerta created an inspiring and unforgettable legacy to the labor, civil rights, and women's movements of the twentieth century. She steadfastly clung to her conviction that agricultural laborers, a workforce dismissed by the largely white leadership of mainstream unions as unorganizable, could be unionized. Proud of her Chicana heritage, she roused multiple generations of Mexican-Americans to fight for their rights. Rejecting mid-twentieth century ideals of femininity, she ignored conventional expectations for women and for Mexican-American women, in particular. For women, and especially Chicanas and Mexicanas, she has blazed a pioneering trail. Surmounting gender, ethnic, and class expectations, she has provided a powerful example and role model in the struggle for a decent standard of living, equality, and justice.

MARGARET ROSE

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See also **Chávez, César Estrada; Delano Grape Strike (1965–1970); United Farm Workers of America**

HULL-HOUSE SETTLEMENT (1889–1963)

Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, founders and residents, established Hull-House, Chicago's first settlement on September 18, 1889, as a protest against the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots in the industrial districts of modern cities. As residents, they took no salaries but paid their own expenses, choosing to live among working-class families and to learn about their needs. Instead of imposing solutions, Addams and Starr sought to work with their neighbors to improve urban life and were committed to sharing their cultural and educational advantages. After renting the once fashionable house built by the realtor Charles J. Hull in 1856, they decorated it as if it were their own home, with paintings, sculpture, and books, and invited their neighbors to social evenings, classes, and lectures.

Settlements proliferated in the 1890s, a period of labor unrest. Soon after opening Hull-House, daily experiences in the neighborhood focused Starr and Addams, and the other residents who soon joined them, on the labor struggle, and they allied themselves with labor leaders and reformers in the antisweatshop movement. Residents collected and publicized data about sweatshop conditions, demanded new laws to regulate the workplace and keep children in school, and encouraged their neighbors to organize themselves into unions. Highly politicized by life in the Nineteenth Ward of Chicago's Near West Side, an

industrial neighborhood just west of the city's downtown, Hull-House residents began to advocate for public health reforms, construction of playgrounds and recreation centers, and improved affordable housing and better sanitation. Responsive to the needs of immigrants and their children, they redefined the nature of programs and educational curricula for public schools. These initiatives were fully expressed in the Progressive Party platform of 1912 that was developed in large part by settlement leaders. At the Bull Moose convention held in Chicago, Jane Addams seconded the nomination of Theodore Roosevelt as candidate for president of the United States.

Over the years, Hull-House welcomed reformers and radicals, socialists, communists, anarchists, and trade unionists as residents; there were also a significant number of young professionals from the fields of business, law, and medicine. Artists and writers, university people, social workers and college graduates in search of meaning in their lives also came to live at the settlement for periods of six months, one or two years, or in some cases for decades.

Some historians emphasize the social control features of settlement house initiatives, arguing that middle- and upper-middle-class residents hoped to assimilate immigrants into American middle-class values about family life and social behavior. Others question the motivation of the settlement movement in expanding the role of the state, especially arguing that the maternalist values of settlement leaders, who were predominantly women, led eventually to a two-tiered social welfare system in the United States that disadvantaged working-class women and minorities and attempted to enforce middle-class behavior and mores. Historians have also critiqued the race policies of social settlements, pointing out that these associations rarely resulted in interracial programs.

Hull-House and Gender

The overwhelming majority of residents at Hull-House were single women. Among these, a small group spent their adult lives at Hull-House. Many others, including Florence Kelley, Mary Kenney, Julia C. Lathrop, Grace Abbott, and Alice Hamilton, were leaders in the women's political culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Alliances forged at Hull-House linked social activist women in national and international networks. For many women, Hull-House and other settlements provided a new kind of social space in between a traditional domestic sphere and a new civic or professional life. Hull-House included male residents, too, but the

settlement's leaders were women. Hull-House was a privately funded settlement for most of the association's 74-year history on Halsted Street. Money came primarily from reform-minded women. Louise deKoven Bowen was the single largest contributor to the settlement, and after she was appointed treasurer of Hull-House Association in 1907, she assumed much of the responsibility for fund-raising. Other major donors were Mary Rozet Smith, Addams's companion, and Helen Culver, heir to the Hull property. The wealthy male philanthropists Charles Hutchinson, Edward B. Butler, and Julius Rosenwald also contributed to Hull-House, but the settlement was never their major philanthropic focus as it became for Smith and Bowen. The settlement was incorporated as the Hull-House Association (HHA) in 1895, with Addams, John Dewey, Helen Culver, Allen B. Pond, and Mary Rozet Smith serving as trustees. Pond was the architect for the 12 additional settlement buildings. Educator and philosopher John Dewey was active at Hull-House during his tenure at the University of Chicago. The board of trustees remained small (less than 10) during Jane Addams's tenure as head resident and president. She remained in these positions until her death in May 1935, never receiving a salary and using her own inheritance to sustain the enterprise.

The almost unconditional support she received from the close-knit and small group of women donors who shared her political agenda was a major reason why Jane Addams could risk taking unpopular positions. She was also empowered by the independent status of Hull-House, one of the few settlements in the country that was not affiliated with either a religious body or a university.

After Addams's death, the Hull-House resident Adena Miller Rich served as head resident (1935–1937), refusing to accept any compensation in an effort to continue the original settlement tradition. Charlotte Carr (1937–1942) became the first paid director, and with her tenure during the New Deal came a greater reliance on public funding, a change that the HHA had resisted until almost the end of the 1920s. Professionalism in the field of social work as well as increased public funding and a full-time salaried director contributed to the demise of the settlement as a co-operative, resident-based community based on volunteerism.

Hull-House as a Social Center

Hull-House programs grew at a rapid pace as settlement residents became more familiar with the needs of the neighborhood. By 1907, the settlement was a

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complex of 13 buildings, 12 additional edifices having been constructed by architects Pond & Pond as new programs and services were added and space for a growing number of women and men residents was provided. Services for children included a kindergarten, nursery, well-baby clinic, public gymnasium, and playground. In 1907, Hull-House residents founded the Juvenile Protective Association (JPA), and in 1908, they established the Immigrants' Protective League (IPL). Both the IPL and the JPA were housed in the settlement's buildings and had their own boards and staff who worked closely with Hull-House. The settlement included a branch of the public library, a post office, and a cooperative boardinghouse for young workingwomen, the Jane Club. It acted as a liaison with city charities and social service agencies. Numerous social and recreational clubs attracted both children and adults. Educational programs for adults included college extension classes, lecture series, and vocational training. The arts were addressed through a rigorous Music School program, classes in visual and craft arts, sponsorship of theater groups and productions, exhibits, dance classes, and a collection of artwork for loan to club members. Many activities were geared toward neighborhood immigrants. Hull-House sponsored ethnic festivals and social events, and offered English and citizenship classes. By 1907, the settlement reported that nine thousand people attended classes or participated in activities.

Using the Performing and Visual Arts to Create Community

Addams and Starr, who had met while attending the Rockford Female Seminary in Rockford, Illinois, were influenced by Toynbee Hall, the East London settlement started in 1884 by Oxford graduates. They first put into place programs and activities that reflected their reading of John Ruskin, William Morris, and T. F. Horsfall, following the theory that it was essential that working people should have the opportunity to express themselves through the arts. It is not surprising that well-educated women who were disturbed by the seeming isolation and alienation of the working classes initially would turn to high culture as a means to bridge the class gap. The Shakespeare classes, the Plato Club, and the college-extension courses they offered appealed to the American-born clerks and schoolteachers of German and Irish descent, who still remained in the neighborhood that was rapidly being populated by newly arrived immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. Later,

Addams and residents Enella Benedict, head of the Art School, Eleanor Smith, director of the Music School, and Laura Dainty Pelham and Edith de Nancrede, of the Drama department, realized that the performing and visual arts could be vehicles for intercultural and cross-class activities. Theatrical and musical events where neighborhood children and adults performed for audiences that included the settlement's wealthy patrons, for example, created opportunities for privileged Chicagoans to learn first-hand about immigrant and working-class people. At the same time, pageants and holiday celebrations brought together neighbors from different cultural backgrounds.

As successive groups of European immigrants and migrants from the southern United States arrived in the Hull-House neighborhood, residents adapted the performing arts programs as ways of bringing children and adults of different races, ethnicities, and religions into social contact. Reproductions of European art and sculpture initially decorated the settlement's interior space, and the first new building added to the Hull home included art galleries and studios and a lending library where books and art reproductions could be borrowed. The Labor Museum that opened in 1900 also privileged European crafts. With the founding of the Hull-House Kilns in 1927, the settlement acknowledged the migrations of Mexicans. The Kilns were incorporated as a business, a reflection of the fact that Hull-House had become a major institution in the neighborhood and an employer of local crafts people in its industrial shops. Artists from Mexico were employed, but the directors of the kilns were Americans with connections to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the paid workers were Mexicans from the neighborhood whose primary roles were to produce ceramic dishes that were sold in downtown Chicago shops. There were also opportunities to produce individual art pieces.

During the New Deal era, Hull-House increased its staff with federally funded workers and introduced a department of Workers' Education. Cultural differences in the neighborhood were decentered as shared working-class interests informed creative expressions in the visual and performing arts. Art exhibits included the work of Chicago-area African-American artists, and efforts to integrate programs and staff to reflect the changing demography of the neighborhood had mixed results. With the loss of federal funding during World War II and its aftermath, Hull-House resumed its Eurocentric emphases, as illustrated by the presence of a Latvian theater group in the 1950s.

Support of Labor Organization

The arrival of Florence Kelley brought labor issues to the center. Taking leadership of the antisweatshop campaign, Kelley and her allies were successful in obtaining passage of the first Factory Inspection Act in Illinois in 1893; this legislation also had provisions for reduction of hours for women workers (the eight-hour day clause) and compulsory school attendance for children through the age of 14. Appointed chief factory inspector, Kelley located her office in the settlement house.

Hull-House invited workers interested in organizing new unions to meet in its facilities and, when the new unions engaged in strikes, became sympathetic allies, providing bail money, contributing to the fund for striking workers' families, and protesting the anti-union politics of the employers. Chicago branches of the Women's Union Label League and the Women's Trade Union League met there. During the economic depression of 1893–1894, Hull-House opened a Model Lodging House for unemployed women and funded it through a cooperative arrangement with the Chicago Woman's Club. With the assistance of Hull-House, Mary Kenney and a group of women workers formed the Jane Club, a co-operative and self-governing boarding club. A house was built in the Hull-House complex for the club's use.

Sociological Investigation and Advocacy

The belief that an enlightened citizenry could be mobilized for reform causes was part of the Progressive Era's faith in the efficacy of social science investigation to produce solutions for society's problems. *Hull House Maps & Papers (HHM&P)* (1895) is the first study of its kind in the United States and directly influenced subsequent social surveys that also emanated from settlement houses rather than from universities. *HHM&P* condemn the sweating system in the garment trades and argue that only those workers who organized themselves into trade unions were able to improve their status. In subsequent studies—23 different investigations were conducted between 1892 and 1933—Hull-House residents explored child labor, tenement conditions, ethnic groups, infant mortality, midwifery, cocaine use, and the causes and prevention of truancy. Many of their findings were published in the *American Journal of Sociology*. They used this information to lobby for reforms.

Departure

The Hull-House neighborhood continued to change demographically. In 1938, the Jane Addams Homes, the city's first public housing development, was built southwest of the settlement. In the 1950s, parts of the neighborhood were razed for industrial use and to accommodate two expressways. Hull-House's director, Russell Ballard (1943–1963), advocated for community participation in the redevelopment of the old neighborhood, but by the 1950s, settlement houses no longer were in the vanguard of reform. There were discussions about the future of Hull-House.

In 1961, the Hull-House neighborhood was selected as the site for a new urban campus for the University of Illinois, and plans initially proposed the demolition of the 13-building settlement complex and the whole neighborhood that surrounded it. The plan provoked considerable protest from the neighborhood and generated a campaign to save some of the original Hull-House buildings. Two buildings were saved: the original Hull home and the Residents' Dining Hall building. The social service functions of the HHA moved to other Chicago sites in 1963. In 1967, the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum opened in the two remaining structures that had been saved and restored.

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See also **Addams, Jane**

HUTCHESON, WILLIAM L. (1874–1953) President, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (UBCJ), 1915–1951

Having experienced long periods of unemployment and witnessed failed organizing campaigns as a young itinerate carpenter, William L. Hutcheson developed a firm belief in business principles and the importance of centralized organization and strong leadership to the American labor movement. His style of leadership is usually described as business unionism, and his policies were often criticized as conservative and undemocratic. Nevertheless, he fought hard to preserve his union's jurisdictional claims and powerful position within the labor movement. He was among the most prominent labor leaders in the twentieth century.

Soon after becoming the general president of the UBCJ upon the death of the president, James Kirby, in 1915, Hutcheson intervened in a wage dispute between the New York District Council and the Building Trades Employers' Association. When locals called a strike without the approval of the national organization, he negotiated a settlement with the Employers' Association, and the UBCJ General Executive Board suspended and re-organized 61 locals. Because of the New York locals' tradition of independence, Hutcheson's decisive actions made it clear that powerful local unions and autonomous district councils would be closely monitored under his leadership.

Throughout his career, Hutcheson steadfastly opposed the concept of industrial unionism. For the leaders of the Carpenters union, the prospect of industrial unions raised the specter of jurisdictional losses and internal discord. Since 1914, the UBCJ had adhered to a policy of craft industrialism. In short, this meant that although the union claimed jurisdiction over the entire woodworking industry, it preferred not to organize all workers. Instead, the Brotherhood preferred to police the industry in the interests of

preserving the carpenters' craft interests. In the 1920s, Hutcheson promptly expelled suspected agitators in response to Communists' attempts to infiltrate the UBCJ. When debates within the American Federation of Labor (AFL) over chartering industrial unions began in 1933, Hutcheson was a leading opponent. The split within the AFL, which led to the creation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), was famously underscored in 1935 when Hutcheson and the United Mine Workers (UMW) president John Lewis engaged in a fistfight on the AFL convention floor. The UBCJ and the CIO continued their battles in jurisdictional disputes and remained bitter rivals for the remainder of Hutcheson's career.

Hutcheson rejected third-party political movements and argued that labor stood to gain more as a nonpartisan political pressure group. During World War I, for example, he was successful in achieving all of the Carpenters major wartime labor demands through his co-operation in the creation of the National War Labor Board. Throughout his career, Hutcheson sought to achieve gains for labor through the Republican Party. GOP principles meshed well with Hutcheson's conservatism, which generally tolerated only minimal governmental intervention in the economy. Within the labor movement, he warned rank-and-file members that the government could take away just as quickly as it could give to labor. He retreated slightly from this stance during the Great Depression and supported public works projects and unemployment insurance, but he opposed President Roosevelt in each of his elections.

Over the course of his career, Hutcheson became the dominant labor figure within the Republican Party. He turned down offers to serve as secretary of labor under presidents Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, but advised each on labor issues. In addition to serving as a delegate to several Republican conventions, he was a regular visitor at the White House during Hoover's administration, and in 1944, he was considered as a potential vice presidential candidate. Despite his own conservatism, Hutcheson considered himself a liberalizing force within the Republican Party.

Hutcheson continued to support the Republican Party after passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, but he devoted much of the remainder of his career to fighting antilabor legislation. According to his biographer, Hutcheson helped influence President Truman to veto the Taft-Hartley Act, and in 1948, the Carpenters union joined the rest of the labor movement in campaigning against congressmen who had voted for the bill. Although he felt betrayed by Robert Taft and other conservative party members, Hutcheson remained a Republican and continued to

advocate a nonpartisan policy for labor even when the AFL came out in support of the Democratic presidential candidate, Adlai Stevenson, in 1952.

Suffering from health problems, Hutcheson resigned his post as president in 1951 at the age of 77. He was succeeded by his son, Maurice, who held the office until 1972. After a brief stay at the union's retirement home in Lakeland, Florida (which he had been instrumental in establishing), Hutcheson returned to the Midwest, where he died on October 20, 1953.

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See also **United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America**

I

ILLINOIS WOMAN'S ALLIANCE

The Illinois Woman's Alliance (IWA) was formed in November 1888 as a cross-class and interracial coalition of 25 diverse women's organizations. Two prior decades of successful political organization by Chicago women around issues of women's rights and the protection of women and children had prepared the way for the IWA. Middle-class and elite women had enlarged the scope of their organizations to incorporate labor issues, and during the same period, women workers had formed labor unions and had affiliated with the men's Trade and Labor Assembly of Chicago.

The immediate incident leading to the IWA's formation was journalist Nell Nelson's "City Slave Girls," a shocking expose of conditions in Chicago's sweatshop, which appeared in the *Chicago Times*. Chicago had a tenement and workshop inspection law on the books that had been enacted in 1879 in response to the revelation that garments were being produced in tenement rooms where men, women, and children lay sick with diphtheria, measles, smallpox, tuberculosis, and other diseases that could be transmitted to purchasers of the garments. The inspection law was not enforced.

The IWA had 25 affiliates ranging from representatives of the Knights of Labor to the Chicago Woman's Club and the Prudence Crandall Club, one of the first African-American women's clubs in Chicago. At its peak the IWA could fill the city council chambers with 500 women. The IWA members included socialists, dress reformers, spiritualists, temperance advocates, and clubwomen.

Elizabeth Morgan, Caroline Huling, Corrine Stubbs Brown, and Fannie Barrier Williams all were IWA officers and represent a cross section of the women's movement in Chicago in the late nineteenth century. Morgan, British-born socialist, in 1888 helped found the Ladies' Federal Labor Union, No. 2703. It was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and adopted the Knights of Labor principle of treating housewives as producers. Morgan represented the Ladies' Federal and the larger Trade and Labor Assembly of Chicago in the IWA. Corrine Brown, a schoolteacher for 13 years and a principal for six before she married Frank Brown, a Chicago banker, was a member of the Socialist Labor party. She was both a leading clubwoman and the head of the Ladies' Federal Union No. 2703. Brown and Morgan issued the call for the formation of the IWA. Caroline Huling, the daughter of a newspaper publisher with political connections in New York State, was an early convert to France E. Willard's Women's Christian Temperance Union and a leader in the Cook County Equal Suffrage Association. She edited a short-lived suffrage newspaper, and in March 1888 was a delegate to the first International Council of Women. Fannie Williams, raised in Brockport, New York, taught school before she married S. Laing Williams, a black lawyer, and settled in Chicago. A member of Chicago's black elite, Williams authored newspaper and magazine articles, founded the Prudence Crandall Club, a literary society of upper-class African-American women and, after heated debate, was voted a member of the CWC.

The IWA slogan, "Justice to Children—Loyalty to Women," reflected the potential conflict inherent in the coalition as traditionalist women advocated moral reforms while feminists attempted to expand the authority and power of women in society. There were also disagreements between trade unionist women who resisted political solutions to economic problems initially and middle-class reformers who sought an expanded role of the state in these matters. The national solution of the race question in 1896 into acceptance of a system of segregated women's organizations meant that the interracial coalition achieved by the IWA would be an anomalous event, not the beginnings of a social transformation.

The balance of power of the coalition shifted when in 1892, Hull-House resident Florence Kelley became the leading figure of the antisweatshop movement. Kelley was a strong advocate of political solutions and with Corrine Brown and the IWA, lobbied successfully for the passage of a state factory inspection system and was appointed the first chief factory inspector. For the next 3 years, Kelley enforced the act's chief clauses. The 1893 act outlawed the labor of children under 14 years of age; it regulated the labor of children age 14–16; it banned the production of garments in tenements. It prohibited the employment of women and minors for more than 8 hours a day, a clause that made the Illinois act the most advanced in the United States.

The Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA) immediately challenged the 8-hour clause in the courts. In a surprising move that was condemned by members of the Trade and Labor Assembly and by many middle-class members of the IWA, the alliance passed a resolution in 1894 condemning the 8-hour clause. Accused of being the action of an antilabor group that had acted without a quorum, IWA stalwarts held another meeting and endorsed the controversial clause. There were charges that political and religious influences were at work in the IWA, steering the alliance away from its original prolabor stance. The IWA delegates to the Trade and Labor Assembly complained that the alliance had refused to pass a resolution in support of the Pullman strikers and had instead expressed its disapproval of strikes as a means to settle labor troubles. The IWA appeared to be on the brink of dissolution. Three years later the IWA still held meetings, but its officers did not include leading socialists or trade unionists or the leading clubwomen who had supported factory inspection legislation, including the 8-hour clause, and the alliance's agenda instead focused on more traditional women's issues, including the care and disposition of dependent children in state and county institutions. The Illinois Supreme Court had ruled in 1895 that the

8-hour clause was unconstitutional because it violated women's right to contract their labor on any terms set by their employer. The IWA however had demonstrated the power of a coalition that crossed the boundaries of class and race.

RIMA LUNIN SCHULTZ

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IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT OF 1965

The national origins system set in place during the 1920s began to unravel during World War II, although the specific quotas were not replaced until 1965. During World War II, as a gesture to America's ally China, Congress repealed the Chinese Restriction acts, dating to 1882. The lawmakers, with the support of the Roosevelt administration, granted China a quota of only 105 annually and gave Chinese immigrants the right to become U.S. citizens. In 1946, India and the Philippines were also given quotas. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 granted all Asian countries small quotas. Japan was given the largest number: 185. Most nations received only 100 slots. The 1952 law also repealed a ban on naturalization for Asian immigrants. At that time the largest group of Asian immigrants in the United States was the over 70,000 Japanese who could now become United States citizens, and most did so.

These modifications responded to the changing post-1945 world and the United States' new role in that world. Foreign policy became part of immigration law because the United States did not wish its immigration laws to be explicitly racist. In a similar manner Congress agreed to admit 110,000 war brides (mostly English and German but 6,000 Chinese women as well) without regard for quotas and some other minor aspects of immigration law.

Congress and postwar presidents also wanted to admit many Europeans who were displaced because of the war and the outbreak of the Cold War, even though many lived in countries with small

national-origins quotas, sometimes the minimum of 100. Congress responded to the refugee crisis by passing the Displaced Persons acts of 1948 and 1950. These laws allowed 400,000 persons to come to the United States regardless of their small allotments. The legislation allowed individual countries to mortgage their future quotas; in some cases this procedure mortgaged individual national allotments for over 100 years.

The McCarran-Walter Immigration Act of 1952 might have opened the door for limited Asian immigration, but it kept the Johnson-Reed system of national origins for Europeans. However the next year President Dwight Eisenhower asked Congress to admit another 200,000 persons regardless of the quotas, and the legislators agreed. Then by the parole power, Eisenhower admitted over 35,000 refugees fleeing the failed Hungarian revolution of 1956, and Congress sanctioned the president's action by enacting legislation allowing them to become immigrants. Still other refugees were granted entrance by special laws during the 1950s. When Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba and Cubans began to flee to the United States, once again President Eisenhower and later presidents admitted them. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy followed a similar pattern when he paroled into the United States 14,000 Chinese who had fled to Hong Kong.

Western Hemisphere nations had no quotas, but few immigrants came during World War II. Congress did authorize the importation of temporary Mexican workers, known as *braceros*, during the war. This program continued after 1945, lasting until 1964. Some of the *braceros* returned after their terms expired, becoming regular immigrants or undocumented aliens. Thus immigration from Mexico and the Western Hemisphere began to grow, running to roughly 120,000 annually in the early 1960s. These nonquota immigrants coupled with the various refugees from Europe and Asia meant that from 1945 to the early 1960s two-thirds of all immigrants entered as nonquota migrants.

Passage of the Immigration and Nationality (Hart-Celler) Act of 1965

Clearly the 1920s system was not working as intended. Moreover fear of immigrants had lessened during the 1950s and 1960s. Both Presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight Eisenhower proposed substantial alterations for immigration policy, but neither president proposed scrapping the national origins quotas entirely. However President John F. Kennedy

went further and suggested a plan to end national origins quotas but without a large increase in immigration. After Kennedy's assassination, President Lyndon Johnson took up the call for immigration reform.

The liberal climate of the 1960s produced the Civil Rights acts of 1964 and 1965, Medicare, the War on Poverty, and other Great Society programs. With this climate it seemed that immigration reform would pass easily. The overwhelming victory of President Johnson in 1964 over Republican Barry Goldwater and a huge democratic majority in Congress reinforced the possibility of legislating new immigration policy.

In spite of the growing support for immigration reform, the president and other political leaders did not believe that substantial increases in immigration would pass. Thus proposed legislation liberalized immigration law but only cautiously. In the first place the total places enacted for the Eastern Hemisphere were only 170,000. The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 used a figure of 150,000, which had been increased by several thousand after World War II. Thus the new system for the Eastern Hemisphere would have added only about 15,000 slots more than the current figure.

Spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens had been exempt from the quotas since 1924, and Congress added parents of U.S. citizens to the exempt list. The total of exempt persons was estimated to be only 50,000 or so, but the actual figures went over 300,000 during some years of the 1990s, a number that the framers of the 1965 law had not projected.

The main liberalization of the Hart-Celler Act was to give all nations the identical quota. Now Asian nations would have the same allotment (20,000 annually) as Great Britain and Germany, the countries favored under the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act.

This liberalization was not expected to be major, for Congress created a seven-category preference system to determine who would be permitted under the quotas. The Johnson-Reed Act had preferences for occupations and family members, but of course these had to fit within the national origins quotas. The preferences of the Hart-Celler Act were geared toward family unification, which accounted for 74% of the slots. The largest preference (24%) was for brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens, which prompted some observers to call the new law the "brothers and sisters act." The second largest preference was for spouses and minor children of permanent resident aliens (immigrants). The preferences aimed at aiding those nations, mostly European, with backlogs for family unification. Italy and Greece were expected to take advantage of the new system because they had backlogs of persons wanting to join family members

already in the United States. They did so in the immediate years after the 1965 act went into effect. Italy for example, whose old quota was under 6,000, averaged over 25,000 for the first years after the new law went into effect.

Two preferences were set aside for those with special skills needed in the United States. These categories amounted to 20% under the preference system and were not expected to have a significant impact on employment, which helped to win support of organized labor. In the end these two categories were very important for Asian immigrants, for many possessed the desired skills. For example Asians, especially Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, and Indians, entered as medical professionals. Once established they could use the family preferences to build a network of new immigration, thus making possible the large number of Asian immigrants by the 1980s. In part Asians could use the new system so effectively because the pressure for emigration in Europe lessened after the 1960s. The economies of Western Europe had recovered from World War II, and some nations, such as Germany, were importing temporary workers, and not sending many persons to the United States.

Congress also recognized that the large number of refugees from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East arriving after 1945 were admitted on an *ad hoc* basis, either by presidential use of the parole power or by special legislation. To remedy this situation, the lawmakers set aside the last preference for refugees, amounting to 10,200 places. This figure quickly proved inadequate and later forced Congress to revise and increase programs for refugees.

What of the Western Hemisphere? Key senators were alarmed by the growing number of Latinos entering the United States after the 1950s. These senators, with some support in the House of Representatives, persuaded the Johnson administration to accept for the first time a limit for the Western Hemisphere, amounting to 120,000 persons, a figure approximately equal to the number of newcomers from Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America in the early 1960s. As was the case with the Eastern Hemisphere, spouses, minor children, and parents of U.S. citizens were exempt from the ceiling. In establishing this limit, Congress made the law more restrictive than the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924. Under the Hart-Celler Act the Western Hemisphere nations did not have preference categories, nor did they have national limits of 20,000, which proved to be an advantage for Mexico, the nation with the largest flow of immigrants to the United States in the early 1960s. However in the 1970s Congress gave the Western Hemisphere the same preferences as the

Eastern Hemisphere, and in 1979 lawmakers created a worldwide uniform system by combining the two hemispheres.

As finally developed, the new immigration acts abolished the discrimination of national origins, replacing it with a total of 290,000 immigrants, with spouses, minor children, and parents of U.S. citizens being exempt. It was projected that the worldwide system would permit approximately 350,000 new immigrants to enter annually. Yet by the 1990s, immigration was averaging one million annually. Clearly other changes were required after the 1970s to make such large increases possible. The Hart-Celler Act had begun the process of liberalization of American immigration policy.

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IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION

In spite of the importance of immigration to the U.S. national identity, the question of immigration has been a complicated one. The founding generation expressed a great deal of ambivalence toward immigration. Many were concerned that perhaps immigrants would not be able to adopt the American ideals of individual liberty and republican principles that were undergirding the new nation. This concern however was moderated by the sense that the United States had a special mission as a place of asylum.

Perhaps even more important, the founding fathers and the generations that succeeded them realized that immigrants—whether coming as indentured servants or independent individuals—would play an important role in building the nation characterized by a perennial labor shortage and what seemed like boundless land to the West yet to be conquered.

Considering the important role of immigration in the nation's founding, it might at first seem a bit surprising that the framers of the Constitution paid little attention to it. In fact the Constitution addresses the issue of immigration only once in its provisions, barring Congress from limiting the "migration or importation" of persons until 1808. Just as the framers left questions of immigration largely unaddressed, they also said little about the issue of naturalization, instead providing Congress with the power to "establish a uniform rule of naturalization." As such in 1790, the nation's first Congress responded by passing the Naturalization Act of 1790. This act stipulated that in order to become a naturalized citizen, immigrants had to have resided in the United States for 2 years and that one had to also pledge loyalty to the ideals embodied in the Constitution. Equally revealing the act also required that prospective citizens be "free white persons." Both substantively and symbolically, these stipulations demonstrated the importance of the idea of freedom and the notion of volitional citizenship—that partaking in shared republican ideals made disparate persons a people. However the "free white persons" clauses reaffirmed that only those who were white could truly be free, thereby racializing citizenship and reaffirming racial hierarchies.

Although the nation's first naturalization policy was exclusive and racist, Congress did nothing to try to limit the number of immigrants, even those not considered white. Nearly a century would pass before Congress would attempt to seriously limit who could come to the United States. The fact that Congress did not pass any meaningful restrictive legislation until the last quarter of the nineteenth century however does not mean that all residents viewed immigration positively. During the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s, restrictionists looked for ways to limit the influence of Irish and Catholic immigrants. The creation of the American party in 1851 provided an institutional base for all those who hoped to redefine the nation's political community by dramatically increasing the number of years required for naturalization and limiting the rights of alien residents. However the historically easy pathway of naturalization open to free and white immigrants meant that by the early nineteenth century, many immigrant/ethnic communities had already

amassed political strength that the Whigs and the Jeffersonian Democrats of the 1830s and 1840s, or the Republicans of the 1850s and 1860s, could not easily ignore.

Recognizing the nation's need for labor, during the 1860s Congress, rather than restrict immigration, took steps to try to attract immigrant laborers to come to the United States. In 1862, Congress passed the Homestead Act providing 160 acres of land to those willing to toil on it for 5 years. Both citizens and aliens were eligible to apply. Two years later Congress passed an act to encourage immigration, which provided funds to overseas consular officials to publicize land and labor opportunities in the United States. This act also included a clause allowing businesses to pay the fare for European laborers who were willing to sign a 1-year labor contract. (This section was repealed in 1868 due to the political pressure of labor groups who feared that the incoming immigrants would be held in semiservitude and undermine the wages and rights of laboring men.)

Race and Labor Restrictions

The relative openness that characterized U.S. immigration policy began to change during the 1870s and 1880s. At the behest of western congressmen, who feared the influence of Chinese immigrants, in 1875 Congress passed the Page Law. This law banned "coolie labor" by making it illegal to bring in Asian immigrants without their voluntary consent. This act also excluded prostitutes from coming into the United States, a rather poorly veiled attempt to limit Chinese women from entering at all. Though western nativists celebrated the passage of the Page Law, they were far from satisfied. Just a year later they helped to spearhead the creation of a Joint Special Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration. Charged with the task of assessing the "character and extent" as well as effect of Chinese immigration on the United States, the commission interviewed over one hundred witnesses (most prorestrictionists) and established a fact-finding mission. In spite of the public face of impartiality, the special commission merely repeated the racist charges made by westerners for decades—that Chinese immigrants undermined white labor and that Chinese immigrants could not assimilate into American culture politically, socially, racially, or economically. Largely adopting the report's findings, in 1880 both Democrats and Republicans pledged to place immigration restrictions on Chinese immigration, transforming the question of Chinese

IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION

immigration and Chinese-American labor into a national rather than just a regional issue.

In 1882, Congress answered calls to limit Chinese immigration by passing the Chinese Exclusion Act, the most significant piece of immigration legislation since the nation's first Congress limited naturalization to free white persons. The Chinese Exclusion Act stipulated that Chinese laborers would be barred from coming into the United States for 20 years, a term that was changed to 10 years due to the pressure of President Chester Arthur, who was concerned about treaty obligations. (Chinese merchants and students were exempted from these restrictions.) Chinese laborers already in the United States who wished to travel outside the United States would need to attain certificates or face the prospect of being denied entry on trying to return. In addition to excluding future Chinese laborers and circumscribing the movement of Chinese laborers already in the United States, the act also made it easier to deport Chinese immigrants from the United States. It also stipulated that no state government could naturalize them.

It took just 6 years for Congress to revise the Chinese Exclusion Act, making it even more difficult for Chinese immigrants already in the United States. The Scott Act of 1888 revoked the right of Chinese laborers to travel outside the United States and gain reentry regardless of whether they had certificates allowing them to do so. Furthermore the Scott Act explicitly stated that Chinese merchants attempting to come into the United States would have to prove their exempted status by demonstrating the possession of \$1,000 worth of property. (This represented an attempt to make it more difficult for Chinese laborers to come into the United States under the merchant status.) Finally in 1892, the year the original Chinese Exclusion Act was scheduled to expire, Congress passed the Geary Act. This act made permanent the prohibitions of Chinese laborers coming into the United States. It also stipulated that Chinese aliens in the United States had to carry certificates of residence, proving that they had been in the United States before 1882.

The original Chinese Exclusion Act marked an important turning point in U.S. immigration and labor law. First it linked race and class exclusions, thereby codifying popular assumptions that certain races were "unfree" laborers who undermined white workingmen and the republican ideals of the nation. The legislation also had a less apparent but nonetheless important effect—its enforcement required the building of an administrative immigration bureaucracy.

The issues of open immigration, labor, and race continued to garner public concern throughout the

late nineteenth century. While western nativists campaigned to exclude Chinese immigrants, labor groups spearheaded efforts to limit U.S. businesses' access to contract laborers. Led by the Knights of Labor (KOL), laboring groups throughout the nation began to call for a general contract labor law that would make it illegal for U.S. companies to recruit foreign workers abroad. The reasoning behind the demand for a contract labor law was based on the assumption that those workers coming in with contracts were not really free workers but rather semi-enslaved workers. The KOL officials and supporters also believed that U.S. corporations recruited immigrant workers to break strikes, undermine wages, lower the standard of living, and defuse the political power of American workers.

In 1885, Congress responded to demands for a contract labor law by passing the Foran Act, also known as the Contract Labor Act. This act represented the KOL's most important legislative victory. The act invalidated all contracts made to import alien workers and empowered the federal government to deport any workers who had come to the United States after having been contracted to work while still overseas. Corporations that violated the act faced the prospect of fines up to \$1,000. In spite of the celebration of the Foran Act as a labor victory, it did little to impede the mass migration of immigrant workers into the United States or to uphold the wages and standard of living of workers already here.

Expanding Restrictions

Although the Foran Act did little to restrict immigration, this does not mean that the federal government abandoned its efforts to regulate immigration. In 1891, Congress passed the Immigrant Act of 1891, mandating the creation of a new federal bureaucracy—the Immigration Bureau—to coordinate and oversee the nation's borders and screening of potential immigrants. With the creation of the Immigration Bureau the federal government took over from states and private agencies the power to determine who would be allowed into the United States. Equally important the 1891 legislation expanded the kinds of restrictions established with Foran by specifically excluding certain persons from entering the United States, including polygamists and those with contagious diseases. This act also made it easier for the Immigration Bureau to deport persons likely to become a public charge. The last provision, which came to be known as LPC, reflected the assumption that only those immigrants

who could be self-supporting workers should be admitted into the United States.

The new restrictions laid out in the 1891 law did little to stop the growing numbers of immigrants coming into the United States: Millions of southern and eastern Europeans immigrated to the United States from 1890 to the early 1920s. The arrival of these immigrants on American shores and the essential role that they played in the booming industrial economy assured that immigration and labor would be two of the most important political issues of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On one hand these newest immigrants faced charges that they represented a docile, dependent, and servile labor force that embodied the worst abuses and effects of American capitalism. On the other hand nativists insisted that these very same immigrants were anarchists and socialists bringing in radical foreign ideals that would tear asunder the democratic fabric of the nation, both figuratively and literally.

Though these two charges—the one that immigrants were docile and the other that they were radical revolutionaries—might at first appear contradictory, nativists had no trouble making both claims at once. What wedded these two visions was the assumption that the newest immigrants were racially inferior. Labor organizations, which had often called for restricting immigration, were now joined by a host of patriotic and academic societies looking for ways to ferret out the undesirable immigrants. Whether motivated primarily by racial, social, political, or economic concerns (and most often a combination of all), these nativists insisted that southern and eastern Europeans represented a cheap immigrant labor force, which undermined the nation's economy and political ideals. (The fact that the nation suffered numerous economic recessions and depressions in this era did much to reinforce the assumption that immigrants were undermining the nation's economy.) Armed with the new science of eugenics and new allies in academic and political circles, the movement to restrict immigration into the United States gained greater strength and respectability.

As concern about the influence of the newest immigrants on the U.S. economy and society mounted, Congress created the Dillingham Commission in 1908 to study the issue of immigration, labor, and race and to come up with possible solutions. Supported with a significant budget and staffed by hundreds of expert social scientists, the commission produced a 42-volume report. The report compared and contrasted the nation's old (British, German, Irish, and so forth) immigrants with the newest arrivals, characterizing the former in a positive light while calling into question the influences of the latter

immigrants on the nation's economy, social structure, political institutions, and racial makeup. In fact southern and eastern European immigrants were most often portrayed as an unskilled labor force of men and women who caused innumerable economic, social, political, and racial problems for the nation. As such the commission recommended that Congress pass a literacy test, increase the head tax, and begin to restrict immigration based on the prospective immigrant's national origins.

It took a number of years for all of the commission's recommendations to be put into place, but by the middle of the 1920s, all of the restrictions had been instituted. After many years of trying to pass a literacy clause, in 1917 Congress finally succeeded in doing so over the veto of President Woodrow Wilson. Four years later and after concern that the number of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe would increase dramatically now that World War I was over, Congress passed a Temporary Emergency Act to limit the number of immigrants coming into the United States to 387,803 a year. Rather than dole out these slots on a first-come basis, the act created a proportional representation quota system whereby the number of immigrants from any particular nation entering the United States could not be more than 3% of the immigrants already in the United States based on the 1910 census. In 1924 Congress agreed on a more permanent solution, further decreasing the number of immigrants to 186,437 a year and revising the quota system so that the number of immigrants allowed into the United States each year would be based on a percentage of immigrants already in the United States in 1890 rather than 1910, further decreasing the numbers of southern and eastern European immigrants who would be allowed to immigrate to the United States. This act also stipulated that only immigrants who could become naturalized citizens—which at this point included only those who were white and those of African descent—could immigrate to the United States at all, effectively barring all Asian immigrants from coming to the United States. Though the 1924 National Origins Act did not explicitly exclude laborers like the Chinese Exclusion Act, in practice it had a similar effect: Limit the number of supposedly racially inferior immigrants whom the nativists charged had begun to undermine the nation economically, socially, and politically.

Immigration Exceptions

In spite of the broad scope of the National Origins Act, it did include one very important exception—the

IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION

Western Hemisphere. The history of immigration policy toward the Western Hemisphere, and Mexico in particular, followed a very different trajectory than the one the United States was developing toward Asia and Europe. In 1911, the Dillingham Commission even lauded Mexican immigrants as a migratory and temporary workforce that would help to meet the needs of U.S. agriculture without changing the demographic profile of the United States. During World War I, the U.S. secretary of labor invoked a provision of the Immigration Act of 1917 to allow U.S. agricultural interests to recruit agricultural workers at the Canadian and Mexican borders by waiving head taxes, literacy tests, and contract labor laws. To make sure that these workers would return to their home country, the U.S. Department of Labor fingerprinted and photographed the incoming workers and withheld part of their wages. This program formally ended in 1921.

The relatively porous border between the United States and Mexico did not go unnoticed. Shortly after Congress succeeded in passing immigration restrictions with respect to European immigrants, it turned its attention to the issue of Mexican immigration. Many of the nation's leading restrictionists were concerned that the nation had closed the front door while leaving the back door completely open. In response during the latter half of the 1920s, both the Senate and the House hosted numerous hearings and entertained a variety of bills that would have restricted immigration from the Western Hemisphere or Mexico alone. The restrictionists who wanted to restrict Mexican immigration made both racial and economic arguments, insisting that the Mexican immigrants who came to the United States undermined the racial foundations of the nation, which the just recently passed National Origins Act was supposed to protect, and undermined white workingmen and farmers who could not compete with the low wages and low standard of living of Mexican immigrants. Since many Mexican immigrants toiled in agriculture, these restrictionists also insisted that Mexican immigration led to the downfall of family farms and the rise of large corporate landed estates. These restrictionists however faced an equally well-organized and vocal contingent of antirestrictionists from the Southwest and Midwest who claimed that Mexicans were integral to the future of American agriculture. These antirestrictionists attempted to quell the race fears of restrictionists by claiming that Mexicans had a homing instinct that drew them back home. The issue, they insisted, was not one of immigration but rather a labor question. With the back-room influence of the U.S. State Department, which feared the diplomatic fallout if the United States restricted immigration

from the Western Hemisphere, the antirestrictionists prevailed.

The failure of Congress to pass a restrictive act to exclude Mexican immigrants however does not mean that the issue of Mexican immigration was simply ignored. In fact the United States turned to administrative means to try to monitor the number of immigrants coming into the United States, relying on a newly created border patrol and implementation of head taxes and LPC clauses to suit the needs of American agriculture. The underlying assumption of these administrative means of regulating Mexican immigration was the idea that Mexicans were not really immigrants but workers who could be allowed in when needed and propelled to leave when no longer necessary. This is perhaps best reflected during the Great Depression when municipal and state authorities, often working hand-in-hand with Mexican consular officials in the United States, repatriated thousands of Mexican immigrants to Mexico. Though the program began as a voluntary repatriation campaign whereby Mexican nationals wishing to return home would be provided transportation, it soon evolved into a coercive program as various U.S. officials pressured many Mexicans out of the United States.

The perception of Mexican immigrants as workers who could be imported and exported as need be was further codified in the Emergency Labor Importation Program, which began in 1942 as an emergency wartime measure and extended until 1964, years after the conflict had ended. This program, which became known as the *Bracero* program, was a bilateral agreement between Mexico and the United States, in which the former agreed to provide workers as long as the United States ensured wages, working conditions, and living standards. In practice U.S. officials did little to enforce the provisions of the program, and Mexican officials often found themselves powerless to force their northern neighbor to abide by the initial agreement. The program was finally disbanded in 1964 due to pressure from a public anxious about Mexican immigration as well as labor and civil rights groups who pointed to labor and civil rights violations.

A year after the disbanding of the *Bracero* program, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1965, which abolished the national quota system, limited immigration worldwide to 290,000 a year, and created a maximum ceiling of 20,000 immigrants per country. In addition to creating a more equitable system for admissions, the 1965 legislation created a seven-category preference system of admissions, privileging family reunification while also reserving some slots for immigrants with special work skills.

The history of labor and immigration restriction can be characterized as *laissez faire* until the 1880s, when fault lines based on race and labor emerged. The restrictions on Chinese workers and contract labor extended the racialized and economic ideals embodied in the nation's first naturalization policy—that one had to be a free white person. Over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Congress expanded the restricted categories, barring almost all Asian immigrants in 1917 and making sure that fewer southern and eastern European immigrants would come in 1921 and 1924. The most important exception to these widening restrictions was the Western Hemisphere, and Mexico in particular. The unwillingness of Congress to include the Western Hemisphere or Mexico in the national origins restrictions however was based on the idea that Mexican immigrants were not really immigrants at all but merely workers who would return to Mexico one day. Not only until 1965 did the United States abandon the racially influenced national origins and adopt a more egalitarian immigration policy.

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INDENTURED SERVITUDE

A shortage of labor plagued settlers in British Colonial America (1607–1775). Human brawn, aided only by animal and wind power, was required for most of the extremely labor-intensive tasks required in the American colonies. To meet this demand for labor, European settlers in British Colonial America relied on indentured servants. Though there were regional variations, this system of unfree labor thrived throughout British Colonial America.

Indentured servitude involved a written contract—an indenture—that a young person signed before coming to British Colonial America. This contract (indenture) specified that a laborer would work for a set number of years. The term ranged from 4–7 years, depending on specific circumstances. In return the indentured servant's passage to the colonies would be paid for and food and clothing would be provided for the duration of the contract. (The British American colonist who bought the indenture would pay these costs.) In some cases servants would also receive land or money (freedom dues) at the conclusion of their term. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a lively trade in servants developed. Recruiters in England convinced young people to migrate to the colonies. In British Colonial America, colonists bought and sold indentures. Young men, often no more than teenagers, comprised the overwhelming majority of those who signed indentures. In many colonies, where men overwhelmingly outnumbered women, female indentured servants often faced the risk of sexual assault. Though servants usually signed the indenture voluntarily, they had no say over who bought the indenture or the type of labor they had to perform. Moreover indentured servants could neither marry nor take part in the political process. Servants legally belonged to the individual who purchased the indenture.

Indentured servitude flourished first in the English Chesapeake colonies of Virginia and Maryland during the seventeenth century. With the production and export of tobacco, beginning in the 1610s, planters turned to white indentured servants from England in order to meet the seemingly insatiable European craving for the American weed. The majority of these servants were young men. They cleared the land, planted, and tended the young plants before harvesting the mature leaves. The process involved intense labor. To encourage the emigration of servants as well

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as the growth and profitability of the Chesapeake colonies, planters received 50 acres of land under the headright system for every servant they paid to emigrate. For the young and destitute in England, the possibility of owning land in British Colonial America in return for serving as a servant proved to be a powerful inducement for making the voyage. Servant contracts sometimes even specified that a parcel of land would be granted on completion of the indentures. Yet most indentured servants in Virginia and Maryland did not survive their term of service. Disease, poor diet, and cruel treatment claimed thousands of servants' lives. While some successfully served the full term of their indentureship and managed to enter the ranks of the landowning planter class, others found it next to impossible to do so. Discontent among former servants found expression in 1675–1676 during Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia. This uprising, named after the insurgent leader Nathaniel Bacon, pitted land-hungry former servants against the royal governor who had tried to limit Anglo settlement on native American lands. After Bacon's Rebellion collapsed, planters gradually turned to African slave labor. For much of the seventeenth century, Africans in the Chesapeake colonies had served as indentured servants. Some Africans became landowners and had bought indentured servants as well. By the end of the seventeenth century however, especially after Bacon's Rebellion, racial antipathy toward those with black skins as well as the belief that black slaves would be more manageable than white servants led to the foundation of racially based slavery.

White indentured servants flocked to the English West Indies, especially the island of Barbados. From the 1620s to the 1640s, the English in the West Indies followed their counterparts in the Chesapeake colonies by growing tobacco. Just as in Virginia and Maryland, tobacco production spurred the emigration of a vast number of young English men and a few women who willingly sold themselves into servitude. Several factors worked against indentured servants in the West Indies however. First the islands proved to be a death trap for the English. The mortality rate from disease among the English servants in the West Indies surpassed that of the Chesapeake colonies. Second when the English West Indies turned from tobacco to sugar production in the 1640s, the labor system changed as well. As sugar supplanted tobacco, slavery surpassed indentured servitude as the primary labor system. By the 1640s, the English had fully colonized the small West Indian islands, making it highly improbable for white indentured servants to become planters. A rebellion by servants in the late

1640s on Barbados illustrates the level of frustration among those whose dreams of upward social mobility had been frustrated. Because of the transition to sugar and slavery, the English West Indies had ceased to be a major destination for white indentured servants by the early 1700s.

In the eighteenth century, planters in the Chesapeake colonies as well as those in the Carolinas and Georgia relied on both white indentured servants and African slaves. Colonial laws separated the two groups of laborers however. White servants were accorded the protection of colonial law while black slaves were defined as property. In some of the southern mainland colonies, most notably in South Carolina, African slavery was the major labor system.

Most indentured servants in the New England colonies (the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Plymouth Colony, New Haven Colony, Connecticut Colony, and Rhode Island) did not emigrate from England but rather were the children of the colonists themselves. Because colonial New England families tended to be very large, with six or more children being the norm, the region essentially produced its own labor force. The use of New England children as indentured servants served several purposes. First in colonial New England, where the Puritan faith predominated, indentured servants received religious instruction in the households where they worked. In this way the use of Puritan children as servants created communities bound together by shared religious belief. Second this system of indentureship allowed for extensive supervision over the large number of young people in New England. The placement of servants in the households of relatives increased the degree of oversight and control. Some of the strains experienced by New England's indentured servants found expression in cases of witchcraft. The historical record illustrates that on several occasions, young servants believed the Devil tempting them with promises of easing the burden of work if they would serve him. Other New England servants ran away. Many escaped the New England labor regime by going to sea. The most famous New England runaway, Benjamin Franklin, broke his indenture to his brother James by taking flight from his native Boston in 1723 and going to Philadelphia.

The middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania absorbed great number of servants from Europe. These colonies, especially Pennsylvania, received praise as the "best poor man's country." The French writer J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, who never served as an indentured servant, applauded the region as a place where an indentured servant, through hard work and perseverance, could become

a landowner. Others found the middle colonies disappointing. One servant, William Moraley, signed an indenture in 1729 and set sail with other servants to Philadelphia to seek his fortune. On his arrival Moraley was sold to a New Jersey Quaker. Unhappy with his dependent status, Moraley ran away only to be caught and returned to the Quaker's household. He completed his indenture in the early 1730s. Unable to find a place for himself in British Colonial America however, Moraley returned to his native England in 1734.

Indentured servitude in British Colonial America can be credited with laying part of the foundation for what would later be termed the American dream. During the Colonial Era, when a rigid European social hierarchy separated an elite leisure class from a mass of drones, coming to British Colonial America as an indentured servant appeared to be a way to escape dire poverty and substantially improve one's lot in life by potentially owning land. Many European promoters of colonization vigorously publicized the idea of upward social mobility during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indentured servitude did provide access to the status of an independent landowner for some migrants. For the majority of indentured servants however, life was filled with unending toil and hardship. For many indentured servitude led to an early death in British Colonial America. Other indentured servants, like Moraley and the more successful Benjamin Franklin, ran away. On several occasions discontent among indentured servants took the form of armed rebellion, most notably the 1675–1676 uprising in Virginia. However one chooses to interpret indentured servitude, this type of labor system helped to meet the urgent need for workers in British Colonial America.

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INDEPENDENT UNION OF ALL WORKERS

In 1933, under the leadership of veteran Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) activist Frank Ellis, Hormel packinghouse workers in Austin, Minnesota, organized themselves and launched the Independent Union of All Workers (IUAW). The IUAW practiced many of the principles of the IWW—industrial as opposed to craft organization, a reliance on direct action, an emphasis on the values of solidarity, and a militant standing toward the employer—but it also went beyond its predecessor in its extension of wall-to-wall organizing to communities as well as workplaces. Over the next 4 years, it spread to at least 12 other midwestern communities, organizing not only packinghouse workers but also manufacturing, retail, transportation, and service workers. In 1937, amid a wave of turmoil in national labor politics, Minnesota Farmer Labor politics, and an economic collapse that shifted the labor climate, the IUAW voted to dismember itself, with groups of workers and networks of locals choosing to affiliate with existing American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions or organizing committees. Although the organization itself faded from existence, its dynamics, practices, and values left a living legacy for midwestern unions of packinghouse workers, warehouse workers and truckers, waitresses and department store clerks, and public employees.

Frank Ellis and a cadre of activists began the IUAW by building a strong shop-floor organization in the Hormel plant in the summer of 1933. They stopped production in the hog kill to force foremen to tear up Community Chest pledge cards as a way of protesting strong-arm management tactics as well as the low level of wages. A few months later, they walked off their jobs to join members of the Farm Holiday Association in picketing roads into Austin as part of their campaign for higher hog prices. Such actions inspired other Hormel workers to join the IUAW and to understand that collective direct action was the path to improved compensation and a recognition of workers' rights in the workplace.

In the country's first officially recorded sit-down strike, Hormel workers took over their plant on November 10, 1933, and held it—and millions of dollars' worth of equipment and semiprocessed meat—for the next three days. The IUAW leaders insisted that company management come into the occupied plant for negotiations, where according to local folklore, they felt a rise in temperature every time they turned down a union demand at the bargaining table. Farmer Labor party Governor Floyd B. Olson refused to dispatch the National Guard to retake Hormel's property from its workers. Instead he rushed to Austin to mediate a settlement. At the end of three days, the IUAW had its first contract, a substantial wage increase, and the momentum to spread beyond the Hormel plant itself.

Inside the plant and wherever they gained a foothold, the IUAW relied on direct action—slowdowns, stoppages, workplace protests, and—to expand workers' ability to control work rules, the pace of production, the systems of compensation, and the like. Their militant reputation—and their success—caught the imaginations of thousands of other workers, first in Austin and nearby communities like Albert Lea, and then across Minnesota and into North and South Dakota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. The IUAW sent teams of rank-and-file volunteer organizers into other communities, organized mass meetings featuring the kind of soapbox speaking that had been practiced by the IWW, and then offered practical support from picket lines to food pantries. In some communities they published newspapers, ran candidates for school board and city council, and promoted the vision of a society and culture in which workers were leaders.

In the late spring of 1937, a series of developments and events came together to create an organizational crisis for the IUAW. As the national economy plunged into the second trough of the Great Depression, unemployment leapt upward for the first time in 4 years, employers cut wages and dug in their heels

against the further extension of union recognition and collective-bargaining agreements. Shifting political tides turned nationally against President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, while the Minnesota Farmer Labor party suffered the blow of the untimely death of Governor Olson, followed by increased infighting surrounding the new governor, Elmer Benson. Within the national labor movement, AFL leaders stepped up their efforts to undercut the new CIO unions, while CIO leaders and activists sought to consolidate their organizational breakthroughs.

The IUAW found itself in the midst of a hard-fought series of sit-down strikes in Albert Lea, 20 miles west of Austin, which included two substantial American Gas Machine manufacturing plants, three trucking warehouses, and the Woolworth's store. Coordinated sit-down strikes, linked by nightly marches led by the IUAW's Drum and Bugle Corps and bolstered by hundreds of militant rank-and-filers from the Austin Hormel plant, expressed workers' determination to win union recognition and improved conditions. When the Freeborn County sheriff launched a military attack, reminiscent of the Pacific Northwest violence against the IWW in the World War I era, on the "sitdowners" and the IUAW's hall, a showdown was precipitated, bringing Governor Benson himself to the scene. All of this happened while the IUAW founding spirit and chief strategist was locked away in state prison on questionable morals charges.

This crisis led to a complex negotiated settlement in which Albert Lea employers offered union recognition and contracts to local unions that would affiliate with specific AFL or CIO national unions. The IUAW leaders agreed to allow Albert Lea, and then Austin, and then other cities' members to vote on dissolving their "horizontal" organization in order to win security and apparent stability. In the next half dozen years, IUAW locals became part of the Packinghouse Workers' Organizing Committee-CIO (and then the United Packinghouse Workers of America), the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee-CIO (and then the United Steelworkers of America), District 50 of the United Mine Workers of America (and then the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers' Union), the United Automobile Workers, and the Teamsters' Union. For many years, the particular locals they joined tended to manifest the dynamics, strategies, and values that had been inculcated by the IUAW. The vitality of this legacy was reflected in the Hormel strike of 1985–1986, when United Food and Commercial Workers' Union Local P-9, a descendant of the IUAW, waged a nationally significant struggle against the corporate demand for concessions.

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See also **P-9 Strike**

INDUSTRIAL AREAS FOUNDATION

See **Alinsky, Saul David; Industrial Areas Foundation**

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

Industrial democracy was a protean concept used by a wide range of historical actors to frame debates about labor relations from the 1890s through the 1960s. Its origins can be traced to late nineteenth reformers, progressives, socialists, and Social Gospel advocates who worried that the rise of large-scale industrial capitalism was undermining the autonomy of workers and the quality of democracy in the United States.

Among the first to use the term industrial democracy was Lyman Abbott, an energetic Social Gospel reformer who succeeded Henry Ward Beecher as editor of the *Christian Union*. In Abbott's use, the term was meant as a critique of the “wages” system.” Abbott advocated a host of reforms under the banner of industrial democracy, including profit sharing, cooperation, and incentive pay. Whether Abbott was the first American to use the term is not clear. What is clear is that by the 1890s, the term had gained wide currency among reformers. Henry Demarest Lloyd, Richard T. Ely, and many others began invoking notion of industrial democracy as a necessary antidote to growing corporate power during the depression of the 1890s and the merger wave that followed it. Work relations needed to become more democratic or else concentrated economic power would undermine American democracy, they warned.

The British reformers Sidney and Beatrice Webb provided an elaborate articulation of the notion in their 1897 book *Industrial Democracy*. To the Webbs, industrial democracy meant the organization

of democratic trade unions, the recognition of those unions by employers, collective bargaining between employers and unions over the terms of labor, the development of a constitutional government of industry in which unions and employers developed policies jointly. Their ideas in turn influenced Americans like the economist John R. Commons, who advocated collectively bargained trade agreements in the United States as the proper way to advance industrial democracy in the early twentieth century.

A new phase in the dissemination of the industrial democracy ideal came when it was embraced by progressive reformer Louis D. Brandeis around 1910. Brandeis, who was also an advocate of “scientific management,” came to believe that workplace efficiency could not be maximized without the active consent of workers. For him the idea of industrial democracy spoke to the necessity of finding ways through which employers and workers could cooperate in creating workplace rules. Influenced by Brandeis, reformer Robert G. Valentine won some converts to industrial democracy even among the followers of the guru of scientific management, Frederick Winslow Taylor. Brandeis also helped persuade some progressive businessmen, like the Boston retailers Edward and Lincoln Filene, to implement a form of industrial democracy through shop representation plans for their workers. Brandeis allies Felix Frankfurter, Walter Weyl, and Walter Lippmann were all writing about the need for the nation to democratize its workplaces in the years before World War I.

Still talk of industrial democracy remained largely confined to the world of middle-class progressive reformers until the 1913–1915 investigation of the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations (USCIR) and the subsequent impact of the U.S. entry into World War I. In 1913, appointed President Woodrow Wilson appointed the USCIR to investigate the sources of labor violence in the nation and to recommend solutions. Labor lawyer Frank P. Walsh of Kansas City, Missouri, chaired the USCIR and through his committee's well-publicized hearings, Walsh became the most passionate and well-known advocate of industrial democracy in the nation. Walsh became a bitter opponent of company unionism practiced by employers like John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The only way for the nation to democratize its autocratic work relations, Walsh argued, was for the government to protect workers rights to organize unions. Walsh advocated national legislation that would allow workers to join unions without fear of intimidation or dismissal. Such legislation did not come to pass for nearly two decades, but on the eve of World War I, Walsh had succeeded in identifying industrial democracy with the cause of trade

unionism. Thereafter labor activists increasingly adopted the term in their calls for union recognition. Even the radicals of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) began using the term to express their own vision.

The U.S. entry into World War I only widened the intense debate over industrial democracy. President Wilson unintentionally reinforced demands for industrial democracy by framing World War I as a war “to make the work safe for democracy.” If Americans fought for democracy in Europe, they should also enjoy a measure of it in the places where they earned their livelihoods, argued labor activists. The extent to which industry might be democratized during the war was never clear. But the creation of the key war labor agency, the National War Labor Board (NWLB), in 1918 raised hopes that significant reforms could be won. Cochaired by Frank P. Walsh and former president William H. Taft, the NWLB actively promoted industrial democracy by calling on nonunion employers in war industries to bargain collectively with their workers through elected shop committees in cases where they refused to recognize unions. The NWLB’s wartime stand helped legitimize workers’ organizing efforts. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) grew by more than 1 million members during the war and broadly disseminated the idea that workers ought to have a say in shaping the terms of their work relations.

Following World War I, fierce conflicts took place between employers and unions over the survival of union organizations in mass-production industries where they had begun to take root during the war. Those conflicts led to the unprecedented strike wave of 1919. Employers emerged victorious during these strikes, uprooting recently formed unions in the steel, electrical-manufacturing, and meat-packing industries. But many large-scale employers were not able to roll back the clock to re-establish prewar patterns of labor relations. Rather employers had to recognize workers’ demands for a voice in their workplace. Thus in the 1920s, large-scale employers in many basic industries created company unions and explicitly argued that such organizations would secure industrial democracy for their employees. By the end of the 1920s, it appeared that employers had largely succeeded in identifying company unionism with industrial democracy.

Yet the Great Depression undermined employers’ efforts to claim that they were delivering on workers’ demands for industrial democracy. As the welfare capitalism of 1920s’ employers collapsed, workers once again called for independent union organization. Union organizing gathered momentum following the enactment in 1933 of Section 7(a) of the National

Industrial Recovery Act, which provided for collective bargaining in industry. As in the World War I era, workers who sought to form unions did so under the banner of industrial democracy. Contesting the legitimacy of the employer-dominated employee representation plans (ERPs) that remained legal under the NRA, trade unionists argued that only independent union organizations could secure industrial democracy. When the 1935 Wagner Act triggered the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the demand for industrial democracy became central to CIO rhetoric. After the mid-1930s, industrial democracy had become fully identified with trade unionism’s aspirations and had lost its previous connection to employers’ welfare capitalism or the visions of Taylorite efficiency engineers.

What workers and labor activists meant when they used the term industrial democracy was still something of an open question however in the years before the United States entered World War II. For example left-leaning labor leaders like Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) advanced plans for labor’s comanagement of war industries under the banner of industrial democracy. But the war mobilization put on hold the most radical hopes for labor’s comanagement of industry. Under the guidance of a second National War Labor Board (1942–1945), what instead emerged were union security arrangements that entrenched trade unionism in the nation’s basic manufacturing industries and facilitated the expansion of collective bargaining between unions and employers, while demarcating the limits of union power. Nonwage benefits became a chief feature of wartime collective-bargaining agreements, but labor’s efforts to achieve comanagement never came to pass.

When the war came to an end in 1945, labor movement waged an aggressive campaign to expand the limits of wartime industrial democracy. From 1945–1946, a huge strike wave swept the nation. This upheaval differed from the strike wave of 1919. After World War II employers did not attempt to crush unions. Rather employers simply resisted labor’s efforts to take a hand in the management of industry. The UAW’s strike against General Motors (GM) was indicative of how this postwar struggle played out. Autoworkers initially demanded that GM open its books to the union and allow the union a say in the pricing of its products. General Motors firmly resisted these demands and ultimately the UAW gave in on management issues in return for a considerable wage increase. In the postwar era most conflicts over the right to manage were settled in similar ways, with unions agreeing to better wages and benefits in lieu of greater say over how businesses were run. Unions

simply lacked the political and economic power to force a different outcome in such struggles. Once the Taft-Hatley Act was passed in 1947, management's rights were further reinforced by that act's legal protections.

After 1947, the once contested meaning of postwar industrial democracy became clearer. Unions and collective bargaining had become firmly entrenched in basic manufacturing industry, but unions were unable to encroach on management rights. In this context the once insurgent possibilities of industrial democracy were tamed. Whereas the ideal of industrial democracy had once excited radicals and conveyed the possibility of worker-run industries, in the postwar era its meaning had been narrowed to what historian David Brody calls "workplace contractualism." Workplace contractualism amounted to trade union collective bargaining, the elaboration of jointly administered benefit programs, and the development of a workplace rule of law that circumscribed arbitrary and capricious treatment of workers by management. If this more modest form of industrial democracy fell short of the lofty hopes once entertained by radicals, it was nonetheless an enormous achievement. During the height of the uneasy postwar labor-capital accord (roughly 1947–1973) organized workers enjoyed a greater say over the terms and conditions under which they labored than they had ever enjoyed before or since that time. A semblance of democracy had indeed been brought to industry.

Yet no sooner had industrial democracy been entrenched in the form of the postwar collective-bargaining regime than the concept itself began to fall into disuse. By the 1970s, even trade unionists rarely spoke any longer about industrial democracy. At least four developments helped eclipse the industrial democracy ideal. First when the meaning of industrial democracy became clear in the postwar era, the concept suddenly proved less attractive to the wide range of groups who had once competed to define it. Neither employers nor radicals tended to invoke the concept of industrial democracy from the 1950s onward. No longer the protean ideal it had been early in the twentieth century, industrial democracy simply attracted fewer enthusiasts.

Second the very success of postwar workplace contractualism facilitated a subtle shift in workers' visions from industrial democracy to what Brody has called "industrial justice." Once unions' drive for access to decision-making in corporate boardrooms was blunted, workers turned to the task of creating what labor economist Sumner Slichter called "industrial jurisprudence," rules that would free them from arbitrary treatment. Defending and extending those shop-floor rules, not contesting the balance of

power in industry, became the chief mission of the labor movement. Industrial democracy seemed an increasingly anachronistic term.

Third the civil rights revolution of the 1950s and 1960s fostered an alternative conception of worker empowerment. The rights consciousness spawned by the civil rights struggle did not usually channel workers' struggles into collective forms. Rather it helped to shift the locus of workers' struggles from picket lines to courtrooms. As this shift took place, the language of industrial democracy was increasingly supplanted by rights talk.

Finally the economic structures that had given rise to the idea of industrial democracy in the early twentieth century no longer existed in the post-1960s United States. The ideal of industrial democracy was the product of the distinctive historical era of "Fordist" mass production when employers sought to win the loyalty of workers whom they hoped to retain in life-time employment and when government was both deeply interested in, and broadly capable of, regulating workplace relations. In the years after the mid-1960s, the preconditions of industrial democracy evaporated as capital roamed the globe in search of cheaper labor, and government regulation of markets, including labor markets, rapidly receded.

If the idea of industrial democracy had emerged in the 1890s, by the 1990s it no longer resonated in debates about the workplace. When employers, labor leaders, or government officials debated labor questions in the 1990s, they no longer invoked the notion of industrial democracy. Instead they embraced vaguer terms like "labor-management cooperation" and "employee involvement." The distance between the early twentieth-century demand that industry be made democratic and the late twentieth-century plea for workplace cooperation between labor and management was considerable and called attention to how weak organized labor had become by the century's end.

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INDUSTRIAL UNION OF MARINE AND SHIPBUILDING WORKERS OF AMERICA (IUMSWA)

The Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America (IUMSWA) was founded on October 3, 1933, at New York Shipbuilding Corporation, Camden, New Jersey. Initially its only members were workers at the Camden yard. The union had an industrial rather than craft form of organization, which was inclusive of all production workers and was independent of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and its craft unions that previously had members in numerous shipyards during World War I.

Capable leaders were crucial to the IUMSWA's early organizing success, with John Green the most important. He had worked in Scottish Clydeside shipyards since 1916, where he was active in the United Society of Boilermakers and Iron and Steel Shipbuilders. In 1923, he emigrated from Clydebank to Philadelphia, working in a number of manufacturing jobs before starting as a sheet metal worker at New York Ship in 1933.

Green also joined the Socialist party, where he met Moshe (M. H.) Goldstein, who served as the IUMSWA's chief legal counsel from the early 1930s through the 1960s, and Phil Van Gelder, who helped

lead the New York Shipbuilding IUMSWA strike of 1934. Van Gelder had a degree from Brown University, but during the Depression, he became involved in union organizing, including with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (ACW). Van Gelder never worked in a shipyard, but his organizing abilities and his connections to industrial unionists, such as Sidney Hillman and later, John L. Lewis, greatly advanced the IUMSWA in its early, tenuous years. Green and Van Gelder led the IUMSWA during its first decade as national president and national secretary-treasurer, respectively. Thomas Gallagher, who worked as a rigger in the New York Shipyard, was another central figure during the IUMSWA's first decade and served as the main leader of New York Shipbuilding's IUMSWA Local 1 after Green, later becoming the national union's first organizing director. In contrast to Green and Van Gelder, Gallagher identified with the Democratic party, which had a strong base in Camden.

In the early 1930s, the largest private shipyards in the Northeast were New York Shipbuilding; Fore River Shipyard (owned by Bethlehem Shipbuilding, in Quincy, Massachusetts); and Newport News Shipyard in Virginia. These major yards continued to receive minimal naval contracts as well as merchant, tanker, and passenger ship contracts during the 1920s and early 1930s when shipbuilding production reached a low point. When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in early 1933, his administration substantially increased naval production and shipbuilding employment through National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) contracts to these big yards and also smaller but significant private builders, including Federal Shipbuilding (Kearny, New Jersey); Electric Boat (New London, Connecticut); Sun Shipbuilding (Chester, Pennsylvania); and Bath Iron Works (Bath, Maine).

The increase in production and jobs at New York Shipbuilding also was accompanied by restrictions on weekly working hours mandated under the new NIRA and a resultant pay cut that was deeply resented by the yard's workers. The company had installed a weak company union to prevent independent union organizing but failed to stop internal organizing. By fall 1933 workers voted 1,819 to 142 for the new IUMSWA and against the company union in a worker-sponsored poll.

The IUMSWA sought a charter from the AFL a few months later but was refused because it threatened existing jurisdiction claims by AFL metal trades unions. When John L. Lewis established the independence of the Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in November 1936, he brought two independent

unions into the new organization—the IUMSWA and the United Electrical Workers (UEW)—which effectively ensured the permanent split between the AFL and the CIO.

Initially New York Shipbuilding management refused to recognize the IUMSWA, precipitating a seven-week strike in 1934. New York Shipbuilding management's refusal to bargain in 1935 led to a second strike that lasted from March to August. The IUMSWA set up mass picket lines and gained extensive support from the community and such unions as the United Mine Workers (UMW), ACW, and locals of regional AFL unions. Congressional hearings were conducted to investigate the causes of the strike, and the U.S. Department of Labor, including Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, intervened in efforts to mediate.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt finally broke the deadlock when he responded to Secretary Perkins's pleas and told the U.S. Navy and shipyard management that they had to negotiate with and recognize the IUMSWA, or else it would lose existing naval contracts. Management and the union then agreed to the establishment of a special arbitration board, ending the 11-week strike. The final settlement guaranteed full union recognition and a reasonable wage increase. Although IUMSWA Local 1 did not win the union shop, extensive internal organization enabled the IUMSWA to maintain relatively full membership throughout the yard. This stable membership base allowed the IUMSWA to begin organizing beyond Camden.

Organizing Expansion in the 1930s

Throughout its existence the IUMSWA was unable to organize in government yards due to AFL dominance. The AFL also dominated all West Coast yards except small repair yards in the Los Angeles region where the IUMSWA gained a small membership. As a result the IUMSWA was mainly concentrated in private Northeast port shipyards from the 1930s and later decades.

In the IUMSWA's early years, Van Gelder's efforts to direct organizing drives at Fore River, Newport News, Sun Ship, and Bath Iron Works failed in the 1930s largely because of these yards' well-organized company unions. The IUMSWA never won a union election at Newport News and lost elections at Bath Iron Works numerous times until 1955. The IUMSWA did win a victory at Fore River in mid-1945 (then the largest Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)

victory to date in New England) after a disastrous loss in 1941, and at Sun Ship in 1944, both led by organizer Lou Kaplan.

The IUMSWA made its first national breakthrough in the New York port region in 1936 at United's Staten Island Shipyard. Within a year the IUMSWA had locals chartered at a majority of the port region's repair yards, including those in New Jersey bordering New York City. However recognition came only after a bitter repair yard strike in mid-1937 that led to some gains but also losses of some yards.

Federal Shipyard (a subsidiary of U.S. Steel Corporation) was the most important early gain outside Camden. In spring 1937, inside IUMSWA organizers, directed by staff organizer Mike Smith (originally from New York Ship), won a majority on the company union, then voted it out of existence and replaced it with the IUMSWA. Following a massive strike of several days, management agreed to recognize the IUMSWA and signed a first contract. Full recognition and adherence to the grievance procedure by management did not occur until a March 1940 NLRB election that the IUMSWA won by a landslide.

World War II and Shipyard Organizing

By 1941, the Federal Shipbuilding gains and a series of NLRB election victories in other New York port region yards gave the New York port region a membership strength equal to that of the IUMSWA's original base in the Camden-Philadelphia-Delaware River region. This new membership concentration created factional rivalry within the union between the ports of Philadelphia and New York, but also between shipyard union locals, especially those in the largest yards, and the national officers directing union policy and organizing.

In the case of Federal Shipyard, the local had completely failed to sustain dues' collections of members from 1940–1942, leading to bitter fights within the local and suspension of the local's autonomy by the national office. In August 1941, Federal Shipyard workers briefly went on strike demanding enforcement of the National Defense Mediation Board (NDMB) decision calling for a maintenance-of-membership provision. The IUMSWA wanted a union shop with membership a condition of employment, but this NDMB alternative requiring continuous membership once signed up, for the life of the contract, gained the

union's support. As a result of the strike and management's refusal to agree to the NDMB order, the U.S. Navy temporarily took over the yard, but the issue remained unresolved even after ownership returned to private management. Sustaining shipbuilding employment stability had become a major national defense production problem, especially after the attack on Pearl Harbor and the urgency of rapidly increasing the American naval fleet. The IUMSWA was one of the first CIO unions to agree to the no-strike pledge in support for war production, but workers—including those at Federal Shipyard—conducted numerous wildcat (unauthorized) strikes when their demands were not met.

President Roosevelt finally met with IUMSWA representatives, management, and government officials (including the Navy) in the White House in the spring of 1942, where he reiterated his unequivocal support for the NDMB, now the National War Labor Board (NWLB) decision endorsing the maintenance-of-membership provision on union security. The U.S. Steel's management capitulated, and the provision became standard throughout the defense industry, although failure to fully enforce the provision precipitated wildcat strikes at Federal until management agreed to government requirements.

Shipyard employment levels had a major influence on union-organizing success. Only 33,000 worked in private yards in 1933, but naval contracts boosted numbers to 48,700 in 1934 and by 1936 matched pre-Depression levels with over 60,000. As jobs became more secure, the demand for better wages increased. By 1941, private and government shipyards employed over half-a-million workers, with half of these in the North Atlantic region where the IUMSWA had its main membership. Peak World War II shipbuilding employment for all yards was 1,686,600 workers in 1943, with 1,400,000 in private yards. North Atlantic yards employed a majority of all shipyard workers, followed by the Pacific Coast region, and the remainder in Virginia, the Gulf Coast, and the Great Lakes. The IUMSWA membership reached 208,000 in 1943, the highest number attained over the union's 55-year history.

Almost one-fourth of this wartime membership was concentrated in a single yard, Camden's New York Ship, reaching some 50,000 at its peak. Management had difficulty running the yard with its own staff and turned to the union for assistance. Skilled shipyard workers who were IUMSWA members moved into foremen and subforemen positions, and organized a subforemen's division within Local 1. The union also assumed much of the responsibility for hiring and training new workers.

In New York Shipbuilding, Federal Shipbuilding, and the huge Bethlehem yards at Fore River and Sparrow's Point (Baltimore), these new workers included women and black workers, but these workers were generally concentrated in auxiliary yards that lasted only for the duration of the war. At Sun Ship, management created a separate yard with black employees only. This racial division among workers became an organizing target for the IUMSWA in two wartime election campaigns, the second led by organizer Lou Kaplan, which ended this employment segregation. In southern yards, particularly Mobile, Alabama, efforts to break down racial barriers were less successful, with IUMSWA organizers bowing to the tradition of segregation and discriminatory practices to secure union membership among white workers.

During World War II, the federal government regulated wages and hours through various agencies, including the tripartite Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee, but also through mediation efforts involving regional "zone conferences" of union and management representatives. The IUMSWA held sole representation only on the Atlantic conference, shared representation positions with the AFL metal trades unions on the Gulf and Great Lakes conferences, and had no position on the Pacific conference dominated by the AFL. Delays in implementing wage increases, which required approval from the NWLB, led to numerous wildcat strikes in most shipyards that were opposed by the IUMSWA national leadership.

Dissension also occurred at the local and national levels of IUMSWA over the presence of Communist party activists, particularly those elected to union office. At the 1941 IUMSWA convention, delegates approved an anti-Communist clause that later led to the expulsion of national General Executive Board (GEB) member, Irving Velson. Others who were not in the Communist party but who advocated a broad left coalition, including Secretary-Treasurer Van Gelder, later were targeted by IUMSWA President John Green. By the 1940s, Green served as a CIO vice-president and increasingly played a major role in attacking Communists within the CIO.

Postwar Dissension and the Collapse of American Shipbuilding

At the IUMSWA's January 1946 convention, an open split emerged between left and right factions in the national union. Van Gelder, recently returned from army service in Europe, challenged Ross Blood for his old position of secretary-treasurer and had

substantial support from a Federal Shipbuilding delegation led by Lou Kaplan, but Green forces seated only a rightwing slate despite delegate election challenges. Other opposition came from New York Shipbuilding, led by Local 1 president Andy Reeder. After the defeat of the left at the January convention, Green called another convention in September to consolidate his forces. Van Gelder, Reeder, and others again tried to challenge the national leadership, but failed.

New York Shipbuilding Local 1 members remained alienated from the national leadership, but by the late 1940s, with Reeder's failure and departure, came under the rightwing opposition leadership of Tommy "Driftpin" Saul.

Shipyard employment collapsed at the end of the war, with all auxiliary yards closing and even Federal Shipbuilding shutting down by 1948. Strikes in shipbuilding in 1947 and 1948 gave workers some wage gains, but employment security remained precarious. Green decided to expand the IUMSWA's jurisdiction to regain membership. In 1947, the recently created CIO United Railroad Workers of America (URWA), made up of maintenance of way and shop crafts, merged with the IUMSWA. In early 1948, an anti-Communist group of Connecticut-based locals in the International Union of Mine Mill and Smelters, known as the Progressive Metalworkers' Council (PMC), seceded and joined the IUMSWA with Green's approval, over the strong objections of CIO heads Phil Murray and Alan Haywood. By January 1948, IUMSWA had 78,420 members, with 42,850 employed in shipbuilding, but by June 1950, IUMSWA membership had plummeted to 41,858, with only 25,000 in shipbuilding.

Following the membership gains from the URWA and the PMC, tensions arose between shipyard worker members and those in railroads and metal shops over national union positions and charges of national neglect by shipyard locals. As a result New York Ship's Local 1 led by Saul voted to disaffiliate with the IUMSWA in September 1948, and Sun Ship's IUMSWA local disaffiliated in April 1949. In 1950, the IUMSWA lost an NLRB election at New York Ship in a landslide to the AFL's Boilermakers' Union. This loss and the crisis over nonshipbuilding membership led Green to resign as IUMSWA national president in 1951, and national vice-president John Grogan, who came from the Hoboken repair yard in New Jersey, replaced him. Grogan reversed Green's earlier expansion plans and returned to organizing and consolidating the union's original base in shipbuilding. He also presided over the departure of the URWA and former PMC metal workers' locals into the United Steel Workers of America.

Final Decades to 1988 Merger

Grogan remained national president of the IUMSWA until his death in 1968, even though he was elected to the full-time position of mayor of Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1953. With the disaffiliation of the IUMSWA's largest local—in Camden—and the departure of half of the union's nonshipbuilding workers, membership in 1951 declined to 34,100 even though Bethlehem's eight Atlantic Coast shipyards alone still employed some 31,000 workers. World War II era national officer Andrew Pettis became national president after Grogan's death in 1968. In the 1970s, Eugene McCabe became national president, and in the early 1980s, Arthur Batson, Jr., became the last national IUMSWA president.

In the early 1950s, Japan overtook the United States in shipbuilding production, with American yards moving almost exclusively into naval contracts and abandoning virtually all merchant and tanker building. Production in the United States also shifted more to southern and Pacific Coast yards, devastating the IUMSWA. Its membership dropped to 25,600 in 1960, where it remained until the 1980s. By this time the combined employment at the nation's two biggest East Coast shipyards—the USWA's Newport News (specializing in aircraft carriers) and the AFL Metal Trades' Electric Boat (specializing in nuclear submarines)—exceeded the total national membership of the IUMSWA.

By 1988, New York Shipbuilding had closed, and Fore River management announced their yard's closure the following year, leaving only Maine's Bath Iron Works as the national union's single major yard. At only 13,000 members, the IUMSWA finally merged with the IAM, with 7,000 shipbuilding workers in a union mainly based in the aerospace industry, in 1989.

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INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Industrial unionism, which gathers all of the workers in an industry into a single labor organization, saw its heyday in the United States during the 1930s. Some workers and labor leaders challenged the more traditional craft or trade basis of organization quite a bit earlier however. In 1870, the Knights of St. Crispin (KOSC), a union of shoe workers, achieved almost total industrial organization and won a strike in Lynn, Massachusetts. One of the few successful factory workers' unions of its day, the KOSC was a contemporary of the national Knights of Labor (KOL), founded in Philadelphia in 1869 on principles of broad labor solidarity and dedicated to building a "cooperative commonwealth." The KOL admitted workers as individual members, and then placed them in trade assemblies when possible or in mixed assemblies when members of a single trade at a particular locality were insufficient in number. Because the mixed assemblies included unskilled workers and outnumbered the trade assemblies by the 1880s, the KOL took on a unique character that presaged the advent of industrial unionism. However the KOL's emphasis on the development of workers' cooperatives and its desire to organize all workers regardless of skill failed to produce an enduring organization at a time when the rapid concentration of industrial wealth; the abiding hostility of business corporations; and racial, linguistic, and religious barriers among workers made working-class cohesiveness very difficult.

By the late nineteenth century, the emergence of national business corporations and trusts, along with technological change, was weakening the power of trade unions through the geographic diffusion of production and the subdivision of labor into lower-skilled tasks. The first truly national businesses were the railroads, and it was there that one of the earliest efforts at modern industrial unionism took place. In 1893, Eugene Debs and 50 other railroaders founded the American Railway Union (ARU) in Chicago. Prior to this time most railroad workers had no union, and a minority belonged to five brotherhoods with no common alliance between them—the engineers, conductors, firemen, brakemen, and switchmen. The new organization was dedicated to bringing all categories of railway workers together, even car builders and coal miners in railroad employ. While the ARU was open to men and to women, its industrial unionism was still limited by race, since only white workers could join. The ARU led an 1894 strike by Pullman Palace Car employees and the ensuing nationwide Pullman car boycott. As a result of federal intervention and the union's violation of court

injunctions, the ARU was virtually destroyed that same year.

Divisions in the Early AFL

By the time of the ARU's demise, the dominant national labor organization was the American Federation of Labor (AFL), born in 1886 and committed to trade unionism and trade autonomy. Although many of its founding members saw the AFL as a corrective to the KOL's mistakenly broad admission policies and consequently as a better guardian of the prerogatives of skilled workers, there were others who tackled the question of industrial unionism very early on. In 1901, the contest between advocates of craft and industrial organization was reflected in the AFL's Scranton Declaration, which on the one hand affirmed craft autonomy and on the other suggested that some rare industries might benefit from having all their workers organized in a single "paramount organization." On the basis of this second principle, the AFL gave one member union, the United Mine Workers (UMW), founded in 1890, jurisdiction over all workers in and around the mines, including those craftsmen that might normally have belonged to other organizations. The UMW was unusual, since the United Brewery Workers (UBW), which was already established on an industrial basis when it applied for AFL affiliation in 1887, was confronted with repeated demands to limit its organizational reach. Its membership in the federation led to years of bitter jurisdictional disputes and threats of expulsion that persisted through the 1930s. In yet another case, the craft-based International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), founded by skilled male cloak makers in 1900, evolved into an industrial union after a 1909 strike by female shirtwaist makers in New York. The "uprising of the twenty thousand" brought these young Jewish and Italian immigrant women into the ILGWU, which achieved a female membership of 50% by 1916. In men's clothing, the AFL's United Garment Workers of America (UGW), which had been larger than the ILGWU prior to 1909, neglected the male counterparts of these same women. The immigrant men who labored in the ready-made suit sector abandoned the UGW and created their own industrial union outside of the AFL in 1915, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). The ILGWU and ACWA both proved the viability of industrial unionism and the potential for organizing women and immigrants, contrary to much of the rhetoric inside the AFL. Both of the garment unions were also overtly socialist.

The IWW

From 1905 through the First World War, the AFL was challenged by the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), an openly anticapitalist labor organization that sought to organize workers on an industrial basis only. Critical of the “labor aristocracy” that had coalesced in the craft-based AFL, the IWW made a special effort to organize unskilled, foreign-born, and migratory workers that the AFL had ignored. Its principal founding union, the Western Federation of Miners (WFM), was itself an industrial union born in 1893 that had left the AFL in 1897 on account of the federation’s neglect of workers in the Rocky Mountain States. Mirroring the WFM, the IWW devoted considerable attention to workers in the extractive industries of the West, including timber workers, miners, and agricultural workers. While the IWW was in theory composed of a large number of specific industrial departments, its practical organization was very loose, and its membership at any one time was small. The IWW organizers often gave form to workers’ spontaneous struggles rather than building a permanent organizational edifice. The IWW’s militancy and its opposition to the First World War invoked the wrath of employers and government, leading to its destruction by 1920.

The CIO

The heyday of industrial unionism in the United States came in the aftermath of the Wagner Act of 1935, a federal law that protected workers’ right to join unions and unions’ right to engage in collective bargaining. The opportunities presented by this New Deal era law re-opened old fissures within the AFL, causing the federation’s advocates of industrial unionism to set up a Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO) in November 1935. The committee, which sought to lead the AFL in organizing workers in mass-production industries, included the leaders of the UMW, ACWA (now in the AFL), and ILGWU, as well as leaders of the Typographical Union; United Textile Workers; Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers; Oil Field, Gas Well, and Refining Workers; and the Cap and Millinery Department of the United Hatters. Rebuffed in its efforts to achieve industrial charters for workers in steel, automobiles, radio, and rubber, the CIO went ahead with its own organizing drives, broke with the AFL, and recast itself in 1938 as the Congress of Industrial Organizations under the direction of the UMW’s John Lewis. The new unions it

helped to create also subsumed the organizational efforts of the Trade Union Unity League, a collection of industrial unions under Communist leadership since 1929. The birth of the CIO corresponded to a shift in the Communist party line to a position of support for a unified democratic front against fascism, and Communists won some significant positions in the new unions, especially in the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine; Transport Workers; Maritime Workers; Fur and Leather Workers; Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers; and International Woodworkers.

Because the CIO grew so rapidly—to 3.7 million members by the end of 1937—its success suggested that a tremendous latent demand for organization among ordinary production workers had gone unmet until the New Deal era. Workers certainly did exhibit substantial signs of militancy and determination, as most famously illustrated by a sit-down strike at General Motors in Flint, Michigan, from late December 1936 through mid-February 1937. The strike resulted in recognition of the United Automobile Workers and was the first time the CIO had obtained an agreement from an open-shop industry, no less one of the world’s biggest corporations. The labor victory led to a wave of strikes and union organizing drives across the country, with sit-down strikes as the tactic of choice until mid-1937.

The advent of the Second World War allowed the industrial union movement to consolidate its membership gains if not its independence of action as the National War Labor Board adopted the principle of “maintenance of membership” in war industries. While not an endorsement of the closed shop, the rule required union members and new recruits to keep up their membership for the duration of a contract. In 1955, the CIO and the AFL merged, with the latter organization adding an Industrial Union Department in recognition of the permanent need for industrywide unionism. With few exceptions, such as the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE), which derives from a 1995 merger of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers’ Union with the ILGWU, the major industrial unions in the United States as of 2005 have come down to us unchanged as a legacy of the CIO organizing drives of the 1930s.

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INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

Committed to organizing all workers regardless of race, skill, gender, or ethnicity into one large union dedicated to abolishing the wage system and overthrowing capitalism, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) embodied the revival of revolutionary fervor in the American labor movement in the first two decades of the twentieth century. From 1905–1924, the IWW inspired a spirit of radical working-class activism throughout the country that broke sharply from the business unionism advocated by the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Although its official membership was never very large, the IWW struck fear in employers who responded to the challenge of the Wobblies (a nickname for members of the IWW) with a concerted campaign of intimidation and repression that intensified during World War I. The IWW never regained its prewar militancy, but its legacy of direct action, industrial unionism influenced the American labor movement for decades to come.

Origins, Goals, and Membership

In June 1905, an assemblage of dissident radicals and labor activists gathered in Chicago to, in the words of keynote speaker and militant western mine unionist William D. "Big Bill" Haywood, create "a working-class movement that shall have for its purpose the emancipation of the working class from the slave bondage of capitalism" (P. Renshaw, *The Wobblies*, 1967). Delegates to the Chicago convention, what Haywood called the "Continental Congress of the working class," formed the Industrial Workers of the World. Those who attended—western miners, competing factions of socialists, industrial unionists, anarchists—agreed on little other than their hostility

toward the conservative craft unionism of the AFL. The Western Federation of Miners, the largest delegation in attendance for example had learned first hand the ineffectiveness of the AFL, which had proved an unreliable ally in the union's desperate struggles against mine operators in the Mountain West. Having experienced firsthand the multiple tactics that mine operators deployed to break their union—strikebreaking, martial law, private detectives—these veterans of the western mine wars came to Chicago with a sharpened class consciousness. They understood that industrial organization and securing allies across the labor movement rather than affiliation with the AFL was the only way to protect the interests of the working class. The preamble to the IWW's original constitution—"the working class and the employing class have nothing in common"—thus reflected the lived experiences of the workers gathered in Chicago. Declaring "an injury to one an injury to all," they advocated a cooperative, egalitarian spirit that they hoped would transform the American labor movement.

Although the delegates to the Chicago convention submerged philosophical differences in the interest of creating one big industrial union, factionalism quickly sapped the fledgling organization. In 1906, reformist socialists, after a conflict with revolutionary socialists, deserted the IWW. A year later moderates within the Western Federation of Miners persuaded its members to abandon the revolutionary industrial unionism of the IWW, diminishing the ranks of the Wobblies to perhaps less than 6,000. The internal debates within the Western Federation of Miners reflected a deeper debate within the IWW over the strategies and tactics the union ought to pursue to achieve the emancipation of the working class. Some saw industrial unionism as a means to more effectively organize the working-class vote, which would help to elect socialist political candidates. Others saw the exercise of the democratic ballot as flawed as the pure-and-simple unionism of the AFL. Political action, they argued, would lead only to the reform of capitalism, not its overthrow. Instead they favored an organization that would wage direct economic action, enabling workers to seize the means of production of entire industries. At the 1908 convention advocates of direct action gained the upper hand, ousted their opponents, and amended the constitution to eliminate political action as a viable tactic or strategy for achieving the abolition of the wage system. Among those expelled from the 1908 convention was the fractious Marxist ideologue Daniel DeLeon, who founded a faction of the IWW in Detroit. Although this splinter group, which later renamed itself the Workers' International Industrial Union, tried to rival the IWW,

it never exerted much influence before it disbanded in 1924.

After the 1908 convention the IWW dedicated itself to the pursuit of two simultaneous goals. First it sought the practical task of organizing the masses of American industry into one big union. The IWW thus launched an aggressive organizing campaign that urged all workers regardless of skill level, race, ethnicity, nationality, or gender to join. This commitment to inclusiveness distinguished the IWW from exclusionary craft unionism of the AFL and its history of discouraging the participation of unskilled immigrant and African-American workers. The IWW's second and revolutionary goal was to "take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system," as it declared in its 1908 constitution. Direct action through industrial unionism would be the vehicle for achieving this utopian vision. By organizing all workers in all industries, the IWW would control the country's factories, mines, and railroads. Workers would then wage a general strike that would cripple capitalism and usher in a new day of a democratic, wageless, and classless society governed by workers themselves. Because of its revolutionary goals, the IWW pledged never to negotiate or seek peace with employers by signing binding contracts.

Direct-Action Campaigns before World War I

Achieving its utopian vision was a distant goal, so the IWW focused its energies on organizing unaffiliated workers. Despite the predominance of western radicals among the IWW's founders, the union gained national credibility from important victories in labor struggles in the industrial Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions where immigrant factory workers and African-American longshoremen proved eager converts to the IWW's philosophy of direct action.

In 1912, the IWW supported the spontaneous strike of more than 20,000 textile workers who walked out in protest of wage cuts at the American Woolen Company in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Many of the strikers were young women aged 14–18 who had become malnourished and overworked as the company imposed wage reductions and forced them to endure the stress of a system designed to speed up the pace of work. "We want bread and roses, too" demanded the strikers in a phrase that became the signature slogan of the strike. Since most of the strikers were immigrants—Poles, Italians, Lithuanians, Russians, and members of several other nationalities—the IWW played a critical role in sustaining worker solidarity across difficult

language barriers. The IWW distributed literature in dozens of languages and translated speeches, which sustained unity and solidarity as strikers maintained a massive picket line, held rallies, and organized stage parades through city streets. As the strike wore on, providing relief proved one of the greatest challenges to the strikers. The IWW's strike and relief committees served workers of different nationalities by providing supplies, maintaining soup kitchens, and distributing other critical aid. The strikers held their ground even as national guardsmen descended on Lawrence and the city imposed martial law and a ban on public meetings to disrupt their activities.

The IWW carefully cultivated public sympathy throughout the strike. Strike committees coordinated with labor sympathizers in nearby cities to aid the children of strikers by providing them care and temporary out-of-town safety during the duration of the conflict. The response was overwhelming; the image of underfed children in rags generated sympathetic publicity for the strikers and their cause. Distressed by the effectiveness of the strikers' ability to coordinate, Lawrence authorities moved to disrupt their strategy, declaring that children would not be allowed to leave the city. The tide of the strike turned when the police interfered by attacking a transport of 200 children destined for Philadelphia. A public outcry over the tactics of Lawrence authorities forced the mill owners' to settle, offering pay raises, overtime, and other improvements in working conditions.

In 1913, longshoremen in Philadelphia formed the interracial, multiethnic Local 8 of the IWW's Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union. A long history of racial and ethnic conflict among Philadelphia's waterfront workers enabled employers to control the labor force of the city's docks. But longshoremen reversed that trend during a strike in 1913, when eastern European immigrants and African-Americans who worked the docks voted to affiliate with the IWW. Instrumental to the success of Local 8 was Ben Fletcher, who became one of the most prominent Wobblies in the United States. Fletcher, a Philadelphia native and young dockhand in his early twenties, ascended the leadership in the city's IWW. During the strike he emerged as a leader of Local 8. Fletcher was not the only black leader in Local 8: Several other key positions within the union, including those of business agents, meeting chairs, and secretaries, were held by African-Americans at one time or another. The union's careful efforts at political education and balancing the needs and interests of the union's different members made the union a powerful force on the Philadelphia waterfront for more than a decade.

The IWW's message of direct action appealed to the multitude of drifters—miners, loggers, farm

hands—who toiled about the Trans-Mississippi West. The shift to an industrial form of agricultural—wheat on the Great Plains and fruits and vegetables in California and Washington—increased the demand for seasonal, migrant farm labor. Young, single, male, unskilled migrant farm hands endured an endless search for work, riding the rails from job to job, following the harvest season. At each work site, they settled into camps with poor lodging and inadequate bathing facilities and worked jobs that were strenuous, intensely supervised, and low-paying. During harvest season these hoboes became ripe recruits for the Wobblies. Thousands joined, forming in 1915 the Agricultural Workers' Organization (AWO), which later re-organized as the Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union. Until the late 1920s, these militant casual laborers built a union that was strongly centered at the level of the rank-and-file and for a while posed a formidable threat to employers. The IWW's organized farm hands in many ways pioneered the idea of industrial unionism in agriculture. The IWW also established a strong presence among the loggers of the timber camps of the Pacific Northwest. Here a mix of revolutionary appeals and the demands for immediate improvements in working and living conditions attracted thousands of loggers into locals that waged a series of strikes in the decade before World War I.

The Wobbly Counterculture

Beyond a commitment to waging direct-action campaigns against employers, the IWW spread a working-class culture that challenged the dominant values of competitive, acquisitive individualism. Through its newspapers the *Industrial Worker* and *Solidarity* and other publications, such as Covington's hall paper, the *Lumberjack* (later entitled *Voice of the People*), the IWW spread its political education of the working class, which drew on humor, song, and iconoclasm. Cartoons ridiculed Scissor Bill, the fictional American worker—and a ubiquitous presence at mines, mills, and lumber camps throughout the country—who resisted unionization and remained the dutiful servant of employers, earning nothing more than a life of sloth, gambling, drinking to excess, and residing in filth. Ernest Riehe's memorable Mr. Block cartoons, through mockery and humor, educated working-class readers on the values of class solidarity and industrial unionism. Mr. Block represented the naive American worker who faithfully believed that his material interests were served by obeying the law and remaining

faithful to the commands of his employers. As one IWW publication put it, "Mr. Block owns nothing, yet he speaks from the standpoint of the millionaire. . . . he licks the hand that smites him and kisses the boot that kicks him; he is the personification of all that a worker should not be." By following the adventures of Mr. Block, readers witnessed his discovery that the courts fail to protect him, that depositing wages in banks ensures him of no savings, that employer promises of plentiful jobs at high wages never materialize, and that the AFL only reinforces the power of capitalists. By raising the class consciousness of American workers through the humorous education of Mr. Block, Riehe and the IWW aimed to destroy the blocks on which capitalism was built.

The IWW spread its culture of class solidarity and industrial unionism through song as well as humor. The IWW music pledged to "fan the flames of discontent." In 1909, an IWW committee in Spokane, Washington, compiled the first of many editions of workers' songs, which became affectionately known among Wobblies as the "Little Red Song Book," after the color of its paperback cover. The songbook project reflected the talents of its compiler, J. H. Walsh, an energetic West Coast itinerant soapbox organizer who considered himself both an agitator and an entertainer. Wobbly music chronicled the travails of the male, migrant worker, who endured a life on the road with its endless search for work, crowding in unsanitary work camps, and exploitation at the hands of deceitful labor agents. Songs also urged direct action. They celebrated the uncompromising defiance of the IWW, mocked emasculated lackeys, such as Mr. Block and Scissor Bill; memorialized the heroics of legendary unionists, such as Joe Hill and rebel Elizabeth Gurley Flynn; mused at the destruction of property at the hands of Wobbly saboteurs; and promoted an ethic of cooperation and solidarity amid struggle.

But if songs registered workers' frustrations and lionized their militancy, nearly all of them struck a note that inspired dreams of the coming new day. Consider the chorus to Ralph Chaplin's "Commonwealth of Toil": "But we have a glowing dream / Of how fair the world will seem / When each man can live his life secure and free / When the earth is owned by Labor/And there's joy and peace for all/In the commonwealth of Toil that is to be" (*I. W. W. Songs*, 2003).

Although perhaps no more than 60,000 people ever belonged to the IWW at its zenith, many millions of American workers gained exposure to the IWW's revolutionary philosophy through the union's

cultural propaganda of culture of humor, song, and militant class solidarity.

A masculine work life culture of the rails, mines, mills, and logging camps also spread the cultural values of the Wobblies. Hopping freights and living in tent colonies with other migrant workers, however unappealing, nurtured a masculine spirit of camaraderie, rebelliousness, and independence, values that the IWW taught in its newspapers, pamphlets, and stump speeches. Union delegates drifted through migrant camps, distributing IWW literature, buttons, and pasting stickers inside freight cars, rented rooms, and other places where migrants gathered. Organizers won many converts to the Wobbly cause when they displayed militant solidarity in action. Union men intimidated nonunionists, daring them to fistfights, shootouts, and other tests of masculinity. Wobblies enhanced their visibility and reputation among migrant workers when they stood together to resist eviction from freight cars. Engineers and conductors often harassed workers who rode the rails to work sites, trying to extort money from the migrants and forcing them off the train if they refused to pay. Wobblies defied these incursions on what they considered their right to ride the rails, resorting to coordinated acts of physical violence to repel railroad crews. The defiance of the Wobblies, not the deference of nonunionists, secured free passage to the next work site and taught the value of the militant, fighting spirit of the IWW to nonunion observers. Veterans of the rails and lumber camps thus served as emissaries of the IWW's counterculture of rebellious class solidarity.

Repression and Response

The IWW encountered coordinated repression, engineered by both the state and employers, to disrupt its organizing, its direct-action campaigns, and the spread of its cultural propaganda. To further its education of the working class, the IWW deployed a contingent of street-corner speakers and soapbox orators throughout western towns. They thundered before crowds of migrant, casual laborers and led public demonstrations against the abuses of private-employment agencies, or "employment sharks" in the vernacular speech of the IWW, who charged high job-placement and transportation fees to workers. Municipal officials drafted local ordinances that prohibited public-street speaking but exempted such religious organizations as the Salvation Army from the regulations. From 1909–1916, the IWW responded to these legal restrictions with its famous free-speech fights

in such places as Spokane, Washington, Fresno, California, and Minot, North Dakota. Wobblies defied local authorities with a coordinated plan by which one speaker would mount a soapbox and address the gathered crowd until the police intervened and arrested the offender for violating the ordinance. Immediately a second speaker would follow, leading to more arrests, until the IWW overwhelmed the jails and courts, forcing the police to release the prisoners. The demonstrators won public sympathy, not only from other radical groups, but also from civic groups and the mainstream press, which eventually led to the repeal of many of these ordinances. Despite victories in the free-speech fights, these battles divided Wobblies. Internal debates between advocates of soapbox organizing and those who feared that such tactics wasted critical union resources on courtroom costs raged, the latter insisting that time and money could be better spent organizing work sites and staging strikes.

Even as the Wobblies established a presence in mines, construction camps, logging fronts and sawmills, canneries, steel mills, and meatpacking plants, they confronted employers who had the authority to call on the coercive powers of the state to defend their interests over those of the IWW. Despite the IWW's victory at Lawrence for example, American Woolen slowly regained control over its mill. A recession in the textile industry in 1913 enabled mill operators to shift production to nonunion mills, fire unionists, and purchase the loyalty of workers who pledged to shun the Wobblies with promotions and other favors. Employer tactics undermined the IWW's persuasion with workers, who saw the union as powerless to protect the interest of its members. Membership dwindled, and a company-imposed stretch-out eroded pay gains won in the strike. Later that year the IWW endured another stinging defeat. The IWW supported a strike at the silk mills in Paterson, New Jersey, that quickly became one of the union's epic struggles. When silk operators rejected workers' demands, some 25,000 workers forced more than 300 silk mills to go idle. For more than 5 months, silk workers held together through a variety of tactics, including staging a celebrated pageant that dramatized the strikers' cause. Yet the employers' united front eroded worker unity as Paterson officials sanctioned police brutality against strikers, which employers succeeded in blaming on anarchists, a charge that stuck in this town with a reputation as a hotbed of anarchism. Violent repression of the strikers without fear of reprisal from local or state authorities emboldened the hand of company officials. The strike was defeated, and the IWW lost important credibility until the founding

of the AWO in 1915 rejuvenated the union's mass appeal.

The onset of World War I posed even bigger challenges to the "one big union." When the war began in Europe in 1914, the union vowed to oppose it, arguing that it was a struggle between capitalist and imperialist powers in which the working class had no stake. When the United States entered the conflict in 1917, the IWW leadership never made an official antiwar declaration, although it refused to adopt a no-strike pledge and to suspend its commitment to class conflict for the duration of the war. Many Wobblies did resist the draft or went out on strike, but many others did not. Nevertheless Wobblies incurred the indiscriminate wrath of public officials and private citizens who condemned unionists as unpatriotic and pro-German, whose actions undermined American resolve and deprived the United States of mobilizing its vital war industries.

The passage of the Espionage Act (1917) empowered the federal government to intimidate and imprison such radicals as the Wobblies. At the pleading of the interests of the country's major industrial and agricultural interests, the federal government conducted a series of raids against the IWW. Federal agents stormed into union halls, libraries, and private homes, confiscating files, literature, supplies, office equipment, and even personal items. Thousands of organizers and rank-and-file Wobblies were arrested and indicted for violating the Espionage Act. In a series of mass trials, federal authorities prosecuted Wobblies for obstructing the war effort. In the largest of these trials, held in Chicago, William D. Haywood and scores of other Wobbly defendants were found guilty of sedition and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Not only did the federal crackdown ensnare such IWW leaders as Haywood, but it took its toll on rank-and-file members as well. The federal investigations of the IWW were part of a larger federal campaign of fear waged against all kinds of alleged radicals. Vigilante groups, such as the American Protective League, worked in concert with state and local officials to expose and intimidate Wobblies who dodged the draft, failed to report for military training, or who were foreign-born and at risk for deportation as an enemy alien. Police arrested thousands of suspected Wobblies for vagrancy. Vigilantes in local loyalty leagues lynched, tar-and-feathered, and clubbed unionists. Even Wobblies who supported the war effort and served in the military were not immune from vigilante repression. For example war veteran and lumberjack Wesley Everest was lynched for resisting a mob of American Legionnaires who stormed the IWW union hall in Centralia, Washington, on Armistice Day in

1919. The war dealt a crippling blow to the IWW's offices, membership, and infrastructure.

Decline and Legacy

Although some pockets of Wobbly activism—such as the wheat fields of the Great Plains—saw a resurgence in the 1920s, the IWW never recovered from wartime repression. The union invested its limited resources and energies into the defense of wartime prisoners, which undermined any renewed efforts at organizing and direct action. Much of the leadership dispersed. After the war working-class radicals also began to gravitate toward the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA), which was founded in 1919. Spearheaded by former Wobbly William Z. Foster, the CPUSA's Trade Union Educational League (TUEL) pushed to build industrial unionism within the trade union movement. Throughout the 1920s, the TUEL trained hundreds of field organizers who developed the skills, networks, and tactical experience to redirect working-class radicalism in the 1930s. Finally even the Wobbly revival on the plains was short-lived, since critical changes in agricultural technologies reduced agribusiness's dependence on migrant labor, the greatest source of new membership. The introduction of the automobile also undermined the work culture of the West, which weakened the Wobblies' ability to appeal to potential recruits. As workers traveled to work sites by car, they bypassed the sociability of riding the rails and the jungle camps, two places where activists had succeeded in wooing migrants to the Wobbly cause.

Despite its decline the IWW left important legacies. By taking seriously the importance of organizing unskilled workers, the IWW undermined the credibility of the AFL's craft unionism as a model for an effective labor movement. By organizing African-American longshoremen in Philadelphia, immigrant textile workers in Lawrence, and migrant harvest workers, and timber hands of various stripes, the IWW anticipated the industrial unionism of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, founded in the 1930s amid the Great Depression. The Wobblies direct-action tactics found renewed expression among activists in the United Mine Workers, the United Automobile Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. Moreover the IWW's original idealism continues to inspire many on the left to this day. The union still maintains its own website (see References) where the project of working to build one big union remains alive. For many in the labor movement today, both activists and scholars, the IWW's expansive

vision and idealism—that takes seriously the idea that “an injury to one is an injury to all”—is as relevant in today’s world of global capitalism as it was in 1905 at the zenith of American industrial capitalism.

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See also Agricultural Workers Organization; Brotherhood of Timber Workers; Communist Party; DeLeon, Daniel; Fletcher, Benjamin Harrison; Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley; Foster, William Z.; Haywood, William D. “Big Bill”; Hill, Joe; Hoboes; Marine Transport Workers’ Union; Western Federation of Miners/International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers

INJUNCTIONS

By definition an injunction is a court order directing a person, and if necessary his or her associates, to refrain from pursuing a course of action. For the labor movement, the injunction became a powerful legal weapon that was used to hamper its activities. From strikes to boycotts to peaceful picketing, U.S. courts would issue injunctions on the behest of employers to prevent workers from carrying out their forms of protest. Ever since the Pullman strike of 1894, curbing the use of the injunction became a serious quest on the behalf of labor.

Injunctions had their origin in the common law system of England. The king was given the power to prevent any sort of injury by banning someone from committing an act rather than taking action against such person after the injury was performed. Later on the English courts took on this responsibility with the idea of protecting property from any sort of threat and if the law provided for no other defense. In the United States however, the injunction was actually not used much, if at all, until 1877, when courts of equity issued injunctions to stop striking railroad workers. But the use of the injunction prior to Pullman had little if any far-reaching affects. For instance on March 26, 1886, Charles Brusckke, an Illinois furniture maker, obtained an injunction against his striking workers. On April 2, both sides appeared before the court to argue their case, with Brusckke winning a permanent injunction on May 20. Nevertheless the use of the injunction was not very widespread at this time.

In the United States if an immediate threat to property is seen, the courts will issue a temporary restraining order, a move that does not place blame on either side. If no further relief is seen, a temporary injunction will be issued to allow further investigation into the case. After viewing both sides, a judge may decide that more protection is needed and issue a permanent injunction.

However when it came to labor disputes, this path was rarely if ever taken. Courts tended to issue an injunction straight away. The problem concerning labor activities is that of time. When an injunction is issued, a hearing is scheduled for a later date. For a union, or a group of workers conducting a strike, this puts them in a precarious situation. Should they obey the injunction, they will lose the momentum of the strike. Should they disobey, they will be in contempt of court and face possible jail time.

Many labor groups and individuals protested the use of the injunction. They protested that this action was entirely judge-made law. There was no jury involved. Furthermore the side on whom the

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injunction was issued was not allowed to present its case until the hearing; only the petitioner had any access to state its position prior to that time. Also on many occasions, some judges issued blanket injunctions. When doing so many people would be placed under the requirements of the injunction but have no idea as to the situation and would therefore be liable for contempt of court.

The Pullman strike helped to promote the use of the injunction. In protesting wage cuts instituted by the Pullman Company against its workers, the American Railway Union (ARU), which was under the direction of Eugene V. Debs, called for a boycott of Pullman railroad cars to accompany the strike. The Pullman company turned to President Grover Cleveland for assistance. Under the guise of protecting the mails, Cleveland sent in federal troops both to maintain order and to protect the mails and interstate commerce. On the arrival of troops, violence broke out. A federal court issued an injunction against the ARU forbidding any interference with the mails or interstate commerce that the railroads provide, an action that Debs and the ARU ignored. Debs was jailed for contempt of court, and the strike eventually failed.

Once employers saw how the injunction could be used against the labor movement, its use picked up momentum. Ever since the celebrated 1842 Massachusetts case *Commonwealth v. Hunt*, unions had the legal right to exist as long as their purposes were legal. This was a matter of interpretation, especially when it came to the right to strike or conduct a boycott. In conducting strikes and boycotts, courts repeatedly defined and redefined what constituted a legal or illegal activity on the part of labor. The injunction was often used to create these new definitions.

On the other side were those who sought an injunction. A company owner rightfully considered his business his property. Should a labor dispute arise and he was faced with the possibility of a strike preventing him from conducting business, he would also face the loss of income and possibly find himself unable to open his company. An injunction would enable him to continue to use and enjoy his property.

Across the country the argument waged heavily on both sides. The injunction was denounced in the 1896 Democratic platform. Many of the injunction supporters were friends of big business and saw this court action as a way not only to ensure their profits, but also cut deep into labor activities, all while keeping the peace. Some took the middle road and examined injunction usage, distinguishing between proper and improper rulings. And as previously stated, the labor movement saw the injunction as a form of despotism, dictatorship, and harmful to society as a whole.

Writers and labor leaders weighed in heavily on the subject of injunctions. In 1930, Edwin Witt, a noted author and labor law specialist, called injunction judges kings. He argued that unions are painted as lawless when injunctions are ineffective. In 1919, Andrew Furuseth, a prominent national labor leader during the 1920s, argued that injunctions are “revolutionary and destructive of popular government.” In 1923, Herbert Bigelow, another prominent labor leader, saw the issue as “a matter of life or death to organized labor.” Others thought that injunctions prevented the vital dialog between labor and management that was so urgently needed.

Whenever possible labor organizations went out of their way to point out judges they believed to abuse the power of the injunction. Under the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), several judges met with labor’s ire. Two particular judges were James Wilkerson and Jesse Baldwin, both of whom were accused of labor baiting. Judge Dennis Sullivan of the Superior Court of Cook County (the county in which the city of Chicago resides) was especially hated by the CFL, who even attempted to use the ballot box to oust him from his position. However Sullivan had the backing of the Chicago Bar Association and was apparently not repugnant to Chicago society and easily won re-election to the bench.

Many states saw the injunction abuses on the part of the courts and worked to pass legislation to curb its use. States like Illinois, Arizona, and New York worked to create legislation that would pass court approval. In many cases the American Federation of Labor (AFL) provided some guidelines and model language for these acts. By 1914, six states had laws that restricted the use of the injunction. Many felt that federal legislation would help in this quest. The first real piece of congressional law that originally seemed to favor labor was the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, which was meant to curb corrupt business activities. When the Sherman Act was actually later used against labor, it was strengthened with the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914, which was dubbed the Magna Carta of labor. In Clayton labor was not deemed a “commodity or article of commerce” and forbade using the injunction unless there might be irreparable harm to property. Strikes, boycotts, and peaceful picketing were protected.

However three U.S. Supreme Court cases in 1921 put all back to square one: *Duplex Printing Press v. Deering*, *American Steel Foundaries v. Tri-City Trades*, and *Truax v. Corrigan*. *Duplex* involved the issue of secondary boycotts. In this decision the Court held that such boycotts were enjoined under Clayton, which supposedly protected that very right. In *American Steel Foundaries*, Chief Justice, and former

president, William Howard Taft applied the commerce clause of the U.S. constitution to uphold an injunction against striking workers, holding that the picketing presented an obstacle to interstate commerce. In *Truax*, an Arizona anti-injunction law, which used wording from the Clayton Act, was tossed out. The Court held that picketing deprived the owners of their property under the due process and equal protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Using the Supreme Court decisions as a starting point, especially in light of the invalidation of the Arizona law, many states went back to work to draft new legislation that would apply the standards described in those decisions. Illinois was one such state. A new bill was drafted and submitted to the legislature in 1925. This bill provided sweeping rights for unions to exist, as well as greatly limited the use of the injunction unless there was irreparable harm to property. The bill was made into law. Its supporters knew one more hurdle was awaiting them: Court approval. Almost immediately after the passage of the law, one judge refused to issue an injunction under the language of the act. The law was not officially reviewed until the 1934 Illinois case of *Fenske Brothers v. Upholsterers International Union*. The Illinois Supreme Court found the law to be constitutional.

Opponents of the injunction knew that strong federal legislation was needed. On February 7, 1928, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee began to hold hearings concerning a federal bill. As with legislation on the state level, injunction opponents were looking for wording that would stand the test of constitutionality.

The dream of federal legislation became reality in 1932 with the Norris-LaGuardia Federal Anti-Injunction Act. This law spelled out “the public policy of the United States with respect to Employer-Employee relations.” In this new law, federal courts were forbidden from using the injunction to sustain anti-union employment contracts or to prevent such activities as strikes, pickets, and boycotts. The act also addressed the “inequality of bargaining power between employers and employees” by limiting the court power to intervene in labor disputes. However while Norris-LaGuardia may have limited legal powers in some areas, in others labor organizations were still liable for civil suits and criminal activities.

Norris-LaGuardia was passed on the eve of the New Deal, a period that provided a great many legal benefits to organized labor. However in 1947, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act. At one point Congress considered repealing Norris-LaGuardia completely in order to allow courts to issue injunctions in case striking workers violated a no-strike

clause. While repealing the law did not happen, Taft-Hartley did restrict many of the gains given to labor during the previous decade. The General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) was required to seek an injunction against either unions or employers who violated the act, as well as obtaining an injunction against a secondary boycott.

In the early twenty-first century, the injunction issue is not a very prominent one. But for the period starting from the late nineteenth century through the post-World War II years, eradicating its use was indeed a major problem for the U.S. labor movement.

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See also ***Commonwealth v. Hunt*; Norris-LaGuardia Federal Anti-Injunction Act; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)**

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS

From its underground beginnings in 1888, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) has grown into a membership of over 730,000 in various North American industries. Along the way the union has won important rights for workers, including better pensions, stable health care through retirement, safe working conditions, and job security.

The Founding of a Union

On May 5, 1888, Thomas Wilson Talbot, a machinist in an Atlanta, Georgia, railway yard, gathered 18 of his fellow workers for a clandestine meeting in a railroad pit. Believing that railroad machinists needed a union to cope with problems particular to their craft, this small group formed the Order of United Machinists and Mechanical Engineers. The order, formed during a time when employers were often hostile to organized labor, remained underground for several years. Despite its secrecy the order spread beyond Georgia, thanks in part to the “boomers,” men who traveled the railway lines for work. The boomers established local lodges in areas where they were not already present. Within 1 year there were 40 lodges; by 1891, there were 189.

With 34 locals represented, the first convention of the order was held on May 6, 1889, in the Georgia Senate chamber in Atlanta. Tom Talbot was elected grand master machinist (later known as the international president), and William L. Dawley was elected grand secretary (now known as the grand secretary-treasurer). The organization’s name was changed to the National Association of Machinists, and a constitution was drawn up. It was also agreed that a journal, *Machinists Monthly Journal*, would be published monthly consisting of “no less than sixteen pages.”

Also during the 1889 convention, the machinists sought a design for a union emblem. The winning entry was submitted by Frank French, representing Lodge 12 in Houston, Texas. The figures on the design were a flywheel, friction joint caliper, and the machinist’s square with the initials of the organization in between the spokes of the flywheel. French’s design featured symbols important to the members: “The flywheel is significant because it generates a lot of power once it gets started.” French also explained that the calipers signified “that we extend an invitation to all persons of civilized countries who are

practical machinists. The square signifies that we are square and honest.”

Delegates of the second Grand Lodge Convention also adopted a secret code, known as the Russian Prison Knock Cipher, to be distributed to the membership. The code’s purpose was to help machinists communicate with one another when organizing or on other union business. For many years officers and representatives of the IAMAW had no way of quickly communicating from one locality to another except by telegram. In many places the only telegraph office in town was in the railroad depot. This meant that the primary employers of IAM members, the railroads, could review union messages. At least to the eve of World War I, cards bearing new secret traveling passwords were reissued to officers and representatives every 6 months.

In 1890 and 1891, the machinists’ union reached out to its first international members as a Canadian local was founded in Stratford, Ontario. Locals were also formed in Mexico. Consequently the name of the union was changed at the 1891 convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to the International Association of Machinists. The international headquarters were moved to Richmond, Virginia, around this same time.

The IAMAW along with the boilermakers and blacksmiths signed a contract with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad in 1892. This was the first agreement entered into in the United States between a railroad company and an organized shop craft.

Acceptance of application into American Federation of Labor (AFL) affiliation would have been automatic were it not for the color bar, which went back to the IAMAW’s southern beginnings. One of Thomas Talbot’s primary objectives in working to establish this union had been to restore and enhance the image of machinists as aristocrats of labor. From the first membership was strictly limited to an exclusive fraternity of white male machinists. This meant no production workers, no specialists, no women, and no blacks. At the 1895 convention, the word black was removed from the constitution. That same year the IAMAW relocated its headquarters to Chicago, Illinois, and became affiliated with the AFL.

After a successful strike, Local Lodge 52 in Pittsburgh negotiated the IAMAW’s first 9-hour day contract in 1898. In October 1899, many Canadian members won a 9-hour day after a 10-day strike against the Canadian Pacific Railroad. This also included a raise in minimum wage. By 1915, the IAMAW lobbied successfully for an 8-hour workday, increased wages, and improvement to work conditions in many shops and factories. They were especially successful in New England.

On the move again, the machinists established their headquarters in Washington, DC, in 1899. By the turn of the century, the young union had become an international organization that had grown to include 450 local lodges with a membership of 35,000.

Shortly thereafter IAMAW International President James O'Connell signed an agreement with the National Metal Trades' Association (NMTA), a group representing company owners' and employers' interests. Known as the Murray Hill Agreement, this contract provided there would be no discrimination against union labor, defined machinist in the terms of the IAMAW Constitution, stipulated extra pay for overtime, adopted an apprenticeship ratio, and most importantly, promised to put a 54-hour week into effect May 1, 1901, 1 year from the signing of the contract. One year after the agreement was signed however, the NMTA refused to pay workers the same pay for fewer hours per week, beginning 35 years of labor-management antagonism.

In 1911, the IAMAW began allowing some new types of workers into its ranks. Since its beginnings the IAMAW had been primarily composed of skilled, white, male railroad workers. In that year they changed their constitution to allow unskilled machinists as well as female workers. Women had been accepted into the IAMAW membership for some time despite language to the contrary in the constitution. James O'Connell pointed out, "We have female members . . . because of [union shop] agreements." By 1948, IAMAW membership was opened to all regardless of race or gender.

On June 28, 1915, the great strikes on the Illinois Central Railroad, the Harriman Lines, and the Pere Marquette Railroad were terminated. These strikes, in progress for more than 3 years, had been maintained at a tremendous cost to both organized labor and the railroad companies. This same year the union affiliated with the International Metalworkers' Federation. One year later automobile mechanics were admitted to the membership.

Changes in the Ranks: The War Years

During World War I, the Machinists' membership had reached 300,000, making it the largest union in the nation in 1918. However as the war ended and wartime production ceased, IAMAW membership sharply dropped off, plummeting to 80,000 by 1923. The situation worsened during the Great Depression: By 1933, membership was at only 50,000, and 23,000 of those workers were unemployed. The 1930s and 1940s did see new laws passed to help get the unemployed back

to work under Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and with industrial production for World War II. The jobs however decreased again with the end of the war and returning anti-union sentiment.

During the 1944 Grand Lodge Convention, delegates voted to establish an Education Department as well as a newspaper. President Harvey W. Brown persuaded the delegates to support publishing a supplement to the *Journal*. This would be a weekly IAMAW newspaper, the *Machinist*. Eventually the *Journal's* production was cut back to twice a year, and then it was voted out of existence in 1956. The *Machinist* was closed down in 1994. It was replaced with a quarterly magazine, the *IAMAW Journal*, which is still in publication today.

The IAMAW disaffiliated with the AFL in 1945. This break was over the failure of the AFL to settle a jurisdictional dispute between the IAMAW and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees of America, and the International Union of Operating Engineers. The machinists argued that the AFL was assisting and encouraging these unions to trespass on the jurisdiction and raid the membership.

In 1947, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act (officially known as the Labor-Management Relations Act), which placed restrictions on union activities (specifically, it contained provisions that made closed shops illegal and outlawed secondary boycotts). Section 14(b), the most controversial, allowed states to pass right-to-work laws, which would enable them to regulate the number of union shops. The machinists worked with other AFL unions to repeal the act but to no avail. Because of the limitations imposed on union political activity by this act, the Machinists' Non-Partisan Political League was founded. Despite these reverses, the railroad machinists did manage to win a 40-hour workweek in 1949.

Postwar Years

Beginning in 1935 the machinists started organizing within the airline industry and won several victories. In 1936, the Boeing Company in Seattle, Washington, signed the industry's first labor agreement. By 1938, the IAMAW negotiated the first union agreement in air transportation with Eastern Air Lines.

In 1948, Lodge 751 went on strike in Seattle, Washington, against the Boeing Company. For the machinists the issues were preserving longstanding seniority rules that the company wanted to abolish and achieving a 10% per hour raise for all categories

of labor. On strike for 4 months, the machinists went back to work under the terms set by the National Labor Relations Board. The IAMAW joined the International Transport Workers' Federation in 1950 and re-affiliated with the AFL in January 1951.

When the AFL merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1955, Machinists International President Al Hayes was elected vice-president as well as chairman of the Ethical Practices Committee for the new organization. The shift of the IAMAW had changed the composition from skilled craftsmen into essentially an industrial union. The bulk of the membership had moved from the railroads to the metal-fabrication industry, with aircraft industry workers composing the largest component of the workers. From new worksites and plants in California down to Cape Canaveral (later Cape Kennedy) in Florida, aerospace workers began joining the IAMAW.

By 1964, the IAMAW changed its name yet again, this time to the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. The newly named union was able to shut down most of the airline industry 2 years later by striking against five major airlines in the business, including Eastern, National, Northwest, Trans World, and United Airlines. A united effort of 35,400 IAMAW members in 231 cities grounded the airlines for 43 days, finally winning 5% raises in three successive years as well as a cost-of-living escalator. The great airline strike of 1966 also led to President Lyndon B. Johnson eliminating the 3.2% limit on pay raises. This benefited both the public and private sectors by eliminating the cap on pay raises.

After 1970, several new departments were added to headquarters to meet members' needs as well as mirror the diversity of the members that formed the union. These included the Departments of Civil Rights (1976), Organizing (1976), Older Workers and Retired Members (1981), Women (1996), Automotive (2002), and Employment Services (2003).

At the 1984 convention in Seattle, Washington, delegates voted to fund the Placid Harbor Education Center in Maryland to train and educate members of the union as well as "to improve the level of understanding of workers in an ever-changing world." This center was later renamed the William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center in 1998 to honor the late international president.

The Late Twentieth Century and Beyond

In 1991, the Pattern Makers' League of North America merged with the machinists. The International

Woodworkers of America would do the same in 1994. The IAMAW, the United Auto Workers (UAW), and the United Steelworkers of America in 1995 debated plans for unification by the year 2000. This unity plan would have created the largest, most diverse union in North America, with more than 2,000,000 active members and 1,400,000 retirees. However by 1999 the unification effort with the steelworkers and the UAW ended because of major philosophical differences. During the same year, the National Federation of Federal Employees affiliated with the IAMAW. In the twenty-first century, the union represents more than 200 industries and has become a large and diverse organization.

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See also **Taft-Hartley Act**

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) traces its roots to a convention of electrical workers held in a small room above Stolley's Dance Hall in St. Louis, Missouri. On November 21, 1891, 10 delegates representing 300 electrical workers in cities throughout the Midwest named their fledgling organization the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (NBEW). Henry Miller was elected grand president at this first convention, and he immediately sought recognition by the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The federation acknowledged the need to organize the growing electrical industry and issued a national charter to the NBEW on December 7, 1891. In 1899, with the establishment of a local union in Ottawa, Canada, the organization formally became the IBEW.

The road to that historic meeting at Stolley's Dance Hall began in the 1840s when electricity left the experimental realm of the laboratory and was put to a practical commercial purpose in the form of the telegraph. Carried by wires strung on poles, the popularity of real-time communication over great distances spawned the new breed of construction workers referred to as linemen. These linemen led a nomadic

life creating the spider web of telegraph lines across the continent. As more and more linemen were needed in the quest to connect coast to coast and city to city, there was no shortage of men attracted to this new and exciting opportunity for work and travel.

The second-half of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of many unions centered on individual crafts, and during the early years of the specialization of the electrical workers trade, there had been various attempts to organize linemen unions in particular cities and localities without much success. The fact that new telegraph lines were always emanating into new territories meant the workers were an itinerate and isolated workforce. However by 1880, there was enough support and communication among linemen to reach out for affiliation with the Knights of Labor, and while this relationship held for a while, an 1883 failed strike against the Western Union telegraph company subsequently broke up the first fledging union of electrical workers.

The failure of the strike did not dampen the urge to organize, and in 1884, a group of linemen, under the cloak of secrecy for fear of their loss of a job, formed a secret organization called the United Order of Linemen. Headquartered in Denver, this group did attain success organizing linemen in the midwestern and western states. However it was at the St. Louis Exposition of 1890 and the widely announced plan for the Expo to display to the world the wonders of electricity that provided, for the first time, a large project where electrical workers from across the country could work in one place for a prolonged period of time. Discussions among the electrical workers from different parts of the country highlighted the differences in pay and the general lack of safety measures, and these informal bull sessions became the spawning ground culminating in that first convention above Stolley's Dance Hall.

The 10 delegates at that first convention had set a far-reaching agenda, and during their convocation they composed a constitution, established a dues and per capita structure, planned for a death-and-strike benefit, and limited strike activity to only that sanctioned by national officers. Realizing that their dream of a better and safer life depended on increasing the membership, the delegates made organizing all workers in the electrical industry their primary goal. When the convention did adjourn, the delegates returned home flushed with vigor to carry the message to the unorganized in their respective cities. Some, like President Miller, went on the road traveling across the United States helping to set up locals and bring in new members wherever electrical work was being done.

The next convention in Chicago in 1892 saw the head count rise to over 43 local unions and an official

membership of about 2,000. This convention also welcomed the first female telephone operators to become members and authorized the publication of a national magazine called the *Electrical Worker*, which has been published continuously under various names since the first issue in January of 1893.

While the majority of the early membership was concentrated in telegraph and telephone distribution, there was also another dynamic arising in the electrical industry. The growth of electrical power generators to provide electric street lighting and the much-desired electric lamps for use inside buildings produced electrical workers known as inside wiremen. With this new classification came new safety concerns and differing pay schedules, which needed to be addressed differently from linemen. A severe depression during the mid-1890s tested the bonds of brotherhood, but the union prevailed and entered the twentieth century claiming 24,000 members in 1905.

Several hardships that were holding back the IBEW from reaching its full potential were addressed early in the new century. The union had been struggling without a full-time, paid leadership that it needed to deal effectively with outbreaks of unauthorized strikes. The 1903 convention in Salt Lake City brought about the election and provision to pay a full-time salary to Frank J. McNulty as grand president. Given the opportunity to devote himself fulltime to the business of running an international organization, McNulty proved to be a strong leader effectively putting an end to wildcat strikes and restoring credibility with employers regarding contract obligations.

McNulty's 18 years as president were not without conflict. The long-simmering differences and dissensions between linemen and inside wiremen came to a head in 1908 with a large number of members rejecting the leadership of McNulty and holding their own convention, electing J. J. Reid as president. At one point the rebellious faction numbered almost three-fourths of the membership and rejected all initial efforts of the AFL to reconcile the opposing groups. It took a court decision in 1912 that declared the fractious convention of 1908 illegal and that all its actions were to be voided before the rebellious members would heed the AFL effort of reunification under President McNulty with no penalties to those who had seceded.

The Twentieth Century: Growth, Decline, Resurgence—Carrying the Union Torch

After full reunification membership rapidly began to increase. Most important to the growth of the union

was the approach of World War I and the demand it put on the electrical industry. The effort to prepare the country possibly to be on the international war stage prompted the federal government to work with the IBEW and electrical contractors. The IBEW trained inside electricians, and linemen were hired through bona fide electrical contractors to build the military training camps, the arsenals, the navy yards, and even the Panama Canal. In 1917, the federal government took over the railroads, and 90% of the electrical workforce on the railroads joined the IBEW. In 1918, the National War Labor Board (NWLB) was established and endorsed the right to organize, leading many electricians employed in private-sector manufacturing to become IBEW members, and from 1913–1919, the membership exploded from 23,500 to 148,000 members.

The post-WWI United States brought hard times to all in the labor movement. Employers throughout the construction trades became enamored with the open-shop movement. An all out effort to break union influences over work rules was launched by anti-union forces, resulting in prohibitive legislation and antilabor court injunctions. Strike-breaking activities and terrorizing of members and potential members became common practice, and this combined with a depression in 1920–1921, led to IBEW membership dropping to 56,349 in 1925, a decrease of 70% in only 6 years.

Despite a decline in membership, the 1920s were still a time of great foresight for the IBEW. In 1920, the Council of Industrial Relations (CIR) came into existence as a compact between the IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors' Association (NECA). This agreement mandated representatives of employees and employers meet and discuss disputes arising in the industry and to abide by the mutually determined decisions and effectively eliminated strikes in the industry.

The 1920s also saw the formation of the Electrical Workers' Benefit Association in 1922 and the restructuring of the death benefit for union electricians. In 1928, the IBEW Pension Plan was instituted.

The IBEW suffered during the Great Depression, and financial difficulties resulted in canceling conventions from 1929–1941. Economic distress was felt throughout the industry and throughout the union. Officers' and representatives' salaries were cut, and some staff were laid off. However IBEW membership never dropped below 50,000 while other unions were forced out of existence.

New Deal legislation beneficial to workers affected the IBEW in a positive way by emphasizing the right of all workers to organize. However industrial semiskilled electricians did not have the training to

stand side-by-side with IBEW trained construction electricians and linemen. This led to a protectionist attitude by long-time IBEW members, and this perceived arrogance was seen by industrial electricians as an indifference to their concerns. By the time the IBEW became ready to enjoin these workers, the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE) had filled the void. When John L. Lewis, leader of the newly established Committee for Industrial Organizations, endorsed the UE, the goal of the IBEW to enroll all electrical workers was thwarted.

As before the First World War, the buildup of the war effort saw great expansion in all phases of electrical work. Industrial production and electrical construction and distribution soared as the military relied on all things electrical and on the fledgling electronic infusion. Realizing the importance of labor in the war effort, Roosevelt appointed Daniel Tracy, IBEW international president (1933–1940, 1947–1954), to serve as assistant secretary of labor, thus guaranteeing organized labor would be a major player. Tracy worked hard to assure labor peace and harmony with the war effort and helped to craft a no-strike policy, wage-stabilization programs, and concessions on premium pay.

The economic stimulus leading up to WW II and continuing through the war years brought a large increase in IBEW membership. The IBEW membership grew from 50,000 in 1933 to 347,000 by the end of the war, picking up many utility, manufacturing, and government employees.

The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 made organizing new members much more of a struggle for all of organized labor. However in 1947, training of electrical workers took on a new importance, and the IBEW-NECA National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee was established and became the major conduit of new workers coming into the industry.

During the postwar years the IBEW was forced to take a look at its policy concerning hiring of minorities. Historically the organization was overwhelmingly white. Through its history the union did have a legitimate contention that the transient nature of the work situation caused members to travel throughout the country and into racially segregated cities where work for blacks could not be guaranteed. However this statement could no longer hold as the civil rights movement drove down segregating laws.

The IBEW did not rush to hire minorities as either journeymen or as apprentices, but much of this resulted from a strong unwritten sentiment toward nepotism. The union did promote opening all aspects of membership to minorities during the early sixties in order to meet government standards for

apprenticeships. However it took individual locals, such as New York City Local 3, to lead the way in demonstrating that minorities could become productive workers and good union members.

The second-half of the twentieth century saw a large decline of organized labor membership brought on by anti-union entities and right-to-work laws. The establishment of trade schools and nonunion electrical-training programs during the 1970s and 1980s specifically hurt IBEW recruitment efforts. In the early 1990s, the IBEW launched the Construction Organizing Membership Education Training (COMET) program. This aggressive organizing campaign became the model for organized labor and has been highly successful for all the skilled trades.

In 2005, IBEW membership stands at approximately 750,000. Union members are comprised predominantly of inside and outside electrical workers; utility workers; workers in cable broadcasting, radio and television, motion picture and telecommunications, railroad, manufacturing, and government.

The IBEW is headquartered in Washington, DC, and holds national conventions every 5 years. Principle officers are the international president, international secretary-treasurer, 11 international vice-presidents and a nine-member international executive committee.

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INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF RED CAPS/UNITED TRANSPORT SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF AMERICA

Founded in 1937, the International Brotherhood of Red Caps (IBRC), which changed its name to the United Transport Service Employees of America (UTSEA) in 1940, represented a largely unskilled occupational group dominated by African-Americans in an industry that was marked by pronounced racial divisions. Initially an interracial association affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) as a federal union (that is, affiliated directly to the AFL,

not to any of its constituent international unions), the IBRC became an all-black union shortly after its establishment; it soon disaffiliated in protest from the AFL and after 5 years as an independent body, joined the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1942. Possessing no critical skills enabling them to pressure their employers effectively in their workplaces, red caps relied almost exclusively on publicity and the federal government—in particular the courts and the administrative agencies overseeing labor relations in the railroad industry—to win contracts, wage increases, and improvements in working conditions.

The job category of red cap emerged only in the early 1890s. According to legend, a black teenager, James H. Williams, signaled his availability to carry passengers' bags at New York's Grand Central Station by affixing a piece of red flannel to his cap. Within several years, numerous stations were employing groups of station porters to deliver luggage to and from railroad passenger cars. While smaller stations employed only a few men, larger ones, such as Grand Central Station in New York City, placed as many as 500 men on their payroll by the mid-1930s. A U.S. Department of Labor study in 1942 estimated that 3,787 men worked as red caps throughout the country, while another 316 nonredcaps sometimes carried baggage. The employment status and job responsibilities of the red caps remained varied. In some stations, they performed janitorial services, while in others they focused exclusively on baggage carrying.

The men who secured jobs as red caps were a heterogeneous group by the early twentieth century. Although whites and a small number of Japanese worked as baggage carriers, African-Americans numerically dominated the job category. If the overall labor force was racially mixed, individual railroad stations tended to employ members of only one racial group. Requiring only a strong back and little formal skill, the job attracted men with little formal education, highly educated but unemployed black professionals, and black college students in search of money, especially during periods of high-seasonal travel or summer breaks.

Red cap wages and working conditions had been sources of complaint prior to their unionization in the 1930s. In rare instances red caps were salaried employees, but in many other cases they survived on gratuities alone. The Great Depression diminished the willingness or ability of rail passengers to tip generously. With no salaries, seniority rights, or grievance procedures, red caps experimented unsuccessfully with unionization during and after World War I. As one observer put it, red caps' bargaining position was

extremely weak: If “every Red Cap in the Grand Central Station resigned,” he noted, “they could be replaced by double the amount of men within 24 hours.”

The upsurge in unionization during the 1930s in general, and the widely publicized efforts of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in particular, provided the impetus for successful red cap unionization. In January 1937, an interracial group of Chicago red cap activists launched a unionizing campaign and founded the Brotherhood of Railroad Depot, Bus Terminal, Airport and Dock Red Caps, Attendants and Porters, which became AFL federal Local 20342. Blacks and whites divided leadership positions, with a white red cap serving as president and a black one, Willard S. Townsend, as vice-president. Seeking to build a larger organization, the local sponsored a multicity gathering in May 1937. The election of Townsend, an African-American, to the presidency of this larger body prompted the withdrawal of most white delegates, who eventually sought affiliation with the all-white Brotherhood of Railway Clerks. Second-class status within the AFL proved unacceptable to the black unionists, who withdrew their new organization from the federation to pursue an independent course of organizing red caps across the nation. At a conference held in January 1930, some 60 delegates representing as many as 4,000 workers officially founded the IBRC.

Over the next several years, the IBRC made civil rights and black equality a central tenet in its struggle for legitimacy. In fending off the jurisdictional claims of the white clerks’ union, which insisted that all station workers—including freight handlers, janitors, and red caps—fell under its control, red caps charged their white challenger with outright discrimination and exclusion. A 1940 court decision awarding red caps in St. Paul, Minnesota, to the IBRC, according to one labor journalist, “struck the shackles of jim crow unionism from the legs of the Negro railroad worker and sounded the death knell for discriminatory practices which have enthroned prejudice in the railroad industry.” That assessment, while incorrect, captured the spirit with which red cap activists framed their crusade. But when given a choice, station porters, objecting to the clerks’ “color bar,” overwhelmingly chose the IBRC in representation elections.

Their weak bargaining power in the labor market pushed red caps into a heavy dependence upon the federal government and the labor relations machinery enacted during the New Deal years. The first crucial step was to secure government recognition of its members’ right to organize and bargain collectively. Managers of railroad stations claimed that red caps

were not in fact railroad employees but technically were rather “privileged trespassers” or independent contractors working for tips. That definition of red caps’ employment status if upheld would deprive them of access to the labor relations machinery—the National Adjustment Administration and the National Railroad Adjustment Boards—established under the terms of the Railway Labor Act of 1934. In late 1937 and 1938, the IBRC undertook a March Forward to Job Legality campaign, spearheaded by the union’s white attorney, reformer Leon Despres, to convince the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) that red caps were bona fide railway employees. In September 1938, the ICC ruled in the red caps’ favor, finding that the black workers’ “‘independent’ status was wholly fictitious.” Officially designated railroad employees, red caps now invoked the services of the governmental National Mediation Board to conduct union representation elections in numerous stations across the country, elections that the IBRC overwhelmingly won. In the contract negotiations that ensued in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the IBRC won grievance procedures and work rule improvements but few financial gains. Resorting to the newly passed Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, red caps attempted to secure a minimum wage, which promised to be an economic boon for the majority of red caps working only for wages. Managers at over 200 railway stations responded by instituting a new “accounting and guarantee” system, which included gratuities as part of a red caps’ salary as a means of evading the new law. The IBRC’s court challenges to the system ultimately proved ineffective, as did its attempts to block a 10-cent-a-bag fee imposed by stations on passengers.

The IBRC’s track record was a mixed one. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division concluded in a 1941 study that unionization had brought observable improvements to red caps in the realm of seniority rights, a decrease in working hours, the elimination of the 7-day week, modest wage gains, and inclusion under unemployment compensation and retirement laws. The union had also successfully blocked the white clerks’ union’s effort to absorb and dominate black red caps in a racial, inequitable union structure. In 1942, the UTSEA’s affiliation with the CIO provided it with an organizational platform from which to protest racial discrimination. On affiliation UTSEA President Willard S. Townsend was appointed to the CIO’s executive board, the first black American to hold that position.

That limited success could not prevent the decline of red capping jobs. From the late 1940s through 1960s, railroad stations relied less and less on red

caps' services. Rising baggage fees discouraged passengers from using station porters, while the long-term decline in railroad passenger traffic on account of competition from busses, cars, and planes decreased demand further. By 1955, one observer noted, rail passengers found "the search for the familiar red cap of a porter a desperate one." The advent of two-wheeled baggage carts and "Do-It-Yourself" plans in the mid 1950s displaced even more red caps. By 1972, the UTSEA, which then claimed only 1,700 members, merged with its former rival.

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See also **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Railway Labor Acts**

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

Historically the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) has been one of the most powerful and most controversial of unions in the United States. Its power has stemmed from the union's strategic position in the transportation industry. The controversy has resulted from recurring charges of corruption against the union's leadership. Those charges reflect systemic factors in the union's jurisdiction and its governance that have encouraged corruption and undercut reform. But the corruption charges also often resulted from concerns by anti-union forces about this labor organization's strategic power. Some teamster officials have engaged in corrupt actions that betrayed the interests of the membership, but union opponents also used the label of corruption to tar aggressive union tactics that did not constitute a betrayal of union members.

Early Union History

The origins of the IBT lie in the growth of the teaming industry in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Teamsters drove horse-pulled wagons, and in the growing cities of that era, they played a central role in the urban transportation network. The increasing scale of the teaming industry encouraged efforts at union organization, which took place at the local level in a number of cities in the late 1800s. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) worked to gather these local organizations into a new national union, and as a result, seven local leaders came together at the 1898 AFL convention to sign a national union charter creating the Team Drivers' International Union (TDIU), the organizational predecessor to the IBT. The union's first president was a Detroit teamster named George Innis.

The early years of this new national teamsters' union were marked by rapid growth and internal dissension. Partly by organizing new locals and partly by bringing existing local unions into the TDIU, the new union quickly grew to include 30,000 members by 1901. In many places, such as Chicago, team owners were encouraged to cooperate with the new union in return for its help in allowing them to control competition. Team owners would form an association that agreed to a closed contract with a local in exchange for the local policing the association's cartel arrangements. Intent on building a large union, TDIU leaders adopted an inclusive organizing strategy that welcomed African-Americans, recent immigrants, and even small-scale employers. The TDIU's constitution made team owners who employed less than five teams and who drove a wagon themselves eligible for membership. The inclusion of those employers generated dissension within TDIU, and in 1901 a secession movement resulted in the creation of a rival organization, the Teamsters' National Union (TNU). The AFL brokered a resolution of the conflict that allowed self-employed teamsters, but not employers, to remain members, and in 1903 TDIU and TNU merged to form the IBT.

The new organization's first president was Cornelius Shea, a Boston teamster, whose leadership generated much controversy. Shea led the union into a sympathetic strike against Montgomery Ward and Company in Chicago in the spring of 1905. The Chicago Employers' Association (CEA) joined this conflict on the side of Montgomery Ward and sought to use the strike to break the union's power in Chicago. Charges of corruption emerged as the CEA encouraged the state prosecutor's office to launch an investigation into the union's leadership. The investigation sought to link Shea to a local strike broker, John Driscoll, and also publicized salacious details regarding the teamster leader's private life. The strike ended in a draw, but Shea's reputation and that of the union's had been badly tarnished. Over the next



City employees picket City Hall/World Telegram photo by Dick DeMarsico. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-126870].

2 years, Shea stifled efforts within the union to unseat him, and as a result reformers turned to secession movements, most notably in 1906 with the formation of the United Teamsters of America (UTA). This internal dissension along with legal problems that stemmed from the 1905 Chicago strike brought the union to the brink of bankruptcy. In 1907, a reform candidate, Daniel Tobin, defeated Shea's effort for reelection. Tobin's victory marked a limited reform achievement. While Shea was ousted, Tobin found his ability to clean up particular problem locals in New York and Chicago limited. Faced with the threat of Tobin's intervention, local leaders simply pulled their organizations out of the national union, and in this way, the same tactic of secession proved equally useful to reformers and their opponents.

Transitional Era, 1910s to 1930s

A conservative union leader who described the IBT as "a business institution" that "must be run on business lines," Tobin led the union from 1907 to 1952. His leadership brought stability and financial

health to the IBT. Tobin convinced the UTA to end its secession, and by 1915 the IBT had recovered from the membership losses of the previous decade. Over the next two decades, membership continued to grow at a steady pace reaching 90,000 by 1930. Carefully guarding the union's finances by discouraging local leaders from engaging in precipitous strikes, Tobin built the treasury up to \$2.5 million by 1935. The union's constitution championed a democratic structure that sheltered local union autonomy, but Tobin circumvented those constraints. He built a strong hold over the organization through a network of loyal regional leaders who held the office of international representative. The international representatives owed their position to Tobin and dutifully represented him in their regions, intervening frequently in local union affairs and directing the union's frontlines during its conflicts with employers and other unions.

During these same years, the growth of the motor-trucking industry changed the nature of the union's core constituency. Firms hauling freight began to shift over to motor trucks in the first decade of the twentieth century, but the second decade marked a watershed in this transition. By 1930, according to

Tobin, 70% of the union's members drove motor vehicles, and horse-drawn wagons were becoming anachronisms. Trucking in this era was mostly short-haul, but to the extent that a long-haul interstate-trucking industry had emerged by the late 1920s and early 1930s, Tobin urged local union leaders to organize the drivers in this new industry.

Tobin's rhetoric, which celebrated a conservative craft-conscious ideal of unionism, conflicted with his aggressive policies in broadening the union's jurisdiction. Under Tobin's leadership, the IBT brought in categories of workers in various industries who did not drive but whose membership in the union would increase the organization's strategic position. The teamsters in this era laid claim to, among others, stable hands, employees in the ice and dairy industries, gas station attendants, and later warehouse workers. Like other AFL organizations, it became a kind of industrial union built around the organizational needs of its core membership, the drivers. This inclusive policy combined with the union's strategic role in the transportation industry allowed the IBT to take advantage of the more hospitable environment for organizing that emerged in the 1930s and early 1940s. In the same era, regional leaders, such as Dave Beck and Farrell Dobbs, pioneered new tactics that drew on the growing interstate-trucking industry. As a result, the membership ballooned to a half-million members by 1941, and the IBT became the largest union in the United States.

It also became known as one of the most corrupt. A study of union corruption published in 1938 labeled the teamsters "the most racketeer-ridden union in the United States." This notoriety stemmed from a number of factors. The IBT locals often sought to organize business sectors where entrepreneurs engaged in collusive arrangements to control competition. Local union leaders in those sectors convinced employers to accept collective bargaining by agreeing to participate in these collusive arrangements. By the late 1920s, those anticompetitive arrangements, many of which violated antitrust laws, were often described as racketeering. In addition Prohibition had transformed the nature of organized crime groups, which drew on the illegal liquor trade to become better organized and more aggressive over the course of the 1920s. In Chicago, New York, and elsewhere criminal gangs took on the role of regulating collusive arrangements in various industries, and in doing so, they sought to control the local unions involved. The teamsters' strategic role made their local unions frequent targets for criminal gangs. At the same time, opponents of organized labor, alarmed by its growing power, focused much of their attention on the IBT. Critics,

such as the conservative newspaper columnist Westbrook Pegler, used a broad definition of corruption to condemn the teamsters, whose ability to shut down road traffic during legitimate strikes was described as a kind of racketeering. The union's use of secondary boycotts and its participation in sympathy strikes brought similar condemnation.

Transformation of the Union Under Beck and Hoffa

Dave Beck served as president from 1952–1957, and James Hoffa held the office from 1957–1971. Like Tobin, both Beck and Hoffa described the IBT in business terms, and they sought to structure it accordingly. The union provided a service to its members, selling their labor at the highest price possible, and in order to achieve that end, both men saw a limited role for the rank-and-file membership. Instead they wanted union officials who acted as professionals, meaning well-compensated individuals who had accumulated a level of expertise and who would be required to achieve results or face dismissal. To promote this style of governance, the IBT developed layers of regional and industry-specific administration. On the West Coast, Beck had pioneered the creation of statewide joint councils and later a regional body, the Western Conference of Teamsters. In the 1940s and 1950s, at his urging, that same pattern of administration was extended across the rest of the country, which was divided into four large area conferences. At the same time, locals were also integrated into different regional trade divisions according to the kinds of industries in which their members worked. These trade divisions and conferences coordinated organizing campaigns and provided a new level of oversight on local leaders by keeping track of what proportion of their local's industry had been organized. Local leaders who failed to measure up faced the possibility that the national leadership might impose a trusteeship and oust them from office.

The size of the bargaining unit in the trucking industry also steadily grew. Beginning in the upper Midwest, Hoffa worked to bring all of the trucking locals into one national bargaining unit that would sign onto a national master freight agreement with the trucking industry. He achieved that goal in 1964, thus further integrating local unions into a national structure.

These changes created a more effective union administration, but at the cost of decreased local autonomy and by extension decreased union democracy.

The IBT could mount nationwide organizing campaigns that succeeded against stubborn corporate opponents like Montgomery Ward and Company. But areawide bargaining usurped the independent role traditionally played by local leaders in dealing with their local employers. It also left local leaders opposed to the national administration open to a new range of repercussions, including adverse grievance rulings against their membership at the conference level by grievance boards now dominated by the national leadership.

The relentless pressure to organize however also meant that the IBT was relatively open in this era to minorities and women as members. From its earliest years, the teamsters had welcomed African-American members. Historically the union had followed regional customs by having segregated locals in the South and mostly integrated locals in the North. Blacks served as local union officials and attended the union conventions as voting delegates. When racial tensions surfaced during the Chicago teamsters' strike of 1905, the union's leadership admonished white members to remember the valued role played by black teamsters in their union. By the 1930s, Tobin claimed that the IBT had more black members than any other union, and African-Americans probably made up about one-seventh of the membership. Without making a formal announcement, the union's southern locals were integrated in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Similar to other biracial unions in this era however, the teamsters allowed a range of discriminatory practices to continue, especially at the local level. Many local unions, especially in local delivery and long-haul trucking jurisdictions, excluded African-American members or kept them out of the better jobs. Although about 200 thousand blacks belonged to the IBT by the 1950s, no blacks held office at the national level until the 1970s.

A similar pattern holds true regarding women's membership in the IBT. The union's broadened jurisdiction had resulted in female members as early as the 1930s, and they steadily grew in number in the 1940s and 1950s. By the 1960s, the union estimated that about 80,000 women belonged to the IBT out of a total union membership at the time of 1.7 million. The national leadership promised women equal treatment within the union. But while these women gained a range of benefits from their membership, it remained true that local leaders worked to keep them out of certain jobs and abetted employer practices that resulted in lower pay for women workers.

The IBT had become by the 1950s a diverse union whose 1.5 million members worked in a range of industries from various kinds of light manufacturing,

food processing, and warehousing to the organization's more traditional jurisdiction in the trucking industry. Especially in trucking the union brought significant wage benefits to its membership. By 1956, 85% of all local truck drivers were part of a welfare plan through their job, and 50% of them had pension benefits. The IBT was known for its aggressive bargaining and tenacious organizing.

In the late 1950s, the IBT also once again became the center of controversy that stemmed from allegations of corruption. The McClellan Committee (1957–1959) held hearings that publicized charges of malfeasance against Dave Beck, and in the wake of the controversy that resulted, he chose not to run for re-election. The committee mounted a major effort to end Hoffa's career in a similar way but without success. Although it publicized his ties to organized crime figures and it highlighted his tolerance and even support for corrupt local leaders, Hoffa won election to the union presidency in 1957. The AFL-CIO cited the charges against him and the union's unwillingness to oust him as justification for expelling the IBT in 1957. Despite the outside pressures, Hoffa retained a firm grip on his office even after he was sent to jail on mail fraud and witness tampering charges in 1967. As with earlier waves of controversy, corruption charges in this era combined legitimate criticism with politically motivated hyperbole. Hoffa did have ties to organized crime; he did abet corruption at the local level; and he allowed the misuse of one of the union's largest benefit funds. But anti-union forces also depicted Hoffa and the teamsters' power as a threat to national security in an effort to justify new restrictions on union-organizing efforts.

Recent History

In an effort to gain parole, Hoffa resigned from the teamsters' presidency in 1971, and he was succeeded by Frank Fitzsimmons. Released from jail in 1971, Hoffa disappeared in 1975. He is generally believed to have been murdered in an effort by organized crime to block him from re-assuming the teamsters' presidency. This widely accepted explanation reflects the degree to which allegations of organized crime influence in the union continued after Hoffa's fall from power. Evidence indicates that his successors, Frank Fitzsimmons (president, 1971–1981), Roy Williams (president, 1981–1983), and Jackie Presser (president, 1983–1988), each had strong connections to organized crime figures. Efforts by reform groups, most notably Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), to

challenge these leaders proved unsuccessful. Insurgents enjoyed relatively few victories at the local level and thus had few delegates at the IBT conventions, where the national union leaders were elected. By the 1980s, the federal government had decided to intervene. The Justice Department cited organized crime's influence over the union to support a Civil RICO suit in 1988 calling for a court-imposed trusteeship over the union. A settlement reached on the eve of trial in 1989, led to a court-monitored consent decree that allowed a range of different types of government oversight.

This continuing oversight brought a measure of change to the IBT. Government-monitored direct elections held in 1991 led to the election of Ron Carey, a self-proclaimed reformer who received support from TDU. But Carey's effort to win re-election 5 years later was marred by a scandal involving the use of union funds to support his re-election campaign. The IBT's internal review board, created by the 1989 consent decree, removed Carey from office, and another election was held in 1998. This time James P. Hoffa, the son of James R. Hoffa, won in a victory that was widely seen as a defeat for the reformers. Supported by most of the union's long-time corps of officials, Hoffa has sought to end the government oversight on the grounds that it is no longer necessary.

These recent contests involving corruption and reform have taken place in the midst of dramatic shifts in the political and economic context facing the union. In 1979, Congress passed legislation deregulating the trucking industry, and the result was a 50% decline in the rate of union organization in the trucking industry. The union's membership fell from a peak of about two million in the mid-1970s to roughly 1.5 million by the year 2000. A political climate favorable to anti-union forces has undercut efforts to recoup membership losses with new organizing campaigns in the trucking industry. The existence of this large, unorganized segment in the trucking industry constrains the union's collective-bargaining position, but it remains true that teamster drivers enjoy better wages and working conditions than their nonunion counterparts. Those conditions in turn influence wages in the nonunion sector, where firms have to make their wages competitive in order to stave off organizing efforts. In this way the union continues to wield much influence in its key jurisdiction.

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See also Beck, David; Chicago Teamsters Strike of 1905; Fitzsimmons, Frank E.; Hoffa, James P; Hoffa, James R; McClellan Committee Hearings; Organized Crime; Presser, Jackie; Racketeering and RICO

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)

Origins and Early Years

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was born in London, between November 29 and December 6, 1949. Founding American affiliates included the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and the United Mineworkers of America (UMW). Fifty-nine labor union centers from 53 countries representing more than 48 million members attended.

The ICFTU was a "dual union" center. It was a spin-off from the existing World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), founded in 1945 as the

labor counterpart to the United Nations' Organization and successor to the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) founded in 1913. The CIO and most other major labor union centers had been enthusiastic early members of the WFTU. Its continuation of the broad alliance against Hitler and Japanese militarism during World War II meant that such Communist labor centers as the All-Union Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions were also members. The AFL steadfastly refused to work with Communists under any circumstances and thus never joined the WFTU, working instead to undermine the organization.

The WFTU became a major site of conflict in the emerging Cold War in the late 1940s. Outside the organization, the AFL's Free Trade Union Committee and U.S. government agencies fought to deny WFTU representation in major international bodies like the International Labor Organization and United Nations; the AFL and other agencies also sought to influence individual national labor centers in France and Italy and the re-emergent labor unions in Allied occupation areas of Germany and Austria. Inside the organization, sharpening international tensions led to growing opposition to WFTU Secretary-General Benoît Frachon who, although not formally a Communist, was considered to be acting as one through his opposition to the Marshall Plan, among other important international issues. After a shift in the internal balance of power during 1948 and 1949, the CIO was ready to join the British Trades' Union Congress (TUC) and other northwestern European labor centers in abandoning the WFTU to found a rival organization.

From the first, like other international organizations, the ICFTU, headquartered in Brussels, was an organization housing differing and often-competing constituents. The relationship between the ICFTU and European labor unions on the one side and the AFL (AFL-CIO after 1955) on the other was stormy. From the mid-1950s, relations between colonial and ex-colonial labor movements and the Europeans who led the ICFTU became increasingly tense. Much of the dissension was fueled by very close ties between national labor centers and their own governments, which pursued their foreign policies through international bodies.

The first secretary-general of the ICFTU was J. H. Oldenbroeck of the Netherlands, a veteran anti-Communist and leader of the powerful International Transport Workers' Federation. During World War II he had worked closely with the AFL and Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a forerunner of the CIA. Under Oldenbroeck, the organization of the ICFTU developed, as did its independence from AFL influence.

American Labor and the ICFTU during the 1950s and 1960s

Almost from the beginning, George Meany, president of the AFL (then AFL-CIO), regarded the ICFTU as insufficiently militant when it came to communism. For their part ICFTU leaders like Oldenbroeck lived in an environment where the strong presence of Communists was a reality. They disdained American missionary zeal on the issue. Friction quickly developed. The AFL refused to contribute funds to the organization. The Americans felt slighted by the ICFTU leadership. They slammed what they considered the ponderous approach of the European leaders in building a network of regional labor organizations to lead the fight against communism. Dominated by the AFL, in the Western Hemisphere the first regional section of the ICFTU was founded in 1951, the Organización Regional Interamericana del Trabajadores (ORIT). The AFL also refused to end its independent international activities, a move that led to more independent activities by the TUC. The resulting funding crisis meant the ICFTU was hamstrung. Strong U.S. anticolonial attitudes ran counter to the conservative colonial outlook of British, French, and Belgian unions. In 1951, existing difficulties were increased when Victor Tewson of the TUC was elected president of the ICFTU in contravention of an unwritten agreement that the organization should be led by representatives of the smaller affiliates to avoid struggles between the more powerful members. The personal rivalry of Meany and President Walter Reuther of the CIO was reflected in the support given by the CIO to Oldenbroeck and Tewson.

The merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955 meant a more united American approach to the ICFTU and to a temporary deal. The AFL-CIO agreed to renew its financial obligations to the ICFTU, channel its international work through the organization, and enlarge its secretariat. The 1955 Vienna Congress of the ICFTU accepted these proposals and in return promised that no affiliates would establish contacts with Communists. A new, powerful director of organization was to be appointed to provide a counterweight to Oldenbroeck. The job proved so politically sensitive it took a year to find a suitable candidate for the position. Charles Millard, Canadian director of the United Steelworkers of America was a compromise candidate. Millard was placed in an impossible position, caught between the efforts of the Americans and Europeans to dominate the ICFTU. With morale at ICFTU headquarters low due to Oldenbroeck's personal style of leadership (he did not like to share responsibility), the AFL-CIO once again withheld its

financial commitments. Independent AFL-CIO activity in Africa after 1957 led to clashes with the British. By 1959, the ICFTU had upset the Americans, the British, and the Africans. It failed to develop a sound regional structure for the continent; omitted to consult Africans in instituting a training school; appointed the British union official Albert Hammerton as African regional director, a person previously criticized by Africans for his colonialist positions; and proved unable to respond to AFL-CIO pressure for a greater American presence to counter growing neutralist and Communist movements. The upshot was a vigorous American-led move to force the resignation of Oldenbroeck and the entire ICFTU leadership.

Despite the replacement of Oldenbroeck by the American-backed Omer Becu in 1960, relations between the AFL-CIO and the ICFTU improved little. The establishment of AFRO, the African Regional Organization of the ICFTU that same year was hardly a giant step forward. It was followed a year later by the establishment of the All-Africa Trade Union Federation and an intensified struggle within and among African labor unions over disaffiliation from any outside organizations. Eventually most left the ICFTU.

By 1965, George Meany had had enough. He demanded a full accounting of all monies donated to the ICFTU's solidarity fund and refused further funds until all unspent monies were returned and accounted for. Financial mismanagement of ICFTU monies in Africa was real. By 1968, when Reuther's United Automobile Workers (UAW) withdrew from the AFL-CIO, in part over foreign policy issues, the crunch arrived. Before withdrawing, Reuther and the ICFTU held talks concerning the application of the UAW for membership. The AFL-CIO was not informed, though Meany was subsequently told and asked not to oppose the application. Regarding this as interference in the internal affairs of a national affiliate, Meany requested the application be rejected, then took the AFL-CIO out of the ICFTU in 1969. Other reasons included condemnations of the United States over the war in Vietnam, supported by the AFL-CIO, and greater fraternization of the Europeans with Communist neighbors. The AFL-CIO remained affiliated with ORIT and increased its dominance. Throughout the 1960s, the AFL-CIO increased its activities independent of the ICFTU. In 1963, the American Institute for Free Labor Democracy (AIFLD) was founded as a partnership of the AFL-CIO, multinational U.S. corporations, and the U.S. government. In 1965, the African American Labor Center (AALC) was set up to oversee operations in Africa, and in 1968, as the Vietnam War entered its most severe phase, the Asian American Free Labor Institute (AIFLI) was

established, both with heavy U.S. government financial support.

The End of the Cold War and the Evolution of the ICFTU

Only in 1982, after the death of Meany, did the AFL-CIO rejoin the ICFTU. The move was part of a major reconsideration of AFL-CIO foreign policy. By that time the ICFTU had sharpened its positions on human rights—for free labor, against slave labor, for women's rights, against child labor, for freedom of association, for workers' rights as a fundamental guarantee of human rights more generally. It was also focusing ever more tightly on the challenges posed by globalization. From the early 1980s, these were also issues of increasing concern for the AFL-CIO. Such concerns led to a much greater ICFTU effort in developing nations. In 1984, the final regional organization, the Asian and Pacific Regional Organization (APRO) was established. Working both through the major international organizations and on the ground, a remarkable transformation was enacted. Working together and separately, the AFL-CIO and ICFTU supported the independent Polish labor movement *Solidarnosc* in its efforts to represent the interests of working people outside government control and in campaigns for human rights in Chile, South Africa, and Turkey, among others.

As the Cold War ended in 1989 and 1990, the ICFTU was in a good position to consolidate its position as the most representative trade union organization in the world. By 1999, as the other world labor union federations—the WFTU and the formerly Christian World Confederation of Labor (WCL)—stagnated or declined in membership, the ICFTU grew to approximately 124 million members in 213 national trade union centers in 143 countries. Moreover by 1999, the ratio of members in developing countries to those in developed countries had risen dramatically to reach 48% of the total.

One of the central tensions in the ICFTU remained the North-South divide between industrialized and developing nations. The bureaucratic leadership of the ICFTU lagged behind the improving balance in membership and was challenged to integrate the concerns and struggles of workers from quite different environments. The ICFTU responses to issues of foreign debt, reform of multilateral institutions, international cooperation and free trade, and the liberalization of foreign investment were all challenged by leaders of workers of the South as bureaucratically rather than democratically determined and

insufficiently sensitive to southern perspectives. Tensions led to the increased autonomy of the regional organizations after 1996. Reforms of ORIT in particular became models for calls to reform the ICFTU itself in a more decentralized direction.

By 2004, the ICFTU had grown to 234 affiliates in 152 countries with a combined membership of 148 million. It worked closely with the European Trade Union Confederation, the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (TUAC) and had deepened its historical working relationship with the International Trade Secretariats now renamed Global Union Federations (international groupings of national labor unions in a single trade). At its eighteenth world congress in December 2004 in Miyazaki, Japan, resolutions were passed for reforms that included a move toward unification with the WCL and tightening the relationship between the regional organizations and ICFTU headquarters to promote cohesive and concerted global action. Evidence of U.S. participation in the ICFTU can be seen in the fact that AFL-CIO President John Sweeney served that year as president of the TUAC and on the steering committee and executive board of the ICFTU, while AFL-CIO Executive Vice-President Linda Chavez-Thompson was president of ORIT.

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See also American Federation of Labor; American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Meany, George; Reuther, Walter

INTERNATIONAL FISHERMEN AND ALLIED WORKERS OF AMERICA

The International Fishermen and Allied Workers of America (IFAWA), a Congress of International Organizations (CIO) affiliate, represented fishing industry workers on the Pacific Coast of the United States in the years during and after World War II. The IFAWA focused on the protection of fishers' incomes and access to the fishery resource. While initially enjoying great organizational success, the union nevertheless became the target of successive attacks by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) through the 1940s, which interpreted contractual demands for minimum fish prices as collusion to fix prices and restrain trade. These legal setbacks eventually forced IFAWA to reinvent itself as the Fisheries' and Allied Workers' Division of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) in 1949. Along with the ILWU, the fishers were expelled from the CIO for alleged political affiliations later that year. The division was moribund by the mid-1950s.

The IFAWA emerged in 1937-1938, after a half-century of relatively isolated union action by Pacific fishers, with the affiliation of six smaller, regionally focused fishers' unions with the CIO. One year later these regional affiliates joined with several directly affiliated unions to create IFAWA, headquartered in Seattle. Nevertheless given its diverse parentage and the geographical specificity of each local's organizational and natural resource concerns, the union constitution allowed for considerable local autonomy, and the organization remained highly decentralized.

Like many other unions, IFAWA grew throughout World War II. At its peak in 1946, IFAWA membership exceeded 22,000, and the FTC declared that the "Pacific North West fishing industry is one of the most highly unionized industries of the country." Locals operated in every major fishing port on the coast, from Bristol Bay in western Alaska to San Diego, and members participated in virtually every commercially significant Pacific fishery—crab, salmon, sardine, tuna, herring, and halibut, for example—with the full range of commercial gear: Trawl, long-line, purse-seine, and gill net, among others.

Three groups comprised the greater part of IFAWA's membership: Company fishers, fisher-boat owners, and shares' fishers. Company fishers fished with boats and gear owned by fish processors or

“operators” and were paid a share of their catch. This arrangement was more common in more geographically isolated fisheries. Fisher-boat owners, or independents, owned or leased their boats and gear and sold their catch to operators by weight or piece. Shares’ fishers crewed independent boats and were paid a share of the sale price of the catch, commonly after some agreed-on deduction for the cost of boat and gear maintenance. A proportionally less-significant fourth group, shore workers employed by the operators, performed a variety of jobs in the plants and on the docks.

Joe Jurich led IFAWA from its inception and remained president until the merger with the ILWU a decade later. Jurich’s dynamism notwithstanding, the major organizing and strategic work was done at the local level in the face of challenges specific to fishery or locality. For example IFAWA’s heated battles with the Seaman’s International Union (SIU-AFL) in the early 1940s over participation in the Monterey sardine fishery was managed by Local 33, based in San Pedro, California, not by the international. Rather the international’s principal organizational role was the representation of the union in three critical arenas: (1) To the membership, primarily through the publication of the union newspaper, the *International Fisherman and Allied Worker*, and the organization of fishery-specific coastwise conferences; (2) to state and federal fisheries managers through the conduct and publication of scientific research; and (3) before federal trade and labor regulators, the FTC in particular, in hearings and before the courts.

It is these latter two activities, and their institutional and ecological contexts, that make the history of IFAWA of particular interest. First the union’s organizational form—a loosely coordinated set of virtually autonomous locals across thousands of miles of coast—reflected the ecological dimensions of the resource on which the membership depended. Not only would inconsistent pricing across regions undercut the power of all locals, but the mobility of the fish stocks, and the consequent risk of nonlocal risks to stock sustainability simultaneously encouraged vast geographical coverage and a commitment to local autonomy. The international’s commitment to fisheries’ science and population research was a logical result of these same pressures.

Second and most significantly in the union’s history, the great majority of the international’s attention—and that of powerful locals like San Pedro, San Francisco (Local 34), and Astoria, Oregon (Local 50), among others—was absorbed by the efforts of the FTC’s antitrust division to indict the union under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The indictments, which began as soon as the union was organized in

1939, and continued unabated throughout the life of IFAWA and the ILWU fishers’ division, were founded on the assertion that IFAWA’s members were “independent contractors,” engaged in the sale of commodities to processors. As such all efforts to set minimum fish prices constituted illegal price discrimination. Fishers’ refusal to fish, a fishing strike, or “tie-up” was configured as restraint of trade.

The IFAWA, usually represented by Jurich and the union’s California representative, Jeff Kibre, asserted that fishers were employees in everything but name. In the face of operator monopsony, the debt relations in which most fishers were involved with processors, and the perishability of fish that prevented the search for the highest price, even independent fishers were merely delivering fish to operators for what IFAWA called a “wage price.” They argued that conflicts with processors were not the matter of the Sherman Act, but constituted labor disputes under the Norris-LaGuardia Act.

In the early 1940s, the legal interpretations of these conflicts varied: Despite the support, the FTC position from the Supreme Court in its decision in *Columbia River Packers Association v. Hinton*, the National War Labor Board generally recognized IFAWA’s appeals for wage adjustments. By 1946, however, the courts had become far less sympathetic, and a series of defeats—especially in the Second Circuit’s decision in *Local 36 of International Fishermen and Allied Workers of America v. United States*—created significant organizational instability, marked most notably by the secession of the membership-rich Alaska Fishermen’s Union. The union never recovered; further indictments followed precedent, and locals collapsed or disaffiliated. The effort to save the union by joining the ILWU was further hampered by the disintegration of the CIO, and by 1957, even the Fisheries’ and Allied Workers’ Division was basically no more than a file folder.

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See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations; International Longshoremen's Association; Pacific Northwest; Sherman Anti-Trust Act**

INTERNATIONAL FUR AND LEATHER WORKERS' UNION

The International Fur and Leather Workers' Union (IFLWU) was the most left-wing of the Congress of International Organization's (CIO's) unions. The union was established in 1939, when the International Fur Workers' Union (IFWU), with its heavily Jewish—and smaller Greek—membership, merged with the recently created National Leather Workers' Association after a CIO-inspired industrial union campaign. The former organization itself was born of an earlier alliance, when eight American Federation of Labor (AFL) unions representing the various crafts of the fur trade joined together in 1913 to form the IFWU.

The 14,000-member IFWU was continually plagued by internal corruption, autocratic leaders, and constant factional battles. In the New York fur district, the industry's largest and most important center, organized crime soon managed to infiltrate the union, reaching accommodating arrangements with various employers. A radical group, led by Russian-born, New York Joint Board Chairman Ben Gold, an open Communist prominent within the national Communist party (CPUSA), began a concerted effort to regulate the industry and purge the union of all vestiges of criminal control. In a 4-month strike starting in February of 1926—waged mainly for a five-day, 40-hour week—Gold and his supporters challenged the district's employers and their organized crime supporters within the union. The strike ended in an unstable success and was followed the following year by yet another strike—mainly to enforce the settlement reached after the previous year's conflagration. Gold was not able to totally rid the union of corruption and was forced to wage a decade-long struggle against his right-wing enemies within the leadership of the international union—and the AFL. The Executive Council of the AFL and AFL President

William Green soon targeted Gold, appointing a special committee charged with ridding the New York City joint board of its Communist leadership. Faced with such concerted opposition, Gold lost his position as head of the joint board in 1928 but continued to lead the left-wing opposition group of the union, and then worked with the Trade Union Educational League and the Trade Union Unity League over the next few years to develop an industrial union, the Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union, which would bring skilled and unskilled workers together in one expansive working-class organization. For the ensuing 7 years, unionization in the fur industry was sharply divided and chaotic. It was not until the spring of 1935, when the temper of trade unionism began to shift further to the left when the Communist party abandoned its "third-period" line and began once again to oppose dual unionism and emphasize unity and when rank-and-file workers had had enough of their organized-crime-tainted leadership that Gold returned and worked his way back into leadership of the IFWU. He was subsequently elected international president of the union in May of 1937. Soon afterward he took the IFWU out of the AFL and into the recently established CIO. In early 1938, Gold led the entire union in a successful strike that achieved wage increases and seasonal job security (the fur industry was a highly seasonal industry). Perhaps most important the strike finally unified the fur workers, forcing managers to sign an industrywide collective-bargaining agreement.

With the fur workers finally unified and the industry firmly organized, the new CIO-affiliated union shifted its focus to the leather trades and began cultivating an alliance with the National Leather Workers' Association, established by the CIO in 1937. In 1939, both the leather workers and the fur workers voted affirmatively for merging their two organizations and soon afterward established the IFLWU. The new industrial union immediately turned to organizing hitherto unorganized leather workers—in Pennsylvania, upstate New York, New England, and in the shops of the Midwest, close to the stockyards of Chicago.

During World War II, following the uncomfortable 1939–1941 alliance between Germany and the Soviet Union, codified in the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the union, like other left-led CIO unions, took on a hyperpatriotic stance and limited militant and radical action. It adopted a no-strike pledge for the duration of the war and accommodated to working out its demands through the War Labor Board. But the post-war era brought another turn. The IFLWU began to distance itself from the mainstream of the CIO. On

foreign policy and domestic political issues, the union became an outspoken critic of the Truman administration. By 1948, Gold and his supporters turned away from the Democratic party and gave their support to Henry Wallace, former vice-president, who ran a full-employment, propeace, anti-Cold War campaign. The divergent path treaded by Gold and his union ultimately led to a fratricidal ideological battle within the CIO, finally culminating in the expulsion of the IFLWU in 1950, along with 10 other left-led unions.

Expulsion could be survived, but the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 became Gold's and the union's Achilles' heel. In 1953, Gold was accused of perjury for signing a non-Communist Taft-Hartley Affidavit and was forced to resign as president of the union. He had publicly announced his withdrawal from the CPUSA in August of 1950 in order to sign the required non-Communist oath, required of all labor leaders under Section 9(h) of the act in order to gain for their unions the recognition and protections of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). A federal grand jury however determined that Gold had indeed perjured himself and was still involved in Communist party affairs and business; in April of 1954, he was sentenced to serve 1–3 years for violation of two counts of the Taft-Hartley Act. Though the Supreme Court would reverse Gold's conviction in January of 1958 because of FBI pressure on jury members and the government would ultimately drop its prosecution of the case, the immediate aftermath of the decision deeply harmed the union. As a result of Gold's 1954 conviction, in the summer of 1954, the IFLWU formally lost all NLRB protections.

In reality however many employers, like the Endicott Johnson Corporation—a large shoe and leather-manufacturing firm located in the southern tier of New York—and the various tannery mills in Fulton County, New York, had already taken advantage of the union's red reputation and vulnerability. They ceased negotiating with union representatives as early as 1947, even before the Taft-Hartley Bill had been signed, counting on favorable NLRB rulings against Communist-led locals.

Besides being targeted by employers and the government, from 1950–1955, the disaffiliated, independent union faced constant attempts throughout the country by CIO and AFL competitive unions to pick away at its membership. Finally in 1955, after much negotiation, a weakened IFLWU merged with the Amalgamated Butchers and Meat Cutters of North America. One of the conditions of that merger, set by George Meany, then president of the AFL (which was soon to merge with the CIO), and by Patrick E.

Gorman, secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated, was the permanent removal of Gold from any leadership position in the union and the general “decommunization” of the union. Gold returned to the shops as a fur worker; his three decades of union leadership had ended.

In spite of the expulsion of Gold and many of his fellow Communist supporters in the IFLWU, the now-merged fur and leather division of the Amalgamated—the Joint Board Fur, Leather and Machine Workers' Union—persisted in following a progressive, left-wing track; it remained a radical voice and force within the AFL-CIO and the American labor movement. The union participated actively in the various civil rights and peace movements of the late 1950s–1970s, particularly under the leadership of Henry Foner, who had joined the IFLWU in 1948 as educational director. In 1961, following the death of Sam Burt, then president of the joint board, Foner was elevated to the presidency of the union and retained that position till his retirement in 1988—taking the union through yet another merger. Under the strain of a shrinking labor movement in the final decades of the twentieth century, the Amalgamated and its constituent unions began to explore mergers with other unions. In 1979, it joined with the Retail Clerks' International Union (RCIU), founded in 1888, to form the United Food and Commercial Workers' union (UFCW). The UFCW now has a membership of approximately 1.4 million workers.

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INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE

The International Labor Defense (ILD) was founded in Chicago on June 23, 1925. Closely associated with the Workers' party (which later became the American Communist Party) from its inception, the ILD satisfied V. I. Lenin's classic definition of a mass organization, one that was nominally non-Communist but firmly guided by the leadership of the party. In this way, Lenin theorized, non-Communists could gradually be drawn into the Communist orbit. The ILD was largely the brainchild of James P. Cannon, a leader of the Workers' party during the early 1920s when the American Communist movement was often split by bitter factional disputes. Cannon maintained that it had been inspired by a 1925 meeting in the Soviet Union with "Big Bill" Haywood, the leader of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) who had been indicted under the Sedition Act for his opposition to the involvement of the United States in World War I, jumped bail, and fled into exile in the Soviet Union. Convinced of the need for a legal defense organization that would defend activists in the labor movement and provide aid and assistance for their families, Cannon worked tirelessly to bring the organization into being. His efforts led to his election as national secretary at the 1925 meeting, a position he maintained until 1928, when he was expelled from the Communist party for his Trotskyite views.

For the ILD legal and political defenses were inextricably intertwined. It was firmly wed to the belief that legal strategies and tactics were in themselves inadequate to defend working-class people from a court system that was designed to represent the interests of the ruling classes. Although the ILD committed itself to securing the services of the most skilled, experienced, and politically adept lawyers it could find, it boldly linked its courtroom battles with sustained efforts at mass mobilization: Demonstrations, mass meetings, fund-raising events, petition drives, and telegrams and letters to established authorities. Moreover the ILD relied on its extensive network of international mass organizations, such as International Red Aid (known by its Russian initials MOPR) to mobilize international public opinion around its causes. These were the tactics the ILD pursued and fine tuned over the course of its existence.

Shortly after its emergence, the ILD plunged into the defense efforts mounted on behalf of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, joining with liberals, radical anarchists, workers, immigrants, and people of conscience in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to save their lives. By 1928, shortly before his expulsion, Cannon reported that the ILD had organized numerous new branches across the country; laid the basis

for the defense campaigns of nationally known labor martyrs Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, as well as the Centralia, Washington, IWW workers; sponsored national tours on "revolution and counterrevolution in China" and "Polish fascism"; and dramatically increased the circulation of its magazine *Labor Defender*.

Cannon was replaced as national secretary by J. Louis Engdahl during a period that coincided with the 1928 Sixth Congress of the Communist International's (Comintern's) elevation of the Negro question as a central priority of the international Communist movement. The "black belt" of the South was named as the source of African-American oppression, the "black peasantry" as potential allies of the revolutionary working class. The Communist party shifted considerable effort and resources to organizing in the South; the ILD maintained a watchful eye for cases that captured these interests. One of the most important cases of this kind was the infamous Scottsboro case of 1931: Nine unemployed young black men were dragged off a freight train in Scottsboro, Alabama, and accused of raping two white women who, like them, were "hoboing" in search of jobs in Depression era America. Successfully wresting the defense of the Scottsboro boys from the hands of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the ILD aggressively waged a campaign throughout the 1930s that transformed it into a cause that generated international attention, led to two major Supreme Court decisions, and successfully derailed the sustained attempts of the State of Alabama to execute the Scottsboro defendants. The ILD also played a central role in bringing public attention to bear on the case of Angelo Herndon, an African-American Communist party organizer arrested in Atlanta, Georgia, in July 1932, for leading a biracial demonstration and indicted on a charge of incitement to insurrection—a law that carried a maximum penalty of death. Cases such as these, as well as the ascendancy of an African-American attorney to the position of national secretary after J. Louis Engdahl's death in late 1932, played a decisive role in bringing the ILD and the Communist party to the attention of the black community during the 1930s.

As a mass organization, the ILD from the beginning sought out reputable non-Communists to serve on its national executive board, but Communist party leadership ran the organization. In 1937, however, during the "popular-front" period, the ILD was re-organized; Vito Marcantonio, the radical congressman from East Harlem was named president; Anna Damon, a party member, became national secretary.

After the outbreak of World War II, the ILD's influence began to wane. By the end of the war, its status as a distinct organization had come to an end. It merged with the National Negro Congress and the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties to form the Civil Rights Congress, an organization that continued the struggle for civil rights and liberties into the mid-1950s.

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See also **Civil Rights Congress; Communist Party; Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Industrial Workers of the World; Mooney, Tom; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; National Negro Congress; Sacco and Vanzetti; Scottsboro Case**

INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION (ILGWU) (1900–1995)

The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) was founded as the principal representative of workers in the women's and children's sectors of the apparel industry in June 1900 at the Labor Lyceum, 64 East Fourth Street, New York, New York. Representatives of the Cloakmakers' Protective Union of Philadelphia, United Cloak Pressers of Philadelphia, Cloakmakers' Union of Baltimore, United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers of New York and Vicinity, Newark Cloakmakers' Union, and the Shirtmakers' Union of New York formed the ILGWU. Centered in New York, the union's mission was to improve wages and working conditions in women's and children's garment factories in the United States and Canada. At its founding the ILGWU affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

As the end of the nineteenth-century drew near, the manufacture of clothing in the United States shifted from small artisan shops, individual homes, and immigrant-occupied tenements of urban industrial areas, such as New York's Lower East Side, to a growing number of factories. Though the roots of

factory-based apparel making can be traced to the 1840s, several factors spawned its expansion at century's end. The advent of the foot-powered sewing machine in 1846 and the mechanical cutting knife in 1876, along with the introduction of steam power by the 1880s, meant that large quantities of fabric could be made into finished clothing with greater efficiency. New technology transformed and enhanced production and resulted in more division of labor to meet growing consumer demand for ready-made clothing. Advances in transporting raw materials to manufacturers and finished goods to consumers opened new markets. Work-ready immigrants in urban areas contributed to the industry's growth as the nineteenth century drew to close.

In 1880, the typical New York garment-making establishment was owned by a German Jewish clothing retailer who employed small numbers of people. Most of the workers who made clothing for women and children—the focus of this study—were female. In the years to follow, tens of thousands of Jews emigrated from Russia and Eastern Europe in flight from pogroms, religious persecution, and political discrimination. Many possessed skills as tailors and seamstresses and entered the women's clothing industry *en masse* to be joined by Italian immigrants. By the dawn of the twentieth century, immigration significantly impacted U.S. apparel making.

Many workers were employed in so-called "inside shops" owned by a manufacturer who purchased raw materials, planned production, and hired immigrant labor to cut, sew, press, and finish fabric into consumer products. The manufacturer arranged for their sale in the marketplace. The main branches of the women's apparel industry included dresses, cloaks and suits, corsets and brassieres, undergarments, neckwear, rainwear, and infants' and children's wear. Although some large factories emerged in East Coast cities most garment-making establishments remained relatively small: The average factory employed about 30 people in 1899. Women's apparel making expanded to cities from coast to coast—including Cleveland, Chicago, St. Louis, Los Angeles, and San Francisco—but Manhattan remained a prime locale throughout the twentieth century.

Unionization began in the same city in 1879. The Knights of Labor established a short-lived workers' association that was superseded in 1883 by the Dress and Cloak Makers' Union and the Gotham Knife Cutters' Association of New York and Vicinity. Unions were also formed in Toledo, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. Worker-led protests of poor wages, long hours, and working conditions were common. The cloak trade workforce in New York struck in August 1885 demanding higher wages and shorter workdays.



Sweatshop of Mr. Goldstein 30 Suffolk St. Witness Mrs. L. Hosford. Location: New York, New York. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, National Child Labor Committee Collection [LC-DIG-nclc-04455].

In 1886, workers struck to protest contracting to small nonunion producers who paid pittance wages. The following year 30 walkouts were reported in the New York area over similar issues. Numerous garment strikes hit New York and Philadelphia in 1888 as workers demanded improved working conditions and higher wages. Disputes typically were settled with limited concessions to workers.

By the 1890s, the socialist United Hebrew Trades created the Operators' and Cloak Makers' Union No. 1 in Manhattan with affiliates in Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. After a major strike in New York in the spring of 1890, employers recognized the union. By the end of the year, the Operators' and Cloak Makers' Union No. 1 reported a membership of 7,000. However by 1892, the union was in disarray.

The tumultuous drive for unionization continued in 1892 with the formation of the International Cloak Makers' Union of America, headquartered in New York, where Barondess managed its metropolitan branch. The union had affiliates in Boston, Baltimore, Chicago, and Philadelphia and joined the AFL. The new union also set out to organize men's tailors and clothing makers, the traditional domain of the more conservative AFL-affiliated United Garment Workers' Union.

Over the next few years the pattern of union formation and dissolution in women's apparel continued, as did infighting between socialists, anarchists, and

moderates. In June 1900, representatives from the several apparel unions met at Manhattan's Labor Lyceum to resolve cantankerous relations between workers and manufacturers. The conclave resulted in the formation of the ILGWU.

The union set out to organize workers, raise their wages, and win recognition. Garment manufacturers—in part to avoid the ILGWU and its demands for higher wages and better working conditions—expanded a practice that had its roots in the nineteenth century: Contracting to outside shops. Under this arrangement manufacturers and jobbers purchased fabrics, designed new styles, then contracted for the making of the garments. Small, highly competitive contractors bid on the orders, paying low wages and demanding long hours from employees. With its notoriously low wages and poor working conditions, contracting gave rise to the industrial sweatshop so often associated with garment making on Manhattan's Lower East Side. The system threatened unionization. Two significant strikes and a tragic fire brought public recognition to the struggles of garment workers and the ILGWU.

In 1909, 20,000 shirtwaist makers went on strike against New York employers. With support of the Women's Trade Union League, workers protested unsafe working conditions, low wages, long hours, and the imposition of employer-imposed taxes for electricity, sewing needles, and chairs. The ILGWU's shirtwaist makers affiliate, Local 25, spearheaded the

strike, dubbed the “uprising of twenty thousand.” Over 600 workers were affected. When the strike was settled, about half of the employers agreed to a 52-hour workweek, eliminated discrimination against hiring union members, ended all employer-charged taxes, and provided four annual paid holidays.

The uprising was followed in 1910 by the “great revolt” of 60,000 New York cloak makers. Worker grievances were similar to those prevalent in the uprising. Employers responded to the strike by forming the Cloak, Suit, and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Association and issuing public statements claiming that workers were treated fairly. Louis Brandeis, Boston lawyer and later U.S. Supreme Court justice, mediated a settlement of the dispute by creating the historic protocol of peace.

While the protocol was in its infancy, tragedy struck at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in March 1911. Located at New York's Washington Square, Triangle employed hundreds in a cramped, unsafe, multiple-story building where workers logged days of 12 hours or more. On March 25, 1911, during the daytime shift, a fire began on the middle floors of the building. Fueled by an abundance of cloth and other material, flames quickly spread. Frantic workers screamed for help and gasped for air from upper-story windows as flames billowed around. Rather than succumb to the inferno, some leapt from heights of eight stories. Sixty-two jumped to their end on the sidewalk below. Others died in the inferno bringing total fatalities to 146.

Strikes and the Triangle tragedy set the stage for Brandeis's labor-management relations experiment. The protocol of peace established several important precedents by creating a Committee of Grievances and a Board of Arbitration to mediate and arbitrate employer-union disputes and worker grievances, a Joint Board of Sanitary Control to oversee factory and employee health and safety, and a preferential union shop in which employer-hiring practices were limited to union members. The protocol was among early mediation attempts in U.S. labor-management relations. Within a few years its status was jeopardized by contracting.

The union expanded in other eastern cities, such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston, and by the end of World War I, had a membership of about 100 thousand. During the following decade, internal power struggles between Communists, socialists, and moderates nearly destroyed the ILGWU. In 1920, William Z. Foster formed the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL) to coordinate the work of leftist activists in the American labor movement. The TUEL policy advocated class struggle, international unification of industrial workers, mass organization

across industries, creation of a labor party, recognition of the Soviet state, and destruction of capitalism. Communists—led by Louis Hyman of the cloak makers and Charles (Sasha) Zimmerman of the dress-makers—expanded their influence in ILGWU affiliates and by 1924, elected a majority on the executive boards of key New York Locals 9 and 22. The ILGWU President Morris Sigman—a socialist who rejected Communist dogma—expelled TUEL supporters.

Conflict between radical and moderate forces peaked with a Communist-led strike in early 1926. Nearly 40,000 New York-based cloak makers walked off the job in protest over employer contracting to small nonunion factories outside of the New York area. The shutdown lasted 28 weeks at a total cost to the ILGWU treasury of \$3 million. Sigman encouraged strike-weary, hungry, and penniless workers to affiliate with the union's more moderate influences. Most workers came back to the ILGWU, and Sigman successfully negotiated a contract with the employers that however lacked significant restrictions on contracting. Meanwhile Communists aligned themselves with the new Trade Union Unity League. In the needle trades disenchanted leftists joined the Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union. Not all Communists followed this path. Hyman and Zimmerman rejected the move and remained with the ILGWU, becoming stalwart anti-Stalinists.

In 1928, Benjamin Schlesinger once again assumed the ILGWU's presidency (he had served in the post on two previous occasions: 1903–1904 and 1914–1923). David Dubinsky, the head of Local 10 representing garment cutters, assumed the post of secretary-treasurer. By the time of their ascendancy, the Communists had been expelled from ILGWU locals. Yet their actions and the impact of the 1926 strike endured. The union was bankrupt. Membership dwindled to 60,000, while New York members were threatened by unemployment and underemployment as the practice of contracting to nonunion factories expanded.

At its 1922 convention union delegates voted to levy a 4-dollar per-capita assessment to form the Eastern Out-of-Town Organizing Department to organize contractors that were sprouting in areas removed from the city. By the mid-1920s, the department enlisted 2,500 members organized in 29 locals in New Jersey, Connecticut, and on Long Island.

By the time Dubinsky assumed the presidency of the ILGWU in 1932, the union's future appeared grim. The Great Depression had caused a significant industrial slowdown; the union's membership dwindled to fewer than 25,000; and its financial situation remained precarious. Out-of-town shops had grown

to a problem of major proportion. As the nation's economy stalled, competition among jobbers put tremendous pressure on contractors who were played against one another for even the smallest margins. Contractors responded by ignoring union agreements, paying below market wages, breaking the union altogether, and seeking the cheapest labor possible by fleeing to remote areas.

By the 1930s, the union expanded its definition of out-of-town to include a territory covering a one-hundred-plus mile radius from Manhattan, where it estimated that over 25,000 workers were employed in a virtual "sweatshop swamp." A 1933 general dress strike brought some organizing success, increased wages, and shortened hours, but problems remained as contractors continued to seek lower cost production. Pennsylvania's anthracite coal region and in particular its northernmost reaches around Wilkes-Barre and Scranton—which contained high-population concentrations and afforded relatively easy access to metropolitan markets—were prime locales for contractors who produced dresses and children's clothing for New York jobbers.

As the contracting system expanded during the 1920s and 1930s, out-of-town shops received nearly all of their work from New York jobbers. By 1937, nearly one-third of all cotton dresses sold in the eastern United States were manufactured in contract shops as was about 50% of all children's apparel.

The effect of low-cost competition from contractors impacted the New York dress industry as jobs were siphoned away. The ILGWU reported that, from 1946–1956, its membership declined by over 10,000 as a direct result of jobs going to lower-wage nonunion shops in Pennsylvania. The trend would continue well into the 1950s and 1960s as manufacturers moved production to the American South where the ILGWU would follow with organizing drives. By the late 1970s, and for the remainder of the twentieth century, apparel production shifted to Central and South America, Asia, and Pacific Rim nations. The ILGWU's membership dwindled to fewer than 200 thousand by the century's end.

Despite the union's peaks and valleys, throughout its history the ILGWU has been recognized as one of the foremost U.S. labor organizations, committed to social unionism, education of its members, and political activism. The ILGWU became the first American labor union to establish a health care center for its members in Manhattan in the early twentieth century. By the 1950s, union health care centers were established in nearly every major metropolitan area in the Northeast as well as in remote reaches where the apparel industry had spawned, such as Easton,

Pennsylvania, and locales in the American South. The ILGWU also established cultural and social institutions that served ILGWU members needs. These included a New York-based union leadership school; a "labor stage" for worker-based performing arts; a union-run vacation and education resort, Unity House, in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania; and a union-owned radio station.

The ILGWU also constructed housing for member retirees in New York and was among the first unions successfully to negotiate health, welfare, and vacation funds in contracts with employers in the 1940s. The union nurtured its own chorus that conducted live musical performances in a variety of venues ranging from community fundraisers to political rallies and campaigns. And it implemented workers' education programs throughout its districts and locals to enlighten worker members on issues ranging from workplace health and safety to politics and political activism. The union was routinely active in voter registration drives and regularly endorsed and advocated for prolabor political candidates and incumbents, usually Democrats. Finally the ILGWU was at the forefront of an active national union label campaign from the 1960s to the mid-1980s to educate and encourage American consumers on the value of purchasing products made in the United States. Though it did not succeed in the long run, the union label campaign gained national acclaim as organized labor fought overseas imports of products ranging from apparel to electronics and children's toys.

In 1995, the ILGWU merged with the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (ACTWU) to create UNITE! or Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees. The merger accompanied a 10 million-dollar campaign to organize domestic and overseas apparel workers in collaboration with the international labor movement. To assert such control, the new union turned to familiar practices reflective of its educational and political traditions.

The UNITE! members also took part in and supported massive protests targeted at the World Trade Organization's (WTO) third annual ministerial conference held in Seattle, Washington, in late 1999. In one of the largest (and most violent) protests of its kind, scores of protestors disrupted trade talks and demanded improved labor standards in developing economies and a greater voice for workers in trade agreements. Environmental, human, and labor rights' issues were the central focus of those concerned about negative repercussions of international free trade policy. Despite the perception of weakened clout

and credibility, the WTO protests defined the labor movement's militancy in the arena of international trade, as did its spring 2000 opposition to the U.S. Government's move to normalize trade relations with the People's Republic of China in which UNITE! played an oppositionist role due in large part to workplace conditions in the Asian nation. In a related move UNITE! supported student-led antisweatshop campaigns to stop colleges and universities from selling apparel made with sweated labor. Student-inspired organizations, such as the United Students against Sweatshops, collaborated with the union and the Workers' Rights Organization.

On July 8, 2004, UNITE! merged with the Hotel Employees' and Restaurant Employees' International Union (HERE) to form UNITE HERE. The union represents more than 450,000 active members and more than 400,000 retirees throughout North America. The UNITE HERE is largely comprised of immigrants, including a high percentage of African-American, Latino, and Asian-American workers. The majority of UNITE HERE members are women.

In July 2005, UNITE HERE joined with three other labor unions—the Service Employees' International Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and United Food and Commercial Workers—in boycotting the national AFL-CIO convention held in Chicago. The four unions comprise the Change to Win Coalition and have openly defied and challenged AFL-CIO policy and traditions and call for greater effort in grassroots organizing.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Working-Class Feminism**

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) is one of the American Federation of Labor's (AFL's) oldest trade unions. Established in Chicago in 1892, the ILA would eventually expand its geographical base from the Midwest lake district to the Pacific Coast, the Gulf, and finally the Atlantic coastline. There had been numerous attempts to organize longshoremen beginning in the early nineteenth century. Most attempts were destroyed by economic conditions or employer intransigence. The economic and financial panics of the 1870s and 1880s did much to stall union organization. The Knights of Labor successfully organized New York's longshoremen, but a strike in 1889 witnessed a total destruction of the Knights' power. Contributing to this defeat was the use of Italian strikebreakers, and by the end of the nineteenth century, Italians dominated dock work in Brooklyn, Staten Island, and New Jersey.

In the Midwest and gulf ports, the story was different however. As early as 1877, tugboat worker Daniel Keefe had established a longshoremen's local in Chicago. He cautiously began to nurture locals in other midwestern ports. His perseverance paid off when longshoremen in Detroit and Cleveland and others agreed to use Keefe's Chicago local as a template. Because Keefe had also organized some Canadian locals, the title of the new organization would be the International Longshoremen's Association. By 1905, it appeared that the ILA's cautious approach was paying dividends. It had organized 100,000 longshoremen; 50,000 were from Great Lakes' ports, but New York remained as yet unorganized. Other ports of ILA strength were concentrated in the Gulf. Galveston, Mobile, and New Orleans were particular centers of union strength. Keefe's conservatism (he had close personal links with U.S. Senator Mark Hanna and the National Civic Federation) isolated him from many of the ILA locals. This was particularly the case with the Gulf longshoremen. These longshoremen fought bitter and violent battles against shippers and stevedores. Accustomed to fighting aggressively for advances, these longshoremen were wary of Keefe's cautious approach. In 1908, a stunned membership learned that Keefe had resigned. Taking his place was another Great Lakes ILA leader, T. V. O'Connor.

O'Connor appeared just as cautious as Keefe although relations with the AFL stood on happier ground. But O'Connor refused to support other maritime workers. In the Great Lakes region seamen had asked for support during a 1908 strike. O'Connor refused the plea leaving in his wake a hostile union



Longshoremen loading cargo onto a ship at Port Authority Piers, Furman St., Brooklyn, New York/World Journal Tribune photo by Matthew Black. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection, [LC-USZ62-124237].

movement. Just as important the seamen lost the strike and personally blamed O'Connor and the ILA for their defeat. For all the lack of support for other maritime unions, the ILA's membership expansion continued apace. In 1911, there were over 307 locals. The majority were still in the Great Lakes region, but expansion had reached further into Canada, Puerto Rico, and the Atlantic ports of Baltimore, Philadelphia, Hampton Roads, and Norfolk, Virginia. The West remained a weak spot though. Although ILA locals were evident in San Diego, San Francisco, Oregon, and Washington, they held tenuous power and at times left the ILA fold accusing it of conservatism or acting like a company union.

Southern locals continued their strong showing. Just as dynamic these locals practiced a form of biracial unionism whereby black and white longshoremen were members together. Gulf longshoremen were unique in that they actively practiced a form of enlightened race relations. Although separated into white and black locals, white longshoremen recognized that accommodation to African-American dockworkers was a strategic necessity. Operating in a Jim Crow milieu, the New Orleans longshoremen paradoxically worked together to form a vibrant and successful alliance. Unlike longshoremen in the northern and

midwestern ports, these longshoremen in New Orleans built a biracial labor movement that could actively resist employer power.

New York City, the largest port in the nation in terms of cargo handled and number of longshoremen, was still relatively unorganized. Stalling ILA efforts was the Longshoremen's Union Protective Association (LUPA). By 1912, the ILA had to share the spoils with the LUPA. Such dual unionism hampered a united front and left the majority of New York and New Jersey longshoremen unorganized. O'Connor dispatched organizers into the port and aggressively began organizing ILA locals. A district council was formed to represent the locals throughout the port. Such tactics bore fruit when the members of the LUPA either agreed to join the ILA or were simply absorbed. By 1914, the ILA had at last gained an impressive foothold. Such success was replicated in Boston and Baltimore. Philadelphia longshoremen however aligned themselves with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Nonetheless the ILA was at last becoming a truly national organization. Encouraging such growth was a sympathetic federal government. President Woodrow Wilson's administration had done much to encourage trade union growth generally. The establishment of the Department of

Labor and the passage of the Clayton Anti-Trust Act made clear the shift toward more supportive government of trade union growth.

The organization of the New York longshoremen was beset with difficulties however. The giant port and its relatively large number of longshoremen, numbering approximately 30,000, were considered a very attractive prize by some union officials. The strong localism of the union made for unstable situations at times. The ethnic and racial character of the workforce added another layer to this traditional localism. Longshoremen locals tended to operate around specific piers. Such concentration was ethnically and race-based. On the west side of Manhattan, the Irish dominated the piers by the West Village, Chelsea, and Hells' Kitchen. In Brooklyn Italians controlled most of the locals, but in others there was a smattering of African-American and Scandinavian control. In New Jersey the mix was even more diverse with Italian, Czech, Polish, and Irish ethnics laboring. By the early 1920s, these same groups dominated the hiring process, thus preventing competition from so-called outsiders. In fact it merely confirmed a racial and ethnic hierarchy.

This hierarchy was no more evident than in Manhattan. Irish control of the more lucrative passenger terminals ensured a clear dominance in the port and in the union. Centered in this area was Local 791, known also as the "mother local." It was one of the largest and more militant of the union locals. It tended to lead the way in setting standards of work and wage demands. From Local 791 would come a future leader of the ILA, Joe Ryan. Ryan had moved through Local 791 to become the voice of the New York District Council.

But Ryan had to bide his time because once O'Connor stepped down from the presidency in 1921, he was replaced by another Great Lakes union official, Anthony Chlopek. Chlopek tried to continue the ILA goal of expansion but lacked the centralizing power to drive a nationwide campaign. Indeed the power had been transferred to the district and local levels, just as problematic employer offensives on the West Coast and at Gulf ports had rolled the union back. The ILA was now concentrated on the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Coast. The ILA barely hung on, and Chlopek retired a mere 6 years later in 1927.

For Joe Ryan his time had come to assume the presidency. He had made a name for himself by earlier supporting O'Connor and ridding New York of separatist tendencies. His presidency also represented a fundamental shift of power. The Great Lakes region, while obviously still important, could not compare in terms of numbers to the Atlantic Coast locals. As the major Atlantic ports were organized, a critical

shift had taken place; consequently the center of power now resided in New York.

Joe Ryan would become a highly controversial figure. He became one of the longest ruling presidents, being in power from 1927 to 1954. His actions or nonaction with regard to criminal control of some New York locals would tarnish his image and that of the ILA. While at the helm, union locals in Brooklyn, Staten Island, Jersey City, and a smattering on the east and west sides of Manhattan became controlled by criminal elements. Notorious Italian and Irish gangsters used union locals as fiefdoms to control rackets, shake down employers and longshoremen, and organize theft on a large scale. To some extent the criminal infiltration on New York's waterfront coincided with Ryan's rule. When asked about the large number of ILA officials who had police records, Ryan merely responded that he was helping felons with an opportunity to go straight. Ryan also charged that Communist encroachment on the piers needed to be confronted with aggressive means. Indeed throughout his tenure as president, Ryan was always more concerned about Communist activity than that of criminal loading rackets.

The Port of New York's reputation for widespread criminal activity ensured that other regional districts were not pleased by the domination by New Yorkers of the ILA hierarchy. This resentment or alienation was no more apparent than with the West Coast longshoremen's revolt from the ILA. Since World War I, West Coast longshoremen had lacked a fighting organization and were forced to work with a company union. In 1934, these longshoremen rebelled against the arbitrary power of employers. A series of bloody street battles in San Francisco followed, resulting in deaths of two longshoremen. The ILA, and in particular, Joe Ryan, attempted to rein in the West Coast men urging that they remain patient and wait for the right moment to confront employers. The men rejected such overtures and instead formed a new union, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). Led by Australian-born Harry Bridges, the ILWU was to become a permanent feature along the West Coast. The ILA had thus lost a significant membership section and would never regain its power on the West Coast.

Just as problematic, the ILA was facing a revolt within its ranks on the Atlantic Coast. Fed up with poor wages and working conditions, New York's rank-and-file were ripe for rebellion. Pete Panto, an Italian-American longshoreman from Brooklyn, helped create an organized opposition to the ILA hierarchy. In 1939, Panto was addressing meetings of thousands of Brooklyn's longshoremen. Panto was trusted by the men because he was one of them, a rank-and-file

longshoreman. For the ILA leaders in Brooklyn, Panto's challenge was deemed a serious affront. Making the situation dangerous was that most of the Brooklyn union locals were controlled by mobsters linked to organized crime. Panto was warned to shut up and stop agitating against the established ILA leadership, but the momentum of the oppositional movement continued. In 1939, however, Panto went missing. Some union officials argued that his disappearance was a ruse to garner sympathy. His supporters believed that something more sinister was afoot. Chalk messages were written along the waterfront and in Brooklyn Heights asking, "Where is Pete Panto?" With Panto gone, the movement he had headed disintegrated. The message had clearly been sent; do not challenge the Brooklyn ILA leadership.

Not until after World War II was Panto's body discovered in a mob-run cemetery in New Jersey. He had been strangled and dumped in a lime pit. It was subsequently revealed that Panto had been murdered by members of Murder Inc. Murder Inc. was a notorious hit squad for the New York mob. The leading member was Albert Anastasia, whose brother, Tony Anastasia was the leader of the Brooklyn ILA. In response to Panto's disappearance, police officials did a short investigation, and the Brooklyn District Attorney asked Ryan to clear up the mob-dominated Brooklyn waterfront. Ryan agreed, but 20 years later in the 1950s, the same mob-related officials were still in power of most of the Brooklyn docks.

Panto's disappearance had a chilling effect on the insurgency. Lacking a respected leader, New York's longshoremen once again adopted a posture of grudgingly accepting their lot. Following Pearl Harbor and the entry of the United States into World War II, the ILA longshoremen were further defenseless in opposing the speed-up on the Atlantic Ocean docks. Sling loads increased, and the rhythm of work intensified. The only escape for many of the longshoremen was to leave the respective waterfronts for other jobs or enter the military. Indeed large numbers of Brooklyn and Manhattan longshoremen joined the armed forces. For those remaining, they experienced a dramatic deterioration of working conditions, including an almost absence of safety regulations on the job.

Once the war ended, the ILA confronted an angry and frustrated rank-and-file. Adding to the volatile mix were returning veterans who were no longer just going to accept the status quo. The spark for the revolt was a wage agreement negotiated by Ryan in 1945. Members of mother Local 791 walked off the job and were quickly joined by others throughout the port. Within days the port was shut down. For

the first time, there appeared to be an organized opposition to the ILA leadership. Ryan responded by using redbaiting tactics when he blamed Communists for fomenting the trouble. True there was some Communist involvement, but it was peripheral at best. The charge was a potent one however. Those insurgent leaders who did emerge were quickly isolated and then violently attacked. William E. Warren and Sal Barone, for example, were viciously beaten, thrown out of the ILA, and told to stay away from the docks.

Such intimidation, although effective in the preceding case, could not forestall opposition to the ILA leadership. By 1948, returning veterans had transformed the political climate. These men had experienced death and destruction on a grand scale. Just as vital they had developed a distinct resentment of authority, whether military or union officialdom. Communist agitators were also active on the docks, particularly in Brooklyn. Trouble quickly followed another wage agreement that Ryan had negotiated. Again it was Local 791 that led the walkout. Local 791's leader, Gene Sampson, initially took charge of the revolt. Within days not only was the port of New York closed, but also ports in Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. The rebellion had therefore spread to other ports. Ryan repeated his charge that Communists were spreading dissension and attempting to disrupt a "fine agreement." Such an accusation fell on deaf ears. Even the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was unimpressed with Ryan's accusation. In Brooklyn though, Communist influence was prevalent in the insurgency's leaders. Paul O'Dwyer, the brother of New York City Mayor William O'Dwyer, and Vincent Longhi, were both Communist sympathizers and helped create an oppositional organization. Such action was fraught with danger because gangsters were close by and could have easily attacked the organization.

The ILA was forced to renew negotiations. This time the ILA negotiated a larger wage increase and welfare fund. With such a turnaround, the opposition felt emboldened, and with the help of labor priests, they began organizing. In 1951, the situation was rife for change. Ryan had again negotiated a wage increase that was rejected by the rank-and-file. Correspondingly another wildcat strike broke out in New York and along the Atlantic coastline. Ryan's charge of Communist conspiracy rang hollow. The strike lasted for 11 days, resulting in a wage increase above that of Ryan's agreement. The strike also caught the attention of officials in New York. Governor Thomas Dewey unleashed an investigation of the ILA and its affiliated New York locals. What followed was a sensational series of hearings where a slew of ILA

officials were cross-examined. Ultimately the hearings proved that the ILA was replete not only with criminal elements, but also members of organized crime.

The findings of widespread criminal infiltration forced the AFL to kick the ILA out of the established movement. The AFL created a rival union, the International Brotherhood of Longshoremen and a series of National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) elections were held. Each time however the New York men voted for the ILA. The ILA was eventually allowed back into the AFL after it promised to clean up the union. But the ILA has continued to be investigated for its criminal activities. Even as recently as the 1990s, a series of arrests of ILA officials highlighted the continuing involvement of criminal groups in the union.

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INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION

One of the oldest and most successful trade unions in North America, the evolution and history of the International Typographical Union (ITU) reflected the strengths and weaknesses of American craft unionism.

Origins

Printers established some of the earliest trade unions in North America in response to trends that unfolded through the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During these years, even before mechanization, the division of labor eroded the importance of the long apprenticeships and training. This introduced “two-thirds” and “half-way” journeymen, as well as young boys into the shops and allowed employers radically to expand the size of the workplace. The process degraded the value of skilled labor, reduced wages, and simply throttled the kind of

mobility typified by the success of Benjamin Franklin in colonial days.

Journeymen in the craft began negotiating for better wages and working conditions as early as 1778, going on strike by 1786, and forming their own organizations in Philadelphia and New York by the 1790s, and in Boston, Albany, Baltimore, and Washington by 1815. That year also saw the first discussions begin about the need to establish a common wage scale for the northeastern seaboard.

Early efforts at national organization followed. In 1836, representatives from half-a-dozen locals formed a National Typographical Association, which reconvened in 1837. During these same years, there were also locals in at least 16 other communities as well as a Canadian society. In 1844, printers on the East Coast had a short-lived Order of Faust, apparently a fraternal organization named for the mythical, historical figure whose efforts created the craft.

The National Typographical Union

Near the middle of the nineteenth century, technological innovations converged to transform the craft. Early in the century, techniques of stereotyping allowed casts of forms for an entire page to be made and stored indefinitely. At about the same time, papermakers learned how to produce continuous rolls of paper, and steam-powered presses began to mechanize the process. In the 1840s, the Hoe rotary press combined these innovations in a way that made large-scale factory productions viable. The larger newspapers in New York and Philadelphia built massive new structures to house the gigantic new presses, the demands of which employed unprecedented numbers of workers, laboring by shift.

Journeymen working in these new concerns, together with others in less technologically developed smaller shops, held national conventions in 1850 and 1851 before organizing the National Typographical Union (NTU) on May 3, 1852. The NTU convened annually but had very little power over local organizations. It used its moral influence to attempt resolution of the varying standards among the locals for how to deal with wage scales, negotiations, and scabs. For example the NTU gradually drew New York’s Co-operative Printer’s Union representing job printers into its own No. 6, mostly newspaper printers.

The NTU could not overcome the different scale and orientation of the locals largely because local conditions were hardly similar in the craft as in the wider society. As this came to a head, the NTU

postponed its 1861 convention, and the organization largely imploded under the impact of the Civil War. Still the wartime inflation and prosperity inspired new and larger reorganizations even as hard-pressed employers introduced women into the industry. By 1867, the NTU's own reconstruction involved renewed efforts to extend its power in relation to those of subordinate bodies and locals. In many respects the latter would long retain power.

Reconstruction of the union posed questions that came to a head at the 1869 convention. Although the NTU left whether or not to admit black members to the locals, many of which remained white-only, it decided 10 years later to require all locals to accept transfers of membership regardless of race. So, too, the NTU grappled with the question of the women who had entered the industry, opting for a distinct women's local in some cases. At the same time, the admission of Canadian locals transformed the NTU into the ITU.

Heyday: Shaping an American Craft Unionism

Locals organized within specific workplaces or chapels. In a craft where apprenticeship survived in such a state as not to provide many of the essential skills, the ITU became an arbiter of those skills. This suited the larger and more successful employers as well as the union, so the ITU gained much more control over the hiring and firing of workers than most American unions. This included control over the list of unemployed members who could substitute for the regularly employed, although a standardized ITU control over the sublist took until 1890. This went beyond the workplace as well because members "tramping" from job to job could replace their regular dues card with a traveling card that would be honored by all unions and therefore their employers.

Before the ITU assumed that authority, a series of secret societies within the union assumed that function. The Brotherhood of the Union, an antebellum forerunner of the Knights of Labor likely entered the union through the New York merger in the 1850s. Through the 1870s, it sought to secure the employment of the most committed unionists by taking control over hiring and firing in many chapels. This paradoxically established the foundations for cliquish privilege and corruption. After an ongoing battle at the conventions from 1880 to 1896, the ITU took on this authority and specifically placed the activities of the brotherhood beyond the bonds of acceptance.

Nevertheless as late as 1912, a secret society known as the Wahnetas had assumed the same functions as the brotherhood.

The only way the ITU could supersede what the Wahnetas or the brotherhood had done was to take control itself over the sublist and related issues. By the turn of the century, the progressives battled "administrationists" to do so, creating a unique two-party system within a North American union. (By the late 1920s, the independents would replace administrationists.)

Progressive Policy

From the 1880s into the 1920s, the ITU introduced a number of noteworthy innovations during this period. When the new Linotype machine finally allowed type to be set from a keyboard in the 1880s, union printers did not resist the machine but made it their own. Through rigorous training, they made sure that the overwhelming majority of Linotypes in use by 1915 were operated by unionists.

Insofar as the Linotype increased the exposure of printers to lead fumes, it afflicted many members with the printers' disease, tuberculosis. Given the ITU's long-standing interest in alimony and benefits, it opened a sanitarium in Colorado for treatment of the disease in 1892. Other reforms were even more directly associated with the wider ideology of progressive reform.

Printers had always preferred means other than strikes to impose their decisions. If a conflict became intense enough to inspire a work stoppage, other ITU locals might or might not respond with financial support. During the great strike wave of the 1880s though, the ITU began to put together a common defense fund to support the increasingly larger and more expensive local strikes. This forced the ITU to assume considerable control over job actions and encouraged collective bargaining and arbitration with employers. The approach reached its peak success during the First World War with the 1917–1922 arbitration agreement providing a legal alternative to litigation whereby both parties agree to submit their respective positions to a third party who would arbitrate or negotiate a resolution satisfactory to both sides.

In addition to arbitration, the ITU took up the idea of the referendum, which came to be used systematically to resolve questions in the union after 1889, and eventually used the referendum for its regular governance.

Organizing the Unorganized: The Congress of Industrial Organizations

From its inception the ITU functioned alongside other craft unions like that of the pressmen and lithographers. The Amalgamated Lithographers of America (1886) formed independently of the ITU, but the very success of the latter in elevating the wages and working conditions of compositors and typesetters inspired renewed efforts of these related crafts, creating the International Printing Pressmen's Union (1889), the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders (1892), the International Stereotypers' and Electrotypers' Union (1901), and the International Photoengravers' Union (1904). It was a founding participant in the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

The ITU extended its progressive unionism to industrial organization to break with the AFL in 1935, participating in the new Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). Although this became a point of contention between the progressives and independents during the war, the ITU, like the other CIO unions, clashed with the government over National War Labor Board in 1943–1944, and after the war, Taft-Hartley Law 1947.

Postwar Demise

Despite the ITU's past adaptability, most locals and the international itself failed to adjust to the post-World War II technological and demographic changes in the industry. This proved fatal to the union's future.

After World War II, the officials who built the CIO and battled Taft-Hartley fared poorly in the climate of prosperity and anticommunism. Suburbanization and television drove a number of big-city dailies out of business. Eventually the Newspaper Preservation Act (1971) set aside earlier antitrust legislation by allowing rival publications to combine their production and delivery resources. This essentially authorized the extension of control by Gannett, Knight-Ridder, and Media General, Inc. over many urban newspapers.

The industry turned increasingly toward offset printing and photocomposition, and phototypesetting. These became commercially viable in the 1930s and became the dominant mode of printing in the 1950s. This technique conveys images to paper from rubber rollers, which pick up the ink from metal or paper plates. Dark parts of those plates repel water

and absorb ink, while light parts repel ink and absorb water. These come from a photographic image of a sheet, the text for which was entered on a typewriter keyboard instead of a Linotype. This opened the craft to new workers, particularly women with good key-boarding skills.

Although the ITU and its locals fought the introduction of *ersatz* printing into the industry, it eventually established training programs for its members. However its main strategy was to negotiate guaranteed jobs for members already employed in the industry. Contrary to its own long traditions, the ITU never took stock of the state of the craft, much less opened itself to organization of the unorganized.

Unionism in the Computer Age

Computers transformed the craft entirely in the 1970s and 1980s. These made possible digital typesetting, while word-processing software and the quick-printing industry created an explosion in small-press publishing. Although at the center of this rapidly growing industry, ITU membership actually fell from over 106,634 in 1964 to only about 38,000 working members by the mid-1980s.

The cost of making printing profitable continued to encourage the concentration of media, which pit the ITU against more powerful employers. The deregulation of the 1980s brought ownership from outside of the industry to new levels. By then the large city newspapers moved digitized technology toward plateless printing, where images could be transferred by ink jet, photographic, or quick-copy techniques. While these remain ancillary to large-scale operations like a newspaper, they are frequently used for the production of printed matter in small quantity.

All these shifts further blurred the lines between the ITU and other unions like the Newspaper Guild, the Newspaper and Graphic Communications Workers' Union, and others. On the one hand employers ruthlessly exploited the persistence of these divisions. By 1975, the production of the *Washington Post* involved so many different unions that it successfully pit them against each other to win a pressman's strike. Similar scenarios had been played out earlier in many other cities.

On the other these developments made a new approach unavoidable. Through the 1970s into the 1980s, a series of mergers brought pressmen, bookbinders, stereotypers, electrotypers, photoengravers, and lithographers into the Graphic Communications International Union. By the mid-1980s, the ITU

sought unions with which it might merge. In 1986, it folded its organization and resources into the Printing, Publishing, and Media Workers' division of the Communication Workers of America.

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INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

Founded in 1896, the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) has historically consisted of two branches of engineers: Stationary engineers and hoisting and portable engineers. In general stationary engineers operate, maintain, and repair equipment in buildings and industrial complexes, while hoisting and portable engineers operate heavy equipment used in the building and construction trades. Over the course of its history, the union has experienced its most impressive growth in the construction industry, and in the second-half of the twentieth century, the IUOE established itself as one of the strongest building trades unions in the United States.

Constituency

Five of the original six local craft unions that joined to form the IUOE in 1896 represented highly skilled stationary engineers who operated the steam engines that powered the heating and refrigeration systems in large commercial buildings (the word steam appeared in the union's title until 1927). Stationary engineers comprised a majority of the IUOE's membership until 1940, but their prestige was undermined by the decline of the steam engine. As central power plants replaced the single-building steam engine, the responsibilities of operating engineers gradually became the maintenance of central heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, and electrical systems. The stationary

branch of the IUOE responded to these challenges in the post-World War II period by launching organizing drives in such other areas as nuclear power plants, oil and chemical refineries, hospitals, and public utilities.

In contrast to their stationary counterparts as well as to other building trades unions, hoisting and portable engineers generally benefited from technological change. In fact the job did not exist before the invention of the first practical hoisting engine in 1875. And as hoisting, pumping, cement mixing, and excavating machines improved, so did the job of the hoisting and portable engineer. In 1907, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) awarded the IUOE jurisdiction over all forms of construction equipment regardless of power source, thus ensuring that the union would survive the demise of the steam engine and would win a majority of its jurisdictional battles with other unions. After the IUOE amalgamated with the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel and Dredgemen in 1927, they were poised to organize the operators of the heavy machines used in future highway and heavy construction projects, such as dams, airports, subways, pipelines, and bridges. In the post-World War II construction boom, these construction projects became the main source of employment for the IUOE and helped transform it from a financially weak organization of mostly stationary engineers into one of the most powerful unions in the building trades.

Leadership, Gains, and Conflict

Throughout its history the IUOE has remained committed to a course of business unionism, although since World War II, union leaders have exhibited flexibility in altering bargaining and organizational strategies to adjust to economic, technological, and political changes. Each general president and most international officers until 1921 were members of stationary locals, and every president since has come from the building trades division.

In the period that stationary engineers controlled the central organization, IUOE leaders focused on regulating entry to the craft and striking a workable balance between the international organization and local unions. In 1906, the IUOE began organizing lesser skilled workers into branch locals, each of which were subordinate to a parent local. In addition to serving as a substitute for a formal apprenticeship program, these branch locals also allowed the IUOE to neutralize the competition of nonunion workers for hoisting jobs, which would have undercut the union's

wage rate. The most divisive internal conflicts that erupted during this period, particularly the problem of recalcitrant locals and internal jurisdictional disputes, were gradually resolved through amalgamation and the overall growth of the union's central organization during the 1920s and 1930s.

From 1940–1975, the IUOE enjoyed its greatest period of economic growth. Operating engineers had always enjoyed certain advantages when bargaining with employers. Contractors felt that they could depend on the IUOE to supply well-trained operators, which became increasingly important as contractors increased their investments in equipment and entered labor markets where they were unfamiliar with employers. In addition since operating engineers could halt an entire construction project simply by refusing to hoist materials, contractors were inclined to maintain good relations with the union. These factors combined with the expansion in the construction of highways, airports, pipelines, and other earth-moving projects to establish unprecedented wage settlements that significantly outpaced interest rates. With many of the union's internal disputes settled and the union experiencing healthy membership and financial growth, leaders in the post-World War II period were able to concentrate on reviving its stationary branch and moving into new fields, developing safety programs, pressing for workplace health and safety legislation, restructuring its job, and organizing training programs.

The IUOE leaders have also had to respond to external challenges. In the postwar period, building trades' unions were targeted by civil rights groups and protesters for excluding minorities and women. With passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, establishment of the Job Corps program, and implementation in 1969 of the Philadelphia Plan, the federal government also began to compel building trades unions to alter their membership and apprenticeship practices. The IUOE was resistant to any form of interference with its apprenticeship and membership policies, but in 1977 the union made inclusion of minorities a priority and created a department of civil rights.

More serious challenges to the IUOE's success however have been posed by the ascendance of political conservatism in the United States, economic recession and rising unemployment in the construction industry, and an aggressive open-shop drive led by large firms that purchase the services of contractors. Although by the 1960s, the National Labor Relations Board had begun applying Taft-Hartley regulations to building trades unions and anti-union state and national legislators launched attacks against prevailing wage legislation, contractors generally continued

to prefer IUOE labor. This soon changed however as the high-wage settlements of the 1960s had the unintended effect of making contractors responsive to anti-union campaigns launched by the large firms that blamed union wage rates for high construction costs. As a result the IUOE suffered substantial membership losses and watched as many of its collective-bargaining gains were rolled back. According to the union's historians, the IUOE regrouped after its nadir in the 1980s and began a period of new growth in the 1990s.

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INTERNATIONAL WOODWORKERS OF AMERICA

The International Woodworkers of America (1937–1987) was unique among Congress of International Organizations (CIO) unions in two respects. First it was the most Canadian of international unions, with Canadians composing from 40%–60% of the union's membership throughout its history. Secondly it experienced an early internal political rift that would serve as a dress rehearsal for the conflict the labor movement experienced during the Cold War era. The history of the IWA demonstrates both the strength of the CIO's original industrial union strategy and that vision's limitations when confronted by the globalization of the economy at century's end. When the IWA finally divided into two national unions in 1987, one based in Canada and the other in the United States, the divorce demonstrated the limits of international union solidarity in this new world order.

Origins of Unionism in the Wood Products Industry

The lumber and sawmill industry had been the scene of turbulent labor unrest since the nineteenth century. This was especially the case in the Pacific Northwest,

where the industry migrated as forests in the East and Midwest were cleared by the timber industrialists of the era. The wood products industry was an extremely dangerous place to work, especially for loggers. This group, dominated by unmarried men working in remote communities, provided a particularly fertile ground for labor radicalism. Early organizing success by the Industrial Workers of the World prompted fierce interunion rivalry between labor radicals, conservative craft unions, and a significant employer-dominated company union, the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen. The vast majority of the industry's workers were unskilled, and the highly labor-intensive nature of production encouraged employers to squeeze workers with low pay and benefits. Seasonal fluctuations in product markets and chronic overcapacity led to frequent unemployment, further depressing the rural economies where logging and sawmills proliferated.

The IWA was founded in Tacoma, Washington, in July 1937, by woodworkers disaffected with the craft unionism policies of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (UBC). The Timber and Sawmill Workers' union was given jurisdiction of the industry by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the early 1930s but was never granted full membership status under the UBC constitution. Discontent exploded in the spring of 1935, when Oregon and Washington locals launched a regionwide strike. When insurgent unions (mostly in Washington State) opposed the UBC-led efforts to settle the dispute on less than acceptable terms, local leaders accused them of selling out and formed a rump Federation of Woodworkers' organization. They quickly sought affiliation with the national CIO and seceded from the UBC to form the new international union. Central to the IWA grievances were the second-rate status wood workers suffered within the UBC and the segregation of locals by craft, autocratically enforced by UBC officials. As delegates to the founding IWA convention sang, "We've gone CIO boys, we've gone CIO. The Carpenters and Joiners have always tried to corner our dough, but we'll stick together, for rank-and-file control." The IWA would be one of the most democratically structured of CIO international unions.

Canadian Influence and Disputes Over Communism

From the beginning the IWA was strongly influenced by its Canadian segment. The IWA's first president, Harold Pritchett, was a shingle weaver and member of the Canadian Communist party. He became only

the second Canadian to head a U.S.-based international union. The Canadian region of the IWA was heavily influenced by left wingers, including leadership from the Communist party-affiliated Lumber Workers' Industrial Union, which fought a bitter, 5-month strike on Vancouver Island in 1934.

The IWA was split between a red bloc led by Pritchett and a white bloc of anti-Communists with strength in the Columbia River district of the union in Oregon and Washington. Observers have noted that the IWA "got redder as you went north," and this has been a source for debate about the politics of the union. One theory is that the northern mills encouraged a more radical rank-and-file because they were larger, more mechanized, and the workers more "proletarianized." Another relevant factor was the ethnic mix of workers within the IWA's two Pacific Northwest regions. The southern part of Region 3's membership (Oregon and Northern California) tended toward Germans of Midwest farming backgrounds, while Washington and Region 1 in British Columbia had more Scandinavians, and especially Finns, who are often associated with left-wing labor activism.

Rivalry with AFL Sawmill Workers

In addition to the battle over communism, the IWA faced significant resistance organizing from the rival AFL timber union (now known as the Lumber and Sawmill Workers [LSW]). Other AFL and CIO affiliates often joined the bitter disputes between the two, as the unions sought to enforce boycotts against their rival's products. An early partner of the IWA in these battles was the newly formed International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, another left-led union, whose successful 1934 coastal strike was a watershed historical moment for many Industrial Workers of the World (IWA) members. The recession of 1938, the red/white split, and fierce competition with the (LSW) exacted a serious toll on the new union. Membership fell from 40,000 at the first convention to 20,000 in 1938. The conflict prompted CIO President Phil Murray to install one of his staff, Adolph Germer, as organizing director, leading to a final showdown between the red and white blocs.

The white bloc deposed Pritchett in 1941 after his visa to enter the United States was denied when he attempted to attend the union's convention in Portland. The events surrounding Pritchett's defeat were notable because of the active involvement of the national CIO office, a precursor to the more open internecine warfare that the CIO would experience in 1947-1950. With white-bloc candidate Worth Lowery

the new president, the left wing of the IWA retreated to British Columbia's District 3, where Harry Pritchett remained director.

Despite the ongoing political turmoil within the union, the IWA's first 15 years marked a remarkable organizing thrust that made the lumber and sawmill industry in the Pacific Northwest one of the most organized sectors in the entire North American manufacturing economy. Wartime labor policies boosted organizing, and by the late 1940s, 80% of the industry's workers were represented by a union.

Despite holding on to power in District 1, Pritchett's red bloc was seriously compromised by a fatal strategic decision made in 1948. Rather than submit to the Taft-Hartley Act's requirements to sign anti-Communist affidavits, British Columbia IWA leaders, on advice from the Canadian Communist party, took the region out of the IWA and formed an independent Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada. Shortly they faced raids from competing AFL and CIO unions, and the left-wing leadership was defeated. In 1950, the WIUC dissolved and went back into the IWA.

The IWA enjoyed great success in the 1960s and 1970s, with its membership peaking at 112,000 in 1977 as the housing boom drove a strong albeit cyclical industry. Significant strikes on both sides of the border strengthened pattern bargaining agreements in the United States and more centralized industrywide negotiations in British Columbia, where a corporate political environment encouraged government intervention in labor relations to stabilize crucial economic sectors.

Dissolution of the International Union

Despite success at the bargaining table, serious structural economic changes were at work that would undermine the strength of the IWA. Like other manufacturing industries, technological change was reducing employment drastically in wood products. Furthermore U.S.-based employers began increasingly to move operations to the South, where wages were considerably lower. Like other manufacturing unions of the era, the IWA found it difficult to organize in southern states or in the Canadian Maritimes, where a vicious anti-union campaign defeated IWA organizing efforts in Newfoundland in 1959. Finally in the late 1970s and 1980s, changing international markets for lumber would increasingly put Canadian and U.S. members at odds with each other as the United

States imposed stiff tariffs on British Columbia lumber entering the country.

The organizational watershed for the IWA occurred in the early 1980s. Employers in the United States aggressively sought concessions from unions, often using permanent striker replacements, a tactic not possible under British Columbia's labor code. Louisiana Pacific was the first to challenge the wood products' unions, breaking the IWA and the LSW in a 1983 strike and instituting wage cuts of 10%. In British Columbia the IWA successfully fought back employer concessions after waging the longest strike in provincial history in 1986. But later that year, the U.S. woodworker bargaining system came apart when the Weyerhaeuser Corporation forced concessions of \$4 per hour after threatening to replace IWA members who had been on strike for six weeks. The paths of the two regions had diverged significantly due to differences in the two national labor regimes and different strategies with regard to contract concessions.

The IWA was officially dissolved into two national unions in March 1987. Subsequent declines in membership led both unions to seek mergers with stronger organizations. The IWA-US became a division of the International Association of Machinists in 1994 and the Industrial, Wood, and Allied Workers of Canada (the renamed IWA) eventually returned to a U.S.-based union, merging with the United Steelworkers of America in 2004.

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See also Communist Party; Pacific Northwest; Taft-Hartley Act; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' ORDER

The International Workers' Order (IWO) was founded on May 30, 1930, at Cooper Union in New York City by Yiddish-speaking left-wing Jews as a mutual-aid fraternal organization. William Weiner became the first president; Reuben Saltzman, the general secretary; and Kalman Marmor, the cultural director. The IWO provided low-cost life insurance for workers as well as credit, health care, and burial benefits. The IWO promoted a socialist pro-Bolshevik ideology, and its members actively supported progressive social causes, union struggles, and minority rights. The IWO federations provided a rich social and cultural life for their working-class members with summer colonies, choirs, theater groups, marching bands, sports leagues, and orchestras as well as language schools and summer camps for children.

The IWO emerged from divisions in the Workmen's Circle or *Arbeiter* Ring organized in New York in 1892 as a national labor fraternal order, an umbrella organization that encompassed labor Zionists, Bundists, and territorialists. All had a secular approach to Jewish identity, a concern with widespread anti-Semitism, and a desire to end class exploitation. An important undertaking of the *Arbeiter* Ring was the development of *shules* (schools) for children and summer camps where Yiddish language and literature were taught from a secular socialist point of view. They also incorporated drama, music, and dance into their programs, providing opportunities for impoverished immigrant children that would otherwise have been denied to them as well as an intellectual and social world for poor Jewish immigrants.

By the early 1920s, the *Arbeiter* Ring membership was split between the linke, those who supported the Bolshevik revolution, and those who remained Social Democrats. People took their politics seriously and were passionate about their views. The vituperation was bitter, the rhetoric vitriolic, and after a number of battles in the 1920s, the Left, or those who celebrated the Russian revolution and the emergence of the U.S.S.R. withdrew from the organization and called on others to follow and "help build a real proletarian Order."

At first the *international* in the name of the new organization was an aspiration that expressed a political outlook rather than a reality. The founders stressed the common class interests of workers avoiding what they viewed as the narrow chauvinism and nationalism of existing ethnic organizations. The approach was to first of all gather together existing fraternal organizations of varying nationalities, and then to organize language sections in other language

communities. The strategy succeeded. From its beginnings as a Jewish workers' organization, it soon developed into a multi-ethnic and multiracial association. In addition to the large Jewish and English sections, there were 13 different language federations that were members by the mid-1930s, including the Hungarian Workmen's Sick, Benevolent, and Educational Federation; the Slovak Workers' Society; the Garibaldi American Fraternal Society (Italian speaking); the Polonia Society; the Ukrainian American Fraternal Union; the Rumanian American Fraternal Society; the Russian National Mutual Aid Society; the Croatian Benevolent Fraternity; the Cervantes Fraternal Society (Spanish-speaking); the Serbian-American Fraternal Society; the Carpathian-Russian Peoples' Society; the Hellenic American Brotherhood; the Czech Workers' Society; and the Finnish American Mutual Aid Society, a descendant of the Finnish Socialist Federation.

The IWO was unique in its attempt to attract blacks and ethnics into one organization and to offer insurance at the same rates to all working people regardless of race or occupation. At the time the IWO was the only organization where blacks could get insurance at the same rate as others and where people in high-risk occupations were welcome, which made the order attractive to coal miners in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. At its strongest in the 1940s, the order had a membership of 184,000. The largest ethnic group remained the Jewish section, which in 1944 became the Jewish People's Fraternal Order (JPFO). Jewish IWO members represented approximately one-third of the membership.

The leadership of the IWO were members of the Communist party, and this was reflected in IWO policy. However the majority of the rank-and-file, while favorably disposed toward the Soviet Union, were not party members, and not subject to party discipline. The structure of the organization allowed for considerable autonomy among the language groupings, which organized their own cultural and educational activities as they saw fit. The order flourished in the 1930s and 1940s, becoming the largest and most successful left-wing organization in U.S. history. A number of the language sections were part of a North American movement. For example the Jewish section had close ties with its Canadian counterpart, the Labour League, and the schools used both teachers and materials coming from New York. The Labour League in Canada became the United Jewish People's Order in 1945, which still exists.

Active in struggles to organize the CIO, IWO members engaged in campaigns for social security legislation and were very vocal in their opposition to

anti-Semitism and the rise of fascism in the 1930s. Chartered as an insurance carrier by New York State, the IWO had certified insurance licenses in 17 other states and the District of Columbia. The left-wing politics of the international order, in particular the connection between IWO leaders and the Communist party ultimately destroyed the order during the height of the Cold War. In 1947, it was named a subversive organization and placed on the attorney general's list of subversive organizations. This list, supposedly to be used to ensure employee loyalty for federal government agencies, received national publicity and became the cornerstone of the Red Scare. In 1949, a time when the anti-Communist crusade had become a national obsession in the United States, the IWO was reviewed by the Mutual and Fraternal Bureau, a regulatory body that was part of the Insurance Department of New York State.

Although it was financially healthy, and its practices conformed to the insurance regulatory laws, James B. Haley, the insurance examiner for New York State found the order's fraternal activities unpatriotic and a "moral hazard," justifying withdrawing the license and liquidating the order. The case was heard in the Supreme Court in 1953, but the decision was upheld. The state took over the IWO and its assets, and the order was destroyed. It was the first and only time that an insurance company was disbanded for its unpopular politics. These included participation in the peace movement in the postwar years, in particular supporting the Stockholm Peace Petition, which proposed outlawing nuclear war. The IWO maintained that the Cold War was a threat to world peace. The organization was critical of American foreign policy—in particular the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, and U.S. engagement in Korea. By the 1950s, internal policy was no longer considered so radical: The battles for union recognition had largely been won, and Social Security, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, public housing, and Fair Employment Practices were supported by most liberals.

After the IWO was eliminated, the Jewish section (Jewish People's Fraternal Order) reconstituted itself as the Jewish Cultural Clubs and societies. The camp, *Kinderland*, is thriving, and some of the Yiddish schools, now Sunday schools, still exist. The Canadian counterpart, the United Jewish People's Order still exists, as do the United Ukrainian Canadians. Although far smaller in numbers than previously, they represent an approach to ethnic identity that combines respect for one's heritage with the commitment to social justice.

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INTERNATIONAL WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATION ("FIRST INTERNATIONAL")

Though short-lived and considered by most of its participants a failure, the International Workingmen's Association (IWA) is famous for being the only political organization founded and led by Karl Marx. Established in London in 1864 and officially pronounced dead by 1876, in its few short years the First International brought together a cadre of organizers who represented nearly all the existing variants of radical thought and ideology of its day. While its own initiatives and schemes all came to naught, its fame steadily grew along with the international renown of Marx, and subsequent international socialist congresses claimed themselves successors to its legacy.

Initially organized by an eclectic group of English and French artisans, expatriate revolutionists, trade unionists, and democratic reformers, the association was quickly pulled toward greater ideological discipline by Marx. While disagreeing with the party's majority of reformers, Marx believed that it could be a vehicle for spreading socialist principles at a crucial time in European and American history. Marx's tremendous energy, overawing intellectual leadership, and extensive contacts, helped the organization spread widely while his efforts at purifying the IWA's ranks by purging those elements that he deemed backward—a group that included not only anarchists, but leaders of the English trade union movement, Italian nationalists, Spanish syndicalists, and Yankee socialists (as Marx called native-born American radicals)—fractured it in many directions.

The IWA burst into international prominence with the French worker's revolt known as the Paris Commune of 1871. Though Marx and other IWA leaders had had little to do with the declaration of

the commune that spring, or the events that led to its bloody suppression, a number of communard leaders declared themselves internationalists, and both governments and newspapers were quick to accuse the IWA of responsibility for it. Of course for revolutionaries and radical reformers from Moscow to Missouri, this only established the international's credentials and added to its prestige.

Founded first in the United States by German-American immigrants, many of them refugees from the European workers' rebellions of 1848, the IWA soon grew beyond the urban immigrant enclaves where it first took root. In the United States a uniquely American brand of social reform, a cross-class eclectic movement that encompassed abolition, feminism, temperance, spiritualism, communitarian socialism, and various health regimes, briefly joined forces with the competing socialist doctrines of Karl Marx. For a period of about 5 years, from 1867 to 1873, a significant number of native-born, English-speaking sections of the international had sprung up across the country, in both large cities, such as Baltimore and San Francisco, as well as in smaller places, such as Galveston, Texas; Terre Haute, Indiana; and Hammond, New York.

The U.S. IWA, for a fleeting moment in time in the early 1870s, was one big tent sheltering immigrant Marxists, communalists, anarchists, spiritualists, feminists, and land reformers, radical groups that had not been united in pursuit of a single cause since their members were joined in the abolitionist crusade against slavery. The IWA was an organization more characterized by its contradictions than its consistencies; it brought together those recognized as being the intellectual fathers of native anarchism with those credited with introducing Marxism to the United States. It enlisted both ideological atheists and the founders of American spiritualism. Among its members were trade unionists determined to preserve the privileges of the racially and gendered U.S. industrial caste system and the leading champions of the equal rights of women and minorities. Attracting both rich and poor, black and white, native and immigrant, men and women, the IWA stood at the crossroads of American society and American radicalism.

Of all the differences and potential divisions contained within the IWA, it was the deep ideological chasm between a hardening Marxist orthodoxy and the republican ideals of Yankee radicals that proved insurmountable. The diversity of individuals attracted to the IWA flew in the face of the strategy that Marx and his German American cohorts had hammered out for the United States. Marx had called for organizing a coalition of German and Irish workers who would together radicalize the American proletariat.

Such a vision of the IWA as a worker's vanguard capable of organizing and directing the fledgling U.S. industrial proletariat into a sharp tool of class struggle fared badly at recruiting American workers. Much to the chagrin of the IWA's class-conscious German American leaders, it instead found itself deluged with Yankee radicals who shared a distrust of coercive authority in any guise. By 1870, the American reform element outnumbered the socialist Germans and had a widely circulated newspaper of its own, *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*. By the fall of that year the block representing English language sections threatened to take control and democratize the IWA's American governing body, the central committee.

Yankee internationalists pursued their own broad egalitarian goals from under their new red umbrella. In New York native American reformers symbolically marched with African-American veterans in their foremost ranks. They organized black sections and railed against discrimination of all kinds in their newspapers. They nominated Victoria Woodhull and Frederick Douglass for the highest offices in the land. They worked with the National Woman Suffrage Association to secure women's franchise. From the viewpoint of the German Americans who maintained close ties to Marx in London, such actions were viewed as unscientific, idealistic, and simply wrong-headed. To them the Yankee radicals stood as the greatest obstacle to the success of their revolutionary strategy, and go they must.

In 1871, after but a year of coalition, the agents of Marxist orthodoxy in the United States became convinced that the reputation of their party among bona fide workingmen was in jeopardy because of their partner's pursuit of the moralistic and idealistic issues of women's rights, municipal ownership of utilities, and democratic reforms. In December of that year, a German American faction, led by Friedrich Sorge, expelled their fellow English-speaking radicals from the party, a move that spelled the end of the international in the United States and foreshadowed a similar schism and collapse of its parent organization in Europe. After the demise of the First International, the first U.S. Marxist movement, had destroyed itself, its so-called Yankee members continued their egalitarian and anticapitalistic crusade in a diverse array of causes, including providing leaders to such organizations as the Eight-Hour League, the Knights of Labor, and the Sovereigns of Industry.

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See also **Marx, Karl**

IRISH

Irish people immigrated to the United States nearly continuously from the seventeenth century until the present day, making the Irish one of the largest, most sustained, and most influential of the population movements that shaped the American working class. Irish Catholics began moving to the United States in large numbers around 1830, and because they arrived early, spoke English, and settled primarily in large cities, they became powerful in institutions that would earn the loyalty of many subsequent members of the urban ethnic working class, including the Catholic church, the Democratic party, and organized labor. Their influence therefore was even greater than their numbers would suggest.

Before about 1830, most Irish emigrants were members of Ireland's minority Protestant community, many of them of Scottish descent and hailing from the Northern province of Ulster. A substantial minority were Catholic, but they settled in dispersed communities, and deprived of contact with other Irish Catholics, many did not retain ethnic or religious ties. Furthermore although discriminatory legislation significantly limited Irish Catholics' political rights and economic opportunities, most Irish Catholics were reluctant to leave Ireland. The early Irish-American community therefore comprised mostly Protestants, many of whom were hostile to their Catholic co-ethnics. After Catholics began immigrating in large numbers, the Protestant and Catholic Irish-American communities remained largely distinct, with different settlement and economic patterns and separate institutions. Protestant Irish-Americans are often referred to as the "Scots-Irish" and are discussed in a separate entry.

Irish Catholics began arriving in the United States in larger numbers in the early nineteenth century. Although very small numbers of Irish men and women fled to the United States in the late eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries to escape being prosecuted by the British authorities for political offenses, the overwhelming majority of emigrants left Ireland for economic reasons. Starting in the early nineteenth century, changes in the agricultural economy made it more difficult for Irish people to support their families as farmers or farm laborers, and Ireland

was actually losing rather than gaining industrial jobs that might have offered an alternative means of earning a living. Most Irish people were reluctant to emigrate and attempted to adapt to these economic challenges, most notably by subsisting on potatoes, a high-yield crop that could feed a family on relatively little land. However to improve their prospects or to avoid slipping into the ranks of the impoverished, some Irish Catholics, especially young men from relatively prosperous backgrounds, chose to come to America. This pattern was suddenly and tragically amplified when the potato crop failed repeatedly from 1845–1850. About a million people died in the Great Famine, and another 1.8 million desperate refugees made their way to North America, with the majority eventually settling in the United States. The famine refugees were, for the most part, not among the poorest Irish agricultural workers, most of whom could not afford passage to North America. However few brought savings or supplies with them, and most had only agricultural skills, which were not in demand in eastern and midwestern urban centers in which they settled. Moreover they faced significant prejudice, both because of their religion and ethnicity. Therefore they found jobs at the bottom of the economic ladder: In factories, as common laborers, and among women, in domestic service. After the famine ended, rates of emigration remained high, and although not nearly as desperate as famine-era refugees, later Irish immigrants continued to concentrate in cities and to find jobs as unskilled or semiskilled laborers. Two aspects of postfamine Irish immigration patterns are particularly notable. First an unusually high percentage of Irish immigrants were women. By the early twentieth century, more than half of all immigrants were female, most of them young, single women who hoped to find jobs and ultimately husbands in the United States. Second although many Irish immigrants dreamed of one day returning to Ireland, the overwhelming majority remained in the United States for the rest of their lives. In this they differed from most other immigrant groups, which had substantial rates of return to their home countries. Once they settled in the United States, Irish immigrants sent money back to Ireland, supporting remaining relatives and often paying for friends' or family members' passage to the United States. If Irish-Americans were unable to return to the land of their birth, they were considerably more successful at recreating their communities in the United States.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Irish-American community was increasingly prosperous and stable. Although Irish immigrants were disproportionately likely to be unskilled laborers, many immigrants and most members of the second generation

achieved a measure of economic mobility, gaining skills and sometimes entering the lower middle class. Young immigrant women were most likely to work in factories or domestic service, but their daughters and granddaughters often found jobs as teachers or clerical workers. There was also considerable geographic diversity in the Irish-American experience: Irish-Americans found fewer avenues to economic mobility in New England cities, such as Boston, than in midwestern and western cities, such as St. Louis or San Francisco, where anti-Catholic and anti-Irish prejudices were less entrenched.

If Irish-Americans were more prosperous by the end of the nineteenth century, they also benefited from no longer being the most recent or alien-seeming immigrant group. In the late nineteenth century, new immigrants from southern and Eastern Europe began arriving in the United States. Many of them, like Irish-Americans, were Catholics from agricultural backgrounds, and many settled in the same urban centers in which Irish-Americans had lived for decades. There was of course nothing new about Irish-Americans sharing urban space with members of other ethnic groups. Most notably in the nineteenth century, the Irish often lived in close proximity to African-Americans. Irish-Americans seldom felt solidarity with their African-American neighbors, and they seem to have been anxious to distance themselves from people who were even more despised and oppressed than themselves. Irish-Americans often refused to work with African-Americans, and their hostility sometimes spilled over into mass violence, as in the 1863 Draft Riots, which included appalling instances of racial violence. This attitude however stands in marked contrast to their approach to the new immigrants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Irish-Americans may have felt superior to new immigrants, and new immigrants may have resented Irish-American power, but they nonetheless forged uneasy alliances. Irish-Americans came to act as “ethnic brokers,” helping new immigrants negotiate their relations with the dominant society. In theory the relationship between the Irish and new immigrants was mutually beneficial: New immigrants could call on Irish-Americans’ experience dealing with an often-hostile society, and Irish-American leaders gained a new constituency. In practice however, relations were sometimes much more unequal and strained. These alliances were often negotiated in institutions that the Irish did not found but in which by the late nineteenth century, they held considerable influence: The American Catholic church, labor unions, and urban political machines.

Irish Catholics began arriving in the United States during a period of profound religious change in

Ireland. Although Irish Catholics had always identified strongly with the Catholic faith, it was only in the second-half of the nineteenth century that they became especially observant. Before the famine only about one-third of all Irish Catholics attended Mass each week; by the end of the nineteenth century, weekly Mass attendance was around 90%. The number of Irish priests and nuns also increased exponentially in the nineteenth century. The American Catholic church was transformed by the influx of Irish Catholics, who placed unprecedented demands on what had previously been a small, genteel institution dominated by Maryland planters. The newly observant Irish immigrants themselves helped achieve this transformation. Out of their meager paychecks, they donated money to build churches, schools, hospitals, and orphanages; Irish and Irish-American priests and nuns provided much of the staff for these institutions. By the time new immigrants from Eastern and southern Europe began arriving in the United States, the Irish dominated the American hierarchy, and they often clashed with immigrant Catholics who wished to retain their distinctive ethnic identities and traditions. Despite these tensions Catholicism could serve as a rallying point, uniting disparate people against a seemingly hostile, Protestant-dominant culture. Moreover although Irish Catholicism was usually conservative, stressing the individual’s duty to submit to established authority, Catholic social thought also stressed that bonds of obligation were reciprocal and that employers had a duty to provide a decent standard of living for their workers. There was space in American Catholicism therefore for a labor movement, albeit usually a relatively conservative one.

Irish-Americans also became a significant force in politics, especially at the local level. Irish Catholic immigrants had considerable experience with mass politics before they ever arrived in the United States. From 1829–1847, the Irish Catholic leader Daniel O’Connell campaigned successfully to remove the last legal barriers to Catholics’ full political participation and then unsuccessfully to gain a measure of independence for Ireland. O’Connell’s strategy was to mobilize the entire Irish Catholic population, encouraging even the poorest people, who did not meet the property qualification for the vote, to donate a penny to the cause and organizing massive protests called “monster meetings” to put pressure on the British government. Before they set foot in the United States therefore, many Irish immigrants thought of themselves as political actors and of politics as a way of expressing group identity. Perhaps for this reason, Irish immigrants quickly adapted to American partisan politics, naturalizing and voting at higher rates than other nineteenth-century immigrants and for the

most part, forming a strong attachment to the Democratic party. By the early twentieth century, they had come to dominate local politics in many American cities. Irish-Americans were particularly adept at managing political machines, institutions that won the support of voters by offering them tangible, individual benefits, such as jobs. In such cities as Chicago, machines ultimately became multi-ethnic institutions, but Irish-run machines were as likely to exclude new voters, who required jobs or other costly rewards to earn their loyalty, as to encourage them to participate in the political process. When machines did incorporate new ethnic or African-American voters, they often bought their loyalty with low-status and low-paying jobs or with federal benefits that were administered by local authorities. Machines may have helped incorporate new voters into the system therefore, but they also reinforced inequality within the system. By the mid-twentieth century, most urban machines were on the decline, but Irish-Americans continued to be disproportionately powerful in local politics and increasingly to make their mark on the national scene as well, culminating with the election of John F. Kennedy to the presidency in 1960.

If Irish-Americans were unusually active in American politics, they also retained an interest in the politics of their homeland. Many Irish-Americans hoped that Ireland would become independent of Britain, although they disagreed about whether this should be done through force or by peaceful means. During periods of heightened nationalist activity in Ireland, tens of thousands of Irish-Americans joined organizations and donated money to try to achieve that goal. Irish-American nationalism was often a conservative movement, led by members of the middle-class, eschewing economic goals, and stressing the need for Irish-Americans to adhere to middle-class standards of respectability in order to prove that Irish people were capable of self-government. Some historians have suggested that middle-class Irish-Americans used nationalism to obscure class divisions within the community and unite Irish-Americans behind middle-class leadership. Yet nationalism could also reinforce working-class consciousness and introduce Irish-Americans to radical politics. In 1879, nationalists in Ireland took up the cause of land reform, attacking the landlord system and adding an economic element to the movement for Irish independence. In the United States many nationalists believed that support for land reform was merely a tactic in the larger battle for Irish independence, but a faction of Irish-American nationalists, represented by Patrick Ford's newspaper the *Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, fused nationalism, Catholicism, and demands for economic justice in both Ireland and the United States. Some

Irish-American nationalists supported Henry George's single-tax scheme, bringing them into contact with Protestant radicals whom they had previously viewed with hostility. Economic and social radicalism were always minority strains in Irish-American nationalism, but they continued to be present in the twentieth century. In the early 1920s, for instance, Chicago Federation of Labor President John Fitzpatrick founded the Labor Bureau for Irish Independence, which linked commitments to Irish nationalism, global anti-imperialism, and justice for workers.

This connection between nationalism and labor reflects the fact that the Irish were extremely well-represented in both the rank-and-file and leadership of American labor unions. Irish immigrants brought from Ireland traditions of labor protest, some of which were not suited to a modern capitalist economy. In the 1870s, the "Molly Maguires" attempted to bring premodern modes of protest to bear on the problem of industrial exploitation in Pennsylvania coalmines. Using ritualized forms of violence that were common in the Irish countryside, workers threatened and ultimately murdered mine officials in an attempt to force mine owners to fulfill what Irish peasants took to be employers' obligations to their workers. These efforts were futile, resulting only in the prosecutions of Irish-American workers, many of whom may have been innocent. Some immigrant contemporaries of the Molly Maguires had experience with British and Irish unions, and they may have been more likely than other first-generation Irish-Americans to participate in organized labor. However most Irish-American union leaders seem to have been American-born, such as Knights of Labor leader Terence Powderly, who was born in Pennsylvania in 1849, the son of Irish immigrants. Irish-Americans were so ubiquitous in the labor movement that it is hard to generalize about them: They were active in the most radical as well as the most conservative factions. It is probably safe to say however that they were more likely to be conservative than radical. Indeed some Irish-dominated unions, like some urban political machines, seemed more interested in securing benefits for their members by excluding outsiders than in forming coalitions with members of other ethnic groups or even more recent Irish immigrants. However Irish leaders could be found in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and even the IWW, as well as the more-conservative American Federation of Labor (AFL).

In the 1920s, the flow of Irish immigration slowed because of laws restricting immigration and because the Great Depression eliminated the economic opportunities that drew Irish men and women to the United States. Young Irish people continued to emigrate in

large numbers, but Britain, rather than the United States became their preferred destination. Perhaps because there were fewer recent immigrants to create a concrete bond to Ireland, the community seems to have lost some of its distinctiveness, and some scholars suggest that Irish-Americans' Catholic identity gradually supplanted their Irish affiliation. The Irish-American community was also increasingly middle-class, with rates of college graduation and white-collar employment higher than the overall population, and increasingly suburban. In the early twenty-first century, Irish-Americans no longer reliably support the Democratic party, and their voting habits look much like those of the population in general. Although the community has lost many of its distinctive characteristics, many Irish-Americans continue to be committed to their Irish identity.

In the 1980s, facing a recession in Ireland, Irish people again began to immigrate to the United States in larger numbers. They were aided in this by a visa program that favored the Irish, but many came as undocumented immigrants. Legal immigrants found jobs throughout the economy, including in professional occupations. Undocumented Irish immigrants were concentrated in such jobs as construction, restaurant work, and childcare. In recent years the Irish economy has experienced remarkable growth, and for the first time since the seventeenth century, Ireland has become an immigrant-receiving, rather than an emigrant-sending nation. Many Irish immigrants who arrived in the 1980s have decided to return to Ireland and pursue opportunities at home, something that was not possible for their earlier counterparts.

EMILY BRUNNER

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IRON

See **Steel and Iron**

IRONS, MARTIN (OCTOBER 7, 1830–1900) Knights of Labor

Martin Irons was a machinist and a Knights of Labor member who led the 1886 Southwest strike against railroad king Jay Gould's southwestern system of railways. The conflict was a pivotal event of the Great Upheaval of 1886, when Gilded Age working-class protest peaked. The walkout's defeat contributed to the decline of the knights. For Irons, who was haunted throughout his life by personal demons and tragedy, the strike brought first public recognition, and then controversy and hardship.

Irons was born on October 7, 1830, in Dundee, Scotland. His father was a sailor and sail maker, and his mother may have been a milliner. Irons was 14 when he arrived with a guardian in New York City. Six years later he began an itinerant life, moving about mostly in Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri. In 1852, he married Mary Brown, also from Scotland. He often met with unemployment, drank heavily, and was a physically abusive husband, family sources reveal. Around 1876, Irons left Richmond, Missouri, where he had settled for 6 years and returned to an itinerant life without his family.

Around 1880, Irons arrived in Sedalia, Missouri. He married again, found a job as a machinist in a Gould system shop, and met with other workers to discuss labor issues. Once a member of the Grange, the Odd Fellows, and the Ancient Order of Workingmen, Irons joined the Knights of Labor, probably in 1884. By the fall of 1885, District Assembly (DA) 101, composed of about 5,000 knights across Gould's Southwest system, had elected him their master workman and chair of the executive board.

Like many railroad workers, Irons believed that Gould was conspiring to impose wage slavery on his employees and that only the enforcement of previous agreements and the recognition of DA 101 as the collective-bargaining agent on the Gould system could prevent this. The 1886 walkout began over precisely these issues. A massive, popularly supported strike in March 1885 and the knights' threat of a national railway strike later that year had resulted in much heralded contracts that railroad managers routinely ignored. Moreover railroad management widely discriminated against knights and consistently frustrated the efforts of Irons and other leaders to gain a hearing.

The general strike on the Gould system began on March 6, 1886. At a meeting in the midst of the conflict, Irons confided to Terence Powderly, the national knights' leader, that a mystery gunslinger had forced him at gunpoint to sign the strike order. Historian Ruth

Allen has accepted Irons's account although no independent evidence supports it. More likely Irons fabricated the story in order to distance himself from a failing walkout, one that DA 101 had undertaken without consulting the national knights. By the time Irons met with Powderly, railroad officials had obtained injunctions against strikers who interfered with freight traffic, and freight traffic was resuming with the aid of strikebreakers, returning strikers, and skilled trainmen. One week later and against Powderly's instructions, Irons pushed to expand the walkout to include knights throughout the country. A sympathy strike in East St. Louis that had paralyzed railway traffic in the region encouraged him, but a bloody clash there between prostrike crowds and railroad-employed deputies brought the state militia in to protect railroad property, effectively ending the 1886 walkout.

Much of the press and public associated Irons with the sabotage, riots, intimidation, and bloodshed that marked the strike in its final phase, although clearly many knights had engaged in these tactics. Irons insisted that he had consistently urged knights against violence, but the record suggests otherwise. Whatever the case the weight of the strike's failure fell disproportionately on him. His critics charged that he had aggressively pursued a clash with Gould in order to amass power. Embittered Sedalia knights forced him to resign and leave town. Blacklisted by the railways and alone (his second wife had died during the strike of pneumonia), Irons roamed in search of better circumstances in Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas, with little luck. He escaped various legal troubles, including a child molestation charge. Still despite his infamy, Irons never tired of discussing social and economic questions and was an active member of the People's party. During the 1890s, a doctor in Bruceville, Texas, took in and befriended an ailing and impoverished Irons, who died in 1900. In the decade after his death, Eugene Debs and Mother Jones praised him, and the Missouri State Federation of Labor voted to erect a monument in Bruceville to commemorate Irons's contributions to the labor movement.

TERESA CASE

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See also **Gilded Age; Knights of Labor**

ITALIANS

Italian migrant workers have been coming to North America since the earliest European settlements—a number of Venetian glass blowers had settled in Jamestown by 1622—and during the peak years of their migration, they constituted a critical, and heavily exploited, part of this country's working class. A handful of people from the peninsula that became Italy were enumerated in the 1820 U.S. census, and by 1850, a little more than a decade before Italy was united during the *Risorgimento*, the 3,645 Italians in the census were scattered across the country. Most of these early migrants, though certainly not all, were from provinces in northern Italy. There were population concentrations in New Orleans, San Francisco, and New York; over half the Italian migrants at that point lived in the South. There were agricultural settlements as well that extended the breadth of the country in places like Texas, New Jersey, and California.

The character of this immigration changed drastically during the peak years of Italian immigration. Over 300,000 arrived during the 1880s, and in the first decade of the twentieth century, over two million made the journey. From 1880–1920, over 4.1 million Italians entered the country. Most of these migrants came from southern provinces and the island of Sicily. Most were from rural areas, though some were artisans; few had solid industrial skills, and fewer could read. They were predominantly male—men outnumbered women by about 3 to 1. Their settlement patterns in the United States changed as well. Almost 97% arrived in New York, and many decided to settle there. By 1920, 400,000 Italian migrants made New York City their homes. There were sizeable Italian populations in Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, New Orleans, and growing populations in Chicago and in smaller and medium-sized cities, like Rochester, Utica, and Kansas City. But this wave of migrants concentrated mostly in the northeastern and mid-Atlantic states and mostly in large cities in those regions.

This summary though belies the complexity of Italian migration. Italians had a history of movement throughout Europe that preceded, and overlapped with, movement to the United States. Italian workers began seeking industrial employment to supplement sparse agricultural income in the earliest stages of industrialization on the European mainland. Seasonal journeys to industrial centers in Italy, France, Germany, and Switzerland extended across oceans when steerage rates on trans-Atlantic ocean liners began to drop in the late nineteenth century. Even then Italians did not necessarily head for the United States. By 1900, two of every three Italians



Family of Italians who came from nearby towns to pick beans as day laborers. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-057686-D].

who crossed the Atlantic sought other destinations, like Argentina, Brazil, or Montenegro.

Nor was there any guarantee they were going to stay. Most Italians were determined to return home once they made enough money to buy property in Italy. Not every Italian did so, but their return migration rates were as high as any other migrant group. Calculations of these rates are undependable at best, but historians estimate that from 30% to over 50% of Italian migrants left the United States. In 1908, the peak year of their migration, more Italians actually left the country than entered it. This was the second year of an economic depression in the United States. Nonetheless the statistic is telling.

Reception

The predominance of southern Italians in this massive wave of migrants, their penchant for return migration, their concentration in large cities, and their skill levels on arrival had enormous implications for working-class Italian migrants' reception in this country. At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, large-scale migration from across southern and Eastern Europe alarmed many native-born Americans. Politicians and labor leaders

clamored for immigration restriction, and scholars in new social sciences like sociology began to characterize these new immigrants in racial terms. They considered them superior to Asians and Africans in the hierarchy of race but well below northern and western Europeans. Even in this scorned population, Italians, and especially southern Italians, were often singled out as the most contemptible. Scholarly works not only defined southern Italians as the lowest of European races, they often advised Anglo Saxons not to intermarry with them. They were considered, as one angry Italian migrant labor organizer put it, "the garbage of American social life."

Southern Italian immigrants at times experienced attitudes and treatment more similar to blacks than to other European immigrants. They were recruited to work on plantations to prod uncooperative ex-slaves. In the segregated South, they worked side-by-side with blacks, and their children often attended the same schools. Southern Italians suspected of crimes were occasionally lynched, a brutality almost exclusively endured by blacks. In the most infamous instance, 11 Italians in New Orleans were lynched in 1891. Three more were lynched in the city in 1896, and two in Tampa, Florida, in 1910.

As scorned as they were however, only the quality of their whiteness was challenged—rarely if ever the fact of it. Southern Italians may have been widely

considered inferior to other European immigrants, but they still shared the privileges and advantages that whiteness conveyed in the United States. They did not face systematic, legalized segregation. They were not only legally allowed to naturalize (the naturalization law of 1790, not altered until 1952, reserved this opportunity solely for whites), they were encouraged to do so. Nor were they denied the right to vote—they were often criticized for not voting often enough.

Work

In many ways southern Italians were like the Irish immigrants who worked as manual laborers in the antebellum years—social commentators at the end of the nineteenth century commented explicitly that they were taking jobs that had previously belonged to the Irish and that Italian migrants were assuming their desultory social status as well. Certain Italian men actively sought outdoor manual labor, and Italian migrants moved in large numbers into the construction industry. They concentrated in other areas as well, especially in the garment and textile industries. Young, Italian immigrant women worked in the latter in large numbers. Many daughters in Italian families began work outside the home early to contribute to the family income. Most left this sort of work, if not when they married, then when their first babies were born. Married Italian women frequently sought work that enabled them to remain at home, taking in boarders, doing piece work for garment shops, or assembling artificial flowers or costume jewelry, often with the assistance of their small children.

Italian immigrant workers usually found employment through one of two means. The first was through *padrones*, or labor agents, who acted as intermediaries between them and potential employers. This system, more prevalent in the nineteenth than in the twentieth century, was often profoundly exploitive. *Padrones* often worked with employers to bilk immigrants out of their labor and their pay. *Padrones* were supplanted gradually by the links of chain migration—Italians migrating from the same region, village, or even street would seek each other out, and help each other find shelter and employment.

The work that these immigrants found was often extremely dangerous. In coalmines in Pennsylvania and Arizona, in Pennsylvania steel plants, and on building sites throughout the country, for example, Italian immigrant men faced potential injury or death daily. In textile and garment factories, Italian immigrant women risked disfigurement and mortal injury

as well. In 1912, for example, a young girl testifying about unsafe conditions in textile mills showed U.S. senators how one of the machines had ripped off a piece of her scalp. The year before locked exit doors in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in New York City had doomed 146 Italian and Jewish young women when lint from the machines caught fire. The image of these women leaping to their deaths to avoid the flames would haunt the city for decades.

Organizational Life

In the face of hardship and contempt and danger, Italian immigrants organized themselves, often drawing on institutions they had created in Italy. They formed mutual benefit societies, which provided a sense of community and often insurance in case of injury and funeral benefits in case of death. These associations' members usually organized themselves along regional lines or even by specific villages. Regionalism ran deep among Italian immigrants, in part because Italy itself had only existed as a nation since 1861, and in part because resentments between northern and southern Italians were so strong. Many also drew on the solace of religious faith. Despite the dominance of the Irish in the American Catholic hierarchy and their often open contempt for Italian Catholics, religious festivals were important events in Italian neighborhoods, and many—especially women—remained faithful church goers.

But the hesitance of many Italian immigrants about church services spoke to their wariness about certain organizations. There was a deep strain of distrust for the state and the church (often seen as one and the same in Italy) especially among southern Italian immigrants. Their anticlericalism kept many away from the church even if many still saw life through the lens of the religious imagery with which they had been raised. Their experience of the state as predominantly an oppressive institution contributed to very low rates of naturalization and use of the franchise among these immigrants.

Unions and Radical Organizations

It is small wonder then that the first migrant radicals to make their presence felt in Italian immigrant communities were anarchists. Like other Italian immigrant revolutionaries, these anarchists were small in number but deeply devoted and arduous activists.

ITALIANS

As with so much of Italian immigrant life, much of this anarchist culture was rooted in Italy. The first anarchists to proselytize in Italian immigrant communities were sojourners from Italy who stayed in the country anywhere from a few weeks to a few years. They helped to develop anarchist circles, often named after Italian revolutionaries, in places like Tampa, Florida; Paterson, New Jersey; and Barre, Vermont. The most prominent of them, Luigi Galleani, also stayed the longest in the United States. Arriving in Paterson in 1902, he edited *la Questione Sociale* there before moving to Barre to join fellow immigrants from the Piedmont region in Italy who had settled there to work in the marble quarries and as sculptors. There he began the *Cronaca Sovversiva*, the most important voice of Italian immigrant anti-organizational anarchism in the United States, which reached anarchist men and women all over the country. He and his followers, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti among them, argued that a decent and dignified life for all could be achieved only by destroying existing institutions and starting over. Galleani encouraged his followers to act on their beliefs, publishing a bomb manual in about 1905, and certain of them responded—evidence points to their involvement in a number of bombings during and after World War I.

Italian immigrant syndicalists also considered the state an incurably corrupt institution but argued that unions should be the focal point of revolutionary activity. Though like the anarchists, relatively small in number, these syndicalists had an impact on the American labor movement that exceeded their numerical strength because of their willingness to risk prison time and even death in confronting factory owners and state officials. Led by people like labor activist and poet Arturo Giovannitti, they strived to use their *Federazione Socialista Italiana* (FSI) and its newspaper *il Proletario* to reach Italian immigrant workers. The apex of their efforts came in 1912, when they worked with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) to help over 20,000 striking textile workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts, achieve an unexpected victory. Soon after however disagreement about how to respond to World War I splintered the organization. Some of its members, among them former *il Proletario* editor Edmondo Rossoni, became staunch defenders of Italian nationalism and eventually joined Mussolini's Fascist party.

Although so few Italian immigrants voted in the early twentieth century, there was a small group who aligned themselves with the electoral strategies of the Socialist party. Their organization, the *Federazione Socialista Italiana* of the Socialist Party of America (FSI/SPA), was based in Chicago. Its members had

some success organizing garment workers in the Midwest and on the East Coast.

World War I and Its Aftermath

While certain historians argue that their participation as soldiers in World War I gained Italian immigrants some level of respectability, wartime and postwar repression delivered a crushing blow to most Italian immigrant radicals. Italian anarchists, syndicalists, and even socialists were hounded, imprisoned, and deported. Though Italian immigrants took part in large numbers in the wave of postwar strikes that swept the nation, hostility to their perceived foreignness and fear even of moderate labor unions peaked in the late 1910s. The Red Scare, which stretched from the end of World War I into the early 1920s, had no clearer symbols among Italian immigrants than Sacco and Vanzetti, who were executed after a 7-year trial and series of appeals that revealed the potential injustice and danger Italian immigrants and radicals faced. As their appeals progressed, Congress passed two laws, one in 1921 and one in 1924, which slowed immigration from Italy (and elsewhere in southern and Eastern Europe and Japan) to a trickle.

The 1920s were marked by a decline in radical energies and by the rise of fascism in Italy—and increasing support for it among Italian Americans. Italian American radicals devoted much of their energy to combating Fascist supporters in Italian immigrant communities, often with considerable success. Carlo Tresca and his allies in New York for example made the streets unsafe for Fascists throughout the 1920s. But divisions among these radicals—particularly with the rising influence of the Communists in revolutionary circles—made successful opposition difficult. More importantly, opposition faced overwhelming enthusiasm for Mussolini and fascism among the Italian immigrant elite and in its press, as well as among many native-born Americans through the 1920s and early 1930s.

The 1920s also witnessed the emergence of corrupt labor organizers among Italian Americans. Unions in the clothing, garment, and construction industries and among dockworkers for example fell under the influence of organized criminal syndicates. These were not the first labor unions to fall prey to criminal elements; they would not be the last. And this corruption was neither specific to, nor confined to, Italian Americans. But here were roots of an association between Italian Americans and organized crime that continues to haunt them, especially through mass media and popular culture, to this day.

Italian Americans

By the 1930s and the 1940s, and especially by the end of World War II, Italian Americans were well on their way to entering the American mainstream. There was still of course support for fellow ethnics like Fiorella la Guardia, who became mayor of New York City. There were even remnants of past radical affiliations, most significantly in New York, where Italians in Harlem elected Communist sympathizer Vito Marcantonio to Congress repeatedly from 1936–1950. But most Italian American workers supported new Congress of Industrial Organization unions and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal. As sons and daughters—even grandsons and granddaughters—of Italian immigrants, most began to consider themselves part of the ethnic composition of a multiethnic United States.

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See also Anarchism; Catholic Church; Communist Party; Congress of Industrial Organizations; Immigration Restriction; Lawrence Strike (1912); Sacco and Vanzetti; Textiles; Triangle Shirtwaist Fire

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J. P. STEVENS CAMPAIGN (1963–1980)

In the spring of 1963, leaders of the Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA) selected J. P. Stevens as the target for a major organizing campaign. The second-largest textile firm in the nation, Stevens employed more than 36,000 people, the bulk of them in the South. For more than 30 years, textile unions had struggled to organize the growing southern textile industry, the region's largest employer. Across the South, employers fiercely opposed the union, often backed up by local politicians and community leaders. By the early 1960s, unions had only managed to sign up around 10% of the southern textile workforce, and most of these employees worked in small plants. Seeking to make more progress, TWUA leaders reasoned that if they could organize a large firm, other employers would look more favorably upon the union.

At Stevens, the battle between the two sides raged on until the fall of 1980, becoming a symbol of labor's determination to try and break through in the most nonunion area of the country. When an agreement was finally reached, the union called off a boycott of Stevens's products while the company agreed to recognize the union at the plants that it had managed to organize.

Labor Law Violations

TWUA leaders picked Stevens in the hope that the New York-based firm would look on it more

favorably than southern-owned companies. This proved to be a miscalculation, as from the start Stevens repeatedly violated labor laws in order to thwart organizing. Like many other companies, Stevens had moved south after World War II, specifically because it wanted to pay lower wages and avoid unions. The Stevens CEO, Robert T. Stevens, a former secretary of the Army, disliked the way that his company had been picked out by TWUA and was determined to make a stand. For over 17 years, company officials argued that the union was an unwanted "third party" that would interfere with the direct relationship between management and its employees.

Stevens workers, however, received wages that were well below the manufacturing average, and they had few benefits. Many initially responded enthusiastically to TWUA, but company officials soon targeted activists. Between 1965 and 1976, Stevens was cited for violating the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 15 different cases, paying out around \$1.3 million in back pay to approximately three hundred workers. In a series of judgments by both the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the courts, Stevens was accused of having open disregard for labor law.

At the heart of Stevens's strategy was the widespread dismissal of the union's most influential supporters. Supervisors used a wide range of pretexts in order to remove union advocates, even dismissing highly experienced workers as incompetent. Others were fired for practices that had long been tolerated, such as engaging in horseplay or buying soft drinks

during company time. Such behavior led the national American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) to brand the textile giant as the greatest labor law violator in the entire United States. Feeling that they could not allow such behavior to go unpunished, in the summer of 1976, the AFL-CIO threw itself behind a boycott. Earlier in the year, TWUA had merged with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) in order to form a bigger union that could bring Stevens to its knees. In the fall of 1976, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) officially launched its boycott, the first time that this tactic had been attempted against an employer of Stevens's size. In doing so, activists particularly hoped to force the company to recognize the union at its plants in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, where the union had won an election in 1974 but had been unable to secure a contract.

The Campaign at Its Peak

The boycott brought the Stevens campaign to national attention, as thousands of protesters marched against the company in the nation's largest cities. "Don't Sleep with Stevens," they declared, a call for consumers to stop purchasing Stevens's sheets, a central part of its business. The union used issues of sexual and racial discrimination to mobilize the support of civil rights groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), together with large parts of the women's movement and many church and student groups. In addition, the boycott was endorsed by 56 U.S. representatives and many high-profile figures, including the actress Jane Fonda, the sports commentator Myron Cope, and the economist John Kenneth Galbraith.

Alongside the boycott, the maverick activist Ray Rogers ran the first "corporate campaign" in U.S. history. As part of this, ACTWU's supporters disrupted Stevens's shareholders' meetings, securing publicity of the company's labor record. In addition, Rogers revealed that many of Stevens's directors were also CEOs of firms with union ties. Rogers successfully caused embarrassment and investor discontent, and two of the firm's directors were forced to resign.

At its peak, the Stevens campaign also inspired the film *Norma Rae* (1979). In the popular movie, Sally Field won an Oscar for her depiction of a character that was loosely based on Roanoke Rapids worker Crystal Lee Sutton. Following the movie's release, Sutton herself conducted a nationwide tour to

promote the union's case, securing a great deal of positive press coverage in the process. As a public relations weapon, in fact, the boycott was clearly a success, although its economic impact on the firm was mild, especially as Stevens only sold around one third of its products directly to the consumer.

At its height, the campaign attracted a lot of attention from journalists. Detailed articles on the struggle appeared in national papers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, as well as in a range of journals that included *The Nation*, *Fortune*, *Business Week*, and *Time*. At the same time, journalist Mimi Conway produced a popular account of workers' struggle in Roanoke Rapids. Based largely on oral history interviews, Conway's work provided a vivid insight into workers' daily lives.

Since these contemporary accounts, historical scholarship has been limited. Some scholars have written articles exploring the making and impact of *Norma Rae*, while others have provided overviews of the campaign. Only recently has the entire campaign received its first book-length treatment. Making extensive use of recently released documents, Timothy J. Minchin's *"Don't Sleep with Stevens!": The J. P. Stevens Campaign and the Struggle to Organize the South, 1963–1980* provides an up-to-date account of the Stevens struggle.

Alongside the boycott and "corporate campaign," the union re-ignited its organizing efforts, yet it continued to struggle to make real gains. As Stevens had established such a harsh reputation, few workers were willing to risk discharge by signing union cards. Racial divisions also hurt organizing. ACTWU's leaders found that African-Americans, who were coming into the textile industry in increasing numbers, were more likely to join the union. They were still overwhelmingly concentrated in low-paid jobs, and many had been radicalized by the civil rights movement. Their activism, however, scared off whites, who saw the union as "black."

Following the 1980 settlement, the union continued small-scale organizing efforts until the fall of 1983, when the two sides settled all remaining NLRB charges. ACTWU abandoned its organizing efforts at Stevens's plants, while Stevens paid out \$1.2 million and promised to obey the law in the future. Following this settlement, the two sides established a stable relationship at organized sites.

Significance of the Stevens Campaign

The Stevens campaign was not a complete victory for either side, and both were scarred by such a long fight.

For organized labor, the battle proved highly expensive, as it poured more than \$30 million into the effort. At the time, this was the largest amount that a union had ever spent on a campaign against a single company. Despite all its efforts, the union never brought more than 7% of the company's workers under contract. While refusing to reveal how much it had spent, Stevens's corporate image was clearly harmed, and it had spent too much time fighting the union rather than modernizing its plants.

Overall, the Stevens campaign had a number of important consequences for U.S. labor relations. The company showed other firms that they could avoid unionization by deliberately violating labor laws. In subsequent years, many other executives copied these tactics, especially as the powers of the NLRB were further eroded during the 1980s. The willingness of some employers to openly disregard the NLRA prompted the AFL-CIO to fight for labor law reform, but labor-backed bills narrowly failed to become law in both 1978 and 1994.

Despite this, the campaign also highlighted to the labor movement that it could achieve the most if it worked with its allies in the broader community, a trend that has continued in subsequent years as striking has become less effective. The union's efforts, particularly its innovative "corporate campaign," brought Stevens to the bargaining table, no small achievement given the firm's virulent opposition to organized labor. Since the early 1980s, however, ACTWU's breakthrough has been undermined by the flight of the textile industry to the developing world, a trend that has undermined its ability to conduct further organizing. Ironically, in the years after the Stevens campaign, both managers and workers have come together to lobby for protection against cheap imports, yet this campaign has failed to convince Congress. In the 1980s and 1990s, the number of textile employees tumbled, and Stevens itself disappeared as a corporate entity in 1988, when it was bought out by a competitor and divided into three.

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JAMAICANS

More than any other modern international event, World War II motivated an unparalleled effort to recruit foreign labor for agricultural work in the United States. At the onset of WWII, farmers worried that they would face severe labor shortages because of the military draft and the high-paying defense industry jobs that had siphoned off many agricultural workers from farms, as well as the possibility of paying higher wages during the harvest season. In response, the U.S. government intervened on behalf of the growers and allowed them legally to import labor from Mexico and the British West Indies. On August 4, 1942, an executive order initiated the Mexican bracero program, which recruited Mexicans to work in the United States. Following the precedent of the bracero program, the U.S. government established a similar program to recruit workers from the British West Indies. The first agreements were reached with the colonial authorities in the Bahamas in March 1943 and with Jamaica in April 1943.

These two agreements established the British West Indies (BWI) Temporary Alien Labor Program and like the bracero program was formalized with the passage of Public Law 45, a series of farm labor appropriations acts authorizing the U.S. government to admit temporarily foreigners to perform agricultural labor in the United States. Other West Indians (from the Bahamas, British Honduras, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica, and Barbados) eventually joined the program; however, they never composed a significant portion of the farmworkers. Jamaicans always far outnumbered other Caribbean farmworkers, second only to the Mexican workers employed on the West Coast. Nearly 50,000 Jamaican men were recruited over the four years of the wartime program.

JAMAICANS

Several factors influenced the decision of the U.S. government to recruit large numbers of men from Jamaica. First, East Coast growers preferred Jamaicans to Mexicans because they spoke English. Jamaica was also considered an ideal source for foreign labor because of the island's geographical proximity to the eastern United States. Other factors included the island's high rates of unemployment, which meant there was significant support for any migration scheme that would alleviate the unemployment on the island. Additionally, the diplomatic relations between the crown colony governments of the islands, Great Britain, and the United States, allowed the intergovernmental agreement to be concluded easily.

In May 1943, the first Jamaican men recruited as farmworkers entered the United States. The average age of Jamaican men recruited as farmworkers was 25 years old; the oldest workers were 45 and the youngest not under 18. By the end of the first year, more than 11,000 Jamaican farmworkers were in the United States. They were dispersed throughout 14 states along the eastern seaboard from Florida to Maine. Workers harvested rhubarb, asparagus, peas, spinach, and beets in Pennsylvania; picked and harvested strawberries, spinach, onions, and potatoes in New York and New Jersey; worked on tobacco farms in Connecticut; and even helped bring in the sugar-beet crops in Idaho and Michigan. The harvesting of seasonal crops required significant stooping, squatting, and lifting, in the elements, from morning until late afternoon. During each contract period, Jamaican men moved from one locality to the next, with most ending the season cutting cane in Florida.

According to the intergovernmental agreement, the U.S. government, not individual farmers, employed Jamaicans, and they were guaranteed basic protections. The main provisions of the intergovernmental agreement guaranteed each man employment for at least 75% of the period for which he was contracted and that each man receive a minimum of 30 cents an hour and be required to work no more than six days a week. The agreement also stated that workers were not to "suffer discriminatory acts which would subject them to living conditions and sanitation and medical services . . . inferior to those afforded other agricultural workers" and would be housed in facilities maintained or approved by the U.S. government, and receive "all necessary food, health and medical care and other subsistence living facilities."

Despite the contract provisions, Jamaican farmworkers found that housing, food, and wage standards were frequently disregarded. Some Jamaicans, when housed by their employers, sometimes endured unsatisfactory housing in fairground cattle exhibition

sheds and garages. Those not housed with their employers were placed in government camps called Farm Labor Supply Centers. These facilities were not permanent structures, usually army-issued tents, or prefabricated wooden huts, and included very basic accommodations. Provided with a cot and thin mattress, the typical quarters for the men were crude and furnished only to provide the men a place to sleep at the end of a long day of work. The quantity and quality of the food served in the camps was also a point of great frustration. Because of wartime rationing, certain food items, especially the products Jamaican men liked the most—meat, sugar, and rice—were in very short supply. The cold bologna and cheese sandwiches were the basis of many of the men's complaints. Yet, more than any other issue, dissatisfaction over wages was the most contentious. The Jamaican men's contract stated, "there shall be no strikes, lockouts, or stoppages of work during the period of employment," but they often organized work-slowdowns or stoppages and used other creative tactics to force farmers to improve their wages and comply with contract standards. Jamaican men were vulnerable to growers' threats of repatriation, and workers identified as "troublemakers" frequently found their contracts terminated, and they were sent home to Jamaica.

The BWI program was supposed to be a temporary expedient during a wartime emergency and concluded on December 31, 1947; however, the program lasted much longer. During the years 1947–1952, the BWI program converted into a temporary-worker program, as allowed under the provisions of the Immigration Act of 1917. Tripartite contracts were drawn up between the Jamaican workers, the Jamaican government, and U.S. employers. Employers wanting Jamaican farmworkers could, with authorization from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, recruit within Jamaica or other West Indian islands. In 1952, this temporary system received permanent sanction when the Department of Labor, under section H-2A of the new Immigration Nationality Act, authorized American employers to contract with West Indian men for farm work if they could prove that no domestic workers wanted the jobs. Under the program, U.S. agricultural employers, Jamaican workers, and the Jamaican government signed working contracts, thereby eliminating the U.S. government's involvement and liability. Farmworkers' wages and hours were set, and employers were required to provide suitable living and working conditions; however, with little official oversight, violations were rampant, and workers were reluctant to complain because of the threat of being sent home to Jamaica.

After 1952, American employers recruited in Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica, and Barbados, although Jamaicans remained the largest group of West Indian farmworkers. Most Jamaicans worked as cane cutters under H-2A temporary contracts for Florida sugar plantations in the 1980s and early 1990s. They lived in atrociously inferior housing and were paid sub-minimum wages. However, by 1995, few Jamaicans were contracted to cut cane, and this change was in large part due to the mechanization of the Florida sugarcane harvest. Since 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor has reported that many apple growers have been hiring Jamaicans as H-2A workers in West Virginia, New York, and New England. Jamaicans work from tree to tree on 12-foot ladders hauling bags that they pack full of apples. The apple harvest season lasts no more than two months out of the year and is incredibly backbreaking. Under the H-2A provisions, problems of housing, food, wages, and general mistreatment of Jamaican farmworkers have continued to beleague the H-2A program, just as they did during World War II.

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JANITORIAL/CUSTODIAL

Janitors clean and maintain the buildings of urban America. Thus, their numbers have increased with the growth of cities and the industries that support them. In 1900, over 56,000 people worked in the occupation. In 2003, there were 2,064,350, making an average hourly wage of \$9.77 or \$20,320 annually. A manual

occupation of low status, janitorial work has traditionally attracted a high proportion of immigrants and African-Americans. From the early twentieth century, janitors have been prominent trade unionists.

The Work

Janitorial work appears deceptively simple. Janitors clean floors, rugs, walls, and windows. They take out the garbage, empty wastebaskets, mow lawns, and shovel snow. They do numerous minor repairs to faucets and fixtures; they paint walls and fix damaged woodwork; and they make sure that heating and air-conditioning equipment works properly. In other words, they perform a set of low-skilled, manual, building service tasks. Nonetheless, this short summary leaves out the challenges of managing the numerous duties and dealing with the people who live or work in the buildings.

In contrast to factory workers, janitors do not typically work together in groups but rather service individual buildings by themselves or with a few co-workers. Also, unlike factory laborers, janitors do not usually work under the direct supervision of a superior. This quality of the job demands much of janitors, while constituting one of the occupation's main attractions. Since janitors are the responsible person on the spot, tenants or teachers go immediately to them to solve problems. This responsibility also means that they seldom work a normal day or week. At the same time, the janitor's responsibility for a building has meant that he could be "his own boss," an option that most manual laborers have not had.

The tasks that janitors perform are seldom physically strenuous in themselves but do require constant bending, stooping, and stretching, which can cause injuries like strained backs. Although rarely demanding individually, janitorial tasks can nonetheless be challenging in their multiplicity, timing, and required knowledge. The janitor has been the one managing the numerous duties, and the tasks themselves usually require more knowledge than is initially apparent. In the days of coal furnaces, maintaining a fire without burning too much fuel required skill and experience. Today, the furnace may be computer driven, but for that reason it requires sufficient experience with digital equipment to maintain basic operation. Many janitorial tasks in schools and offices impinge on health and safety codes. Unionized positions require knowledge of contractually defined work.

Thus, janitorial work has required more skills than is commonly assumed. Janitors need to read well enough to understand memos from supervisors and

instructions on machines. They have to write sufficiently well to keep records. They need time management skills to orchestrate the complex menu of tasks. Yet, most important, they need social skills. The janitor is responsible to a building owner or manager but also—in many cases—to a union. Both can issue demands, which may conflict. Even more challenging are the frequent requests from teachers, tenants, and office workers. While not having direct authority over the janitor, these people commonly assume that they can make demands, too, in part because they feel socially superior. Learning to deal with, and manage, the building's users has typically been one of the janitor's greatest challenges. Thus, janitorial work can often demand levels of intelligence, self-discipline, and maturity that exceed considerably the occupation's menial status and low pay.

The Workers

Janitorial jobs have typically attracted recent immigrants and African-Americans. The ethnic and racial characteristics of male janitors in 1900 set a pattern that has largely remained: about 35% were immigrants, and another 15% were the children of immigrants. Thus, half were immigrants and their offspring. Just over 20% were African-Americans, leaving 30% American-born whites of native-born parents. This basic pattern of an occupation dominated by first- and second-generation immigrants and African-Americans has persisted. The origins of the foreign-born janitors have, of course, changed dramatically. While immigrant janitors formerly came from Europe, in the late twentieth century they typically came from Latin America.

African-Americans have been notable for their early and persistently strong representation in the occupation. African-Americans constituted over a fifth of janitors well before the Great Migration out of the South that began during World War I, and they still make up 20% of janitors and cleaners (see Figure 1).

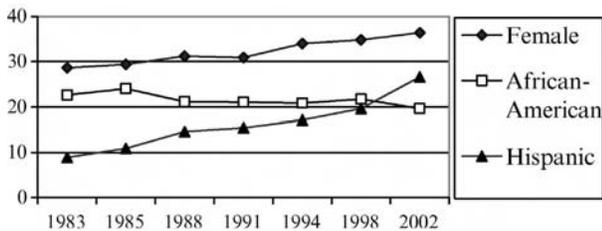


Figure 1. Janitors and Cleaners by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1983 to 2002.

A service occupation, janitorial work has fit with similar economic niches where, from an early date, African-Americans have earned a living in cities, such as waiting, barbering, and domestic service. Since janitorial work has grown rapidly, it became a substantial field of opportunity, especially for African-American males.

The representation of women in the janitorial workforce has changed significantly. In 1900, women made up about 14% of janitors. Today, they constitute over 35% of the workforce, and their proportion is expected to increase significantly in the future. The rise in the proportion of female janitors and cleaners is a reflection of the historic movement of women into the gainfully employed workforce during the last 40 years. Cleaning contractors have contributed to this larger trend by specializing in hiring women, particularly Hispanics. The rise of the cleaning contractors has reduced the number of traditional unionized janitorial jobs, where African-American males have been strongly represented. This development helps explain why the proportions of women and Hispanics have trended upward together in the janitorial workforce, while the percentage of African-Americans has decreased.

The age of janitors helps account for their historically prominent role in labor organizing. The occupation has traditionally attracted a substantial proportion of middle-aged men. A study of Missouri's school janitors in the 1930s found that their average age was 49. In 1998, 42% of janitors and cleaners were 45 years old or older. Since janitors perform light physical labor, the occupation has attracted manual workers who can no longer perform in more physically demanding jobs in fields such as construction or mining. The stability of the occupation has added to its attractions to older workers. In addition, traditional janitorial work has required maturity and social skills that come with age. At the same time, the low status and pay of janitors have meant that the occupation is not the first choice for workers. Thus, janitorial work has attracted older workers often with considerable background in other occupations, including experience with the trade unions. Even if such workers were only a minority among janitors, they have formed an experienced and reliable constituency for supporting unions.

The Industry

Since all buildings need to be cleaned and maintained, janitors and cleaners work across a range of industries. In 2003, local government, most notably school

systems, hired over 20% of janitorial workers. Janitors employed by the federal government and by all colleges and universities together constituted another 5%. The remaining 75% worked primarily, though not exclusively, for private industry in residential buildings, offices, and hotels—that is, in the building services industry as traditionally understood.

Throughout its history, building services has been a metropolitan industry, which means first of all that its markets—including the one for labor—have been defined by cities and their economic hinterlands. Like other metropolitan industries, such as construction, building services has been characterized by numerous small- to medium-sized businesses, as well as, of course, some large ones. The apartment industry is the most obvious example, characterized by hundreds, if not thousands, of individual owners, even when national corporations may own the largest buildings in town.

The numerous businesses owning and operating buildings not only compete with each other but also try to manage their metropolitan markets. Historically, for example, they have tried to maintain a stable level of advantageous prices, which usually has required limiting access to their markets from outside competitors. Maintaining a price level also means disciplining local businesses that undercut it. Businesses' cooperative efforts to achieve these goals have typically been unstable, particularly because of the diverging interests between small and large firms. Unions have played a complicated role in the metropolitan building service industries, fighting for higher wages and better working conditions, while also sometimes cooperating to maintain agreed-upon price levels by, for example, disciplining businesses that pay below scale. When janitors' unions have gained control of the labor market in a metropolitan area, they have helped stabilize competition among building owners by putting a floor under wage reductions to gain cost advantages.

The substantial growth of contract cleaning firms in the last third of the twentieth century has brought a new level of competition to the building service industry and challenged the dominion of unions. The cleaning firms fit the mold of a metropolitan industry. In 2002, the nation had 51,345 firms providing janitorial services, and they hired more than 45% of the over 2 million janitors and cleaners. Although there were some large firms, these businesses employed an average of 18 workers. Also fitting the historical mold of the building service industry, the contract cleaners gained a competitive advantage by opposing unions and exploiting immigrants, in this case particularly, Hispanic women. Because the contract cleaners can provide cleaning services below the cost of unionized

janitors, they have started a trend toward outsourcing janitorial cleaning tasks.

Notably, however, because the buildings being serviced cannot be moved, these janitorial tasks cannot be outsourced overseas. Metropolitan markets are also subject to local political influence. These are two advantages to unions in an industry that is otherwise difficult and expensive to organize.

Unions and Politics

The dispersal of janitors across a metropolitan area has made organizing them complex and costly. The same dispersal has made their development of collective identities difficult. In addition, the numerous modest-sized employers in the industry require unions to confront and bargain with a host of businesses instead of a few. For much of the twentieth century, it was common for one janitor to service several residential buildings, often with different owners. Thus, the unions had to deal with more employers than they had members. The employment of a substantial minority of janitors by various governmental bodies has created further problems for unions, because government employees work under different laws and regulations.

These structural problems have helped push janitors' unions into politics from their earliest days. Most obviously, unions organizing publicly employed janitors have found political influence one of the few reliable means for aiding their members, since government workers have typically lacked legal collective bargaining rights, attaining them only since the 1960s. More generally, unions have used local politics to influence the real estate industry in which their members work. Historically, local governments have profoundly shaped the owners of real estate through court decisions, public works investment, zoning, building codes, and various health and safety regulations. Thus, gaining influence with these governments has been a means for shaping an often fragmented and complex industry. Ironically, the dispersal of the membership has aided the political influence of unions because they have members spread across political jurisdictions who know the local area intimately and engage in basic political work under the unions' central direction. In Chicago, the janitors' local was one of the most effective grassroots political organizations in the city.

Stable janitors' unions formed first in Chicago under the leadership of William F. Quesse, the native-born son of German immigrants. Quesse's local achieved a citywide contract in 1917 and went on to form the

core of the new Building Service Employees International Union (BSEIU) in 1921. Other cities represented among the charter members were New York, Boston, St. Louis, and Seattle. Also from Chicago was a local of female school “janitresses.” Quesse’s Local 1 remained the center of power in the International for the next several decades. In the 1930s, Local 1 came under the influence of an alliance of Chicago and New York mobsters, who installed New Yorker George Scalise as head of the International. After Scalise was successfully prosecuted in the early 1940s, William McFetridge, Quesse’s nephew, took over the leadership of both Local 1 and the International. Whereas Quesse supported a local Republican faction, Local 1 under McFetridge allied with Richard J. Daley’s Democratic machine.

Both Local 1 and the International prospered after World War II. In 1968, the BSEIU changed its name to the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to acknowledge its expanded organizing among health-care and government workers. In 2004, the SEIU had 1.7 million members across the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico, making it the largest union in the AFL-CIO, as well as the source of some of its most energetic and innovative leadership. In 1995, John J. Sweeney moved from international president of the SEIU to president of the AFL-CIO. The SEIU has taken the lead in organizing the largely immigrant workers in the contract cleaning industry. Its Justice for Janitors campaign in the 1990s became a model for contemporary union organizing by mobilizing local communities to exert political pressure within metropolitan areas such as Washington, DC and Los Angeles.

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See also African-Americans; Justice for Janitors; Mexican and Mexican-American Workers; Service Employees’ International Union; Southwest; Sweeney, John J.

JAPANESE STRIKE IN HAWAII (1909)

Between May and November of 1909, nearly seven thousand Japanese workers struck sugar plantations on O’ahu in the territory of Hawai’i. The strike was instigated by a group that called itself “The Higher Wage Association.” The Association was led by a small group of local intellectuals and writers, Motoyuki Negoro, Yasutaro Soga, and Kinzaburo Makino, who launched a campaign to increase the pay and improve working and living conditions of the largely Japanese workforce. The strike was a watershed in Hawai’i labor history because it was the first organized mass walkout of workers in the sugar industry. The strike united workers on many plantations and garnered the support of laborers on other islands and local business, trade, and union organizations. The strike also helped to consolidate the power of the Hawaii Sugar Planters’ Association (HSPA), which represented all of the sugar plantation owners in the territory. Both sides used the power of the

press to spread their messages, pitting Japanese- and English-language newspapers against one another in a war of words. Although the strike was eventually broken, the HSPA later conceded to many of the demands made by the striking workers, leading to higher pay and improved living conditions on the plantations.

The sugar industry in Hawai'i was established in the early 1840s. The industry enjoyed rapid growth after 1887 when the Kingdom of Hawai'i signed a reciprocity treaty with the United States guaranteeing Hawai'i's sugar duty-free entry into American ports. Because of years of depopulation due to introduced disease, the local Hawai'ian population was insufficient to provide enough labor for the industry. Sugar plantation owners, working in cooperation with the Hawai'ian government, began importing laborers from Asia, first China and, by the late nineteenth century, from Japan. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Japanese workers represented more than half the local workforce on sugar plantations.

Hawai'i plantation owners enjoyed a far-reaching control over their workers. According to Kingdom law, under the Masters and Servants Act, employees could be restricted to the plantation, could be jailed for failing to fulfill the terms of their contract, and enjoyed little to no legal recourse in the case of a dispute with an employer. After 1900, as a territory of the United States, the terms of labor contracting underwent liberalization, but Japanese immigrant workers were still subject to the dominion of plantation owners and managers. Workers were vulnerable to arrest, imprisonment, or deportation if they protested conditions on the plantations too strenuously.

Prior to 1909, labor strikes in Hawai'i were often spontaneous acts of resistance to the abuses of a *luna* (foreman) or a means to resolve a dispute over pay on a specific plantation. The 1909 strike was the first organized strike aimed at changing living and working conditions for all workers in the industry. Although it was confined to O'ahu, it was supported by plantation workers throughout the territory.

The 1909 strike was provoked by a call for higher wages. In July of 1908, Motoyuki Negoro published an editorial in *Nippu Jiji*, a Japanese-language newspaper in Honolulu. Negoro noted that the industry was enjoying an unprecedented level of profits and that workers had a right to share in those profits. The debate over higher wages continued throughout the year, eventually culminating in a meeting of the Japanese community leaders to discuss the issues. Those who wished to press ahead formed the Higher Wages Association and proceeded to formulate a set of demands to present to the Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association.

The petition presented to the HSPA documented the hardship of workers trying to survive on an average wage of 14 dollars a month. In addition to wage demands, the Higher Wage Association also stipulated that the HSPA address the substandard living conditions on the plantations. It called for an eight-hour workday, improved housing, sanitary and bathing facilities, and larger quarters to accommodate growing families. The petition also demanded an end to race-based wage scales that paid Japanese workers less than Portuguese and white workers.

The HSPA studiously ignored the demands of the workers as outlined in the petition. It refused to acknowledge or negotiate with the Higher Wage Association and instead began to plead its case before the public in the English-language press. It warned the white community of the potential for anarchy and unrest in the territory and suggested that the strike organizers were radicals, possibly Communists.

The strike began on May 5 when workers at Wai-pahu plantation presented their demands to local management. On May 9, 1,500 workers in Aiea walked off the job. By the end of the month, the Higher Wage Association estimated that 7,000 workers were striking all O'ahu plantations. The HSPA responded quickly; as an organization, it privately pledged to share the cost of the strike amongst its members so that no one plantation owner was vulnerable to excessive financial loss. Striking workers were kicked out of plantation-owned housing and charged with trespassing if they re-entered the premises. Plantation owners hired replacement workers from the Korean, Hawai'ian, and Portuguese communities, sometimes paying twice the going daily rate. The HSPA employed spies within the Higher Wage Association and used its influence in local government to harass the strike leaders. In June, the leadership of the Higher Wage Association and sympathetic writers and editors of the *Nippu Jiji* were arrested and charged with conspiracy. In August, they were convicted and sentenced to 10 months in prison and fined \$300 each. Although they were eventually pardoned and released from jail, the HSPA demonstrated its potential power over union organizers because of the control it exercised over local government.

The arrest and imprisonment of the leaders crippled the strike. The strike fund was insufficient to take care of the thousands of workers and their families who, having been ousted from their plantation housing, were living in parks, beaches, and warehouses in Honolulu. On August 5, 1909, the Higher Wage Association voted to return to work.

In the months and years following the strike, the HSPA gradually conceded to many of the demands made by the strikers. It made incremental shifts in

wage scales and instituted measures designed to make plantation camps more livable. The strike demonstrated the willingness and ability of workers to organize against the formidable power of the HSPA.

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JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE

The Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) formed in 1934 as a direct response to the Nazi seizure of power in Germany the preceding year. Its founders, composed of leaders from within the ranks of Jewish labor, sought to mobilize the general American labor movement to fight against fascism. In the years after the defeat of Nazi Germany, the JLC broadened its agenda on several fronts, including assisting survivors of the Holocaust, strengthening labor movements abroad, and fighting prejudice in the United States.

When the Nazis seized power in 1933, several American Jewish labor leaders convinced the American Federation of Labor (AFL) to call for a boycott of German products. Most American Jewish groups, such as the American Jewish Committee, believed a boycott would only lead to Nazi reprisals against German Jews or worse, an outbreak of anti-Semitism in the United States. Jewish labor leaders dismissed these concerns, and in 1933, convinced AFL leaders to call for the boycott. These Jewish labor leaders believed it necessary to create a permanent body to deal with this threat, and in February 1934, the JLC was created to develop more lines of attack against fascism and provide support for the victims of fascism.

The JLC formed with representation from the most powerful forces in the Jewish labor movement, most notably the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the United Hebrew Trades, the Workmen's Circle, and the Jewish Daily Forward Association. Its agenda consisted of four primary goals: raise awareness among the American public about the fascist threat, aid refugees of fascism, provide material and moral support for groups fighting fascism, and defend Jewish rights throughout the world.

At the AFL's 1934 convention, the JLC's president and founding member, Baruch Charney Vladeck, addressed the American Federation of Labor's annual

convention and convinced AFL leaders of the need to create a special fund called the Labor Chest. The money from this fund was designated to assist refugees as well as promote various projects the JLC deemed necessary to educate the general public on the fascist threat.

In 1936, the JLC organized one of the largest of these projects. It sought to divert attention away from the Olympic Games in Berlin by organizing the World Labor Athletic Carnival at Randall's Island in New York, featuring athletes who did not wish to participate in the Berlin games. This "counter-Olympics" attracted prominent figures in labor and politics to serve as honorary chairpersons of the games, including the New York governor, Herbert Lehman, the New York City mayor, Fiorello LaGuardia, and the AFL president, William Green.

During World War II, the JLC succeeded in three major endeavors despite the immense obstacles created by the war. First, it made contact with underground forces in Nazi-occupied Europe and sent funds to assist them in fighting the Nazis. Second, it established a committee in New York composed of exiled European trade-union leaders, which maintained contact with partisans in Europe. Third, the JLC lobbied the U.S. government to provide visas for over a thousand European leaders in politics and culture, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and attained for them safe passage to the United States.

With the end of the war in 1945, JLC leadership believed the fate of Jewish children in postwar Europe needed to be addressed. Accordingly, it established the Child Adoption Program, which sought to provide these children with necessities such as clothes and food packages in addition to school supplies and toys. The program's leaders requested that union shops, locals, fraternal societies, or even individuals "adopt" a child for \$300 each year.

Throughout the war years, the JLC supported Jewish immigration to Palestine as a practical solution to the refugee problem, especially since Congress refused to make exceptions to the immigration restriction laws of the 1920s. Yet, within the JLC, divisions among members over the issue of Zionism prevented the JLC from endorsing a Jewish state in Palestine until 1948. Most JLC members hailed from the Bund or General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia. Bundists opposed nationalist movements such as Zionism as distractions from the socialist enterprise. Nonetheless, by the end of World War II, the realities of the Holocaust led most JLC members to view a Jewish state in Palestine as the only hope for Jewish survivors in Europe. By 1947, JLC leaders worked diligently to secure the votes

within the United Nations supporting the partition of Palestine. With Israel's creation in 1948, the JLC spent the next few decades lending financial and moral succor to the Jewish labor movement in Israel and helping to develop Israel's infrastructure.

In addition to aiding Israel, the JLC implemented several plans to assist the survivors of the European war, including non-Jews. It sent clothing and food in mass quantities to European survivors, helped reunite families separated during the war, built libraries, and provided shelter and food for children who lost their parents during the war. Domestically, the JLC developed educational programs to inform American workers on issues of prejudice. These programs, which received support from the general American labor movement, began a long-term commitment by the JLC to civil rights.

Initially, the JLC set up several committees at the local level in the United States and Canada designed to battle prejudice. Eventually, it assisted in the creation of civil rights departments in several national unions in both countries, which led ultimately to the formation of the AFL Civil Rights Department. During the 1960s, the JLC also played a role in the creation of the United Farm Workers.

Although founded as a reaction to the rise of Nazi fascism, the JLC became a pro-active organization dedicated to strengthening ties between labor and the Jewish community. Its actions before and during World War II demonstrate that Jewish and labor activists worked together in preventing, and later, alleviating the effects of Nazi persecution. Over time, the JLC expanded its agenda beyond the Jewish community to the national and international arena, leaving an indelible mark on the American labor movement and the Jewish community.

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See also Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

JEWS

During the twentieth century, the Jewish labor movement in the United States played a transformative role in the American labor movement. With the mass arrival of Eastern European Jews to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a new influx of Jewish workers entered the American labor force and brought a new sensibility to organized labor. After Jews were initially ostracized from the American labor movement by Gentile members resentful of the newcomers, Jews steadily worked their way to acceptance and helped implement new approaches and innovations to trade unionism and labor/management cooperation. Most of the Jewish influence within the American labor movement centered in the garment industry and in urban centers, especially New York, Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia. By the mid-twentieth century, the number of Jewish rank-and-file workers diminished, but Jewish leadership within the American labor movement remained influential for the rest of the century.

The first masses of immigrant Jewish laborers found themselves generally blocked from entry into unions belonging to the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the dominant labor federation at the turn of the twentieth century. Through a combination of obstacles, including high initiation fees, approval from union leaders for membership, or insistence on a foreign union card, Gentile union leadership generally blocked the entry of new Jewish arrivals. Through perseverance and the assistance of important allies such as the AFL president, Samuel Gompers, Jews began making headway into the American labor movement by the 1890s. Still, resistance to their presence remained through the early twentieth century.

By the 1920s, Jewish labor suffered through a tumultuous decade of strife caused by communist agitation within the garment industry and the increased influence of organized crime used by both management and union leadership to intimidate foes. These two elements would be subdued by union leaders during the 1930s, however, and the New Deal legislation of President Franklin Roosevelt's administration opened up new opportunities for American labor to thrive. Jewish labor leaders recognized the opportunities offered first by the National Recovery Act (NRA) and then by the Wagner Act, and they introduced new innovations to American trade unionism that would set a new standard for labor-management practices. Jewish-led garment unions, such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) and International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), created the first cooperative housing projects, pension and welfare funds, worker



Jewish family working on garters in kitchen for tenement home. Location: New York, New York. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, National Child Labor Committee Collection [LC-DIG-nclc-04274].

education institutes, and union health centers. Additionally, they provided funding for fellow labor movements outside the United States and became politically engaged in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. In New York State, Jewish labor leaders formed two third parties, the American Labor Party (ALP) and the Liberal Party of New York, both of which shaped the state's political landscape for decades. Throughout the mid-twentieth century, Jewish labor leaders applied this expansive vision, inspired by the revolutionary movements of their youth in Eastern Europe, to the American labor movement. In the process, they played a major role in the evolution of the American labor movement from a "bread-and-butter" unionism to a movement encompassing a broader social vision for American society.

Origins of a Movement

Defining "Jewish unions" is problematic. Although many of the early garment unions based in New York City during the late nineteenth century consisted of Jewish majorities among workers, by the early twentieth century, union demographics had shifted. For example, the ACWA, one of the most powerful

garment unions during the twentieth century, originated under a predominantly Jewish membership. By the 1920s, however, this Jewish predominance diminished as Jews came to comprise just under half of the ACWA's membership. By the turn of the twentieth century, even the United Hebrew Trades (UHT), an organization founded in the 1880s explicitly to assist Jewish workers, accepted non-Jewish members and found that at various points during the 1930s, nearly half of its members were not Jewish.

Despite the demographic changes in union membership, however, Jewish leadership in these unions remained constant throughout the early and mid-twentieth century. Even with the large number of women comprising garment workers, the executive boards remained predominantly male and Jewish. By the mid-twentieth century, many Jewish garment workers had worked their way into the middle class, or at least their children breached it. Yet for decades, Jewish leadership remained entrenched, leaving a profound imprint on the American labor movement years after the number of rank-and-file Jewish unionists had dramatically diminished.

The dominance of Jewish leadership in the garment unions came only after a long struggle to create a labor movement among Jewish immigrants. During the 1880s, Jewish immigrants typically sought upward mobility as fast as possible, and therefore, never

cultivated a strong trade-union movement. Many Jewish garment workers saw themselves as future employers and rarely engaged in the communal struggles necessary to form a vibrant and cohesive labor movement. In the early 1900s, the majority of the hundreds of thousands of garment workers in New York remained unorganized, and those unions that existed operated with minimal energy. Additionally, most of them had little connection with other American workers and little exposure to socialism. Thus, few immigrant Jews possessed a class-consciousness capable of sustaining a trade-union movement.

After 1905, this mentality changed rapidly. The second generation of Eastern European Jewish immigrants hit the shores of America with a bubbling romanticism for socialist ideals bred by revolutionary ferment in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Eastern Europe. Most arrived fresh from the abortive 1905 Russian Revolution, which despite its failure, left veterans of the revolt hopeful of applying their socialist vision in the United States.

This vision clashed, however, with the dominant attitude of the native, American labor movement, composed of non-Jewish workers. During the late nineteenth century, leaders of the emerging AFL embraced a labor philosophy known as “bread-and-butter” unionism. AFL leaders stressed wages, hours, and working conditions, shunning broader visions of social transformation. Many of the Jewish immigrants, imbued with socialist ideology, found this “bread-and-butter” unionism wanting. Their commitment to socialism encouraged workers to strive for a broad social vision that encompassed social insurance, government activism, and racial equality, all things anathema to AFL leaders of the early twentieth century. By the early 1900s, despite AFL resistance to such an expansive agenda, Jewish garment workers began to coalesce around the radical doctrine of their Eastern European homelands. They spent the first two decades of the twentieth century forming unions or strengthening previously existing ones.

The Jewish labor movement was not limited to the large memberships within the garment unions. Jewish workers also created labor organizations and associations to address their socialist vision such as the United Hebrew Trades. Founded in 1888, the UHT helped immigrants seeking food, shelter, and work, and provided financial support for sick workers, offered recreation opportunities, and educated workers in socialist principles. Additionally, by the early 1900s, Jewish workers formed fraternal organizations, most notably the Workmen’s Circle (*Arbeiter Ring* in Yiddish), to promote social interaction and offer economic assistance and educational opportunities.

Jewish trade unionists also found assistance in many cases from Jewish community leaders. During the late nineteenth century, the mass arrival of Eastern European Jews to the United States raised concern among Jews already living in the country. Unlike Jewish immigrants of the mid-nineteenth century, many of whom came to the United States with some money and quickly assimilated, these new Jewish immigrants appeared quite foreign to most Americans and did not seem as readily assimilable as their predecessors. Despite these concerns among American Jews, some efforts were made to assist these new arrivals in their transition to life in the United States. Since many of these immigrants would be working in factories, notable American Jews sought to make their transition as smooth and quiet as possible. Some Jewish manufacturers tried to keep labor strife quiet by working with the newcomers in addressing labor issues. Additionally, Jewish community leaders sought to avoid trouble between manufacturers and workers by mediating disputes. In 1911, for example, Louis Brandeis arbitrated a cloakmakers’ strike and drafted the protocol of peace, which helped establish a cooperative relationship between labor and management within the garment industry. Although many battles emerged between Jewish management and labor during the century, this attitude of quiet mediation and cooperation played a major role in allowing the Jewish labor movement to grow in an otherwise hostile environment.

The rising number of Jewish garment workers in the United States made it difficult for native garment union leaders to prevent them from joining their unions. Many native garment workers viewed these Jewish newcomers as aliens with radical beliefs, potentially undermining the garment unions. Even so, by World War I, Jewish-led labor battles had gained Jewish workers entry into established unions and had created new organizations such as the ACWA. The ILGWU emerged as a force in the garment industry after a 1909 strike among shirtwaist makers in New York known as the “Uprising of the 20,000.” This strike marked the emergence of the ILGWU. Its gains continued in 1910 as a cloakmakers’ strike, called the “Great Revolt,” earned workers a 50-hour workweek, minimum wages for certain workers, and a Joint Board of Sanitary Control. Such hard-fought strikes won respect from AFL leaders. By the 1920s, as most Jewish labor leaders traded the radicalism of their youth for a more reform-minded approach to labor-management relations, they began to enjoy growing influence with the AFL. Yet, as the 1920s began, ideological conflicts within the Jewish labor movement and confrontations with organized crime nearly destroyed the Jewish labor movement in its nascent stages.

The 1920s: Struggles on Two Fronts

Despite Jewish labor's growing influence within the American labor movement, the 1920s proved a tumultuous decade for Jewish labor generally as communists engaged right-wing socialists in internecine conflicts that led in certain cases to destructive strikes, especially a 1926 strike that nearly destroyed the ILGWU. Additionally, organized crime entered the garment industry in growing numbers, with gangs working as strikebreakers for some manufacturers and strike enforcers for some labor unions.

Communism made major inroads within the Jewish labor movement during the decade, and many communists took an active role in union activities, including running for elected positions within the unions. Although the left wing of the Jewish labor movement also included anarchists and left-wing socialists, it was the communists whom union leaders such as Morris Sigman, David Dubinsky, and Alex Rose sought to purge from the garment industry. After anticommunist Jewish labor leaders actively sought the removal of communists from influential positions within the garment unions, the communists found themselves in retreat by the end of the decade. Still, the financial and psychological damage done to some garment unions, especially the ILGWU, lasted for years to come.

Organized crime also played a role in this weakening of the garment industry during this decade. Both manufacturers and unions hired gangsters from different gangs to work as "muscle" in either breaking strikes and protecting scabs or protecting picketers and attacking scabs. During a 1926 strike that paralyzed the garment industry, only the intervention of Arnold Rothstein, the influential gambler with mob connections, could successfully convince the gangs involved to cease their activities. This opened the way to a settlement but did not end mob influence within the Jewish labor movement. Mobsters infiltrated the trucking unions within the garment industry as well as some locals. By the early 1930s, Jewish labor leaders such as Sidney Hillman and David Dubinsky worked diligently to purge the mob from their unions. Their efforts met with generally good results, but some level of mob influence lingered for years to come.

A New Era

The 1930s proved both a successful and divisive era for Jewish labor. On the one hand, President Roosevelt's New Deal brought legal recognition to the labor

movement through the Wagner Act as well as significant measures to protect union organizing. Concurrently, however, the labor movement fractured over the issue of organizing unskilled labor. Many Jewish labor leaders, including Sidney Hillman of the ACWA, David Dubinsky of the ILGWU, and Max Zaritsky of the United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers' Union (UHCMWU), joined the Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in an effort to organize the multitude of unskilled labor in the United States. Many AFL leaders feared losing bargaining leverage if they organized unskilled workers, whom management could easily replace with scabs. They preferred to focus their energies on skilled workers, much to the chagrin of Jewish labor leaders, who believed such a mentality to be parochial and out of touch with reality. For several American labor leaders, several of them Jewish, the future of the American labor movement lay with industrial unionism and the organizing of the unskilled laboring masses.

During the 1930s, Hillman, Dubinsky, and Zaritsky, along with John L. Lewis (the president of the United Mine Workers) and Charles P. Howard (the president of the International Typographical Union), pressed for the AFL to aggressively organize industrial workers, the labor movement's most energetic fighters during the 1930s, for major changes in worker-management relations. Prior to this period, industrial unionism remained stagnant on the AFL leadership's agenda, but by the 1930s, these labor leaders argued vehemently for the mass organization of industrial workers. In 1935, AFL apathy led Lewis, Howard, Hillman, Dubinsky, and Zaritsky to create the Committee for Industrial Organizations. They worked with AFL locals to convince the old craft unions that they could co-exist with industrial unions. By the late 1930s, fractures within the CIO over fears of dividing the labor movement led Dubinsky and Zaritsky to attempt peacemaking between CIO and AFL officials. They implored the AFL leadership to recognize the need for mass industrial organization while attempting to convince CIO leaders of the need for accommodation. Although Jewish labor leaders could not bridge this divide for nearly two decades, they served in the forefront of American labor's recognition of the need for mass industrial organization. While the ACWA remained in the CIO throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the ILGWU and UHCMWU rejoined the AFL by the 1940s.

With the onset of U.S. entry into World War II by 1941, the entire American labor movement experienced full employment. After the war, American labor enjoyed its greatest period of influence and prosperity. During this time, the Jewish labor movement played an important role in New York and national

politics as well as supporting the international labor movement. The American Labor Party, founded in 1936 to support President Roosevelt's re-election, became a permanent New York state party dedicated to the ideals of the New Deal. After communists gained significant control within the party, right-wing socialists and liberals left the ALP to create the Liberal Party of New York. Both parties played influential roles in local New York politics and presidential elections during the mid-twentieth century.

Internationally, Jewish labor leaders worked through international labor organizations such as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to strengthen free labor movements throughout the world. Additionally, garment unions provided direct assistance to several nations where labor movements sought aid, especially in Israel. Even before World War II, the Jewish labor movement assisted the Jewish labor movement in Palestine, known as the Histadrut. After the war, this assistance increased dramatically after the complete revelation of the Holocaust. Through generous donations, the Jewish labor movement helped the nascent state of Israel develop infrastructure and housing as well as lobby U.S. politicians to support Israel politically and financially.

The Decline of a Movement

By the 1960s, the Jewish labor movement moved into a steady decline as more and more children of union leaders and rank-and-file workers entered white-collar positions. David Dubinsky's retirement as the president of the ILGWU in 1966 signaled the end of an era. A continual increase in non-Jewish minorities ushered in a new era in the garment industry as Jewish labor leaders retired or died in office. Although some notable Jewish labor leaders continued to make an impact on the AFL-CIO's fortunes during the late twentieth century, an era of Jewish labor influence had passed. Yet, this influence, despite its eventual demise, left an immense impact on the American labor movement, both past and present.

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See also Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; American Labor Party; Dubinsky, David; Hillman, Sidney; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Liberal Party; Uprising of the 20,000 (1909)

JOHNSON-REED (IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION) ACT (1924)

In enacting the Johnson Reed Immigration (Restriction) Act of 1924, Congress responded to a half century of concern about immigration. The legislators banned nearly all immigration from Asia and severely curtailed immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe through a system called "national origins." Newcomers from Africa were also limited to small quotas. The Western Hemisphere was left without numerical limits, but even that migration was brought to a near halt during the lean years of the Great Depression.

Asians

Prior to 1875, states managed immigration, but that practice ended when the United States Supreme Court held it to be a federal matter. Following that decision, federal lawmakers passed the Page Act in 1875, which barred prostitutes from coming to America. Seven years later, Congress went further and banned the entrance of Chinese laborers. The law responded to labor agitation against Chinese immigrants in California and growing racism in the United States overall. Racists argued that the Chinese were an inferior and unassimilable people who worked for virtual slave wages and depressed the American wage scale. Chinese merchants and their wives, students, and diplomats could still come to the United States, but the vast majority of potential migrants were barred.

When Japanese immigrants appeared in Hawaii and California, Californians created a diplomatic problem for President Theodore Roosevelt. The San Francisco school board announced that Japanese students were to be segregated. In 1907, President Roosevelt negotiated a diplomatic agreement with Japan (the Gentleman's Agreement) in which the federal government pressured the school board to reverse

its decision and the government of Japan stopped allowing Japanese laborers to sail for America.

Other Asians faced similar hostility and racism. For example, Asian Indians were banned in 1917. Eventually, the Johnson-Reed Act barred virtually all Asians. Filipinos, who migrated to Hawaii and the mainland United States largely as agricultural workers, were not covered by the law. However, during the Great Depression, Congress gave them an annual quota of only 50. After 1945, when the Philippines became independent, they would no longer be eligible to migrate to the United States.

Europeans

Although the 1924 law banned nearly all Asians, the chief goal of the legislators was to curtail European immigrants, especially the largest source of immigrants after 1890: those from Southern and Eastern Europe. By 1910, nearly 15% of the American population was foreign-born. World War I did decrease immigration substantially, but after the war the large-scale movement of people to America renewed, and it increased the alarm of those who believed these newcomers were a danger to the United States.

By the 1920s, the calls for European immigration restriction could no longer be ignored. Business groups still wanted their labor for the growing industries of the United States, but labor leaders, such as Samuel Gompers, saw immigrants as competitors. Some Progressive reformers believed that the burgeoning immigrant communities supported corrupt urban bosses. A revived Ku Klux Klan saw many threats to American society, among them Roman Catholic immigrants and Jews, especially those from Russia and Poland, who, according to anti-Semites, could never successfully assimilate. After the Civil War, white southerners favored immigrants as workers, for many believed that blacks would not be reliable farmworkers. White southerners attempted to recruit Europeans and even Chinese, but these efforts proved to be unsuccessful. As a result, after 1900, southern white politicians turned against immigration, largely using racist arguments. Then World War I released a flood of anti-immigrant sentiment, as did the Russian Revolution of 1917. During World War I, German-Americans were persecuted, and immediately after, many “radical aliens” were rounded up and deported. This was not an unpopular move; many Americans feared that immigrants would import radical sentiments to America.

The rise of nineteenth-century racism crystallized in the “eugenics movement,” which held that certain

groups were inferior. This played a key role in the growing movement to restrict immigration from Europe as well as Asia. By 1900, a variety of academics, politicians, and popular writers were warning that the basic ethnic fabric of American society was in danger due to the “pollution” of America’s demographic stock. The new racism acknowledged that Europeans were all white, but were whites of different abilities. Those who came before the late nineteenth century—the English, Scots-Irish, Scots, Germans, and Scandinavians—were deemed acceptable because of their alleged innate superiority. Even the Irish, who had been the victims of nativism in the nineteenth century because of their poverty and Catholicism, were becoming part of the desirable immigrant stream.

Among the popular eugenics writers was Madison Grant, the author of a popular 1916 book titled *The Passing of the Great Race*. Grant believed that the early Americans were from the Nordic race, but that that stock was now being diluted by mixing with those who came in later years.

Psychologists also took up the role of claiming that the Nordics were superior by nature. Carl Brigham of Princeton University, using the mental intelligence tests of the United States Army uncritically, said these tests proved that the Nordic or Old Stock Americans scored higher because they were naturally superior.

When barring Chinese beginning in 1882, Congress had also enacted a number of restrictions on other immigrants, such as persons “likely to be a public charge” (1891) or persons with certain diseases such as trachoma. Convicts were also added to the banned list, as were anarchists following the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901.

These growing restrictions kept few immigrants out; at Ellis Island 98% of Europeans managed to pass inspection and become legal immigrants. In the 1890s, a new anti-immigrant organization formed with a plan to cut the flow. The Immigration Restriction League, composed of elite Bostonians, suggested that a literacy test was needed for newcomers. The test would ban those over age 16 who could not read and write either English or their native tongue. In 1907, Congress created the Dillingham Commission, which echoed the recommendation. The literacy test passed in Congress, only to be vetoed by presidents Grover Cleveland, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson. Finally, in 1917, on the eve of the American entrance into World War I, Congress marshaled enough votes to override President Wilson’s veto. Yet many Italian, Slovak, Greek, and Slavic immigrants, who would have had difficulty passing the exam in the 1890s, were more apt to be literate by the 1920s. In 1921, 805,000 immigrants passed through Ellis Island

and other ports of entry, with the prospect of millions of others wanting to come to America. If they were to radically reduce the flow, lawmakers had to find new ways, which they did in enacting the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924.

In 1921, Congress passed a one-year measure that limited immigration from the Eastern Hemisphere to approximately 350,000 annually, with each nation having a share based on its proportion of the foreign-born population of 1910. The act was extended the next year. Those who wanted more drastic cuts persuaded the legislators to cut the total and use 1890's foreign-born population as the base line. Because so few Southern and Eastern European immigrants had arrived before that date, the new law drastically reduced their immigration.

Although the restriction was extended several times, ultimately the national origins quotas used the 1920 census numbers, but the proportion was finally based on the entire white population and not simply the foreign-born. The change gave Southern and Eastern European nations more places than by using the 1890 figures. However, the quotas that went into effect in 1929 and that lasted until 1965 gave Great Britain, Germany, and Ireland over two thirds of the total of approximately 150,000 slots. Italy had fewer than 6,000 places, and Greece had only a few hundred, which was exactly what Congress and the administration intended. Using the population-derived formula, some nations had so few slots that the legislators gave them a minimum of 100.

The Western Hemisphere

The Johnson-Reed Act did not give the Western Hemisphere an overall limit or establish individual national quotas. Some in Congress insisted that Mexicans were just as inferior as Poles or Italians. Congress instead listened to the State Department, which said that quotas for the Western Hemisphere would hurt American foreign policy, and to agricultural interests, who claimed that Mexicans were needed to labor on American farms. Persons from the Western Hemisphere still had to pass a literacy test, pay a head tax, and satisfy other provisions of the immigration laws, but these were easily done. And if Mexicans and Canadians could not meet the requirements, many easily crossed the border, albeit illegally. There was no border patrol until 1924, and even after that date it was more interested in keeping liquor from flowing into the United States and catching Asians who were trying to evade immigration ports. However, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, federal, state, and

local officials rounded up and deported several hundred Mexicans and their children, many of whom were American-born United States citizens, and shipped them back to Mexico. Many Europeans also faced difficulties in attempting to enter the United States during those years. Only 500,000 persons managed to gain entrance to America in the 1930s.

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See also **Immigration Restriction**

JOINT COUNCIL OF DINING CAR EMPLOYEES

During the 1930s, African-American railroad workers engaged in unprecedented union-organizing campaigns, the results of which were the formation of new, powerful labor associations. In this era, three substantial unions emerged: the Brotherhood of

JOINT COUNCIL OF DINING CAR EMPLOYEES

Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), which was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL); the United Transportation Workers (UTW), which was affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO); and the Joint Council of Dining Car Employees (JCDCE), which was affiliated with the Federation but in practice worked with both the AFL and CIO. Like the BSCP and the UTW, the JCDCE was a “racial” union and was dedicated to advancing both labor and civil rights.

Black dining car workers formed the JCDCE to fight racial employment discrimination by employers and by other unions. Their battle was another chapter in a much larger struggle within the labor movement. From their inception in the nineteenth century, American labor unions had generally ignored the needs of African-Americans and frequently excluded them. This was particularly true of the national labor umbrella organizations: National Labor Union, the Knights of Labor, and the American Federation of Labor, the latter of which had the worst record on race relations. These labor organizations tended to bow to the racist attitudes and practices of their constituent unions, which were made up mostly of white workers. The major railroad unions were among the worst offenders. The Railway Mail Association only allowed as members workers “of the Caucasian race.” The Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees just admitted “white persons, male and female, of good moral character.” Similar provisions were in most railroad labor organizations. By discriminating against minorities, whites in these unions secured higher wages, better benefits, and elevated their social standing. Similarly, railroad owners profited from the situation by exploiting their disadvantaged employees. Black railroad workers were paid less than their white counterparts, even when they did the same job. For example, occasionally a dining car ran without a white steward. In those instances, a black worker became a “waiter-in-charge,” essentially a steward, but without the title, the higher wages, and the respect. Complaining to an all-white railroad union like the Brotherhood of Dining Car Conductors was fruitless. Black workers had to look elsewhere for redress of their many grievances.

By the early 1930s, there was an organizing model for black dining car workers to follow. In the 1920s, A. Philip Randolph had helped African-American sleeping car porters form a labor brotherhood. Although for years the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters had floundered, in 1934, it received a new lease on life. The 1934 Railroad Labor Act, which was one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal reforms, provided new bargaining rights to

unions. The BSCP used the law to wrestle a contract from the Pullman Palace Car Company. In 1937, the same year that the BSCP gained formal recognition from Pullman, Randolph helped to establish the Joint Council of Dining Car Employees.

The Joint Council grew out of the slow movement of dining car employees to form unions. In 1917, a group of black dining car workers created the Brotherhood of Dining Car Employees on the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. The Brotherhood steadily gained members throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, and eventually it merged into the Hotel and Restaurant Employees’ International (HRE), which was affiliated with the AFL. The formation of the Joint Council in 1937 represented the desire of many black dining car employees to unite the efforts of various union locals. Two dining car workers—Ishmael Flory of Oakland’s HRE Local 456 and Solon Bell of Omaha’s HRE Local 465—were instrumental in the formation of the JCDCE. Both Flory and Bell were exceptional organizers. By the end of the 1930s, the Council had 7,000 members in 15 locals. The Joint Council was also an integrated union that appealed to men and women. In 1939, there were 1,500 white cooks and waitresses who belonged to the JCDCE.

Like its close organizational cousins, the BSCP and the UTW, the leaders of the Joint Council pursued an agenda to improve the lives of dining car workers specifically and all African-Americans generally. All three unions were dedicated to eradicating discrimination in employment and inside the labor movement. The JCDCE and the BSCP faced an uphill battle to change the AFL. Despite Flory’s and Bell’s courageous efforts, very little progress was made. For example, for years, the AFL’s Railroad Employee Department refused to integrate its annual convention. The leaders of the JCDCE as well as the BSCP protested, but they were simply not allowed to attend and represent their interests at the meeting.

Although the JCDCE and other black railroad unions worked harmoniously on occasion, the Joint Council’s political outlook and its specific goals and methods often brought conflict with other unions and civil rights groups. The main problem related to Flory’s and Bell’s communist connections. Allegations that Flory was using his post to recruit for the Communist Party in an attempt to facilitate a takeover of the railroad industry resulted in punitive measures by the AFL on the Joint Council. Eventually, the HRE president, Edward Flore, fired Ishmael Flory and his comrade, Solon Bell, both of whom continued to labor on behalf of black dining car employees and established a rival union, the Dining Car and Railroad Food Workers Union. The challengers

annoyed but did not defeat the JCDCE. The Joint Council also weathered the dramatic transformations in American transportation in the 1960s as railroad passenger travel was supplanted by air travel. Unlike the BSCP and the UTW unions, which faded and eventually merged into stronger unions, the JCDCE was one of the few original "racial" unions to survive.

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JONES, "MOTHER" MARY HARRIS (1837–1930)

Arrested once again in West Virginia in 1913, old Mother Jones used the labor and radical press to send out her missives to the world, and workers, organizers, and friends of labor responded with petitions, demonstrations, and letter-writing campaigns. Wrote T. J. Llewellyn from Missouri to the Secretary of Labor, "I have carried a gun three times in the industrial wars in this country, and by the eternal, if any harm comes to the old Mother, I'm not too old nor by the same token too cowardly to carry it again." Margaret R. Duvall warned of an aroused working class "more dreadful than this country has ever seen" should any harm come to Mother Jones or her fellow prisoners. And A. Van Tassel of Ohio begged President Woodrow Wilson to free the Miners' Angel: "This beautiful hero of the labor movement has committed no crime, but is being slowly murdered because she insisted on agitating and educating the workers to realize their true status in society."

Who was Mother Jones? Aside from a progressive magazine named in her honor, and an occasional invocation of her famous line, "pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living," she is a faded memory. Yet during the first quarter of the twentieth century, she was one of the most famous women in America.

Her friend Upton Sinclair, author of the great exposé of the Chicago stockyards, *The Jungle*, described her this way in his lightly fictionalized account of the Colorado Coal War of 1913–1914:

There broke out a storm of applause which swelled into a tumult as a little woman came forward on the platform. She was wrinkled and old, dressed in black, looking like somebody's grandmother; she was, in truth, the grandmother of hundreds of thousands of miners....Hearing her speak, you discovered the secret of her influence over these polyglot hordes. She had force, she had wit, above all she had the fire of indignation—she was the walking wrath of God....She would tell endless stories about her adventures, about strikes she had led and speeches she had made; about interviews with presidents and governors and captains of industry; about jails and convict camps....All over the country she had roamed and wherever she went, the flame of protest had leaped up in the hearts of men; her story was a veritable Odyssey of revolt.

What Sinclair said was literally true; for 25 years this elderly woman did not have a permanent home, or as she explained to a congressional committee when asked where she lived, "my address is like my shoes, it follows me wherever I go." When she was in her 60s, her 70s, and her 80s, she renounced home, friends, and possessions to live on the road and be with her people, and out of that commitment grew working families' powerful sense of identity with her.

Her story is a difficult one to uncover because it is so shrouded in myth, much of it created by herself, especially in *The Autobiography of Mother Jones* (1925). For example, she says that she was born to Irish dissident parents on May Day, 1830. She followed her family to Canada, learned to be a school teacher and a dressmaker, and then found her true vocation in the 1870s, organizing the working class. In fact, she exaggerated her age to add to her venerability (she was born not on what became the International Workers' Holiday, but in August 1837), and her family came to America not because they were radicals fleeing the English, but because they were impoverished by the Great Hunger, or the Potato Famine, as Americans called it.

Mary Harris spent her early years in the city of Cork, where she witnessed the unspeakable horrors of the Famine—which she never discussed—then finished up her education in Toronto, including a semester at the normal school. As she became an adult, she left her family, first moving to Michigan to teach school, then briefly to Chicago, and then to Memphis, where she married an iron molder named George Jones, who was a member of William Sylvius's Molders' Union. Between 1861 and 1867, Mary and George Jones had four children. In the fall of that



President Calvin Coolidge and "Mother" Jones, half-length, standing outdoors. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-68543].

year, not long after she turned 30 years old, yellow fever struck her household. She was left to bury the dead, all of them, George and her four children. Mary Jones returned to Chicago and resumed dressmaking for the next three decades.

There is no reason to doubt that she became increasingly interested in the labor movement—after all, Chicago was the most radical city in America. But there is no evidence that she was an important player through the 1870s, 1880s, or 1890s, as she implies in her *Autobiography* when she discusses the 1877 Railroad Strike and the Haymarket Affair. Clearly, by the 1890s she had gotten to know some important men in the movement—Terence Powderly of the Knights of Labor, Eugene Debs of the American Railway Union (and soon to head the Socialist Party), and Julius Wayland, editor of the socialist newspaper *The Appeal to Reason*. We have evidence of her marching with a branch of Coxe's Army in 1894, and she was active organizing anthracite miners in Pennsylvania for the new United Mine Workers Union (UMW) in the 1890s.

But the important step for her was becoming "Mother Jones." Mary Harris was a poor Irish famine immigrant, a young school teacher and dressmaker, who drifted away from her working class Toronto family to pursue a life in the United States. Mary Jones was the wife of a working-class man and mother of a young family, until plague took them all and

left her a middle-aged widow, making ends meet sewing dresses in Chicago. It was in that shock city, which doubled in population every 10 years—a place where hundreds of thousands of people from overseas and from America's rural heartland came to start fresh—that she re-created herself and became somebody new. By the late 1890s, she was almost as dispossessed as an American could be—poor, of working class background, an Irish immigrant, widowed, elderly (she turned 60 years old in 1897). With precious little left to lose, in other words, she invented and inhabited the role of Mother Jones.

The new persona transformed Mary Jones. After about the turn of the century, she never called herself Mary; all of her letters were signed "Mother Jones," and union leaders, businessmen, even presidents of the United States all called her "Mother." She began to look the part, always wearing antique black dresses; she frequently referred to her advanced age, her impending mortality; and by her very looks she invoked a mother's claim to moral virtue. Yet Mother Jones skillfully combined her saintly image with hell-fire oratory and raw physical courage. She stood up to police, private detectives, and national guardsmen; she flaunted judges' injunctions and defied governors; she was arrested several times, and spent months in prison. She organized the wives of workers for powerful demonstrations, and she cajoled, encouraged, and berated union workers to stay true to

their organizations. As *Mother Jones*, she was able to make moral claims speaking for the family of labor. Her message rejected the untrammled rule of the marketplace and substituted the necessity of creating humane communities for working families. She invoked wrenching images of blood stolen, bodies mangled, and youth exploited to dramatize the injustice of poverty in America. Above all, she gave working people hope and told them that their *collective* aspirations were in the best traditions of American freedom.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the era of her greatest prominence, it is important to remember the conditions of laboring men and women. Roughly three quarters of a million men mined coal, were paid in company scrip, and made roughly \$400 per year; their families often lived in company towns and had their lives policed by private armed guards who routinely abrogated their civil liberties. Half a million steelworkers labored on 12-hour shifts, six days a week. Not only men but millions of women and children worked in mills and sweatshops for pennies, sometimes with little option but to work or starve. Beyond simple working conditions, the transformation of America from the Gilded Age through the Progressive era—the re-organization of society, economy, law, politics, and culture that accompanied the growth of vast new concentrations of wealth and power in modern corporations—engendered an era of tremendous ideological ferment. It is best to think of Mother Jones as part of an age that produced the socialism of Eugene Debs, the anarchism of Emma Goldman, the struggle for black rights championed by W. E. B. Du Bois, the cracker-barrel radical journalism of Julius Wayland, and a host of others who responded to the crushing weight of corporate power with new and often radical ideas. All sought to mobilize Americans—through unions, through syndicalism, through politics—even to the point of open rebellion. Mother Jones, in other words, participated in contentious, even violent times.

She worked more for the United Mine Workers than for any other organization, especially in the early days of that organization when it was the largest industrial union in America, and she was instrumental in organizing anthracite miners in Pennsylvania and bituminous workers in the Middle West's Central Competitive Field. She broke with the UMW leadership as it turned more conservative early in the twentieth century. In 1903, she organized an early protest against child labor, the "March of the Mill Children," from Philadelphia to President Theodore Roosevelt's home on Long Island. Between roughly 1905 and 1912, she was on the road organizing for the Socialist Party, and for the radical Western Federation of Miners. She was a founding mother of the Industrial

Workers of the World, and a signer of that group's original charter. But she was willing to help out in any strike, so she worked for a while with copper miners in Calumet, brewery workers in Milwaukee, and garment workers in Chicago. She rejoined the Mine Workers as a paid organizer around 1912, just as it launched two massive efforts that ground on for months and turned quite violent in West Virginia and Colorado. "Medieval West Virginia," she said of the Mountain State, "with its tent colonies on the bleak hills! With its grim men and women! When I get to the other side, I shall tell God almighty about West Virginia." She certainly did not win all of the strikes she was involved with, but she was the most prominent and successful organizer of the Mine Workers, which was, in the early twentieth century, one of America's largest and most successful unions.

After the mine wars, she continued to travel about the country. She worked with Mexican revolutionaries based in the United States who sought their country's freedom from the tyranny of the Porfirio Díaz regime; she raised money for political prisoners like Tom Mooney in California; and she campaigned tirelessly from Chicago to Pittsburgh during the Great Steel Strike of 1919. Yet by the end of World War I, her health began to fail, as did her oratorical powers. She continued to make appearances, and she worked on her autobiography. She stayed embroiled in union politics, supporting various reformers in the United Mine Workers against the autocratic reign of John L. Lewis. On May Day, 1930, she and hundreds of well-wishers celebrated her hundredth birthday (she was really 93). Then, just six months later, she passed away.

She asked to be buried at the Union Miners' Cemetery in Mount Olive, Illinois, alongside the brave boys who fell in labor's cause. Thousands gathered to hear Father John Maguire's funeral oration, and tens of thousands more listened to the services over WCFL, Chicago's voice of labor:

Today, in gorgeous mahogany furnished and carefully guarded offices in distant capitals wealthy mine owners and capitalists are breathing sighs of relief. Today, upon the plains of Illinois, the hillsides and valleys of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, in California, Colorado and British Columbia, strong men and toil worn women are weeping tears of bitter grief. The reasons are the same.... Mother Jones is dead.

Above all, working people thought of Mother Jones as one of their own. If her efforts led to a mixture of successes and failures, of some shops and even industries organized, others not, what is most striking is that she was heard at all. Mother Jones's greatest achievement was creating a loud and clear

voice, for who could be more silenced in early twentieth-century America than an elderly widow, and a working-class immigrant at that. Yet she found a way to find and then raise her prophetic voice in the cause of America's workers. And she was heard.

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JOURNEYMEN CARPENTERS STRIKE IN NEW YORK (1833)

Strikes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by journeymen cordwainers, house carpenters, and printers provide valuable lessons in American labor history. The strike of New York City's journeymen house carpenters of 1833 highlights the problematic situations many artisans faced when confronting their employer's whims, fancies, and heightened sense of power.

Artisans who engaged in combining faced conspiracy charges by the courts, which often led to heavy fines and imprisonment, as the example of the haters of New York City in 1823 shows. However, such threats did not stop workers from going on strike. By the late 1820s, when labor's awakening first got under way, emboldened workers struck for the 10-hour day. As artisans in nearby Philadelphia in 1827 paved the way for America's nascent labor movement, in New York City that struggle took another step forward in 1833.

Facing greater vulnerability and insecurity, New York's journeymen carpenters felt compelled to demand higher wages and less hours of labor. As their own circular stated, they planned to "render justice where justice is due." Formerly they had been working for \$1.37 a day, and now they wanted \$1.50. The employers refused to grant the increase, and a strike ensued. At that point, the journeymen house carpenters issued an address "to the Citizens of New York" in mid-May, telling them that they were determined to adhere to their demands until they were met. Within

days, they had deliberated and passed resolutions approving the conduct in general of the Journeymen House Carpenters as being the only means by which they could establish themselves as freemen and gain a compensation for their labors equivalent to the services rendered.

The New York *Evening Post* (June 10, 1833) counted between one to two thousand journeymen house carpenters on strike. Its editor claimed that rancorous feelings between the large body of useful mechanics and their recalcitrant bosses or master carpenters brought on the strike, commenting that not only had the artisans lost enormous wealth, but that wasted wealth had forever been "lost to the community," which resulted in a "total and irremediable loss." Responding to an editorial in the New York *Journal of Commerce* (May 22, 1833) urging every good citizen to "set his face like a flint against all combinations" that either raised or depressed the price, the Typographical Society quickly issued a circular "to the Journeymen Mechanics and Artisans of New York," calling upon all trades to appoint delegates to meet in "a general union." Declaring that "the time has now arrived for the mechanics of our city to arise to their strength," they determined not to ever again "submit to the thralldom which they had patiently borne for many years," nor "suffer employers" who took unfair advantage of their labor. As fellow mechanics engaged in the same cause, they promised to assist the striking journeymen carpenters by getting each member to donate 25 cents a week during the nearly month-long strike.

Before appealing for aid, 11 journeymen jewelers sent them \$13. Afterward, the strikers appointed a committee to receive aid "from those who feel friendly towards us in the struggle for our right." Soon printers, tailors, masons, brush makers, tobacconists, and others helped them out. Next, some 15 trades met in separate meetings, passed resolutions of sympathy, made collections for the benefit of the strikers, and took new efforts to secure their self-protection; other enterprising men called a meeting to create "a general union of the Journeymen Mechanics and Artisans of every branch in this city." Thus aided by the contributions of nearly \$1,200, the journeymen house carpenters, noted the *Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer* (June 3, 1833), could now afford to hold out.

The journeymen house carpenters won their battle and returned to work on their own terms on June 17: \$1.50 for a day of 10 hours from March 10 to November 10, thereafter \$1.37 for a day of nine hours for the remainder of the year.

On August 14, 1833, nine trades organized the General Trades Union (GTU); a year later, 20 more trades representing 11,500 men had joined somewhere

between 20% and 30% of Manhattan's entire white male workforce—prompting the *Evening Post* to ponder such implications.

The birth of the city's trades union thus dates from the journeymen house carpenters strike of 1833. That strike not only became the nucleus around which the GTU was formed, but further, notes the historian Edward Pessen, the cornerstone upon which the early labor movement was based.

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JUSTICE FOR JANITORS

"*Si se puede!*" "Yes, we can!" janitors chanted on picket lines in cities across the United States, rattling noisemakers made from soda cans and stones. Justice for Janitors, a national campaign launched by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in 1987, combined street theater and civil disobedience with legal and corporate strategies to organize the janitorial industry. Justice for Janitor's astonishing success stood out in an era when American unions lost most organizing campaigns.

The SEIU started out as a Chicago janitors union in 1902, and the union built a strong core membership of janitors cleaning office buildings in urban markets, particularly New York City and Chicago. In the mid-1980s, a confluence of factors suddenly wiped out much of the union's strength. During the

1980s, commercial real estate ownership consolidated among a shrinking number of large developers and institutional investors. As real estate values tumbled in a cyclical crash, property owners began contracting out cleaning to independent janitorial companies that competed for business on price. Since labor constituted the single largest expense for a cleaning company, contractors constructed successful bids by trimming wages and benefits. In Los Angeles, for example, janitors' wages fell 36% from 1983 to 1989. Contractors hired newly arrived Central American immigrants, expecting quiescence from largely undocumented workers. In city after city, the union's predominantly African-American janitors swallowed contract concessions as they watched their membership evaporate.

A 1985 lockout in Pittsburgh roused the union to fight back. Members held the line against contract concessions in a yearlong struggle and galvanized the union to develop a plan to deal with the industry's transformation. The union's long-standing decentralization impeded a coordinated response. Powerful local presidents accustomed to autonomy and cordial contract bargaining sometimes refused to join multi-local campaigns, fearing erosion of their authority. Meanwhile, cleaning contractors had mushroomed into national and multinational firms with customer bases that far exceeded any local's ability to affect revenues enough to win with traditional union leverage like strikes.

The SEIU proceeded on two fronts: developing a centralized campaign apparatus, and deploying it in markets without resistant locals. The union created a new division to unite janitor locals under a coordinating umbrella. The division hired a crew of staffers, many from the United Farm Workers, with experience doing community organizing among Latino immigrants. A staffer, Stephen Lerner, helped craft the underlying theory: pressure building owners, not cleaning contractors, with demands for union recognition and fair contracts, since owners could oblige contractors to settle or lose the cleaning contract, and build the added cost of settlement into the contract terms.

They selected Denver in 1987 as the first market for new organizing and demonstrated the range of tactics that would characterize Justice for Janitors. The campaign attacked from above and below. Several contractors cleaned the Denver airport with union crews, while operating nonunion in the city. The union demanded that the political appointees on the airport governing board fire such "double-breasted" contractors unless they recognized the union in the city. Meanwhile, organizers laid out the plan to Latino janitors across the city and worked with community

groups to build coalitions. A cadre of militant janitors marched on their bosses with demands for union recognition and marched in the streets to pressure politicians. Justice for Janitors caught Denver by surprise and won sizable gains within a year.

Buoyed by success, the union turned to Atlanta in 1988. A prominent Atlanta real estate developer with close ties to the Democratic Party looked like a promising target as Atlanta hosted the Democratic National Convention. African-American janitors cleaning his buildings demonstrated when he refused to recognize them, and the union picketed his convention events and dressed their delegates in Justice for Janitors T-shirts. But the mayor crossed the picket line, and the party brass sided with their fund-raiser over the janitors. Atlanta showed that political pressure and street militancy would not be enough in most cities.

Los Angeles and Washington, DC, were the laboratories for honing strategy. Beginning in late 1988, organizers in Los Angeles started talking to the overwhelmingly Latino janitors and building committees of workers willing to act as shock troops. Many workers had fled bloody civil war and insurgencies in El Salvador and Guatemala (and some had fought in those conflicts, as insurgents or soldiers) and found civil disobedience far less daunting than did native-born workers. Janitor committees heckled building owners at restaurants and country clubs by day and signed up members in house visits and on bus rides at night. Meanwhile, organizers tallied unpaid overtime hours and safety problems and used the union's lawyers to assemble legal complaints alleging employer violations of federal wage and hour and safety laws. And the campaign used leaflets and raucous demonstrations to compel office-building tenants to force building owners to settle with the union. Tenants resented the publicity but invariably complained to owners, thus accomplishing the union's goals. After registering modest successes, the union came up against an intransigent employer in Century City, a large office complex. Janitors and organizers agitated for a strike. The workers struck in May 1990 and ran a noisy picket line filled with community allies. Tensions rose among building owners and police. On June 15, as janitors and their allies marched toward Century City, the police attacked, clubbing marchers in full view of television cameras. Public support for the janitors boiled over, obliging the mayor to speak out for the janitors and driving the union's powerful New York local president to finally threaten the cleaning contractor to settle in Los Angeles or risk unrest in New York. The contractor settled, and with a major contractor defeated, janitors rapidly seized the rest of the market, winning a master agreement by 1991.

Building owners proved more intractable in Washington DC, where they had a strong industry association to coordinate their opposition and the union had scant membership. The union dug in and experimented with tactics like protesting zoning changes desired by developers and challenging favorable real estate tax assessments. Civil disobedience escalated from marches and building-lobby demonstrations to highly coordinated mass actions like blocking major traffic arteries during rush hour. The local's African-American leadership, unprepared for an infusion of Latino workers, bucked the International and resisted the campaign. After seven years of pitched battle, the International called a public truce to ratchet down the hostilities and trusted the local. In 1997, the union finally began picking up settlements.

Several key organizing and bargaining concepts shaped Justice for Janitors. First, the union abjured National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)-supervised elections to demonstrate a majority and compel employer bargaining. With extremely high turnover among janitors and many undocumented workers, an election would represent only a snapshot in time of a fluctuating membership. Moreover, the NLRB procedures treated the cleaning contractor as the employer rather than the building owner, who actually controlled the bargaining relationship. Instead, organizers built a militant minority among janitors and pressed for recognition via a majority of signed union cards or a community election. This spared the union the endless litigation and arcane bureaucratic maneuvering that the NLRB election procedure had become. Second, the union negotiated "trigger" agreements with cleaning contractors that initially granted recognition and union rights but modest wage and benefit improvements. Once the union signed up a majority of contractors in a market, the agreements "triggered" negotiations among all the contractors to set a market rate. This strategy forestalled the problem of making a union contractor uncompetitive in a market shaped by labor costs. With a majority of contractors organized, no contractor was disadvantaged by the extra costs for higher wages and benefits. Trigger agreements functioned as a mechanism for pattern bargaining in the service sector, and the SEIU exported the practice to its other service-sector campaigns. The SEIU also laid the groundwork to link markets in national campaigns by lining up contracts in multiple cities to terminate on the same dates. And in 1995, the SEIU required all janitor contracts to include a provision stipulating the right to honor picket lines.

Critics generally assailed Justice for Janitors from two directions: union democracy and the trigger

agreements. Where recalcitrant local officials refused to participate, the SEIU simply removed them, installing trustees to run the locals and then running the trustees for the presidency. In some cases, these trustees came from the rank and file, like Rocio Saenz, a Mexican-born janitor who took over the Boston local; others came from the ranks of union staff organizers, like Mike Garcia in Los Angeles or Michael Fishman in New York. At the same time, the SEIU merged small city locals, many of which represented workers in multiple industries, into regional or state-wide janitorial locals; it was hard for rank-and-file workers to campaign or win office in these staff-run organizations.

As for the trigger agreements, which some derided as settlements for a “nickel and dues checkoff,” criticism subsided abruptly after the SEIU ran a national rolling strike to win health-care benefits in 2000. In April, janitors walked out in Los Angeles, San Diego, and Chicago; as contracts expired in 30 markets, including New York, Cleveland, Chicago, and Seattle, contractors settled quickly, some before expiration. That October, janitors in Stamford and Hartford, Connecticut, struck for union recognition. Janitors routed contractors across the country, winning sizable wage increases and health-care benefits. The union turned to organizing the suburban markets around its strongholds and picked up Orange County, Long Island, suburban Chicago, and northern New Jersey. In 2000, Ken Loach, a leftist British filmmaker,

produced “Bread and Roses,” a Hollywood movie based on the Los Angeles campaign. Justice for Janitors had arrived.

In 2005, 20 years after launching Justice for Janitors, over 70% of janitors in 23 of the top 50 U.S. cities were organized. Despite its great successes, however, the union had lost ground. The South remained overwhelmingly nonunion, and burgeoning suburban office markets added janitors much faster than the union could organize them. The SEIU estimated that its density in the industry had slipped from 40% in the 1950s to 10% in 1980 to 6% by 2000. But a victory in 2005 offered hope. Janitors in New York, Chicago, and dozens of other cities honored picket lines thrown up by Houston janitors working for the same building contractor. The contractor folded quickly, and the union won a master agreement in Houston, marking the first real beachhead in the South.

JENNIFER LUFF

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See also **Service Employees’ International Union**

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KANSAS COURT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Kansas Court of Industrial Relations was an experiment in state-mediated labor relations that grew out of the Kansas coal strike of 1919. The court was actually a three-man board appointed by the governor that could make rules concerning labor relations, settle disputes, and take over and run businesses. It allowed for collective bargaining but declared strikes illegal. The Kansas Court of Industrial Relations was abolished in 1925 by the Kansas Legislature after the Supreme Court of the United States overturned a number of its decisions and curtailed its power.

In November of 1919, the United Mine Workers (UMW) declared a national strike and thousands of Kansas miners heeded the call. The strike was declared illegal by President Wilson, and the UMW called it off, but 12,000 Kansas miners led by Alexander Howat, president of UMW District 14, stayed out and threatened the state with a coal shortage heading into winter. In response the Kansas Supreme Court allowed the state government to take over the mines. Republican Governor Henry Allen still could not induce the miners to return to work, so he called for volunteers and got about 10,000 mostly college student volunteers to work as scabs, many of them recruited during halftime of the Kansas–Missouri football game. These volunteers were reinforced by the Kansas National Guard and about 600 regular army troops.

This strike was soon defeated, and state control of the mines lasted only three weeks, but Governor Allen

wanted to avoid any future strikes in vital services. The month following the coal strike, Allen called a special session of the state legislature of Kansas in January of 1920 to establish a labor arbitration board that would have authority over any labor disputes in an industry that affected the public welfare. This new Kansas Court of Industrial Relations was given the power to regulate working hours, fix a minimum wage, prohibit strikes, run certain industries if necessary, and levy severe penalties for noncompliance.

The court attracted considerable national attention as an experiment, but because it severely curtailed the rights of workers to strike and gave the government almost unlimited power to arbitrate labor disputes, it was vehemently opposed by organized labor. In 1922, Allen used the court to outlaw picketing during a railroad strike and even arrested his friend William White, editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, for putting a placard in favor of the strike in his window. White subsequently became the first Kansan to win the Pulitzer for his attack on this arbitrary arrest and his defense of free speech.

Some employers also objected to the activities of the court, as in the case of the Wolff Packing Company, which was ordered to increase wages to its workers in January of 1921. Wolff Packing Company appealed this decision to the Supreme Court of the United States, arguing that the decision violated the company's Fourteenth Amendment right to have no property taken without due process. In the case *Chas. Wolff Packing Co. v. Court of Industrial Relations of State of Kansas*, 262 U.S. 522 (1923), the Supreme

Court unanimously overturned this decision of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations on the grounds that the declaration of a legislature that a business is concerned with the public interest is insufficient grounds for regulating that business. This severely curtailed the Kansas Court of Industrial Relation's power.

The court heard 166 cases over its 5-year existence and was lauded by many politicians as a novel experiment, but it was generally regarded as a failure.

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See also **United Mine Workers of America**

KEARNEY, DENIS (1847–1907) Workingmen's Party of California

Denis Kearney was a leader of the Workingmen's Party of California (WPC) in the late 1870s and a vehement advocate of Chinese exclusion. A polarizing figure with scant labor background, Kearney was an electrifying speaker whose racist oratory helped nationalize the issue of Chinese immigration.

Kearney was born on February 1, 1847, in Oakmount, County Cork, Ireland. The second of seven sons from a poor family, he went to sea as a cabin boy at age eleven and over the next decade worked his way up to first mate and captain. He married Mary Anne Leary in 1870 and 2 years later settled in San Francisco, where he purchased a draying, or trucking, business. He became an American citizen in 1876. Although he had little formal schooling, he attended a club known as the Lyceum of Self-Culture, at which he participated in weekly debates and developed his speaking skills.

Kearney burst onto the public scene in 1877 in the wake of the national railroad strike after members of an "anticoolie" club barged into a workers' meeting in San Francisco in July and commandeered the audience. With shouts of "on to Chinatown," gangs of white men and boys roamed the city, attacking Chinese homes and property. Kearney joined a vigilante group to suppress the rioters, or "hoodlums," as the press labeled them. In August many of these hoodlums, along with workers and sympathizers, began gathering at a large, vacant space near City

Hall, called the sandlots. Amid the glow of bonfires and torches, sandlot speakers—led by Kearney, who had switched sides—denounced corporations, monopolists, and Chinese immigration. On August 22, Kearney helped organize the Workingmen's Trade and Labor Union of San Francisco and was named secretary.

The momentum of these nightly meetings led to formation of the WPC, and on October 5, Kearney was made president. The party's most fiery orator, Kearney laced his speeches with incendiary comments. "There isn't an honest man in office today," he told one crowd. "The only way to get laws passed in our favor is to surround the Capitol with bayonets and shoot those who vote against us." Kearney was arrested in November for incitement to riot—the first of many such arrests—but acquitted in January 1878. Under Kearney's direction, the party grew, and although his defiant rhetoric and uncompromising personality caused dissension, he remained its leader, chief organizer, and spokesman. Kearney attracted followers by uttering class-based appeals, but he directed his most vicious attacks at Chinese immigrants. The "moon-eyed lepers," with their "putrid carcasses," could live on "rice and rats," he declared. The Pacific Coast was "cursed with parasites from China.... My chief mission here is to secure the expulsion of Chinese labor from California." Sandlot meetings began and ended with Kearney's trademark cry, "the Chinese must go." As he later wrote the English historian Lord Bryce, "Every speech and every document written by me ended with the words, 'And whatever happens the Chinese must go.'" (D. Nunis, *Pacific Historical Review* 36, 1967)

In early 1878, WPC candidates scored victories in San Francisco, Santa Clara, Oakland, and Sacramento. The party's swift ascent alarmed Republicans and Democrats, and in the election for delegates to the state constitutional convention in June, the two major parties nominated a joint nonpartisan slate. Still the WPC captured one-third of the delegates. Flushed with success, Kearney embarked on a tour of the East in the summer of 1878. He spoke in more than a dozen cities, from Boston and Washington to New York and Chicago. Newspapers everywhere reported his denunciations of "capitalistic vagabonds," "lecherous bondholders," and "Asiatic lepers"; the enormous press coverage turned the "howling hoodlum" into a national figure and working-class spokesman. Kearney voiced little interest in unions, however, urging workers instead to abandon the two major parties. "The Workingmen's party must win," he said in Cincinnati, "if it has to wade knee deep in blood and perish in battle." Hoping to cement an alliance with the fledgling Greenback-Labor party,

Kearney also campaigned in Massachusetts for Ben Butler, then running for governor as a Greenbacker. Although showering him with attention, the press excoriated Kearney as a Communist and demagogue, and most workers, union leaders, and labor advocates—who initially welcomed him—soon spurned him for his lack of substantive ideas and his race baiting of Chinese immigrants.

Largely discredited in the East, Kearney returned in November to California where he still retained a sizable following. He campaigned heavily in support of the new state constitution, which Californians approved in May 1879, and steered the WPC toward nominating a large slate of candidates for the upcoming statewide elections. In August, two weeks before the voting, a would-be assassin shot the WPC candidate for mayor of San Francisco, putting the city on edge. Kearney counseled peace, and the party swept to victory, electing the chief justice of the Supreme Court, five associate justices, 11 senators, 17 assemblymen, and the mayor of San Francisco, who recovered. Both the WPC's and Kearney's influence reached their zenith. Leaders of the National Greenback-Labor party, then mounting a serious challenge for the White House in 1880, took notice of these victories and sought to capitalize on them. By winning over Kearney, they hoped to win over the WPC, gain workingmen's votes, and thereby capture California. The Greenbackers invited Kearney to become a leader of the party, and he readily accepted. Emboldened by his newfound respectability, he ratcheted up the intensity of his sandlot speeches. Proposing to build a gallows on the sandlots, he declared, "If I hear any man plotting to kill me, I will kill him so help me God." For uttering these words, Kearney was arrested.

While Kearney was in prison, the WPC split over whether to support the Greenbackers or the Democrats for president. The state Greenback party meanwhile repudiated Kearney. Undeterred, Kearney, released from prison in May 1880, immediately headed to the Greenbackers' national convention in Chicago. In what would be the final major speech of his life, Kearney attacked his enemies as "beggars... robbers... pimp[s] and nincompoops" and declared, "The Chinese must go, even if we are to deluge the state of California in blood." His speech polarized the convention, and he returned home to find the WPC collapsing and the Greenback party imploding. Most WPC members returned to the Democratic fold, and the Greenbackers quickly faded. A year later Kearney himself provided an epitaph: "There is no Workingmen's Party now, and it would take a telescope larger than Lick's to find a vestige of the giant that shook not only the state but the nation." Kearney all

but disappeared from politics. He later inherited a fortune, invested in wheat, sugar, and oil, and died in obscurity on April 24, 1907, in Alameda, California.

Kearney leaves a legacy both familiar and unique. He fits into a long line of charismatic figures who combined rabid populism with vicious racism. Like Mike Walsh in the 1840s, Tom Watson at the turn of the century, and George Wallace in the 1960s, he gained notoriety by spouting class-conscious, racist epithets. A magnetic orator who both attracted and repelled, Kearney rallied supporters to form a vibrant third party, yet his querulous, mercurial personality played a central role in its demise. He became synonymous with the anti-Chinese crusade, which led to passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.

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See also **Chinese Exclusion Acts**

KEATING-OWEN CHILD LABOR ACT (1916)

The Keating-Owen Child Labor Act of 1916 banned goods produced by child workers from interstate and foreign commerce and was the first statute that prescribed federal regulation of child labor. The act set a minimum age of 14 for factory work, an 8-hour day for workers between the ages of 14–16, a 6-day week, and prohibited work between the hours of 7:00 P.M.–6:00 A.M. With bipartisan support in Congress, President Woodrow Wilson signed it into law on September 1, 1916, to take effect exactly 1 year later. Its passage culminated decades of activism by social justice reformers and labor advocates, investigations compiled

by the U.S. Children's Bureau, and public educational campaigns waged by the National Child Labor Committee (NALC) to combat the evils of child labor. After being in effect for only 9 months, the Supreme Court overturned the Keating-Owen Child Labor Act with its *Dagenhart* decision on June 3, 1918.

Child labor reform was a complex proposition involving the minimum age and maximum hours for children across diverse industries and regions in the country. Labor and social reformers began investigating the exploitation of child workers in the late nineteenth century and campaigned for the enactment of state regulation. By 1900, 26 states had passed laws for compulsory school attendance, minimum employment age, or laws that prohibited children from night work or work in dangerous industries. However the patchwork of state laws lacked enforcement, were ignored by employers, and circumvented by needy working-class families. A national movement to end child labor began in the twentieth century and was organized by the NALC.

A federal solution to child labor faced strong resistance from manufacturers' associations and fractiousness among political moderates and progressives. When in 1906, Senator Albert Beveridge suggested that goods produced by children be banned from interstate commerce, objections arose questioning federal interference in parental and states' rights; NALC added its support and lost members, and American Federation of Labor (AFL) President Samuel Gompers argued federal intervention undercut labor's autonomy. Federal attention was sustained during the administrations of Roosevelt and Taft that supported a study of children's and women's working conditions by the Bureau of Labor, banned child labor in the District of Columbia, and created the U.S. Children's Bureau. In 1914, NALC drafted what became the Palmer-Owen bill (Rep. A. Mitchell Palmer [D-PA] and Sen. Robert L. Owen [D-OK]), which, like the Beveridge bill, banned from interstate commerce goods produced by children under the age of 14 and set an 8-hour day for workers aged 14–16. Although President Wilson doubted its constitutionality, he gave his support, and on February 13, 1915, it passed the House, with sectional opposition from representatives of southern manufacturing states—North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi and Georgia—where more than one-quarter of cotton and textile mill workers were children. The bill did not make it to the Senate before adjournment and was reintroduced to Congress the following year. Sponsored by Representative Edward Keating (D-CO) and Senator Owen, it passed the House, 343 to 46, and the Senate with 52 votes for the bill, 12 against, and 32 abstentions.

Anticipating the passage of the Keating-Owen bill, the executive committee of Southern Cotton Manufacturers raised a suit to challenge it before the U.S. Federal Court in North Carolina, which resulted in an injunction of the act's provisions in the state on August 31, 1917. The Supreme Court received *Hammer v. Dagenhart* quickly and in a 5-4 decision ruled that the act had transcended congressional power of the Commerce Clause (Article I, Section 8, Clause 3) and that authority rested in the states. Since its passage many workplaces had conformed to the Keating-Owen Child Labor Act, yet the lifting of federal regulation reversed child labor's decline. Reformers continued their campaigns, gaining support for a tax on profits produced with child labor (Pomerene Amendment to the Revenue Act of 1919) and a constitutional amendment in 1924. However not until the New Deal's provisions during the 1930s would the standards set by the Keating-Owen Child Labor Act be realized.

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KEEFE, DANIEL (SEPTEMBER 27, 1852–JANUARY 2, 1929) Seamen and Longshoremens Union Leader

An example of the union bureaucrat of the late nineteenth century, Keefe comfortably traversed the world of union hall and corporate office. Concerned primarily with upholding the terms of the labor contract, Keefe was the quintessential union leader in the mold

of Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Keefe began his career as a union functionary by organizing seamen who worked along the Great Lakes ports of the Midwest. Prior to that he had worked as a tugboat hand along the Great Lakes, which had given him an invaluable insight into the working conditions of seamen throughout the region. What he saw appalled him. Long hours and low wages were the norm. On board the ships the seamen confronted unsanitary conditions, poor food, and tyrannical skippers. Therefore in 1878, Keefe began to organize these men, quickly gaining results. The seamen joined the new organization, the Lake Seamen's Benevolent Association (LSBA), in great numbers. The LSBA established wage rates for all members, which were generally pasted or pinned to a wall near the docks. The union also encouraged collective action in defending their rights. Seamen for example refused to work with nonunion labor. Union members also boycotted merchants or landlords who serviced nonunion seamen.

Such tactics bore fruit as the LSBA took firm control over hiring and wages. Ship owners counter-attacked in 1880–1881 by bringing in replacement labor and discharging union members. The situation was made more difficult due to internal strife within the LSBA. Sailors had been fighting a running battle to exclude from their ranks seamen who worked on steam-driven vessels. The sailors were losing the battle however, as steam ships were rapidly displacing sailing ships. The bickering weakened the union just as the employers embarked on their anti-union campaign. By 1881, the LSBA had been effectively destroyed on the Great Lakes.

Keefe then turned his attention to the Great Lakes' longshoremen. As with his organizational strategy with the seamen, Keefe traveled from port to port signing up new members. By 1892, Keefe had successfully organized 11 locals from Chicago to Buffalo. Keefe called an organizational meeting in Detroit, and there the assembled delegates agreed on the name of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA). The ILA adopted an aggressive policy of expansion. Not content to just organize longshoremen, the ILA reached out to other workers along the Great Lakes coastline. Correspondingly Keefe helped bring into the ILA fold marine engineers and oilers, tugboat workers, marine pilots, fishermen, grain elevator workers, steam shovel engineers, and marine pile drivers. To a large extent Keefe had succeeded in creating an industrial union. By the end of this initial round of organizing, the ILA had organized 40 marine occupations.

Such territorial advancement encountered resistance. Other unions, most notably the Seamen's Unions, cried foul. For the next few decades, a jurisdictional war broke out as a series of unions charged that Keefe had trampled on their areas of operation. Keefe's political posturing reflected the labor movement's conservative tilt. Once signed, Keefe insisted that ILA locals abide by the contract. When union locals refused and embarked on strike action during the life of the contract, Keefe was merciless in his response. Keefe supplied strikebreakers to break industrial action by his local unions. For Keefe, the contract was sacrosanct; any action that threatened the terms of the contract, whether strikes or boycotts, were perceived as being unwarranted, and at worst, ungrateful.

Keefe's comfortable relationship with employers was epitomized by his relationship with U.S. Senator Mark Hanna and the National Civic Federation (NCF). The group was created ostensibly to steer a middle course between employers who espoused a rabid anti-unionism and radical trade union leaders. Keefe's reputation as a no-strike labor leader was considered particularly attractive. Keefe's elevation as supposed responsible labor leader and member of the NCF had a remarkable effect on him. By the turn of the century, he carried himself more as a successful businessman as he dressed in elegant clothes and smoked expensive cigars.

But for all his conservative leanings, Keefe remained a union leader. Under his tenure the ILA grew into a fighting organization. By 1905, the ILA had 100,000 members. The ports of the Great Lakes had been organized, as had those in Galveston and New Orleans. But in 1908, Keefe abruptly resigned from the ILA. The episode remains clouded in mystery. The most likely reason is that the AFL leadership (who resented Keefe's expansionist aims) had pressured ILA officials to force him out. Whatever the reason, Keefe was a union leader who oversaw the rapid expansion and consolidation of the ILA. Unfortunately such a strategy resulted in a union that refused to support other maritime unions in recognition battles, and in some extreme cases, the same union disciplined its own members for violating signed contracts by striking.

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KELLEY, FLORENCE (SEPTEMBER 12, 1859–FEBRUARY 17, 1932)
Antisweatshop Activist

Florence Kelley dedicated her life to industrial reform, serving as a prominent leader in the antisweatshop movement. As the daughter of William “Pig Iron” Kelley, a radical Republican congressman and Caroline Bartram Kelley, a Quaker and abolitionist, she made an early commitment to social reform that persisted throughout her life. Kelley earned her bachelor’s degree in 1882 as a member of the first generation of college-educated women. She trained in the social sciences both at Cornell University and at the University of Zurich after the University of Pennsylvania refused her admission on account of her sex. During her studies abroad, Kelley became a socialist and translated into English Friedrich Engels’s *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844* and a Karl Marx speech on free trade. When Kelley returned to New York in 1886 with her Russian husband and three children, she continued her socialist activities and began to focus her energies on reforming the circumstances of wage-earning women and children.

Kelley became a leader in the antisweating movement when she moved to Illinois with her children in 1891. Divorced, Kelley became a resident at the Hull-House settlement in Chicago where she immersed herself in industrial reform activities. In 1892, she joined with the Illinois Woman’s Alliance in reporting on the neglect of school children in the city’s poorest wards. That year she also conducted an investigation of the labor conditions in the Chicago garment industry for the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics, participated in a survey of the city’s tenements for the federal commissioner of labor, and was one of the key speakers at a mass meeting denouncing the sweatshop. Kelley and other Hull-House residents enlarged this study and produced the *Hull-House Maps and Papers* (1895), depicting the occupation, nationality, and living conditions of the residents of Chicago’s nineteenth ward. With this evidence Kelley drafted and secured a state law that set maximum hours for women, prohibited child labor, set factory safety standards, and provided for state inspections. Governor John Altgeld appointed Kelley the chief factory inspector, and with a staff of 11, she immediately began to document violations for the state’s attorney. Frustrated that most of the violations were not prosecuted, Kelley secured her law license and prosecuted some of the cases herself.

In the mid-1890s, Kelley and the antisweating campaign endured setbacks, leading Kelley to engage in

a new consumer-based strategy. In 1895, in *Ritchie v. Illinois* the Illinois Supreme Court held that the 8-hour provision in Kelley’s factory law was unconstitutional because it inhibited female workers and their employers’ freedom to contract. The following year John Tanner won the governor’s election and fired Kelley as chief factory inspector. In response in 1897, she joined with wealthy clubwoman Ellen Henrotin to create an Illinois Consumers’ League, modeled after the New York league that worked to use the purchasing power of middle-class women to improve the treatment of factory workers. In 1898, she represented the Illinois League at a multibranch convention and suggested that they create a white label that they would award to goods produced under fair conditions. The branch leagues created the National Consumers’ League (NCL) to coordinate this effort and chose Kelley to run its operations. Kelley moved with her children to the Henry Street settlement house in New York in 1899 to serve as the NCL secretary.

Kelley led the NCL for three decades. She expanded the organization, developing additional local leagues throughout the North and West and led the national and local leagues in their white-label and protective-labor legislation campaigns. Initially Kelley supervised inspections of working conditions in factories throughout the country, assessing which companies should receive an NCL white label. The league conferred the distinction to those who followed state labor laws, did not use home manufacturing or child labor, and did not require overtime. It then urged middle-class female consumers, through ethical and economic appeals, to purchase only goods with a white label. Kelley enhanced the campaign by reviving her state and federal legislation efforts to establish factory safety standards, maximum hours and minimum pay for female workers, and efforts to defend existing laws against constitutional challenges. Most significantly the NCL submitted a brief through then-Attorney Louis Brandeis in the defense of Oregon’s maximum hour law for women. The brief included sociological evidence collected by the NCL that illustrated the hazards of working long hours in factories. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Oregon 10-hour law in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908).

Kelley took the NCL agenda beyond its membership and broadened her social reform work. She sought assistance for the antisweating campaigns from numerous organizations, including the Women’s Trade Union League, the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, the National Congress of Mothers, and the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), educating them on the hazards

of sweating and the importance of protective labor legislation. She assisted in the creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (1909) and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (1919). She fought for woman suffrage, serving for a time as vice-president of the NAWSA. She worked with Lillian Wald and other Henry Street settlement residents in the establishment of the U.S. Children's Bureau in 1911 and in conjunction with the NCL, provided key support for the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Protection (1921) that provided federal funds for health care to working mothers and their children.

Kelley persevered in her social and labor reform work in the 1920s as the political climate became more conservative and opposition to labor reform from the courts, the legislature, and some other women's organizations intensified. During the Red Scare and its aftermath surrounding World War I, Kelley had to defend herself against right-wing, anti-Communists attacks. Kelley and the NCL also fought against the 1921 Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) proposed by the National Woman's party, which she and the NCL perceived as an indirect attack on protective labor reforms for women. In 1923, in *Adkins v. Children's Hospital* the U.S. Supreme Court found that a state minimum-wage law for women was unconstitutional, and in 1926 Congress stopped funding the health care programs created under the Sheppard-Towner Act. When the Great Depression began, Kelley and the entire labor movement endured even more opposition to labor reform.

Kelley died in 1932, but her work survived her. During the New Deal years in the 1930s, the U.S. government adopted many of her labor reform efforts, most significantly the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act that included minimum wage and maximum hours for men and women.

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See also **Hull-House; Illinois Woman's Alliance; National Consumers' League; Women's Trade Union League**

KENNEY O'SULLIVAN, MARY (JANUARY 8, 1864–JANUARY 18, 1943) Cofounder, American Women's Trade Union League

Mary Kenney O'Sullivan was a labor activist and a reformer. The daughter of immigrant railroad workers, she became the first woman organizer for the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and was one of the founders of the American Women's Trade Union League. She especially fostered cross-class alliances among women and used them to advance the interests of laboring women.

Kenney's labor activism was infused with demands for gender equality. Kenney's first job in Chicago was for a bindery company. The bindery trade was one of many that divided tasks by gender and paid a lower wage for women's jobs. Kenney organized her sister workers in the trade to both overcome its gender division and to secure better working conditions.

Kenney sought assistance for organizing her first union from the Ladies Federal Labor Union 2703 (LFLU), a new organization founded to organize female workers. Kenney went from shop to shop persuading female bookbinders to come to an organizational meeting where the LFLU, in its first undertaking, helped the workers form the Women's Bookbinding Union No.1 (WBU). Kenney was elected the WBU delegate to the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly.

Kenney next accepted help in her organizing efforts from Hull-House settlement founder Jane Addams. Hull-House became the meeting place for the WBU and many of the settlement's residents and middle-class affiliates assisted Kenney in organizing unions, managing strikes, and providing direct assistance to female workers. Kenney also persuaded Addams to found Jane Club, a housing cooperative for working women situated near Hull-House. Kenney served as president of the cooperative.

In 1891, AFL President Samuel Gompers appointed Kenney the federation's first national female organizer. The AFL authorized the position for only

a 5-month trial period. Kenney began her service on the East Coast, traveling from New York to Massachusetts attempting to organize women working in the trades. Most notably Kenney worked with Leonora O'Reilly in organizing the Local 16 of the United Garment Workers in New York. Against Gompers's recommendation however, the AFL terminated Kenney's appointment after 5 months, explaining that her low success rate did not justify the financial costs. Its decision demonstrated the AFL's tenuous relationship with female workers. Gompers nonetheless encouraged Kenney and other female labor leaders to continue to organize female workers.

Kenney returned to Chicago and Hull-House in 1892, where she resumed her organization efforts and developed a friendship with labor activist Florence Kelley. Kenney assisted Kelley in her campaign against child labor and the sweating system. Kelley's tactics included both investigations of industries that employed women and children, paying under factory wages to complete work at home, and drafting legislation to abolish such work and regulate the hours of work for women and children. Kenney assisted Kelley in the investigations and chaired a mass meeting in support of a bill Kelley drafted to end sweating and improve working conditions for women and children. The bill included a provision for the creation of a state inspector's office with deputies to enforce the prohibitions in the legislation. When the bill was enacted in 1893, Kenney was appointed a deputy inspector to serve under chief inspector Florence Kelley.

In the fall of 1893, Kenney moved to Boston to work with social reformer Hannah Parker Kimball and labor activist Jack O'Sullivan. The following year Kenney and O'Sullivan married. The pair continued their labor activities throughout their marriage. Kenney became a member of the board of directors of the Boston Women's Educational and Industrial Union (BWEIU), which lobbied for protective labor legislation, provided services to female workers, studied industrial conditions in the city, and assisted in organizing unions. She was also a member of a women's federal labor union organized primarily by her husband for the AFL that comprised laborers and professionals who worked for labor interests. When O'Sullivan died in a train accident in 1902, Kenney secured employment as a property manager for a real estate association to support herself and her children and continued her labor activism.

In 1903, wealthy reformer and socialist William English Walling solicited Kenney to assist him in establishing an American Women's Trade Union League (WTUL). Modeled after the British WTUL, the American league joined workers, social reformers,

and settlement workers with an aim to organize women into trade unions. Kenney was elected the WTUL's national secretary.

Kenney remained active in the WTUL over the next decade but broadened her activist work in a myriad of directions. Kenney joined with wealthy female reformers to found a summer camp for the children at the Boston Dennison House settlement. She also worked as a trade union reporter for the *Boston Globe* and became a peace activist and woman's suffrage proponent. She supported suffrage because she believed it would help laborers improve their working conditions. She spoke out in anger at antisuffragists, accusing them of not caring about workers.

In 1912, Kenney stopped organizing and ended her relationship with the AFL. She had long urged the AFL to hire more female organizers and pay more attention to the conditions of working women, but her disappointment in the organization climaxed over the AFL's failure to aid striking mill workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Though the AFL did not typically lend its support to unskilled workers, Kenney publicly criticized the federation and lent her support to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), an organization whose mission focused on organizing unskilled workers. When the strike settled, Kenney became an inspector for the Massachusetts Board of Labor and Industries, a position she held for the next 20 years. Kenney retired in 1934 at 70 years of age. She died 9 years later.

Kenney devoted her entire life to the labor movement. Most prominently, she joined her efforts to organize women with the work of middle-class female reformers, significantly facilitating cross-class alliances among women to advance the labor movement.

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See also **Hull-House**

KIRKLAND, LANE (1922–1999)

Lane Kirkland was the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization's (AFL-CIO's) second president. The federation's Kirkland Years, 1979–1995, were contentious, controversial, and ultimately damaging to the labor movement as a whole. The question that historians grapple with is: How much was Kirkland responsible for the AFL-CIO's untimely downturn during the 1980s and early 1990s? Kirkland's detractors point out his administration's many failings. The AFL-CIO seemed powerless to stop the antilabor actions of President Ronald Reagan. Even President George H. W. Bush's "kinder, gentler" conservatism went virtually unchallenged. Under Kirkland's watch, the labor movement seemed to grow frail, unresponsive, and sluggish, unable to provide answers to the difficulties presented by an unfriendly federal government, rising costs of living, and the dramatic changes in the economy. Kirkland's patriots point out that organized labor and the AFL-CIO's chief did the best that they could do in the face of Reaganomics, de-industrialization, and the triumph of political conservatives. They agree that the state of the labor movement has seemingly returned to the 1920s nadir. But they assert that Kirkland's leadership brought unity back to organized labor. Moreover as President Bill Clinton once said, Kirkland was a "five-star general in the global fight for human liberty," supporting democratic movements in Europe, Central America, and the Middle East. Finally Kirkland was the self-proclaimed standard bearer for New Deal Democrats, stumping for the working class's bread-and-butter interests and holding the line against unchecked identity politics.

Joseph Lane Kirkland was the second of Randolph and Louise Kirkland's five children. Born on March 12, 1922, Lane grew up in Camden, South Carolina. He was the product of a fine southern aristocratic family. His male ancestors were men of distinction: planters, judges, politicians, industrialists, entrepreneurs, and even adventurers. Although his parents were not wealthy, Lane had a happy childhood. His father was a cotton buyer and later a cotton broker. In good economic times, the family got by with little to spare. In bad times, like most of the late 1920s and through the 1930s when the bottom dropped out of the cotton market, life was rough. It was during the lean years of the Great Depression that

Lane developed many of his life-long personal characteristics, such as his optimism and equanimity and his politics, which were decided, unabashedly "Rooseveltian." In addition to an adherence to liberal politics, the family as a whole seemed to have liberal views on race. Lane grew up in an integrated neighborhood, and relations between the family and African-Americans appeared to be quite respectful and cordial.

Kirkland's experiences with unions happened outside his middle-class family. In his teenage years, Lane developed a serious case of wanderlust. In 1939, following in the footsteps of his ancestor who had joined the American expedition to circumnavigate the globe, Lane went off to sea, joining the crew of the *S.S. Liberator*, a merchant ship. He remained with the merchant marine after the United States formally entered the Second World War in 1941. During the war he joined Local 88 of the Masters, Mates, and Pilots' Associations, thus beginning a five-decade association with organized labor. Still the draw to devote his life to the labor movement was not an obvious one to Kirkland, and after the war, he toyed with various career moves. But in 1947, Lane went to hear the AFL President William Green speak about unions and the vicious assault on them, specifically the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act. Green, who had all the rhetorical tools of a Baptist minister, moved Kirkland, spurring him to ask Green for a job with the federation. Green gave him a post as a researcher and speechwriter.

Through the late 1940s to the early 1960s, Kirkland's *ad hoc* assignments grew in importance. From writing speeches for the Democratic vice-presidential candidate in 1948, Alben Barkley, to penning those of presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson in 1952, Lane became a top spokesperson for the AFL. His work brought him within the closeted circles of political power in the United States. Perhaps nothing illustrates this more than the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Bill. In 1963, the AFL-CIO finally stepped up its somnambulant campaign for civil rights. President John F. Kennedy (JFK) had on his desk an omnibus civil rights reform bill, which included a provision for a new federal fair employment practices commission (FEPC). The inclusion of an FEPC into the legislation made it quite controversial, causing JFK to shy away from it. It was at this moment that AFL-CIO President George Meany sent his top legislative aide, Andrew Biemiller, as well as Lane Kirkland, to speak with Kennedy. Biemiller and Kirkland convinced the president not to drop his support for fair employment. In the end President Kennedy listened to Meany, Biemiller, and Kirkland, as well as several influential civil rights leaders, such as A. Philip Randolph and

Roy Wilkins, and the bill that passed after his assassination contained the FEPC, which was rechristened the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Despite the legislative advances during the Lyndon Johnson years and Kirkland's appointment in 1969 to be the AFL-CIO's secretary-treasurer, the 1960s were a troubled time for him. His first marriage fell apart in 1969. He witnessed with great apprehension the disintegration and transformation of the Democratic party. In Kirkland's view, the singular goal of liberal politics was to advance the standard of living for the working class. He had very little use for antiwar protestors, feminists, environmentalists, and gay rights activists. Kirkland frequently lamented the introduction of so-called identity politics into his Democratic party. To the end Kirkland remained an anti-Communist, bread-and-butter unionist. He was thus devoted to Great Society politics: the War in Vietnam and the War on Poverty. Unfortunately for him this political outlook was best suited for the Cold War of the 1950s and early 1960s, and not the decades that followed the Vietnam War and Watergate.

By the time Kirkland was elevated to the AFL-CIO presidency in 1979, he was already something of an anachronism. Throughout the 1970s, large segments of the labor movement, including coal miners and truck drivers, were seeking more democratic, less bureaucratic solutions to their problems. Despite his great sympathies with workers everywhere, Kirkland was a product of the federation's bureaucracy. Moreover he was not always comfortable in the national spotlight as George Meany had been, particularly with reporters and the New Left's social activists. Rather than adapt his style to new political realities, Kirkland instead charged ahead, leading with what he knew and understood: Fighting for a better deal for workers and fighting against communism across the globe.

Initially Kirkland's political goals found fertile ground. He and President Jimmy Carter got along well. Together they had worked on a labor-management-government arrangement, the so-called National Accord, which ideally would have ushered in a new era of cooperation and give labor unions unprecedented influence in the formation of national economic policy. Kirkland fashioned the outline of the National Accord in preparation for the 1980 presidential election. The AFL-CIO and its member unions went all out for their candidate, Jimmy Carter. Unfortunately for Kirkland, drumming up political support within the labor movement proved much harder than originally thought. Although union leaders backed Carter, many rank-and-file members voted for Ronald Reagan and conservative contenders for the U.S. Congress. Reagan's ascendancy was a disaster for

the AFL-CIO on the domestic level. And yet Kirkland was able to use Reagan's hard Cold War stance in the world to propel the federation's desire to create more democratic unions around the world.

Reagan's "morning in America" policies were tremendously damaging to the labor movement and workers generally. Under Reagan's leadership, conservatives in the federal government launched long-planned attacks on unions and living standards. They wanted to enact all sorts of reforms from lowering the minimum wage to reducing federal support for collective bargaining and workers' rights. President Reagan first showed the nature of his administration in 1981. Instead of bargaining with striking air traffic controllers, who belonged to the Professional Air Traffic Controller Organization (PATCO), Reagan fired all 10,000 workers. They were subsequently blacklisted as well. While supportive of the workers, the AFL-CIO seemed powerless to rein Reagan in. Kirkland was left with the job of rallying laborers and drumming up support for Walter Mondale's lackluster 1984 presidential campaign.

After the stunning and stinging defeat of organized labor's candidate, Kirkland began to focus more on international issues. He had always been interested in foreign affairs and diplomacy. As a died-in-the-wool cold warrior, Kirkland became the AFL-CIO's point man on the U.S. attempt to challenge the Soviet Union in Europe and Central America. He had been involved in carrying out some of the logistics for the operations surrounding the Bay of Pigs fiasco. In the late 1980s, Kirkland became an important voice in the national debates about Cold War foreign policy. Politically he was to the left of Reagan but to the right of those on the Left. He derided any actions to support the oppressive and murderous right-wing dictatorships and was equally critical of the left-wing Central American revolutionaries and governments. He supported middle-of-the-road democratic forces, especially trade unions set up on the federation's model. At the time Kirkland's moderate view seemed to win few converts. However his position became vindicated with the political transformations in Poland and Nicaragua. Kirkland's support for Lech Walesa's Solidarity Movement was decisive and instrumental in the creation of a prodemocracy, non-Communist Poland. (It also made Kirkland a Polish national hero.)

Kirkland's emphasis on foreign policy as well as his particular political outlook in the Cold War was controversial within the AFL-CIO. Not everyone wanted the federation to adopt a moderate tone in the U.S. approach to the global fight with the Communists. Moreover some felt that the concern with international issues was taking the focus away from

the eroding position of organized labor within the United States. Beginning with the failed PATCO strike, unions suffered a series of setbacks. Encouraged by their victories in the early 1980s, anti-union employers and their associations mounted a frontal assault on organized labor. These right-wing forces found sympathy, support, and assistance from the federal government. President Reagan's appointees on the National Labor Relations Board turned that agency into a decidedly pro-employer body. During the 1980s, workers lost about half of their petitions for certification for collective bargaining. Making matters much worse were dramatic and expansive changes to the American economy. Technological innovation, federally sanctioned use of permanent replacement workers, and de-industrialization worked together to deskill and downsize the labor force. All workers suffered as high-paying manufacturing jobs were replaced by low-paying service jobs, but unions and unionists bore the heavy burdens. By the end of the 1980s, union density was at historic lows.

Kirkland tried the best he could to stem the rising conservative tide against organized labor. In the 1980s, he worked tirelessly to bring unity back to the fractured labor movement. His efforts culminated in the re-entry of three major unions—the United Automobile Workers (1981), the Teamsters (1987), and the United Mine Workers (1989)—into the AFL-CIO. Kirkland also led the charge against such potentially antilabor initiatives as North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Finally he worked to diversify and harmonize the labor movement by encouraging women and minorities to take more leadership positions within the AFL-CIO and by adopting neutral stands on such critical social issues as abortion. Despite these accomplishments, many in the labor movement in general, and the AFL-CIO in particular, felt as though the emperor was fiddling while Rome was burning.

Following the election of President Bill Clinton in 1992, forces within the AFL-CIO began to organize a challenge to Kirkland's presidency. In October 1994, at the federation's annual convention, a group of unionists collectively known as the New Voice, engaged in surprise attacks on Kirkland. Taken completely off guard, he became very defensive and resistant to the calls for reform. In particular the New Voice unionists, who were led by John Sweeney, Linda Chavez-Thompson, and Rich Trumka, wanted a renewed focus on organizing new union members; a new approach to the national media; and new support for women, minorities, and low-income wage earners. Rather than fight his vocal opponents, Kirkland decided to retire in the spring of 1995. He was

devastated by the rebuke, which he saw as a condemnation of all that he had accomplished over the last five decades. Moreover at 72, he had been eyeing retirement for some time. In his place the AFL-CIO chose Tom Donahue, who served as president until October 1995, when the federation elected Sweeney. After his ouster Kirkland faded from public view while traveling, enjoying his family, and working on a memoir that was never published. He died in 1999.

To this day Kirkland's critics have not mollified their views of him. Perhaps we are all still too close to the events to make a decisive judgment. It remains difficult to answer the question whether Kirkland could have done more to reverse organized labor's decline since the 1980s. In the midst of a hostile political environment and during one of the most transformative periods in American economic history, he was able at least to keep the AFL-CIO together, challenge some of the more pernicious politicians and public policies, and score some victories, especially on the international stage. But Kirkland's inability or unwillingness to engage in new organizing campaigns, his disregard of the media, and old-style political style did hamper the growth of the federation. Weighing these historical factors will be the work of future labor historians.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations

KNIGHTS OF LABOR

On May 4, 1884, the Union Pacific Railroad Company slashed pay rates for all of its workers. Over 12,000 machinists, yardmen, freight handlers, firemen, and engineers from Nebraska to Oregon struck in protest. In Denver, Colorado, a committee of railroad laborers came to editor and Knights of Labor (KOL) organizer Joseph Buchanan's office for help. The men convinced Buchanan to address a group of local picketers. When he arrived the KOL leader heard militant rhetoric that revealed both workers' anger and their spirit of collectivism. He helped provide expression for the raw passions of these men and their

fellow operatives in other cities by creating KOL District Assembly (DA) 82, which represented all Union Pacific employees from Omaha to Portland. Over the next decade DA 82 proved one of the KOL's strongest affiliates, and its workers earned the highest pay on any railroad line.

During the next year, 1885, tensions between Denver's railroad laborers and their employer arose again, this time spilling over into a citywide display of working-class militancy. Picketers, rioters, paraders, and boycotters blended as a series of actions supported the KOL insistence that all workers receive the remuneration their work had earned them. The housewives and female laborers belonging to Denver's two women's local assemblies of the KOL, for example, appeared on Monday May 18, the first day of the strike, to halt scabs by pushing them into irrigation ditches. Buchanan quipped that a "scab tried to get through the line" and "half a dozen women gave him the 'ditch degree.'" "Those house wives of labor" he wrote, "were fervent believers in the virtues of water." Later that evening protestors marched two miles "loudly singing the battle hymn of organized labor in the West, 'Hold the Fort, ye Knights of Labor!'" Buchanan remembered that the singing stopped twice. First the crowd held "a little bonfire" outside the office of the *Rocky Mountain News*, burning recent issues that had condemned the strike. Second the "nearly two thousand voices" stopped singing to issue "cat-calls, groans, and hisses" at Shed's Cheap Store. The KOL organized a boycott of the store because it refused to recognize the local clerks' union.

To understand Buchanan's activism is to understand the KOL. Born in Missouri in 1851, he eventually chose journalism and union organizing as his trades and went to Colorado in 1878. Between his arrival and his decision to move to Chicago in 1887 in order to aid KOLs falsely accused and erroneously convicted of a bombing at the city's Haymarket Square, he created a number of local assemblies and two district assemblies and led two major railroad strikes, coal miners' strikes, parades, and boycotts. He was a craft union printer who helped organize the Denver Trades Assembly, and he was the KOL's leading organizer in the country. As editor of the Rocky Mountain West's largest labor newspaper, the *Labor Enquirer*, he encouraged workers to find a vision of political economy that resonated most with them, all the while insisting that they privilege pragmatism over dogma. The pages of the *Enquirer* proved eclectic as readers found the writings and speeches of theorists who ranged from doctrinaire Marxists to anarchists to utopian co-operativists to land reformers. No matter their ideological bent, he

consistently reminded his readers that organizing, striking, and boycotting achieved the desired short-term ends of all proponents of the labor movement. His commitment to possessing multiple views led him to join two different socialist societies and endorse Greenback, Union Labor, and Republican candidates for office.

The range of Buchanan's antimonopolistic thought as well as the various actions that resulted from it reflected the changing industrial order. Knights of Labor across the country shared the sense that their rights as citizens were being usurped by corporations. The long hours for low pay, not to mention the dangerous conditions found in factories, mines, and on railroad lines, challenged workers' conception of work and reward. Most KOLs accepted the labor theory of value or the idea that labor created all wealth and therefore workers deserved the lion's share of what they produced. Deciding exactly what the fair share of the fruits of their labor provided often proved difficult. Instead of seeking a wage formula, workers by the 1870s were willing to accept the wage bargain as a transitory phase that allowed them to save enough money eventually to purchase their land or buy a workshop. In the Jeffersonian tradition that many postbellum Americans still held dear, owning land or a small shop signified the promise of American freedom. From this perspective the creation of a permanent wage workforce existing on subsistence pay threatened to prevent generations of laborers from ascending to the promised status of independence. Thus many workers joined the KOL in order to prevent their bosses from keeping them in a dependent state or turning them into wage slaves.

During the 1870s, chronic unemployment and constant wage cuts heightened workers' fears that they now lived in a world where social mobility was dead. When railroad owners cut their laborers' pay yet again, workers' responded by participating in the Great Strike of 1877. With evidence of a collective opposition to wage slavery, KOL leaders outlined the organizations' beliefs and aims in its Preamble and Declaration of Principles. The 1878 document argued that the unchecked "aggressiveness of great capitalists and corporations" would result in the "hopeless degradation of the toiling masses." To ensure that workers received "the wealth they create," KOL favored abolishing the wage system and replacing it with cooperatives. Recognizing the complete restructuring of the nation's economic order would take time, the KOL's declaration also called for more immediate changes to limit the inequalities workers faced. Protecting public lands for "actual settlers" instead of granting acreage to railroad companies, promoting

workplace safety, ending child labor, and making 8 hours the standard workday were among the reforms KOL demanded. Buchanan emerged as the KOL's best organizer because like the order's manifesto, he successfully mixed practical objectives and actions with idealistic goals and rhetoric.

The KOL rank-and-file members accepted this blend of pragmatism and radicalism because they realized that it allowed the ideological and strategic flexibility necessary to construct a national labor movement. Most also realized that much of the KOL's emerging strength resulted from the fact that power within the order flowed from the bottom up. Local, district, state, and national trade assemblies existed under the umbrella of national bodies, which included the general assembly, the general executive board, and the grand master workman. Some local and district assemblies consisted of a single trade, while others were mixed or accepted all those regardless of occupation who wanted to join the order in a given area. The KOL barred lawyers, bankers, speculators, gamblers, and drunkards, since they understood them to be nonproductive workers and immoral human beings. Leaders and members proudly spoke of their acceptance of immigrants, African-Americans, and women. Organizers and elected leaders however also took equal satisfaction in their support of Chinese exclusion and their insistence to ban Asian immigrants from their locals. Many KOL publications, influenced by the racist pseudoscientific writings of the day, considered Chinese workers insimilable and therefore a permanent pool of cheap labor. Thus in order to understand the KOL and their many contradictions, we must look at some of the battles the workers who belonged to the over 12,000 local assemblies organized in roughly 3,000 communities, fought with their employers, and each other. Only then we can grasp how an organization with 110,000 workers in 1885 could grow to 729,000 members in the next year, and then fall to roughly 250,000 members by the end of the 1880s.

Philadelphia tailors created the Nobel and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor in 1869, and chose Uriah Stephens their leader. Influenced by the Masons, these garment cutters founded a fraternal order committed to ritual and secrecy and as a result remained rooted mostly in the Philadelphia area until the 1870s. By 1876, the unskilled laborers in Pittsburgh's emerging industries and a number of Pennsylvania's coal miners joined the order and changed the face of the organization. Crucial to the transformation of the KOL from a fraternal organization into a federation of industrial workers was a change in leadership. Terence Powderly, an Irish Catholic former railroad worker turned machinist,

won the order's top post of grand master workman in 1878. In 1881, Powderly convinced members to abandon secrecy. He also pushed organizers to bring laborers in the emerging factory towns of Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, and Milwaukee into the KOL and demonstrated his commitment to building an organization for industrial workers by moving the KOL's headquarters from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. As more and more workers joined the order, Powderly and other leaders pushed new members to focus on their similarities, such as their opposition to wage labor, rather than their differences, namely, political beliefs that ranged from socialism to anarchism to general reform. Indeed this commitment to unity can be found in the KOL's motto, adopted in 1882, that "an injury to one is the concern of all."

National leaders' commitment to fostering a working-class culture of unity certainly contributed to the order's growth, but victories on the industrial battlefield proved the real engines of expansion. Workers throughout the nation were becoming more militant as indicated by the increasing number of strikes. In 1881, for instance, there were roughly 101,000 workers involved in 474 strikes compared to 407,000 workers participating in 1,432 strikes in 1886. In fact from 1881 to 1900, at least 22,739 strikes occurred. From 1880 to 1884, most of these protests were spontaneous, but after 1884, they were increasingly called by unions. Officially the KOL opposed strikes except in extreme circumstances, but the reality of power flowing from the bottom up meant that local leaders followed the wishes of their constituents rather than national officers. For example when a manager on railroad magnate Jay Gould's Wabash line fired a KOL-affiliated shop man in 1885, his fellow workers refused to handle any more cars. The walkout spread, and Gould eventually backed down. The Wabash strike stirred workers' faith in the power of organized collective action. From July 1885 to June 1886, 6,200 new district assemblies formed. In fact the executive board suspended the granting of new charters for 40 days in early 1886 to try and catch up on the flurry of requests for membership. For a brief period then workers won strikes, membership rolls swelled, and militant actions, not Powderly's rhetoric of cooperation with capital, determined the order's course.

Suggesting the promise of a truly inclusive grassroots working-class movement was the fact that 60,000, or ten percent, of the order's new cardholders were African-Americans. Also, female operatives claimed nearly a ten percent share of the KOL total membership as well. As the women belonging to Denver's local assemblies illustrated, they could be as

militant as the white male majority. This democratic spirit did have its limits.

The Rock Springs Massacre in September 1885 provided an example of white workers' willingness to subscribe to social Darwinism and use brutality in attempting to control the labor supply. Union Pacific coal miners, belonging to DA 82, marched from their union hall to the outskirts of the small Wyoming town. Earlier in the day a fistfight between white and Chinese miners saw the whites call a strike. Although the Chinese outnumbered white coal diggers 331 to 150, whites still surrounded Chinese homes with rifles and revolvers. Many of the Asian immigrants fled by train, as did two white foremen who received death threats, but some remained. As evening settled on Rock Springs, the white KOL members set fire to the local Chinatown, and then shot at those exiting their burning homes. In the end 28 Chinese died, 15 were wounded, and the 14 white miners arrested were acquitted.

Divisions over political beliefs and organizational structure also led to violence and revealed the weakness that existed within the order. Attempting to build on the momentum of the southwestern victory and promote unity through a common reform agenda, both national and regional leaders advocated an 8-hour day movement. The shorter hours movement garnered support from both craft unionists who, led by New York cigar maker Samuel Gompers, belonged to the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU), and Chicago's Anarchist International. Members of both organizations belonged to the KOL. The FOTLU's leaders proposed that workers across the country strike on May 1, 1886 for 8 hours. By early spring 8-hour rallies were held around the country. But all was not well within the KOL. On March 13, Powderly informed local and district assemblies that he opposed the strike plan, arguing that the order did not have the necessary funds for strike relief that this massive action would require. By that point however, Chicago workers proved too excited to wait for May 1 and struck early. Powderly and his supporters found themselves in an increasingly difficult position by the end of April as nearly 50,000 Chicago unionists had made 8 hours the standard workday. As May 1 approached, those who insisted on caution appeared to lack nerve. Despite the grand master workman's objections, KOL members struck.

On May 1, 1886, about 200,000 workers went on strike across the nation; 40,000 lived in Chicago. On May 3, antilabor police captain John Bonfield ordered some of his men to attack picketers outside the McCormick reaper plant. At least two unionists were fatally shot, and a number of other

demonstrators were wounded. In opposition to this extreme act of police brutality, labor activists organized a protest rally at Haymarket Square on May 4. As speakers condemned city leaders for their indifference to the murdered strikers, a bomb exploded killing four policemen. Policemen who had marched to the middle of the square just before the blast opened fire on the crowd. Employer and police hyperbole aided by the *Chicago Tribune's* anti-union flair stirred public fears that they sat on the brink of revolution. Over the next three weeks, Chicago's district attorney incited 31 people for the murder of Mathias Degan, a police officer killed by the bomb. Eventually eight men stood trial for conspiracy to commit murder, and the judge found all of them guilty. After the appeals process, the State of Illinois sanctioned the hanging of four of the conspirators.

Workers across the nation protested the convictions and voiced their opposition to state-sponsored repression. Worried about the image of the KOL, Powderly however refused to authorize an official protest. Already angered by his lack of support for the 8-hour strikes, opposition to Powderly within the order grew. The divisions that workers had put aside during their efforts to acquire pragmatic reforms ended with Haymarket. More specifically the leaders of DA 49 in New York had long pushed their fellow KOLs to follow a more radical path that included organizing laborers into only mixed locals and forbidding organization along craft lines. They had fought with Gompers and the cigar makers over this issue in 1875. By 1886, they held a majority of spots on the KOL's general assembly, and during the KOL's annual meeting, they passed a motion removing the cigar makers from the order. Gompers and other purged workers responded by forming the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Buchanan found himself at the center of this affair. The order's best organizer argued that by expelling the cigar makers the executive board was dividing the labor movement and destroying the KOL. Instead of siding with Buchanan, the thin-skinned Powderly rebuked the Denver printer. Buchanan had critiqued Powderly based on the master workmen's failure to support the accused Haymarket bombers. Powderly countered by claiming that Buchanan had injured the order's image both because of his support for the conspirators and his membership in socialist organizations. In early 1887, Buchanan decided to leave Denver and move to Chicago to defend the convicted Haymarket bombers and try to build an anti-Powderly base. He soon found himself expelled from the KOL.

Buchanan failed largely because the order was hemorrhaging members. In February 1887, Powderly

realized the error of his ways regarding the cigar makers, but by that point Gompers rejected any type of peace. By July 1888, the once powerful KOL stood at 220,000 members. By 1890, that number would fall to 100,000. Although the national office would not disband until 1917, the KOL had become ineffective as a national movement by the early 1890s. Yet the number of members should not be the only test of strength.

In some places, such as the Rocky Mountain West, workers maintained the tradition Buchanan started and continued to work with each other across union and skill lines by engaging in collective actions on both the industrial and political fronts. In Butte, Montana, for example, virtually every male wage by 1890 received \$3 per day. This rate, originally set by the Butte Miners' Union, became the standard. When some laborers excavating a cellar discovered, on May 3, that contractors planned on paying them a daily rate of only \$2.50, they stopped working. Unionists across the city met and threatened a general strike. By May 6, 500 Butte unionists walked picket lines in support of the common laborers' demand for a 3-dollar day. By early June the strike was successful, and the KOL-affiliated Butte Workingmen's Union emerged to represent all unskilled labor in the city.

The unity of Butte workers by the 1890s was also displayed in the political arena. Nationally KOL locals across the country attempted grassroots political efforts from 1885–1888 and then worked with farmers and eventually became tied to the Populist movement in the early 1890s. Following this trend Butte workers created a Workingmen's party in 1888, but only two of the candidates the unionists supported proved victorious. Divisions over tactics, ideology, and religion blunted the promise of this movement. Leaders of the District Assembly 98 (headquartered in Butte) tried again by joining forces with the Helena Trades and Labor Assembly and the Farmers' Alliance to organize the Independent Labor in 1890. The party's platform calling for the 8-hour day, a more stringent mine inspection law, equal wages for men and women, and stronger enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Like its predecessor the Independent Labor party failed. Eventually Montana's KOL succeeded in the mid-1890s as members of the Populist party when they elected local officials and a governor who ran on a fusion Populist-Democratic ticket. Although the KOL's political efforts proved limited nationally, they functioned as a building bloc for Socialist party victories in the Progressive Era.

In the end the KOL strength also proved its weakness. Power did flow from the bottom up, and that

meant that skilled organizers could mould workers' passions into a culture of unity that translated into victories on the industrial battlefield. It also meant that national leaders had troubles controlling factional crises, setting strike policy, healing ideological divisions, and articulating a clear political agenda. The order demonstrated that the class struggle had to start on the local level and that workers could have some success nationally when they maintained their culture of unity.

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KNIGHTS OF ST. CRISPIN AND THE DAUGHTERS OF ST. CRISPIN

Massachusetts shoemakers organized the International Knights of St. Crispin (KOSC), founded in 1867, to oppose the impact of industrialization on shoemaking. The post-Civil War introduction of steam-powered machinery increasingly divided work by job and specialization. Resistance to the power of industrial capitalism required factory workers to organize and confront their employers over wage cuts and control of work processes. In 1868, Lynn shoe workers organized the first KOSC craft lodge in Massachusetts. The transnational activities of the KOSC, led by the craft lodges in Massachusetts, expanded into shoe centers in the American Northeast and Canada. The mechanization of sewing light leather already employed many female shoe workers. Seeking to protect women who migrated to northeastern shoe centers in search of higher wages, the national Daughters of St. Crispin (DOSC), founded in 1869, sought to represent the economic interests of

female shoe workers, both migratory and resident in shoe towns. Led by female workers, the DOSC organized separately from the KOSC but cooperated in strikes and in pressuring employers to arbitrate wages and grievances.

Borrowing the patron saint from English cordwainers, the KOSC transferred artisan values into the emerging post-Civil War shoe factory. These men organized the most successful union of industrial workers in the early 1870s, representing various jobs from skilled lasters to teams of bottomers. Native-born Massachusetts residents, migratory Yankee workers from Maine and New Hampshire, and Irish immigrants joined the Crispin movement, which in 1870 reflected the interests of about half of all American shoe workers. At the same time, the activism of artisan-trained shoe workers in Canadian factories in southern Ontario and Quebec provinces made the KOSC organization international.

Efforts by large New England manufacturers to dominate the American shoe market through higher productivity and lower costs confronted shoe workers with intensifying mechanization, wage cuts, and concentrated, exhausting seasons of production. Crispinism represented both a critique of industrial capitalism and a labor organization. Employers defined labor costs as just another commodity in their calculations and blamed supply-and-demand forces for wage cuts. Crispins feared that wealth and power were concentrating to undermine their fair share of the value created by factory labor. They denied that their labor was a commodity to be buffeted by market forces.

By 1869, the Crispin organization in Massachusetts, spearheaded by activists in Lynn, Worcester, and Brockton, claimed 30,000 members/sympathizers. Two thousand Lynn lasters in Unity Lodge backed by Mutual Lodge with 500 members organized in 1870 to seek a citywide wage scale protected by arbitration. They timed a strike over wages to interrupt the fall busy season. Many small manufacturers, wishing to stabilize wage levels, agreed to arbitration. While unfilled orders piled up, a citywide wage scale was negotiated for 1 year with five Crispins and five manufacturers as a joint board of arbitration in Lynn. This agreement was renewed in 1871. As the leading center of shoe production in New England, Lynn factories joined by others throughout Essex County in Massachusetts set the scale of wages for the Crispin organization expanding in such shoe centers as Utica, New York, and Philadelphia. Similar agreements stabilized wages in Toronto and Hamilton, Ontario.

The KOSC in Lynn became politically active to protest the state legislature's refusal to grant a charter

for the KOSC in 1869 and successfully offered Labor Reform party candidates for state offices, winning local elections. In 1878, the offshoot Workingmen's party candidate and long-time Crispin activist beat the incumbent mayor, a large manufacturer and key opponent of the KOSC. The KOSC in Massachusetts joined the statewide push for the 10-hour day and advocated cooperative shoe factories as an alternative to industrial capitalism. The KOSC opposed Chinese immigration based on the destruction in 1870 of the KOSC in North Adams, Massachusetts, by Asian strikebreakers.

In late 1868, female workers in Lynn shoe factories organized Central Lodge No. 1 of the DOSC to prevent wage cuts. Thirty-one female delegates from DOSC lodges in the Northeast met in Lynn in 1869 to form the national association. The sexual division of labor, which assigned women to machine-stitching uppers, created no serious competition with male workers. The KOSC and the DOSC cooperated but met separately as organizations and in negotiations on wages.

Twenty-four DOSC lodges formed in late 1869, the largest in Rochester, New York, while together the KOSC and DOSC won strikes in Syracuse and Baltimore in 1871. The DOSC represented the self-supporting boarding stitcher and the female-head of family to a greater extent than residents living in male-headed families.

To protect working women's mobility, the KOSC and the DOSC joined forces in 1871 when Lynn shop owners who subcontracted stitching for large manufacturers attempted to stop the turnover of skilled working women during the busy season who left to seek higher wages elsewhere. Infuriated stitchers struck, rejecting the requirement of a week's notice backed by a wage deposit or the disgrace of a dishonorable discharge. The DOSC and the KOSC in Lynn quickly backed the strikers, forcing the employers to agree that stitchers could leave any shop without penalty.

As Lynn manufacturers sought to dominate the national market in high-buttoned ladies shoes, the KOSC and the DOSC faced downward pressure on wages. The depression years, 1873–1878, which reduced demand for fancy styles and crowded labor markets, cut earnings. The national DOSC collapsed in 1874 and the Lynn lodges in 1879. From 1875–1878, arbitration of wages and grievances in Lynn settled strikes, protected profits, and maintained wages for union men. In 1878, Lynn manufacturers, eager to sustain their dominant position in the reviving shoe market, undermined Crispin arbitration. Local lodges struck, while the manufacturers fired Crispins and recruited strikebreakers in the depression-era labor

market. After five weeks the Lynn Crispins lost the right to arbitration, but not the right to organize in lodges. Without a negotiated citywide wage scale, their fight to sustain wages failed. Still the KOSC and the DOSC had developed effective organizations to oppose the power of industrial capitalism.

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KNOW-NOTHING PARTY

In the mid-1850s, the Know-Nothing party, the nickname of what was officially termed the American party, rose to national prominence by vowing to curb the influence of foreigners and Catholics in public life and pledging to safeguard the federal union from corrupt politicians and sectional extremists. Native-born skilled workers comprised an important Know-Nothing constituency, especially in industrializing cities. Know-Nothings supported American workers' requests that government counteract economic slumps and combat immigrant job competition. The ascendancy of Know Nothings worsened ethnic divisions among workers, but by the late 1850s, those conflicts receded in the face of renewed struggle over slavery's status in the West. Almost as fast as it rose, the Know-Nothing party declined as voters' allegiance shifted to the free-soil Republicans in the North and proslavery Democrats in the South.

The Know-Nothing party traced its origins to the American Republican party, a short-lived, anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic party that fielded candidates in 1844 and 1845. Shortly after those elections, New York City's American Republican mayor James Harper and Thomas R. Whitney, an engraver and Whig party activist, helped found the Order of United Americans (OUA), a semisecret nativist society. The OUA remained small and confined to the urban Northeast. In 1853, it merged with another secret society, the Order of the Star Spangled Banner, which restricted membership to native-born Protestants who swore to vote only for men of the same status. The device of an oath-bound secret society prevented opponents from gauging Know-Nothing strength until election day and enforced loyalty that would override voters' attachments to the established Whig and Democratic parties.

In 1853, the name Know-Nothing first appeared in print in the *New York Tribune*. It is unclear if the term referred to members' directive to tell outsiders that they "knew nothing" about the order or if observers who were unable to learn anything about the secretive group coined the phrase.

Anti-immigrant nativism, which was often intertwined with Protestant hatred for Catholics, had a history dating back to the colonial rivalry between Protestant England and its Catholic rivals, France and Spain. Nativism as a force in elections and government has tended to be most intense when spikes in immigration coincide with turmoil in national politics, as occurred in the mid-1850s.

Pre-Civil War immigration peaked from 1845–1854. During those years almost three million immigrants arrived in the United States, more than four times the number that had come during the previous 10-year span. Hard hit by the potato famine and declining opportunities for tenant farmers, Ireland supplied the largest number of newcomers. The states of western Germany, which were affected by crop failure and pressure on handcraft industries, came in a close second.

Immigrants provided a convenient target for voters anxious about disruptive social change. Native-born Americans complained that European newcomers lacked knowledge of republican political institutions and were therefore easily manipulated by scheming office seekers. Protestant bigots claimed that Catholic immigrants owed a primary allegiance to the Pope and acted as Vatican foot soldiers in a plot to subvert American liberty. Xenophobes also believed that immigrants drank to excess, committed crime, and generally disrespected American cultural values. Know-Nothings addressed these concerns with proposals to extend naturalization to 21 years, restrict

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immigrant voting and office holding, teach Protestant values in public schools, disband immigrant militia units, and investigate allegations of sexual abuse by Catholic priests and nuns.

Earlier campaigns on these nativist issues had failed, but the Know-Nothings benefited from voter anger at established parties that made any alternative, even one as ethnically divisive as the American party, seem attractive. Simultaneous with increased immigration, conflict over the spread of slavery to lands recently conquered from Mexico had severely weakened voter allegiance to the Whigs and Democrats. Not only were parties unable to resolve the sectional conflict, but their lingering obsession with Jacksonian era economic fights about credit and currency failed to address new cultural concerns related to schools and alcohol as well as immigration. Voter dissatisfaction with the major parties also embraced a more general critique of party politics as inherently corrupt. Know-Nothings responded to this discontent by promising to safeguard the federal Union from extremists in either section, combat cultural anxiety by attacking immigrants, and replace venal office seekers with virtuous public servants.

For wage earners, political and cultural corruption mattered less than did immigrant competition for jobs and the impact that an influx of unskilled labor had on the trend toward division of labor and the replacement of the artisan shop with the factory assembly line. A drop in the roller-coaster business cycle exacerbated long-term economic forces that contributed to nativism. The 1850s witnessed the end of a long boom spurred by westward expansion, housing construction, and railroad building. Three times during the decade (in 1851, 1854, and 1857) economic panics closed banks, cut off employment, and ate up working families' meager savings. Amid these downturns employers continued to experiment with mass-production techniques in such industries as textiles, iron-making, and food processing, which lowered wages and lessened the need for skilled craftsmen. In this environment fear of foreign competition encompassed several issues: Head-to-head competition for jobs in an oversupplied labor market; competition with the foreign products imported from abroad; and the more abstract problem of the transition toward mass production and an increasing reliance on unskilled labor. In the early 1850s, the Order of United American Mechanics, a nativist trade union, supported strikes in industries pressed by hard times. Spurred by this activity, American-born skilled workers responded to Know-Nothing promises to reduce job competition by curbing immigration; protect American industry by raising the tariff; offset unemployment with public works; and at the local level,

bolster employee-negotiating power by supporting trade unions.

In 1854, the formal American party emerged from secrecy to campaign for offices across the country. From 1854–1856, the American party elected seven governors, eight U.S. senators, 104 members of the federal House of Representatives, and took majority control of eight state legislatures. Although they had supporters in the countryside and small towns, Know-Nothings were particularly influential in cities. They won control of municipal governments in most of the country's largest metropolitan centers, including Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Louisville, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and San Francisco.

The exceptions to Know-Nothing victory proved the rule of nativism's ethnic polarization of the electorate. Ironically it was the home of the OUA, New York City, where Know-Nothings failed to win a majority. That result reflected the greater share of foreign-born voters in New York's electorate, where they made up half of those eligible to vote and could easily defeat a nativist candidate. Immigrant voters in the other major cities quickly banded together with Democrats and wealthy professionals alarmed at the labor militancy of some Know-Nothing partisans. Know-Nothings lost power the fastest in cities that resembled New York's demography; that is, places where the foreign-born comprised a majority or near majority of the electorate.

Political violence, a not uncommon feature of nineteenth-century urban politics, accompanied the rise of the Know-Nothings. The widespread nativist conviction that existing laws failed to stop foreign-born vote fraud encouraged some Know-Nothings to use force against immigrants who tried to cast ballots, lawfully or not. Street gangs affiliated with the rival political factions as well as partisan police joined in these election riots. Among the worst was Louisville's Bloody Monday riot in 1855, during which 22 people died, and the combined tally of 17 deaths and more than 250 injuries at Baltimore's municipal and federal elections in 1856. Violence distorted vote totals and further undermined public confidence in the political process.

In office the American party had difficulty enacting its agenda. In a few states, bans on immigrant militias and restriction of public-works employment to the native-born were put into effect. The Know-Nothing stronghold of Massachusetts enacted a 2-year delay on voting rights for naturalized citizens, but the law was quickly repealed by the next Republican party administration. More extreme proposals to outlaw Catholic convents and lengthen naturalization failed.

At the municipal level, Know-Nothings managed to deliver on many of their promises to native-born workers. American party administrations in cities across the country increased municipal spending on public works, created more working-class jobs in government by professionalizing police and fire departments, extended city services to newer, cheaper neighborhoods on the edges of growing cities, and permitted unions to wage strikes without police interference. In a few places, such as New Orleans where a stevedore won the mayoralty, Know-Nothings placed wage earners in positions of power, but most leaders belonged to the class of lawyers and business professionals who traditionally predominated in the high offices of all parties.

Know-Nothing success was cut short by controversy over slavery's status in the West. The 1854, Kansas-Nebraska Act spurred this conflict by lifting a 33-year-old ban on slavery in those territories and permitting voters in the new states to adopt slavery should they so choose. Like the Whig party, which provided the American party with many of its leaders, the slavery question bedeviled Know-Nothings, who would have rather talked about other issues. In the South nativists were staunchly proslavery, while in the North most Know-Nothings opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and many had joined the party in 1854 and 1855 because at that point the Know-Nothings represented the most credible opponent to the spread of slavery. The fledging Republican party, created in the western states in 1854 and competitive across the North by 1856, made free soil its primary objective. The option to vote for a forthright antislavery extension party in the 1856 presidential election coincided with violence in Kansas and the caning of Republican Senator Charles Sumner by a South Carolina congressman outraged by Sumner's inflammatory free-soil speech, "The Crime Against Kansas."

Poised to expand on their victories of 1854 and 1855, the American party instead collapsed. At the party's presidential nominating convention in February 1856, northern and southern delegates argued over endorsing proslavery laws like the Kansas-Nebraska Act. A united southern delegation aided by a few northern conservatives resolved "to abide by and maintain the existing laws on the subject of slavery, as a final and conclusive settlement of that subject." Afterward 63 of 75 northern delegates repudiated the platform and began the American party's disintegration as a national force. The convention nominated former Whig President Millard Fillmore, a northerner who supported the Fugitive Slave Law and other pro-Southern elements of the Compromise of 1850. Fillmore ran on a platform that emphasized

nativism, sectional comity, and support for popular sovereignty in Kansas. Northern Know-Nothings tried to field an independent ticket but watched helplessly as most of their supporters transferred allegiance to the Republicans. Fillmore, who carried only one state (Maryland), finished a distant third behind victorious Democrat James Buchanan and Republican challenger John C. Frémont. Because Republicans had little support in the South and the increasingly proslavery Democrats were in decline in the North, the fall of the Know-Nothings alarmed Americans committed to preserving the Union.

The American party survived until 1860 and beyond in three of the slave South's three largest cities—Baltimore, Louisville, and New Orleans. In the urban South, the American party stood for a more conservative version of the free-labor politics that drew workers to the Republican banner in the North. Southern big-city Know-Nothings expanded their local support by playing on urban resentment against proslavery rural Democrats who dominated state legislatures. Although southern Know-Nothings did not explicitly attack slavery, they supported the concerns of free-wage labor and thereby posed a threat to the unity of southern whites in support of slavery. During the secession crisis many of these former Know Nothings backed the Union and volunteered for service in federal regiments.

The meteoric rise and fall of the Know-Nothings destabilized the established system of party competition and voiced skilled workers' concerns about immigrant competition and economic change.

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See also **Antebellum Era; Artisans; Fugitive Slave Acts; Order of United American Mechanics**

KOHLER STRIKE (1954)

Lasting from 1954 to 1965, the strike of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 833 against the Kohler Co. of Kohler, Wisconsin, stood out as the longest industrial dispute in U.S. history throughout the second-half of the twentieth century. The 1954 Kohler strike was notable for more than its extraordinary longevity, however. Undertaken against an adamantly anti-union employer, embroiled in congressional-level efforts to demonize UAW leaders, and marked by violence and profound community division, this strike expressed the confrontation between early twentieth-century welfare-capitalist strategies and the competing culture of union solidarity that had emerged within the unions of the Congress of International Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s as they clashed anew in the context of Cold War politics. The rhetoric of the strike also highlighted the significance to labor-management battles of competing labor geographies.

Kohler of Kohler is a family owned company, in business since 1873, most famous for its manufacture of plumbing fixtures. It was located in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, 50 miles north of Milwaukee on the shore of Lake Michigan until its founder, Austrian-born John-Michael Kohler, moved it four miles west to the relatively undeveloped community of Riverside in 1898. The firm passed to the founder's sons in 1900 and ultimately to Walter Jodok Kohler, the only remaining adult son by 1905 (his younger half-brother Herbert, who would be in charge of the plant in the 1950s, was still in school). Walter Kohler oversaw the new plant's expansion throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. He retained a series of planners and landscape architects to develop a residential community adjacent to the plant, featuring company-built homes available for purchase, the American Club dormitory for immigrant workers, and an increasingly elaborate array of clubs, sports, and uplifting recreation designed to enhance the daily lives of worker-residents. Incorporated as Kohler Village in the 1910s, the town had some 400 homes and duplexes in addition to the dormitory by the 1920s.

Though the Kohler Company had weathered strikes by skilled molders at its Sheboygan, Wisconsin, factory, there had been no signs of labor agitation in the Kohler Village plant prior to the 1930s. The first twentieth-century union at the Kohler Company was Federal Union Number 18545, chartered by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in August 1933. Declining piece-work rates and hours, disputes over "cull" rates charged for defective products, favoritism to Kohler Village homeowners in the case of layoffs coupled with mandatory contracts pledging to use scarce wages to make mortgage payments

to the Kohler Village, and an accumulation of complaints about harsh working conditions were among the issues that motivated Local 18545. The recent passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act and its Section 7(a) providing federal endorsement, if not enforcement, for workers' unionization rights also inspired the new union's members: Indeed, as would be the case in the 1950s, workers' desire for the dignity of an independent voice in determinations of conditions became one of the strongest motivations for unionization at Kohler. Almost immediately the firm countered with the formation of the Kohler Workers' Association (KWA), a company union meant to give organized expression to Kohler officials' assertions of the company's willingness "to confer at anytime with any employee, group of employees, or their representatives..." (W. Uphoff, *Kohler on Strike*, 1966). When Local 18545's requests to discuss grievances with company officials met with repeated rebuffs, the union called a strike effective July 16, 1934. Eleven days later the tensions surrounding the strike led to a violent clash in which two workers were killed by "special deputies" protecting the plant and village. A (pre-Wagner Act) National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) hearing held in September considered complaints by the union regarding discharges for union activity, refusal to bargain collectively, and interference with the company's self-organization through the promotion of a company union. Though the NLRB found such interference, it decided that the wrong could be remedied by an election between Local 18545 and the KWA, which the KWA won with 62% of counted votes. Local 18545's strike dragged on until a quiet settlement was reached to permit wartime expansion of the company in 1941. The KWA remained the main organization handling Kohler employee grievances.

The 1954 Kohler strike developed out of growing dissatisfactions and aggressiveness on the part of KWA members in the 1950s. Both the UAW-AFL and the UAW-CIO had responded to continued interest among Kohler employees for an independent union, but the KWA continued to win NLRB elections through 1951. By then KWA officials had themselves become interested in possible UAW-CIO representation as they sought more substantial gains with regard to wages and work conditions and met with resistance from the Kohler Company. In 1952, the KWA membership voted to affiliate with the UAW-CIO, and won an election certifying itself to bargain as Local 833-UAW. The new union signed a first contract with the company in February 1953, bringing, among other things, a dues check-off,

arbitration, and a wage gain. However soon after bargaining began in 1954 for a new contract, the company proved unyielding on major issues, including arbitration, union security, seniority, pensions, insurance, lunch breaks for workers in units with continuous shifts, and wages. Bargaining broke down in April, and Local 833 struck the Kohler plant on April 5.

Union and company tactics early in the strike demonstrated the outrage and acrimony the company had inspired as well as the ferocity of its anti-union sentiment. Convinced that the company was determined to break the strike and destroy the union, and outraged at Kohler officials' allegations that the strike was engineered by militant outsiders, Local 833 rallied masses of 2,000 or more pickets to demonstrate support for the union and prevent the company from operating. The company stockpiled weapons and tear gas while its representatives grimly refused to negotiate on any of the union's demands on the grounds that the union's mass picketing and other strike strategies were illegal.

The company's complaints against the union reflected in part the opposing perceptions and uses of industrial, community, and private space invoked in the course of the conflict. For decades company publicity had touted the factory's idyllic village of proud home-owning employees as proof that the quality of Kohler products derived from a well-ordered balance of industrial and domestic life. Strikers upset this balance by blocking other workers' movements from home to factory, "disturbing the peace" with bullhorns and sound systems used for outdoor meetings, and intimidating those who crossed picket lines to work at the plant by taking industrial issues to their front lawns (thereby also disturbing prevailing gendered divisions of space between home and work promoted by the company). These actions formed the core of the complaints lodged by the company with the Wisconsin Employment Relations Board (WERB) charging the union with unlawful picketing and intimidation under Wisconsin law. The union's own publicity and legal maneuvers signaled the alternative geography in which members charted their affiliations. While the company labeled picketers as outsiders upsetting the friendly labor relations and locally oriented lives in Kohler, union publicity claimed that unionized workers nationwide, with the higher wages and benefits they had won through union contracts, represented the appropriate range of affiliation for Kohler workers. Union lawyers followed suit by filing a complaint against the company for failure to negotiate with NLRB and arguing that due to Kohler's considerable interstate commerce,

it was the NLRB and not WERB that held final jurisdiction. The union's tactics themselves acquired broader geographical reach after the strike had dragged on for a year with no signs of resolution. It pursued a nationwide boycott of Kohler products that often involved strikers following Kohler delivery trucks to distant destinations to picket their recipients. The boycott also relied on the expanded labor support available through the recent AFL-CIO merger.

Before the NLRB case could be heard, the Kohler strike came before another federal body—the U.S. Senate's Select Committee on Improper Activities in the Labor and Management Field, known as the McClellan Committee. Beginning in early 1957, McClellan committee hearings had exposed the corruption and intimidation rampant especially in the Teamsters' Union. Republican members of the committee, especially Senator Barry Goldwater, were determined to direct its investigations at the UAW as well, particularly its president, Walter Reuther, and saw the Kohler strike as the ideal vehicle. Along with right-wing, anti-Communist, and anti-union groups like Dean Manion's For America and *Manion Forum*, which Herbert Kohler, Jr., also supported, they were eager to undermine the higher expectations for wages and benefits that large industrial union contracts inspired among workers nationwide, boost the popularity of state-level right-to-work laws, and curb what they perceived as the growing political influence of big labor, all of which they associated with "Reutherism." The McClellan Committee's Special Counsel, Robert Kennedy, doubted that it could effectively uncover information on the strike that voluminous testimony already taken by the NLRB had not. But repeated news stories claiming that he and his brother, committee member Senator John F. Kennedy, were deliberately shielding Reuther by ignoring the situation in Kohler forced him to ask Committee Chair Senator John L. McClellan to approve an investigation and hearings. Months of mismanaged inquiry undertaken by Republican appointees and followed up by Special Counsel Kennedy himself managed to reconfirm before a national audience the profound local hatreds bred by the strike but no flagrant union corruption. Contrary to their instigators' intent, the McClellan Committee's Kohler hearings gave local union officials and UAW President Reuther a national platform to admit their mistakes and air their convictions, which proved more compelling than the company's intransigent anti-union stance and the accompanying tactics of spying and stockpiling weapons that the hearings exposed.

KOHLER STRIKE (1954)

The NLRB's extensive hearings on the union's charges of unfair labor practices had meanwhile stretched from 1955 to 1959. The board handed down its first ruling on the case on August 26, 1960. It found that though the Kohler strike began as an economic strike, which would not have entitled strikers to re-instatement under the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, it became an unfair labor practices strike as of June 1, 1954, when the company gave a wage increase to nonstriking employees though it had refused demands for wage increases during negotiations. The company was therefore ordered to dismiss any workers hired on or after June 1, 1954, if necessary to re-instate strikers in their old positions. The board upheld the company's discharge of 77 employees for misconduct. Both union and company filed appeals to aspects of the ruling that favored the opposite side.

Negotiations between the company and the union finally resumed in June 1962, after the Supreme Court refused the company's appeal of a Circuit Court's decision upholding the August 1960 NLRB decision. A new contract, the first in 9 years, was reached on October 7, with modest but meaningful gains in the areas of dues check-off, arbitration, seniority, layoffs, insurance, and pensions, among others, though no general wage increase. But court appeals dragged on until, in October 1965, the Supreme Court turned back a second appeal from the company, this time regarding a Circuit Court ruling that effectively expanded the number of former strikers eligible for re-instatement under the August 1960 NLRB order. With the company and union engaged in negotiating a new contract that involved changes in the pension program, the issue of the former strikers' eligibility status became inescapable. A series of high-level negotiations between company and union officials ensued, culminating in the company's agreement to pay strikers \$4.5 million in back wages and pension credits and the union's agreement in return to press no further charges related to the strike.

The longest strike to that date in U.S. history was over. According to the strike's most assiduous scholar, Walter Uphoff, relations between the company and union improved from the early 1960s as they settled into a working routine of regular grievance adjustments and contract negotiations. This was itself an extraordinary achievement considering that only court orders had persuaded the company to comply with laws mandating good-faith bargaining. A two-week strike ensued in the 1980s when the company—like many others with UAW contracts—proposed a two-tier wage system in order to decrease its contractual commitments to employees. However

unlike so many unionized U.S. workers of the late-twentieth century, those at the Kohler Village plant have yet to see their unionized jobs disappear overseas. The company has established plants in an ever-wider global circle of less union-friendly locations—beginning with Spartanburg, South Carolina, during the strike and proceeding to Texas, Mexico, and China, among others. But it has also maintained employment levels at its plant in Kohler, and recently even announced plans to expand its Wisconsin plant. Ironically as jobs protected by the historic contracts pioneered by the CIO in the 1930s and 1940s have become ever scarcer, the Wisconsin plumbing factory once known for its steely determination to repel such contracts has become a most remarkable destination among union-recommended vacation spots—the location of a factory tour where union labor can be seen at work.

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KU KLUX KLAN (RECONSTRUCTION AND WWI ERA)

In its successive incarnations since the 1860s, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) has proven the most powerful reactionary movement in American history. Yet in each of the three eras in which its organizers worked, they recruited different social groups, identified different challenges, targeted different enemies, and had a different relationship to working-class Americans and the labor movement. The two constants over more than a century have been a commitment to white supremacy and an embrace of terrorism as a political tool.

The Reconstruction-Era KKK

The first Ku Klux Klan aimed to restore planter power and white supremacy in the South in the wake of emancipation and the awarding of citizenship rights to former slaves. The organization began in 1866, at a time when fraternal orders with elaborate secret rituals were a popular form of association for American men. It was established on this model in Pulaski, Tennessee, its name taken from a Greek word signifying a circle (*kuklos*). But the new order soon turned to vigilante activity as former Confederate leaders and such Democratic party stalwarts as Nathan Bedford Forrest realized the value its hooded costumes and strict secrecy could have for paramilitary activity. As congressional Reconstruction opened the way to new republican state governments, including African-Americans and those committed to democratizing the region's political economy, the KKK movement spread across the former Confederacy in 1867–1868.

In this era the movement was exclusively southern, largely rural, and its leaders came from the ranks of planters, merchants, and professionals, although the rank-and-file crossed classes. The KKK's primary objective was to reverse the revolutionary change wrought by the Civil War and radical Reconstruction: To restore as much of the prewar social order as it could manage to. Above all KKK leaders aimed to keep agriculture labor servile, if technically free, and to maintain white elites' control of government. For its part as a coalition between freedmen, free blacks, white small-holding farmers, and former Whigs devoted to a free-labor vision of the South's future, the Republican party threatened both agricultural employers' power and white supremacy. This dual challenge made it anathema to Klansmen and their allies in the Democratic party. The violence they inflicted on freedmen had no counterpart in the Western Hemisphere: One in ten of the black participants in the constitutional conventions of 1867–1868 suffered violent reprisals, in which seven were killed outright.

The KKK's signature practice was masked terrorism under cover of darkness. In a typical raid, a band of hooded KKK night riders abducted a local black Republican activist from his home at night, flogged, beat, or otherwise tortured him, sometimes killed him, perhaps also raping women in the family or burning it out of its home or destroying churches or schools. Sometimes Klansmen assaulted whites for Republican party activism or for affronting local moral codes in some way, but their main focus was the defense of racial hierarchy. The movement was

usually most active in communities where blacks and whites lived in relatively equal numbers and Republicans and Democrats were in sharp competition, such as the Upcountry. There vigilantism swung otherwise tight elections, decimated Republican party organizations, and weakened community institutions.

Because so many white southerners agreed with the KKK, its terrorism was nearly impossible to prosecute locally. At worst local law enforcement officials participated in the night riding; at best, they like other critics were intimidated by the KKK and unable to secure indictments and convictions from white jurors. This stalemate made federal intervention essential to suppress the widespread violence and lawlessness that threatened to undermine democracy. Congress carried out major investigations (also unintentionally creating rich documentation for later generations of historians) that led to legislation such as the Ku Klux Klan Act of April 1871, which enabled military arrests and federal trials. Thanks to them the KKK conspiracy was nearly overcome in the early 1870s, although freelance intimidation and violence resumed after federal troops were withdrawn.

The Second KKK

After the defeat of Reconstruction, leading white southerners promoted a mythology of the lost cause that lionized the KKK. In mass membership organizations, such as the United Sons of the Confederacy and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, they glorified the old South and secession and credited the KKK with saving southern civilization from the supposed peril of black rule. As elites reconciled across the Mason-Dixon line in the Gilded Age, the South's mythology became the nation's. Leading historians at premier U.S. universities pilloried Reconstruction such that the KKK appeared a salutary force. The most influential version of this revisionist narrative was the blockbuster film by D. W. Griffith, *Birth of a Nation*, released in 1915. After a private showing for Washington leaders in the White House, President Woodrow Wilson, whose historical writing was quoted in the film, described the racist epic as "history written with lightning."

In the same year the film was released, an Atlanta huckster and avid fraternalist named William Joseph Simmons revived the KKK and used showings of *Birth of a Nation* to recruit. The order's message of "100 percent Americanism" enjoyed wide approval thanks to the hyperpatriotic climate cultivated by the federal government to wage World War I.

But it was not until after the armistice that the second KKK really took off. In the nationwide unrest that followed in the war's wake, the KKK's message attracted a wide swath of native-born, Protestant, white Americans faced with bolder challenges from African-Americans; unprecedented labor struggle and radical mobilization following the Bolshevik revolution; feminist challenges to male power; and a younger generation disdainful of Victorian moral codes and determined to see salacious movies, patronize dance halls, and engage in other modern practices that shocked adults. The new KKK proved most popular in Indiana, where one in four eligible men joined, but it enjoyed great electoral success in places as far-flung as Oregon and Arkansas. Unlike the old KKK, this one did better in urban than in rural areas. The city of Chicago alone hosted 20 different klaverns (chapters) and claimed 50,000 members; in one 1921 march, 10,000 Chicagoans took part. Nationally the KKK is reliably estimated to have enrolled about two million dues-paying members in some four thousand local chapters over the decade.

The KKK of the 1920s had a more wide-ranging agenda than those of other eras. It joined the earlier movement's commitment to white supremacy with modern anti-Semitism; anti-Catholicism; anticommunism; hostility to immigrants; antipathy to liberals; support for old-time religion; and a defense of Victorian gender roles and sexual values. The KKK leaders denounced enlightenment thinking and the Protestant social gospel then popular for encouraging "alien ideas." Local purity campaigns joined all these causes together, often in extralegal Prohibition enforcement. Staking out a place as the most devoted defender of what today would be called family values in the face of what it called moral breakdown, the KKK became so popular that it was able to practice vigilantism with relative impunity in many small-town communities in the South and Southwest. Historians have estimated in fact that approximately half of the victims of KKK terrorism in the 1920s were whites accused of violating local moral codes.

Yet whereas in the Reconstruction era, extralegal violence was the KKK's sole activity of note, in the 1920s, members typically engaged in nonviolent practices common to many social movements, albeit with KKK content. They attended business meetings to discuss ideas and plan activities, campaigned for sympathetic political candidates or against offending businesses, worked for laws against interracial marriage and against U.S. participation in the World Court, came together for picnics and religious revivals, and mobilized for shows of strength in rallies lit by burning crosses. Through such practices, the KKK became a formidable force in American politics.

At least 75 members of Congress in the early 1920s were said to owe their seats to the KKK. In 1924, the national conventions of both major parties voted down resolutions condemning the KKK. By then the KKK also claimed to have recruited 30,000 Protestant ministers and three-quarters of the delegates to the Southeastern Baptist Convention.

Historians have divided over how to interpret this incarnation of the KKK. Riding the crest of the wave of social history in the 1970s that stressed demographic research, downplayed ideas, and sought to identify the real problems behind social movements and their rational answers, some scholars became self-conscious revisionists. Pointing to the KKK's broadly middle-class ranks and many of its leading activists' long records of civic involvement, they depicted members as populists concerned about elite domination of politics and threats to established community standards. Some other historians saw prejudices of various kinds as the core of the KKK's appeal but assumed local conditions determined activists' thinking: That, for example, blacks were the focus in Alabama and Catholics in Pennsylvania. Actually regardless of where they appeared, KKK publications and speeches usually discussed numerous targets and sought to connect issues by, for example, blaming Jews for hard times or Catholics for the failures of Prohibition.

Admittedly a movement this diverse in its antipathies and broad in its catchment poses interpretative challenges that defy conventional class analysis. But if we understand class as socially constructed and class identity as shaped historically by race and gender affiliations and understand middle-class people as having a kind of class consciousness of their own, then the catchment becomes more explicable. It embodied an American variant of reactionary populist politics akin to those developing at the same time in Europe; KKK leaders if not rank-and-file members sensed the family resemblance and expressed feelings of kinship with the Italian Fascist leader Mussolini in particular. No longer forcing the KKK movement into a Procrustean bed as either populist or racist, an approach employing this kind of class analysis can reveal how the two characteristics worked together to give the movement its powerful appeal.

The KKK spokesmen framed their cause in the kind of Janus-faced republican idiom popular in nineteenth-century America. Imperial Wizard Hiram Evans, for example, portrayed the KKK as "once more the embattled farmer and artisan"—now mobilized to fight off "radicalism, cosmopolitanism," and "the alien-minded 'Liberal'" along with other enemies. The republican tradition had long excluded most Americans from citizenship—whether slaves,

property-less labor, or women and children—so its assumptions proved congenial to KKK leaders, who ignored all that did not suit their purposes.

The KKK's class politics built on republicanism's basic distinction between property owners with a stake in society and others seen as objects of control. The movement attracted many skilled workers and seemed untroubled by the kind of racially exclusive business unionism practiced by most affiliates of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Yet KKK leaders excoriated the majority of the contemporary working class, African-Americans, and the new immigrants. The KKK spokesmen construed these groups in biological terms as a threat to the nation, building on the antidemocratic theory of such racist writers then in vogue as Lothrop Stoddard and Madison Grant. Denouncing the militant labor organizations of the unskilled as the work of racial aliens—whether the Industrial Workers of the World or industrial unions more generally—KKK leaders also sometimes helped employers suppress labor struggle with vigilantism.

As powerful as it was at its peak in 1924, the second KKK faltered thereafter and was nearly moribund by the end of the decade everywhere but in the South, where it would continue for decades in numerous derivatives as a force for white supremacy. Historians have offered various explanations of the movement's demise. Some have pointed to the scandals that plagued its leaders, most dramatically in Indiana where the powerful DC Stephenson was found guilty of second-degree murder for the rape of a girlfriend that resulted in her suicide attempt and death. The widely publicized murder trial and ensuing revelations of Stephenson's empire of political corruption tarnished the movement irrevocably. Others have suggested that the rank-and-file recoiled once they realized the extent of the movement's authoritarianism. Still others have argued that the KKK

subsided when the threats its members perceived passed: as the labor movement ebbed, Congress enacted draconian immigration restriction in 1924, the NAACP lost its postwar *élan*, and so forth. With progressive activism on the defensive and conservatism triumphant in Washington, few felt the urgency they had in the early 1920s to pay dues and participate.

Whatever the precise causes of the movement's decline, the stunning power amassed by the KKK in its prime offers a chilling reminder of the indigenous American cultural traditions that have enabled terrorism when carried out by native-born white men styling themselves as victims and standing up for goals and values widely shared among their peers.

NANCY MACLEAN

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See also African-Americans; Civil War and Reconstruction; Gilded Age; World War I

L

LABADIE, JOSEPH A. (1850–1933) **Knights of Labor**

The Detroit organizer of the Knights of Labor, the first president of the Michigan Federation of Labor, and ultimately a major influence on individualist American anarchism, Joseph A. Labadie contributed to numerous organizations and publications in one of the most turbulent and formative periods of American labor history.

Born in Paw Paw, Michigan, Joseph A. Labadie (commonly known as “Jo” Labadie) moved to Detroit in 1872, where he started working as a printer at the *Detroit Post and Tribune*. Joining the International Typographical Union proved to be the start of a long career in labor activism and organization. Six years later, in 1878, Labadie was among the founders of the first chapter of the Knights of Labor in Detroit, sanctioned by the Philadelphia-based organization. Although Labadie quickly became a key figure in the Knights’ Detroit organization, controversy existed from the very beginning. While wholeheartedly agreeing with the emphasis on education and the solidarity of the working class, Labadie criticized the Knights’ elaborate rituals involving secret handshakes, initiation ceremonies, and magnanimous titles, as noted in Carlotta R. Anderson’s *All American Anarchist*, calling them “excessive rigamarole” and “the habits and the fears and the ignorance of our barbaric ancestors.”

Labadie’s involvement in the Knights of Labor coincided with his interest in socialism. During the

1870s and early 1880s, socialism in Detroit attracted a majority of foreign-born immigrants, most notably from Germany. When Labadie decided to join the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) in 1877, he was one of the few native-born members of the organization in Detroit. One of the consequences of Labadie’s interest in socialism and the SLP was the publication of *The Detroit Socialist*, an English-language newspaper with Labadie as a major contributor. In addition to his activities with the SLP and the Knights of Labor, Labadie also served as the first president of the Detroit Trades Council, which was founded in 1880.

The break from socialism as well as the Knights of Labor for Labadie came in the 1880s. Labadie’s interest in anarchism, along with his long-lasting association with Benjamin Tucker, began in the early 1880s. The same period saw Labadie’s involvement in a variety of publications (including the *Advance and Labor Leaf* and the *Three Stars*) and movements, including his interest in Greenbackism and Henry George’s single tax movement. A frequent contributor to Tucker’s *Liberty*, Labadie’s decision to leave the Knights of Labor came after the Haymarket bombing of 1886 in Chicago. While the Knights of Labor became the target of accusations for having connections with anarchists and labor upheaval in general, its leader, Terence Powderly, determinedly denounced anarchism and refused supporting the Haymarket anarchists. Labadie challenged the Knights’ leadership for corruption and authoritarianism, visited the Haymarket anarchists in Chicago where they were imprisoned, and following a particularly vehement

and sharp clash in a Knights of Labor convention, decided to part ways with Powderly.

In 1888, Labadie appeared at the forefront of labor organization in Detroit once again, as he became one of the founders of the Michigan Federation of Labor, functioning as its first president. Labadie's involvement with anarchism intensified during the 1890s, as a wave of violent acts, including the attempted assassination of the Carnegie Steel Company's chairman Henry Clay Frick by Alexander Berkman in 1892 for his brutal tactics during the Homestead strike, and the assassination of President McKinley by Leon Czolgosz in 1901, brought anarchism and anarchists to the center of public attention and reaction. Labadie, while condemning the assassination of McKinley, diverged from many individualist anarchists of the time as he avoided the attempt to categorically distance anarchism from these acts, and explained them as natural consequences of the existing political system and the oppression of labor.

Despite his prolific output as an anarchist columnist and lecturer paralleling his vigorous involvement in labor and anarchist organization, which included arranging speeches by Emma Goldman in Detroit, Labadie's reputation in his home city never suffered. In fact, when his dedication and degree of radicalism were questioned by some anarchists as well as mainstream journalists, Labadie was dismayed. As much as Labadie might have resented such implications, his reputation as the popular "gentle anarchist" of Detroit proved to be helpful on several occasions: in 1908, when the city postal inspector banned Labadie's mail for featuring anarchist material and quotations, an immediate public outcry ensued. Following this incident, a few months later the water board commissioner attempted to fire Labadie for being an anarchist and faced a scathing response from the Detroit press.

Joseph A. Labadie's historical significance for the history of labor and anarchism has often been overlooked, despite his influence and achievements. A considerable part of his lasting legacy can be found in the Joseph A. Labadie Collection, donated to the University of Michigan in 1911. The Labadie Collection is still one of the richest resources for manuscripts and other primary sources on the history of labor and anarchism in the United States.

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See also **Berkman, Alexander; Goldman, Emma; Haymarket Affair (1886); Homestead Strike (1892); Knights of Labor; Socialist Labor Party**

LABOR DAY

Labor Day was founded in New York City in 1882 and has been celebrated by workers in the United States on the first Monday in September ever since. Labor Day was born from the labor movement of the Gilded Age, which was diverse, national, and on the upswing. The first Labor Day celebration was called by the Central Labor Union of New York, a recently formed umbrella organization that included workers from different nations and with different political affiliations. Labor Day eventually became the first national holiday dedicated to a specific class or ethnic group, and its celebration and meaning have changed with the times.

Labor Day was initiated with two goals in mind. First, its proponents wanted to project an image of a united group of producers organized together against monopoly to the general public. Second, Labor Day was intended to be a festival that could bring together the various strands of the working-class movement, socialists, Knights of Labor, anarchists, craft unionists, Single Taxers, and Labor Party activists. The first Labor Day parade was organized to coincide with a Knights of Labor meeting, and it was followed by a picnic. Its organizers sought to create a festival that would have a very general political content that could appeal to as wide a range of workers as possible and that would send a message to the politicians without prompting repression or scaring off the middle class. These conflicting goals of uniting the working class while addressing the general public have been present in Labor Day festivities ever since.

The first Labor Day was a resounding success. As many as 250,000 New Yorkers turned out to watch from 10,000 to 20,000 disciplined paraders (mostly men and a few women) march in formation with floats, banners, and uniforms from Lower Broadway to Union Square. Typical banners read: "Labor Creates All Wealth," "Labor Built This Republic, Labor Shall Rule It," "The Government Must Own the Railroads and Telegraphs," and "Labor Will Be United." Members of each union carried the tools of their trade, a tradition that dated back to guild processions in the European Middle Ages. The parade was also full of patriotic imagery, including American

flags and a drum-and-fife corps; at least one speaker quoted Thomas Jefferson.

Labor Day quickly became part of the nation's working-class traditions. The following year, the Central Labor Union decided to repeat the affair. In 1884, the national Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (the precursor to the American Federation of Labor, AFL) called on workers to participate, and by 1886, workers were celebrating Labor Day throughout the country.

Workers also pushed to have Labor Day recognized by state and local governments and by their employers. A number of cities passed municipal ordinances recognizing the holiday in 1886, Oregon became the first state to enshrine it in 1887, and by 1894, Labor Day was recognized by 24 states, most of which had strong Populist or labor movements. In general, these state and local laws recognized the holiday but did not enforce it as a day off for all workers. Employers were much harder to convince, and for two decades after the first Labor Day parade, the holiday was essentially a one-day general strike in many cities.

By the late 1880s, AFL unions had taken over the job of organizing Labor Day parades in most cities. In the aftermath of Haymarket and the ensuing repression and propaganda campaign against unions as a foreign ideology threatening American values, the AFL moved to strip Labor Day of any radical implications. Red flags and radical speakers were banned, and all marchers were given little American flags. While Labor Day had patriotic symbolism from the beginning, this symbolism was made more prominent at the expense of radical critiques of capitalism. In the 1890s, this pushed many radicals and immigrants to avoid Labor Day and to celebrate May Day instead, which had been born out of the struggles over the eight-hour day centered in Chicago in 1886 and had been celebrated as an international day for workers since 1890.

By the early 1900s, Labor Day had become a permanent part of the American calendar. While the AFL continued to organize Labor Day parades and picnics around the country, and while Samuel Gompers continued to stress the importance of Labor Day parades for demonstrating the strength and patriotism of the labor movement, many workers wanted to use their hard-won three-day weekend for a holiday with friends or family. This was the period when the tradition of the Labor Day barbecue was born.

In the ensuing decades, the AFL made great attempts to make Labor Day fit the mood of the day. In 1918, during World War I, with the labor movement under attack for being less than 100% American, Gompers even renamed Labor Day "Win

the War for Freedom Day." During the 1920s, Labor Day celebrations across the country adapted to the conservative mood of the times. In New York, Labor Day marches were abandoned in favor of celebrations at the Army's Fort Hamilton, where participants watched infantry drills and mock air battles. Labor Day celebrations were open to speeches by politicians, and their class character was diluted by the participation of many nonworkers.

In the 1930s, Labor Day celebrations were reinvigorated by the upsurge in the labor movement and attracted hundreds of thousands of participants in many cities. Labor Day marches once again took on a class character and incorporated images from the current popular culture. In Los Angeles in 1937, for instance, Popeye and the Keystone Cops chased away scabs, while an actor dressed as Abraham Lincoln declared all racial groups equal. Also in the 1930s, women were included in Labor Day celebrations on a more equal footing with men, especially in those celebrations organized by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) instead of the AFL. From 1942 to 1944, unionists stayed on the job during Labor Day and dedicated the holiday to winning World War II.

Since the end of that war, Labor Day has become a fixture of the American scene that is often celebrated like any other anesthetized American three-day weekend, with traffic jams and barbecues. At certain moments, however, union leaders will still call large marches or demonstrations of labor's power and organization on their traditional holiday. In 1959, for instance, over 115,000 New Yorkers marched down Fifth Avenue to protest the Eisenhower recession and the attacks on the labor movement. In 1982, 150,000 people protested Ronald Reagan's domestic policies in New York, and there were smaller marches in Chicago, Indianapolis, and Denver, among other cities. While Labor Day has lost much of its original vigor, it remains the only national holiday dedicated to the working class.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Gompers, Samuel; May Day**

LABOR REPUBLICANISM

Labor republicanism developed from ideas about government and society that gained currency in the transatlantic world in the eighteenth century. In England, criticism grew within radical circles about the corrupting influence of self-seeking placemen and their supporters in parliament. In France, the monarchy became the target of opponents to an entrenched and unaccountable political and social hierarchy.

Republicans held that government rested on the consent of the governed, who through regular elections authorized their representatives to govern for the common good. The polity consisted of “free men” whose social and economic independence as property owners entitled them to the franchise. Citizens replaced subjects in republican discourse; rule by law instead of by men served as a republican benchmark; and civic-mindedness and not the pursuit of personal gain pervaded republican society.

Between 1763 and 1776, when American colonists grieved that British imperial policies infringed on their “rights as free-born Englishmen,” republican ideas were central to an incisive critique of British rule itself. In the Atlantic seaports, artisans joined tradesmen and merchants in defying colonial authority, and especially in Philadelphia from 1774 to 1776, tavern and coffeehouse customers debated the arguments for national independence.

Thomas Paine, a former corset maker and excise man who migrated from England to Philadelphia, popularized much of the emerging republican case for independence in a widely distributed and read pamphlet, *Common Sense*. Paine vehemently denounced monarchic rule as inimical to peace and prosperity and vigorously contended that Americans had an opportunity to erect a government on sound principles. Artisan readers of *Common Sense* and other tracts by Paine during the Revolutionary War imbibed an ethos of uncompromising egalitarianism and nationalism that helped to define their identity as Americans in the young republic.

Independence resonated with special meaning to master and journeymen craftsmen in the pre-industrial era. Just as the newly formed United States of America was free of foreign domination, artisans practiced their trades and earned their livelihoods, free of control by others. Their independence emanated from finely honed skills, breadth of knowledge, well-grounded experience, and personal initiative. Carpenters, cordwainers, and printers, among others, expressed pride in their labor, which they considered vital to the nation’s economic and social welfare. Indeed, artisans viewed themselves as the heart and

soul of a republic of “small producers,” essential to wise government and political stability.

Accordingly, they participated in debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and generally endorsed the federalist case for a stronger central government. Enticed by Thomas Jefferson’s vision of a nation propelled by yeoman farmers and urban mechanics, artisans supported the Virginian planter’s successful candidacy for the presidency in 1800 and helped form the base of the Democratic-Republican Party for the next two decades.

Artisan Republicanism

Artisans not only marked their republicanism by exercising their citizenship rights in elections. Between 1788 and 1825, artisans in New York City used such occasions as Independence Day (4th of July), Evacuation Day (November 25, 1783, when British troops left New York), and the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 to demonstrate their patriotism and celebrate their status as free men and independent producers. In orderly processions they carried banners and transparencies that displayed symbols of their trades and craft societies. These festivals featured an iconography that powerfully expressed values embedded in the artisans’ political and work cultures.

To artisans, the small independent workshop was the microcosm of a republican society. Masters, journeymen, and apprentices worked alongside each other in self-directed but interdependent activity. Mutuality, co-operation, and convivial relations bonded producers within a tightly knit community free of hierarchy and exploitation. Any suggestion that the calculus of economic efficiency should govern the organization of production met with hostility. Typical was the response of a journeyman drug maker in 1830, who dismissed the observation of an English immigrant that a more detailed division of labor would increase productivity: “This is a free country; we want no one person over another which would be the case if you divided the labor.”

That the process of industrialization by the 1820s and 1830s had manifestly rendered the republican imagery of the workshop as increasingly idyllic did not reduce the steadfastness or intensity by which artisans upheld republican values. Disputes between masters and journeymen, which prompted restrictive judicial interpretations of the common law and definitions of property rights at the expense of journeymen, compelled artisans to recognize the reality of social and economic divisions. Yet in doing so, they

re-affirmed the vitality of the founding principles of the American republic as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Journeymen defended their militancy in the face of “haughty and overbearing” masters who in the pursuit of private gain sought to deny journeymen of their natural, inalienable rights as “free men” and thereby defy the republic itself.

Artisans’ republicanism was most manifest as they assumed leadership in the labor movement in the 1820s and 1830s. The growth of craft-based journeymen societies to achieve “just compensation” in the 1820s; the intervention of Workingmen’s Parties in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia (1828–1830) to contest the state’s promotion of “monopolistic privilege”; and the emergence of citywide general trade unions, which brought together craftsmen, outworkers, and factory operatives between 1833 and 1836 to halt the imposition of economic “vassalage” by employers keen to reduce labor costs signaled a shift in consciousness in recognition of the widening chasm between masters and journeymen and employers and wage workers.

Labor republicanism, as defined and understood by artisans in this sense, constituted both a language of class with its distinctive terminology, structure, and tonality as well as the rudiments of an ideological critique of the social relations of production that capitalist accumulation of wealth engendered. In this context, Ely Moore, the leader of the New York Workingmen’s Party, defended journeymen’s concerted activity at the workplace and in the political arena as an antidote to the corrupting influence of a “new aristocracy” of manufacturers and bankers. Addressing the New York General Trades Union in 1834, he warned delegates of the dangers posed by a “widening distinction between employer and the employed,” including the perpetuation of a “system that fostered dependency,” subverted “the natural rights of man,” and was “hostile to the spirit and genius” of republican government.

Labor republicanism as a body of thought was not without its anomalies and tensions. Despite offering an imprimatur to artisans to organize trade unions and political parties with aspirations to represent all producers, at times it existed more as a radical subculture in competition with evangelical Protestantism, which many Anglo-American workers in the 1830s and 1840s embraced. Consequently, its claim to encapsulate a vision of labor in a republican society rested on an appeal to a rationalist sensibility. Although republicanism possessed elements of a code of ethics in its critique of aggrandizing capitalists, it lacked the moral fervor of religious revivalism that

spoke to the emotional needs of artisans and other workers confronted with the insecurities and anxieties of a market-driven economy.

Moreover, republicanism’s emphasis on the rights and liberties of individuals was predicated on the existence of a durable political and cultural consensus. Yet economic changes attendant to industrialization bore witness, and the property rights of individuals became subject to redefinition. In part, republicanism did display an elasticity in this regard, as artisans asserted that their labor constituted a form of property that they “owned” just as much as a merchant owned his business or a yeoman farmer owned his land. However, master craftsmen increasingly were acting as incipient entrepreneurs who regarded the journeymen’s skills as a commodity to be purchased at the right price.

Labor Republicanism and Wage Labor

Concomitant to these different readings of property rights were conflicting interpretations of what wage labor signified. Informed by abolitionists’ critique of slavery in the South, wage labor was a form of “free” labor since wage workers were not bound to their employers in that they were free to seek other employment opportunities and could advance economically and socially. A more pessimistic interpretation stressed that wage labor constituted another and more insidious form of dependency that entailed a deterioration in workers’ position. Labor spokespersons sometimes referred to wage workers as “hirelings” who were shown scant respect by those who retained their services. In the 1830s, “wage slavery” entered republican discourse as an emotive term, indicating that manual workers were entrapped within an “iron chain of bondage.”

This metaphor was not coincidental, since “freedom,” “slavery,” independence, and servility were charged with racial meanings. For many antebellum white Americans, chattel slavery was the lot of African-Americans, who purportedly were “unfit” to act as autonomous agents. Any suggestion that white wage workers were being made slaves of any sort raised the fear that they were falling from republican grace and succumbing to a degradation associated with an inferior race.

Likewise, republicanism’s ethos was coded in terms of gender. Republican independence signified “manliness,” a set of traits that entitled some men to enjoy the rights and fulfill the responsibilities of citizenship. Personal integrity, honesty, native intelligence,

and self-respect were manly characteristics, cultivated in a republican society that did not tolerate social hierarchies based on inherited titles, imposed ranks, or permanent classes. That some seemingly acquiesced to if not accepted a status less than that of “free men” convinced many white workers that a “republican” labor movement justifiably had no room for “unmanly” African-Americans and Chinese immigrant “coolies.”

Notions of manliness, nevertheless, revealed ambiguities in labor republicanism. Republican thought traditionally deemed women as lacking the prerequisites for citizenship, although women served the patriot cause during the War for Independence and subsequently were expected to uphold the ideal of “republican motherhood.” In part, republicanism’s ambiguity paralleled the tensions in the legal code between women as “femme covert” and as “femme sole” whereby women’s status before the law oscillated between one absorbed with that of their fathers or husbands and one that deemed women as autonomous individuals capable of thinking and acting for themselves.

Women drew greater attention from the labor movement as their position in a market economy grew in the 1830s and 1840s. In some respects, the employment of women in mechanized factories and labor-intensive urban sweatshops epitomized the degradation of wage labor and the erosion of the artisans’ world, and as such became a target of approbation.

Yet, as women workers, especially in New England’s cotton textile industry, began to organize against wage reductions and long hours, they asserted their claim to a place within a republican society. Their language of protest—be it to justify their strikes to the general public or explain their petition for a 10-hour day—evoked images familiar with male artisans. Standing firm against the “oppressing hand of avarice,” female operatives in Lowell, Massachusetts, declared they remained “daughters of freemen” and possessed “unquestionable rights” as an inheritance of their “patriotic ancestors.” In short, by dint of their concerted activity and the meaning they attached to it, women workers helped to make labor republicanism less gender specific by the mid-nineteenth century.

Labor Republicanism in the Gilded Age

Labor republicanism’s “golden age” occurred during a period of accelerated industrialization, marked by sweeping technological innovation, the development of national capital, labor and consumer markets, and

the emergence of powerful corporations. This fundamental transformation of the American economy represented a challenge to the labor movement over the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Members from the National Labor Union, Knights of Labor, and individual unions upheld time-honored principles in their advocacy of workers’ individual rights and collective interests. Expressed in declarations, speeches, songs, and poems through such publications as the *National Labor Tribune*, the *Journal of United Labor*, and *John Swinton’s Paper*, an alternative value system and vision of American society were cultivated.

The attempts of industrialists to reduce labor costs and wrest control over the labor process from craft workers spurred trade unionists and labor reformers to re-affirm bedrock republican values. Puddlers in Pittsburgh’s steel mills referred to an “intrinsic customary value” of labor, independent of the interplay of supply and demand. Ideas about natural justice were prominent in a critique of industrial capitalism and underpinned arguments for workers’ claims to the product of their labor as a “competence” and “fair” or “living” wage. Labor, therefore, was construed in terms of equity as a means of securing a “dignified” life that allowed workers to own a house and sustain a family without wives/mothers and children having to work.

An emphasis on the distribution of wealth revealed a growing sensitivity to social and economic relations in a capitalist society. To advocates of the eight-hour day, such as Ira Steward, freedom from excessive toil and just compensation were two sides of the same coin, emblematic of full emancipation. Whereas Steward believed that wage labor did not prevent workers from “moving out of the slavery of poverty” into “the freedom of wealth,” spokespersons from the Knights of Labor, such as George McNeil and Uriah Stephens, regarded wage labor as part and parcel of inequality and the lack of freedom. McNeil categorically declared that “there is an inevitable and irresistible conflict between the wage system and the republican form of government.” Stephens called on Knights to fulfill their noble duty and oppose the usurpations of “an accursed slavery, a heaven denounced tyranny and a degrading atheistic idolatry.”

These different representations of wage labor suggest that labor republicanism was multivalent. For some, it provided the logical foundation for a program—setting out practical aims and objectives. For others, it supplied the labor movement with the moral energy and fortitude necessary to persevere in the face of intense opposition. In any event, republicanism permeated a movement culture that simultaneously

defended American values and dynamically recast them to contest the perceived threat industrial capitalism posed to American democracy. At a time when “self-made” captains of industry such as Andrew Carnegie lauded the pursuit of private interest and the acquisition of wealth as fundamental to a democratic society, Gilded Age labor activists spoke of promoting the “commonweal” whereby workers could “develop their intellectual, moral, and social faculties” and “share in the gains and honors of an advancing civilization.”

The Knights of Labor, in particular, envisioned a society in which cooperation, equality, and community defined social, economic, and cultural life in contrast to the egotistical individualism, the concentration of wealth and power, and the ethos of unbridled competition that industrial capitalism both fed on and encouraged. In a language that combined the temperament of a devout Christian and the clear-headed logic of a political economist, the Knights unreservedly launched a crusade to redeem the republic by nurturing the values and mobilizing for a program that would make “industrial and moral worth and not wealth the true standard of individual and natural greatness.”

The Knights’ appeal rested also on its inclusiveness. Membership in its assemblies and lodges was open to wage earners, farmers, merchants, doctors, and educators. The Knights drew from “producerist” precepts at the heart of artisan republicanism that validated the contributions of the producers of wealth at the exclusion of those who expropriated wealth, such as bankers and land speculators. Likewise, its program was comprehensive—aimed at redressing economic grievances, codifying the rights of labor, altering institutional arrangements, or otherwise checking unequal power relations.

The Knights rapidly declined in the 1890s, and concurrently much of labor’s crusading spirit ebbed. Concomitantly, republicanism’s compelling vigor began to wane within movement discourse. Its guiding principles and core values no longer were salient in labor’s program and strategic orientation. By the turn of the century, greater stress was placed on the nuts and bolts of organization at the workplace and political arena to wrest concessions from employers and the state and to establish the legal legitimacy of trade unions.

Even when there was no change in labor’s objectives, a shift in emphasis emerged. For example, advocates of the eight-hour day turned to arguments focusing on workers as consumers rather than on workers as producers. Workers were entitled to “an American standard of living” and not just the fruits of their labor. Proto-Keynesian assertions that a shorter

workday and higher wages would stimulate demand and thereby promote economic prosperity became more common.

In a sense, republicanism’s decline coincided with workers’ accommodation to the growth of industrial capitalism. Nevertheless, even as labor leaders assumed a business- and statesmanlike posture, the *raison d’être* of trade unionism in the twentieth century remained its pursuit of justice and equality, once at the heart of labor republicanism.

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See also **Artisans; Gilded Age; Knights of Labor**

LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

The Labor Research Association (LRA) was founded in 1927 by Robert Dunn (1895–1977). It continues to this day as a New York-based nonprofit organization that provides research and educational services for unions. Today, the LRA is known for hosting an annual dinner that honors labor leaders. The LRA also assists unions in bargaining preparations and strategic planning. It is managed by a board of directors composed of union and other labor leaders.

Robert Dunn was born in Huntington, Pennsylvania, on June 1, 1895, and eventually graduated from Yale University. He began his career in 1918 as an organizer and economic researcher for the Amalgamated Textile Workers Union. He was also secretary of the New England Civil Liberties Committee, a division of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) from the beginning of that organization in

1920. He served on the board of directors of the ACLU from 1933 to 1941. After founding the LRA in 1927, he served as its executive secretary until 1975. Dunn was interested in the Soviet Union and visited that country as the research director of the Quaker Relief Committee in 1922–1923 and as the secretary of the American Trade Union Delegation to Russia in 1927.

He founded the LRA in order to collect data on labor and the economy for unions. This data included statistics, general information, and analysis by the LRA. To this end, the LRA published the *Labor Fact Book* biennially. The *Labor Fact Book* contained a systematic analysis of the facts and statistics it compiled, including in its first decade such questions as the nature of the Great Depression, the relations of white and black workers, and the meaning of Fascism. The LRA was influenced by the Communist Party and took many of its definitions and questions from that organization's viewpoint. The LRA also put out a series of monographs, mostly written by Dunn, called the "Labor and Industry Series." These include *Labor and Automobiles* (1929), *Labor and Textiles* (1931), and *Labor and Steel* (1934).

The LRA continued to espouse a Marxian viewpoint and to publish books through International Publishers, the Communist Party's publishing house, into the 1950s. The book *Monopoly Today*, put out by the LRA in 1950, for instance, asserted that four hundred men ruled the American economy and analyzed the different groups of monopolies that dominated the nation. The LRA also published books on American imperialism and on theoretical questions such as wage determination (see *New Concepts in Wage Determination*, edited by George Taylor and Frank Pierson, 1957).

The LRA has continued to mount an intellectual critique of academic economics from the viewpoint of labor and the working class until the present day. While the openly Marxian perspective was less evident in LRA publications in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the organization still put out articles with titles like "'Invisible Hand' Not a Solution: Laid-off Workers Need More Protection" (November 15, 2001). The LRA's analysis of the Enron scandal, for instance, asserts that Enron illustrates the "inherent corruption in the system of capital accumulation itself" (Greg Tarpinian, "The Enron Collapse: Symptom of a Corrupt Economic System," Jan 21, 2002). In the early twenty-first century, the LRA began a new project, LRA Photography, dedicated to photographing working people. The LRA has continued the tradition of intellectual work in the service of the labor movement.

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LABOR THEORY OF VALUE

The "labor theory of value," the doctrine that "labor creates all wealth" and that workers should therefore receive the "full fruits of their labor," had broad support in nineteenth-century America. Rooted in ancient notions of justice, the labor theory of value was given modern legitimation in the philosophy of John Locke, who held that one's labor was a form of personal property, as inviolable as one's home, crops, or tools. Artisans, farmers, and politicians agreed, at least rhetorically, that the people who did useful labor were both morally superior to and more worthy of political power than the idle rich, the shiftless, and, in general, those who consumed wealth rather than produced it. Enslaved people also invoked the labor theory of value as a justification for the common practice of appropriating food and other items that, they believed, properly belonged to them by virtue of their productive labor.

The labor theory of value was the bulwark of "producerism," the notion that those who grew the nation's crops and produced its goods were the moral, economic, and political heart of the American republic. What made the labor theory of value so popular in the nineteenth century was that the concept of "labor" was very broad, and might include, depending on who was defining it—in addition to manual laborers, skilled workers, and farmers—merchants, entrepreneurs, and professionals. The first working-class organizations in the Jacksonian era endlessly repeated the claim that "labor creates all wealth" and, accordingly, demanded that workers both receive their fair share of that wealth and that they play a central role in the governance of the republic. In the 1870s and 1880s, America's first great national labor union, the Knights of Labor, embodied this broad definition of what it called the "producing masses" by welcoming—in addition to artisans and other manual workers—merchants and small businessmen, and explicitly excluding only those who "lived by the sweat of other men's brows."

The labor theory of value was central to labor and farmer discourse well into the late nineteenth century. The Knights of Labor used the phrase "full

fruits of his toil” in the preamble to their platform. Workers, it claimed, should be able “to secure to the workers the full enjoyment of the wealth they create.” Both the St. Louis and Omaha platforms of the People’s Party, the political offshoot of the Populist movement, declared: “Wealth belongs to him who creates it. Every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery” (Knights of Labor, pp. 22, 30; Destler, pp. 25–27). Many farmers and workers clung to the belief that they were entitled to nothing less than the “full fruits of their labor.”

Although they continued to embrace the labor theory of value, beginning in the late nineteenth century, American workers began to redefine its meaning, from an individual to a collective concept. Samuel Gompers, the leader of the American Federation of Labor, for example, insisted that living wages represented workers’ fair share of productive value. But Gompers and other advocates of high wages invoked “fair share” in a new way. Whereas earlier in the nineteenth century, proponents of “fair” or “honest” or “just” wages described them as a return for individual labor yields, in the late nineteenth century, advocates for workers described the fair share, often also called a “living wage,” in collective terms, as the worker’s rightful “share in the products of common toil” (Lloyd, 51). This redefinition was necessary as increasingly industrial workers labored alongside large numbers of other people, making it difficult to measure the value of individual labor. Instead, wages resulted from the aggregate claims of a group of workers to their rightful share of the social product that they collectively created.

These revisers of the labor theory of value refused to separate remuneration and production. Their claims for fair wages or living wages, however expansively construed, were a demand for wealth earned by the sweat of workers’ brows. This is why Samuel Gompers insisted that the living wage should be understood as an “entitlement” rather than “charity” (“Minimum Living Wage,” and *Lowell Mail*, pp. 432–435). These claims to economic justice depended on the labor theory of value; living wages came out of the reserves of wealth that workers themselves created. As the radical Bob Ingersoll framed it, the demand for a high standard of living was not a claim for unearned wealth but a way to establish economic justice in the classic producerist sense. “Why should labor fill the world with wealth and live in want?” he asked in 1882 (Ingersoll). Through the twentieth century, organized labor continued to make this argument about the collective value of labor as a justification for wage demands. For example, the socialist newspaper, the *New York Call*, described

a “Fundamental Principle that each worker has an undeniable right to enjoy the full benefit of all that he or she produces” (June 29, 1908).

Although workers continue to invoke the labor theory of value, since the late nineteenth century competing theories of value have emerged. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the major challenge to the producerist moorings of the labor theory of value has been marginalism, the insight first promoted by economists in the 1870s that what is most important for decision making is the marginal or last unit of consumption or production. The marginalist revolution in economics suggested that value was best thought of as what consumers were willing to pay for a good or service. This meant that measuring the value of work could not occur outside of the marketplace; according to this theory, it was ultimately consumers who determined the value of labor. Marginalism challenged the notion that the absolute value of labor could be determined, even if one defined production in collective terms; they understood the determination of labor value as a relative process, shifting the meaning of value from the production to the consumption side, or in the language of economists, from the supply to the demand side.

As the marginalist revolution gained prominence, workers often phrased their wage demands in consumerist rather than producerist terms, weakening the hold of the labor theory of value. “The living wage is based, not on the value of a man’s work, but on his requirements as a man in civilized society,” one advocate declared (Crowther, p. 26). Rejecting the dogma that “wages must be proportionate to the value of services rendered,” another advocate of living wages argued that it was impossible to separate value from questions of power: “every one knows that there is little connection between value of services and wages paid; the employer pays no more than he must” (Sullivan, 284–289). “Under the present social system,” wrote the progressive reformer Scott Nearing in 1915, “there is no relation between the social needs of a man and the wage which he receives.” In a frontal assault on the labor theory of value, Nearing argued that the “the term worth should be abandoned.” For Nearing, a living wage should be “a return in proportion to social needs.” In 1915, Nearing denounced the “American Wage” as “anti-social” because it was “fixed wholly independent of social relations” (Lehrer, p. 91). In 1916, he condemned the view that the worker receives wages “in proportion to his product.” In truth, he wrote, wages “are never fixed on that basis” (Sherman, pp. 66–67; Nearing, 872–873).

Notwithstanding the acceptance of marginal thinking by many working-class organizations, organized

labor and many ordinary workers continued to posit a chastened version of the labor theory of value throughout the twentieth century, a belief that seems likely to continue to motivate manual laborers well into the future. Labor demands for good wages continue to be grounded in the idea that, even in a modern economy, the value of goods and services should be reflective of the labor that helped create the product. When Walter Reuther, the head of the United Auto Workers' Union in the post-World War II years, asked the big automobile companies to "open the books," he was making the case that workers, responsible for the profits of these corporations, deserved a share of the wealth they created. But even here, labor's claims rested less on the labor theory of value than on the claim that justice demanded that workers earn decent wages that would allow them to live with dignity. Many late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century "living wage" campaigns, for example, while stressing the productive value contributed by the labor force, have emphasized far more American affluence, social justice, and the benefits of extending mass consumption as justifications for paying workers livable wages.

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LABOR'S NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE (1936–1944)

Leaders from the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) created Labor's Non-Partisan League (LNPL) in April 1936 to increase organized labor's influence in American politics. The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) president, John L. Lewis, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) president, Sidney Hillman, played leading roles in the formation of LNPL. In an attempt to emphasize its independence from the CIO and its multi-union composition, the League's first president, George Berry, came from the International Printing Pressmen and Assistant's Union, an American Federation of Labor (AFL)-affiliated union. Eli P. Oliver, an organizer for the ACWA, became the vice president. In reality, LNPL possessed only nominal independence from the CIO, whose leaders, particularly Hillman and Lewis, created and controlled the organization.

Just a few months prior to forming LNPL, Hillman and Lewis had created the CIO to challenge the craft-oriented AFL. Upset with the AFL's refusal to alter its organization to accommodate the structural changes that had occurred in the workplace, they formed the CIO to organize these workers into industrial, rather than craft, unions. The CIO experienced substantial early gains, particularly in the fledgling United Auto Workers Union in the wake of the successful Flint sit-down strike. Legislation supported by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, such as the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA, 1933) and, after the Supreme Court ruled the NIRA unconstitutional, the National Labor Relations Act (1935), greatly improved the union-organizing environment. Encouraged by the support of Roosevelt and other labor-friendly Democrats, CIO leaders formed LNPL to increase labor's power and effectiveness in politics.

The formation of LNPL represented an important shift in organized labor's previous stance toward politics. It also demonstrated further differences between the AFL and the CIO. The AFL only occasionally became involved in electoral politics, proudly maintaining that it remained independent of either party by rewarding its political friends and punishing its enemies. LNPL activities represented a more expansive, organized, and partisan foray into electoral politics than AFL leaders had ever envisioned. Although its name suggested that LNPL would be independent of either political party, the League almost

immediately became closely aligned with the Democratic Party and rarely supported Republican Party candidates. The long political alliance between organized labor and the Democratic Party began in 1936 with the creation of LNPL and its support of Roosevelt.

The League provided Roosevelt's 1936 re-election campaign with substantial financial and institutional backing. LNPL spent around \$1,000,000 in its efforts to re-elect FDR, much of it going to the Democratic Party. Lewis's own UMWA contributed a large portion of the money. LNPL also provided important organizational assistance to Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. LNPL election activities included publishing and distributing pamphlets, organizing rallies, radio addresses, press releases, and public statements. In addition to its primary focus on the presidential election, state and local CIO unions that had political activists and increasing CIO union memberships organized support at both the state and local levels for other Democratic Party candidates. Roosevelt's landslide victory (532 electoral votes to the Republican challenger Alf Landon's 8) in 1936 and the election of a number of LNPL-supported governors, such as Frank Murphy in Michigan and George Earle Jr. in Pennsylvania, demonstrated to many CIO leaders that LNPL was a critical component of the new industrial labor movement and that organized labor should have a permanent presence in American politics.

Success in the 1936 elections encouraged LNPL's continued political activities. In early 1937, the national LNPL offices moved to become an integral part of the Democratic Party, the Roosevelt presidency, and the New Deal coalition. Its initial activities focused on supporting Roosevelt's political agenda. For example, LNPL supported the President's ill-fated Supreme Court packing plan. Although formed as a top-down organization interested primarily in national politics, local LNPL organizations in a number of cities, like Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Akron, ran and supported candidates for local offices, such as city council and mayoral races, in 1937.

The emerging alliance between LNPL and the Democratic Party also encountered difficulties. Some LNPL leaders, like the outspoken Lewis, rebuked Roosevelt for his lack of support of union efforts, particularly after the Little Steel Strike Massacre on Memorial Day in 1937, which left 10 strikers shot dead after confrontations with law enforcement. By 1939, Lewis, who now chaired and dominated the LNPL national offices after the ouster of George Berry in 1938, grew increasingly disenchanted with Roosevelt. Lewis supported Republican Wendell Willkie in the 1940 presidential campaign, while most CIO leaders, including Sidney Hillman, supported Roosevelt's bid for an unprecedented third

term. Lewis's support of Willkie created chaos in LNPL, particularly when Lewis ordered LNPL to stay out of the campaign. Some local and state LNPL offices disregarded Lewis's directive and supported Roosevelt. Lewis resigned as president of the CIO after Roosevelt's victory but maintained control of the national LNPL offices.

LNPL went in two directions after the 1940 election. The Lewis-controlled national LNPL offices struggled between 1941 until 1944. Its activities slowed considerably and focused primarily on lobbying Congress on labor-related legislation, such as antistrike bills and wage and price control legislation. In a few strong CIO cities, local LNPL offices developed into independent political arms of the local labor movement that no longer had a direct connection to the national LNPL. These local efforts remained close to the Democratic Party. The creation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations-Political Action Committee (CIO-PAC) in 1943 spelled the end of LNPL. The locally active LNPLs merged into the larger, more coordinated and directly CIO-affiliated CIO-PAC structure. The increasingly inactive Lewis-led national LNPL quietly shut its offices in 1944. The CIO-PAC built on the earlier success of LNPL and further tied organized labor to the Democratic Party as an integral part of the New Deal coalition, a process that LNPL had started when it supported FDR's re-election campaign in 1936.

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See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations**

LABORERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA

In April 1903, Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), called a meeting of all independent laborers' unions in Washington, DC. Gompers argued that the other construction trades often treated laborers—who performed unskilled, low-status work on construction sites (hod carriers, for example, carried mortar to bricklayers)—as

second-class members of the house of labor. Laborers, therefore, would be better able to protect their interests by consolidating all the independents into one international union. On April 13, 25 delegates representing over 8,000 workers formed the International Hod Carriers' and Building Laborers' Union of America (IHCBLUA). During its first decade, the AFL laborers' union survived challenges from two independent unions—the Building Laborers' International Protective Union of America and the Laborers' Protective Union of America. Thereafter, the leadership of presidents Domenico D'Alessandro (1908–1926) and Joseph V. Moreschi (1926–1968) created a relatively stable early history.

The AFL's Laborers' union grew unevenly but persisted through numerous jurisdictional and name changes. In 1912 alone, the Laborers' union changed labels twice, first to the International Hod Carriers' and Common Laborers' Union of America (IHCCLUA) and then to the International Hod Carriers', Building and Common Laborers' Union of America (IHCB & CLUA). The membership grew gradually until 1913, when the union appropriated its first funds for organizers, added road construction workers, and raised membership to nearly 25,000. During the building boom of the 1920s, the Laborers' grew to approximately 96,000. However, the Depression hit the IHCB & CLUA hard, and its numbers dropped to 27,000 by 1933. Although private construction did not recover until after World War II, the Laborers' prospects gradually improved over the 1930s. In 1931, Congress passed the Davis-Bacon Act, which protected wage rates for construction workers on government-financed projects. In addition, public works projects during the second half of the New Deal years were good for the union, bringing the rank and file to over 101,000 in 1937 and 200,000 in 1942. Post-World War II organizing campaigns, combined with the addition of trades such as the National Association of Post Office Mail Handlers in 1958, added strength. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) signed a number of agreements with national employers' associations, such as the National Pipeline Association, Association of Railway Track Contractors of America, Inc., Associated General Contractors of America, National Contractors' Association, Building Trades Employers' Association, and General Contractors' Association. In 1965, the union changed its name one final time to the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), reflecting the union's increased scope.

The Laborers' history is tied to the history of public works and government contract law. Laborers and other construction trades, of course, are essential to

public works projects. Consequently, they have been beneficiaries of the expansion of the nation's infrastructure. In addition to the Davis-Bacon Act, the Federal Highway Act (1944) was a great boon to the Laborers' union. Since the late 1940s, the Laborers have been at the center of lobbying efforts for occupational safety. The 1949 National Pipeline Agreement, for example, included groundbreaking safety regulations for thousands of workers. In addition, in 1962, the Laborers formed the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department Safety Committee, and a massive lobbying effort succeeded in prompting the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Laborers have also played key roles in safe removal of asbestos and in 1988 established a pioneering Health and Safety Fund.

As a union encompassing many low-skilled workers, the Laborers have had a problematic relationship to the history of trade unionism more generally. The conventional view of the AFL is that it was a bastion of "pure and simple unionism," providing a protective house of labor for skilled workers. The Laborers, however, represent Gompers's and the AFL's efforts to expand its jurisdiction to include lower-skilled workers in order to oppose competing unions. The Laborers' history with regard to racial discrimination fits squarely into the broader narrative of trade unionism. Despite the AFL's claims that it disavowed racist practices, contemporaries and historians have noted that African-Americans and Mexicans did not hold an equal place in the Laborers' ranks during the first half of the twentieth century. Well into the century, black laborers in the IHCB & CLUA were forced to reside in segregated locals.

Throughout much of its history, the Laborers' union has had notorious ties to organized crime. The construction industry's large and relatively constant revenue streams have made it an attractive target for organized crime. Additionally, once organized crime members infiltrated the construction trades, the unions' exclusivity facilitated their control over material flows and job distribution. The federal government began investigating these connections in the early twentieth century, culminating in the 1980s and 1990s when LIUNA was at the center of a national controversy over organized crime and unions, with significant implications for national politics. In 1986, the President's Commission on Organized Crime named LIUNA one of the "bad four" unions for its ties to racketeering, along with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), Hotel and Restaurant Workers (HRW), and the International Longshoremen's Association. In 1994, after many successful efforts to clean other unions of organized

crime elements, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) presented LIUNA with a 212-page complaint against the Laborers' president, Arthur A. Coia. In an unusual settlement, the DOJ agreed to leave Coia in office and put LIUNA in charge of cleaning its own ranks of organized crime. Republican members of Congress charged that LIUNA received a "sweetheart deal" because Coia had strong connections to the Democratic Party and President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton. In 1996, the House Committee on the Judiciary's Subcommittee on Crime heard two days of testimony on the Justice Department's handling of allegations that labor was connected to organized crime. In turn, labor leaders such as Coia and the AFL-CIO head John Sweeney rejected the 1996 hearings, arguing that they were merely partisan efforts to undercut organized labor's newly energized organizing campaigns. In 1999, Coia stepped down from the union's presidency, and a year later the federal government gave up its option to take charge of LIUNA. By 2000, LIUNA's self-policing ousted at least 220 corrupt officials, 127 of whom had proven connections to organized crime.

While LIUNA dealt with allegations of corruption, the Laborers saw two distinct movements to increase the numbers and power of rank-and-file members. In 1994, Coia established a new organizing department, which included the Volunteer Organizer in Community Empowerment (VOICE) program. New organizers increased the Laborers' numbers to over 800,000 by focusing on low-skilled workers in new sectors. In 2003, LIUNA also joined the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride Coalition. In addition, Laborers members led an unofficial grassroots movement to democratize the union. The Laborers' history reveals the ambiguities of the American union movement. Throughout its history, the Laborers' union's various incarnations have represented sectors of the working class that other trade and industrial unions often overlooked. Yet, the Laborers' history also highlights American unions' struggles with corruption and imperfect union democracy.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Construction Trades; Davis-Bacon Act; Gompers, Samuel; Occupational Safety and Health Administration

LABOR-MANAGEMENT COOPERATION

"Labor-management cooperation" (LMC) is a rather complex concept in the labor relations lexicon, as its meaning changes depending on who is using it and for what purpose. In the early twentieth century, it denoted key ideological splits within both management and labor. By mid-century, that version of the issue had been settled in favor of a specific form of cooperation. Subsequently, either unions or managements periodically employed the concept, or invoked the sentiment, whenever they were feeling particularly weak—or particularly strong. In the last quarter of the century, when unions still had substantial, if eroding, strength in many important sectors, labor-management cooperation enjoyed something of a fad among management for motives that were decidedly mixed. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, with unions representing less than 10% of private-sector workers, the concept faded, as did the entire field of "labor relations" in favor of "human resources" in nonunion workplaces.

In the early years of the last century, key proponents of labor-management cooperation formed the National Civic Federation (NCF) with hopes of preventing class divisions from "dissolving society" by addressing "industrial problems through evolutionary rather than revolutionary processes." Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and John Mitchell, the head of the United Mine Workers (UMWA), were key labor

spokespersons for this view, while corporate and political leaders associated with the NCF included Andrew Carnegie, William H. Taft, Alton Parker, George Perkins, and August Belmont.

The issue for the labor movement then was whether to use trade unions to negotiate a better deal with capitalist employers or as but part of a larger effort to replace the capitalist system with a “cooperative commonwealth”—that is, one form or another of socialism. Eugene Debs, a railroad unionist who ran for U.S. president as a Socialist from 1900 through 1920, and William (“Big Bill”) Haywood of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) condemned Gompers’s and Mitchell’s participation in the Civic Federation. Haywood claimed unions that took this approach were “poisoned and polluted with the virus of the pure and simple trade union that . . . proclaim [ed] the identity of interests of capital and labor.” In 1911, a dissident group within the AFL and the UMWA scored labor leaders’ membership in the NCF as “class collaboration” designed “to chloroform the labor movement into a more submissive mood.”

On the business side, the primary focus was on whether to accept labor unions as institutional representatives of workers. Business advocates of labor-management cooperation argued that negotiating some terms and conditions of employment with AFL-style unions was preferable to the potential social and political upheavals that would result if there were no mechanism for workers to articulate their grievances and improve their conditions. This view was anathema to most employers at the time, even those who were forced by strikes and boycotts to bargain with unions occasionally. Many corporations, as Debs and Haywood were quick to point out, wanted to have it both ways. U.S. Steel, for example, was a prominent member of the Civic Federation, extolling the virtues of “cooperation” in speeches and documents but going to great lengths to systematically suppress any and all union activity in its mills and mines.

Cooperation Wins as Collective Bargaining

With the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) and other labor legislation in the 1930s, the federal government weighed in strongly in favor of a specific form of labor-management cooperation—government-regulated collective bargaining. By legislating certain rights and protections for workers, the government required private employers to recognize and bargain in good faith with duly elected unions. Responding

to the social and economic upheavals of the Great Depression, the NLRA channeled worker activity into a very specific form of labor union defined nearly exclusively as an institution for collective bargaining. Though communists, socialists, and other revolutionary unionists were prominent in organizing millions of workers into unions within this government-regulated system, the system decisively ended the internal labor movement debate over whether to negotiate with capitalists or to replace them with an altogether different, socialist system. Legally sanctioned strikes forced powerful corporations, one by one from 1937 to 1941, to recognize and bargain with unions.

In the new system, labor-management cooperation was conceived of as necessarily adversarial. That is, though areas of common interest between workers and management were recognized, it was assumed that there would always be deep and abiding differences in real material interests. The way to reconcile these differences was through negotiations, enforced by (peaceful and legally regulated) economic strikes and lockouts or the threat thereof, and by what became elaborate systems of mediation and arbitration by third-party, often government, agencies. Labor-management cooperation, in other words, was seen as enemies negotiating with each other rather than going to war to eliminate each other. Employers, when they had to, recognized and negotiated with unions. Unions abandoned the revolutionary socialist option in favor of negotiating better and better terms and conditions of employment with capitalist employers.

Legally inscribed as an adversarial system, in the immediate post-World War II period it was open as to what all would be covered by the legal requirement to negotiate “terms and conditions.” The principal AFL unions that had formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—the miners and the clothing unions—had long traditions of offering highly competitive employers what amounted to business plans for limiting competition to protect prices and profits. This was also part of the traditional “sales pitch” of the AFL building trades unions: that by cooperating with workers through their unions, employers could stabilize (and thereby increase) the quality and quantity of their production and, thus, their profits. Postwar CIO unions employed similar appeals to “labor-management cooperation” in a different form, proposing tripartite Industry Councils where government, employers, and unions would cooperate to ensure profitability, increased wages, and better conditions within a regime of stable prices that would stimulate economic growth. Employers almost uniformly saw this form of labor-management

cooperation as an illegitimate challenge to their “right to manage.” Both through negotiations and legislative restrictions, this wider participation of unions in “managing” entire industries was rejected by business and government. Though there were occasionally echoes of this broader approach, for the most part unions subsequently narrowed their focus to wages, benefits, and shop-floor power through what became highly elaborate grievance-ending-in-arbitration systems.

Cooperation as Unions Decline

Faced with declining productivity growth and economic stagflation in the 1970s, many unionized employers turned to a shop-floor form of labor-management cooperation for a variety of reasons. Likewise, as plant closings began to proliferate in the late 1970s and early 1980s, some unions broached the idea of “industrial policy” modeled on the CIO’s Industry Councils, while others traded contract concessions for investment guarantees and seats on companies’ board of directors. In general, management was most interested in greater “cooperation” at the shop-floor level, while unions often emphasized “cooperation” at higher levels where companywide decisions were being made.

Labor-management cooperation in the workplace itself came in a variety of forms with an even greater variety of names and emphases. “Quality of Work Life” (QWL), for example, emphasized a joint process of improving workplace amenities, morale, and productivity. “Employee involvement” focused more on gaining worker input and insight into how to improve specific work processes in order to improve product quality and/or productivity. These programs were usually initiated by management in union workplaces, and unions had a variety of responses to them. Most unions were suspicious of them, fearing they would undermine the steward and grievance systems that enforced contract provisions concerning job classifications and work rules. Some, most importantly the United Auto Workers (UAW), embraced the concept at the leadership level and experimented with various forms of cooperative shop-floor improvement processes, but not without both explicit and tacit resistance on the part of local UAW leaders and workers. Even well-defined programs, like those at General Motors at various times, played out very differently division by division and plant by plant. Local management, particularly at the departmental and front-line supervisor levels, were generally unenthusiastic, and even where elaborate programs had seemed to foster a more co-operative environment with tangible

improvements in product quality or productivity, they could be rapidly eroded by labor-management disputes at higher levels.

As union-heavy industries restructured—not only manufacturing with its plant closings and severe downsizing, but telecommunications, airlines, trucking and others—these programs were sometimes forced upon and other times advocated by union workers as efforts that could improve the prospects of their company or industry. Though the overall record of these “labor-management cooperation” programs is mixed at best, there were some dramatic success stories of plants or companies being turned around. These successes, however, typically involved crisis situations, and while some analysts credited labor-management cooperation for these turnarounds, others saw “worker participation in management” as the moving force.

As union power has eroded in industry after industry and as nonunion employers in growing economic sectors have greatly improved their ability to resist union organization, some form of LMC program has become a standard, but unimportant, element in most union workplaces. In nonunion workplaces, an entirely different terminology is used because workers have no collective power to cooperate or not. Though many large employers devote substantial resources to “human capital development” and other efforts to maintain “employee morale and commitment,” others deliberately churn their workforces, accepting high levels of worker absenteeism and turnover in return for a complete absence of any threat of worker organization. From the beginning, the concept of labor-management cooperation assumed a certain level of collective worker power that made cooperation a necessary or appealing option for management. In the private sector in the United States, worker power has decreased to well below that level.

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LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS ACT

See Taft-Hartley Act

LAFOLLETTE CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE

Strikebreakers and labor spies harassed American workers and subverted labor organizations from the earliest days of industrialization. The LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee paraded these shadowy figures before the nation in dramatic hearings from 1936 through 1939, exposing employers' anti-union tactics and affirming the need for federally protected labor rights. The Committee's hearings built public support for the National Labor Relations Act and hamstrung employers from openly attacking workers organizing unions. Reactionary labor leaders opposed to state oversight of labor allied with congressional conservatives in 1938 to undermine the Committee.

American workers won sweeping new federal rights to organize and bargain collectively with the 1935 passage of the National Labor Relations Act. However, employers ignored the law, expecting the Supreme Court to invalidate it along with other New Deal legislation. As the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) prepared its test cases for the Supreme Court, Heber Blankenhorn, an NLRB staffer and former aide to Senator Robert F. Wagner, argued that the NLRB needed a public relations strategy as well. Blankenhorn had organized the Army's first military propaganda unit during World War I and also investigated the steel industry's use of spies and strikebreakers during the 1919 steel strike. Blankenhorn outlined his strategy in a 1935 letter: "Tear open the whole infamous system which rules labor relations in steel, auto manufacture, rubber, much of textiles, much of mining and general manufacture. Let the country, through public hearings, judge what these great industrialists really want when they declare the Labor Relations Act 'unconstitutional.'" After Blankenhorn lobbied leaders of the AFL and CIO along with members of Congress, Senator Robert M. LaFollette Jr. agreed to chair the hearings.

The Committee on Education and Labor opened hearings in April 1936 to investigate "violations of free speech and the rights of labor" and received an appropriation for a full investigation that fall by a subcommittee including LaFollette and Senators Elbert D. Thomas of Utah and Louis Murphy of Iowa. Subpoenas summoned the heads of major detective firms, including the Pinkertons and Burns, to testify about their business and clients. Company

presidents, spies, and strikebreakers were also called. Committee staffers seized the trash cans of recalcitrant detective agencies and laboriously pieced together shredded documents to produce client lists, revealing that storied firms like Studebaker, Endicott-Johnson, and Pennsylvania Greyhound all used undercover operatives. The CIO, just beginning its massive drives in auto and steel, invited Committee staffers to witness strikebreaking on its picket lines, and the Committee held hearings on the strikes at Republic Steel and the Harlan County coal mines as they happened. The Michigan governor, Frank Murphy, said the hearings greatly assisted negotiations during the General Motors sit-down strikes. Lengthy investigations of employers' associations like the National Metal Trades Association and the National Association of Manufacturers exposed their reliance on blacklists and professional armed strikebreakers. The Committee was far from impartial and functioned more as a propaganda agency than as a disinterested enquiry.

A congressional hearing on employer violations of labor rights was not a new idea; the LaFollette Committee mirrored earlier congressional investigations, such as the Homestead hearings of 1893 and the Commission on Industrial Relations in 1913. The Committee's findings were not new either—progressives and trade unionists had complained of spies and blacklists for 50 years, and a synthesis of those earlier accounts formed the initial basis for the Committee's work. The Committee's findings resounded less because they were revelatory, but rather because they were suddenly relevant. Unionists who suspected spies in their ranks or endured strikebreakers' attacks could call in Senate investigators to subpoena their enemies before Congress.

Blankenhorn, hoping to eradicate labor espionage and strikebreaking, tried to require agencies to turn over lists of all their undercover operatives. When the agencies refused, the Senate declined to prosecute them for failing to comply with subpoenas, permitting spies the protection of secrecy. But employers feared bad publicity and rapidly stopped using detective agencies and strikebreaking firms. Both industries began to wither. LaFollette drafted a bill titled the Oppressive Labor Practices Act that would have prohibited employers from using strikebreakers and labor spies and from stockpiling weapons. (The NLRA did not specifically prohibit these acts.)

However, a backlash had begun. Leaders of the AFL resented the Committee's close alliance with CIO unions that had bolted the federation. Moreover, the AFL saw the NLRB's endorsement of industrial organizing as a fulfillment of their worries about state involvement in labor relations. In the summer of

1938, the NLRB ruled against the AFL and for the CIO in a case involving West Coast longshoremen. Outraged AFL leaders began a concerted attack on the NLRA, allying with employers to roll back key provisions of the law, and they began working with Representative Martin Dies, the chair of the newly created House Un-American Affairs Committee (HUAC) investigating Communism. Among HUAC's first targets was the LaFollette Committee. An AFL official, John Frey, testified in August 1938 that Communists were working closely with LaFollette investigators. (Indeed, several LaFollette staffers turned out to be avowed Communists.) A strange and bitter conflict developed between the two committees, with the HUAC threatening to hold hearings on the LaFollette Committee. President Roosevelt publicly supported the LaFollette Committee, and it received enough funding to conduct a major investigation into California agricultural labor. But its bill died in committee, and the LaFollette Committee folded in 1941.

The battle over the LaFollette Committee shows the schism within the labor movement over its relation to the state in the 1930s. The CIO embraced an expansive state regulatory regime, and its collaboration with the LaFollette Committee revealed the potential for a state alliance to discipline employers and shift power to workers. The AFL feared state control and CIO ascendance enough to sabotage this alliance, despite the benefits all workers enjoyed from impairing employers' anti-unionism. Meanwhile, as strike-breaking and labor espionage waned, employers developed new tactics to defeat unions. A labor spy told Congress in 1938 that lawyers were taking all the union-busting business, since attorney-client privilege shielded them from Congressional subpoena.

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See also **Blacklists; National Labor Relations Board; Strikebreaking**

LAFOLLETTE SEAMEN'S ACT (1915)

On March 4, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Seamen's (aka LaFollette) Act, best known for

having secured the "sailor's freedom," that is, the right to quit a ship at port without incurring criminal charges of desertion. Within a comprehensive and complex piece of legislation (requiring 21 pages of dense, single-space type to enumerate its 20 sections), legislators attempted, among other ends, "to promote the welfare of American seamen. . .abolish arrest and imprisonment as a penalty for desertion. . .and to promote safety at sea." What might be considered the "free labor" provisions of the act centered on the decriminalization of desertion (now reduced to a forfeiture of wages earned), formal abolition of flogging and other forms of corporal punishment (replaced by a graduated code of punishment of disorderly conduct), an anticrimping ban on advance wages or the allotment of wages to any but the sailor's immediate family, and a "half-wage clause" allowing the sailor to depart at any port during a voyage with half his earnings to date. Second, the act set firm controls on the hours and conditions of labor. In particular, these work-related measures divided sailors into two and firemen into three watches at sea and limited all seamen to nine-hour days in port; in addition, they specified minimal requirements for shipboard diet, sleeping space, and adequate toilet facilities. Third, explicit concern for passenger as well as crew safety mandated lifeboat design, access, and certified emergency training by the crew. Fourth, the act ventured into the arena of hiring and skill restriction: within five years of the passage of the act, 65% of the deck crew were to be rated as "able seaman," defined by three years' service at sea or on the Great Lakes; in addition, English-language requirements—justified by concern for communicative safety—also clearly intended to shift crews toward higher native-American quotients. Finally, in perhaps its boldest move, the authors of the act specified its application not only to "all vessels of the United States but also, and within a year, to "foreign vessels."

The political history of the Seamen's Act is reasonably well documented. Behind the eponymous author of the legislative act, Senator Robert LaFollette, the real father of the maritime labor reforms was the Seamen's Union leader, Andrew Furuseth. An Oslo-born sailor and fisherman, who jumped ship in 1880 to make his home in San Francisco, Furuseth was a self-taught exponent of sailor union federation, craft unionism, and ultimately, political regulation of the waterfront. In the wake of the *Titanic* disaster of April 1912, the force behind maritime labor and safety reform gained inexorable logic. A less-trumpeted source of support for the bill was anti-Asian racism; both the language and skill requirements in the bill aimed to reduce international maritime traffic

LAFOLLETTE SEAMEN'S ACT (1915)

in “cheap labor” and thus promote the return of “Caucasians” to the industry. By 1912, both major party conventions had adopted resolutions sympathetic to the sailors’ cause. When the Democrats not only retook the White House and control of both houses of Congress in November 1912, but also the bill’s former cosponsor, William B. Wilson, was named Secretary of Labor, labor reform forces gained the edge they needed.

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LANDRUM-GRIFFIN ACT (1959)

Officially titled the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, this law resulted from the McClellan Committee hearings (1957–1959) on union corruption. Those hearings offered opponents of organized labor an opportunity to pass new restrictions on unions’ ability to organize new members. But the legislation also represented efforts to empower the rank-and-file union membership in hopes that they could police their own unions.

This legislation emerged at a time of strength for organized labor. Unions had grown during the early 1950s, reaching a peak of membership in 1956 that included roughly one third of the nonagricultural workforce. The merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955 allowed organized labor to present a united front that should have strengthened their political hand in Congress. The off-year elections in 1958 demonstrated organized labor’s apparent strength as efforts to pass right-to-work legislation in several states, including California, went down to defeat. However, the revelations of union corruption presented by the McClellan Committee undercut public sympathy for labor unions. Even those congressmen who had been elected with the support of organized labor in 1958 felt pressure to support anti-union corruption legislation, regardless of whether or not a bill was harmful to unions.

Meanwhile, business interest groups had been rallying support for amendments to the Wagner Act that would strengthen employers’ ability to resist

union-organizing efforts. An employer counteroffensive to union growth had been gaining strength in the 1950s. The economic downturn in 1957 combined with the growing presence of foreign competition bolstered employer efforts to resist further union gains. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers both sought legislation that would curb unions by restricting organizational picketing and banning secondary boycotts. Their efforts received support from the White House, where the Eisenhower Administration led a Republican Party committed to supporting business interests and hostile to organized labor.

For these groups, the McClellan Committee hearings represented an opportunity to achieve their legislative goals. As one member of the Chamber of Commerce observed, “The McClellan hearings gave us the train to ride on; they were the bulldozer clearing the path.” In particular, the McClellan Committee hearings provided the public with a powerful new symbol of the danger presented by union power, in the form of James R. Hoffa and his apparently corrupt administration of the nation’s largest union, the Teamsters. Congressmen invoked Hoffa’s name in their legislative proposals. For example, Senator John F. Kennedy, who had served on the McClellan Committee, told Congress that his proposed bill would “stop those practices [upon] which, based upon the testimony before our committee, it would appear Mr. Hoffa’s career and power are based—and will in short, virtually put Mr. Hoffa and his associates out of business.”

Key provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act reflected the ways in which anti-union forces seized the opportunity provided by the McClellan Committee hearings by placing new legal barriers in the path of union-organizing efforts. In particular, it imposed restrictions on using pickets in organizing efforts, and it closed a loophole that had allowed the continued use of secondary boycotts, a practice that the Taft-Hartley Act (1947) had attempted to end.

But many other aspects of the bill had little to do with the priorities of business groups; instead, these provisions regulated union governance in the interest of protecting the democratic process within labor organizations. Business groups had feared that such proposals might justify similar new regulations on corporate governance; moreover, an empowered rank and file could encourage union militancy. But Senator John L. McClellan, whose committee had helped create the opportunity for this legislation, championed these union governance proposals. He depicted the effort to empower union members as a kind of voluntarist solution both to the problem of union corruption and to the growing power of organized labor.

Members would police their own organizations by booting corrupt officials out of power. And an empowered membership would restrict the authority available to union leaders, thus offering a natural break in the aggregation of power by individuals such as Hoffa.

To achieve this goal, Landrum-Griffin sought to protect union democracy by setting up new standards for union governance. It drew on the revelations of the McClellan Committee to impose new regulations on union officeholders. The law specified that union officers held a position of fiduciary trust with regard to their members. Legally, this meant that actions in violation of that trust, for instance, misappropriation of union funds or engaging in conflicts of interest, were now violations of federal law. Certain persons were now barred from holding union office. Individuals convicted of certain crimes, including murder, assault, and extortion, were banned from holding union office for a period of 13 years. The law also barred anyone “who is or has been a member of the Communist Party.” It was decreed that unions must make their finances transparent. Officers were required to file annual public reports on the internal finances of their organizations, including information on the officers’ salaries. Finally, a number of provisions sought to guarantee democratic union elections. New guidelines regulated election procedures and provided avenues for appeal in cases of intimidation or fraud. The law created a “Bill of Rights of Members of Labor Organizations” that protected members’ ability to speak out on union affairs and guarded them against unfair disciplinary action.

Union leaders at the time argued strongly against these union governance proposals, claiming that they would hamstring effective union government. But the initial predictions that the law would foster instability by encouraging frequent turnover in union officeholders have not been borne out over time. Instead, critics have frequently argued that the law has not offered enough help to insurgent movements within unions. Thus, although the law proved helpful to reform efforts in the United Mine Workers Union in the early 1970s, insurgents in the Teamsters Union had less success in using the law to unseat their leadership. Ironically, the law designed to put Hoffa out of business had little impact on him or his union in subsequent years.

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See also Hoffa, James R.; McClellan Committee Hearings; Organized Crime

LAUNDRY

Laundry workers have always done some of the hardest and most necessary work in society. Nevertheless, laundry work has almost always been considered a low-skilled, menial job ideally suited to women, often women of color. The term “laundry worker” hides a multitude of tasks and identities. “Laundry worker” has been used to refer to laundresses or washerwomen who washed clothes and flatwork (sheets, tablecloths, and other flat pieces) by hand in private homes; steam or power laundry workers who labored in highly mechanized industrial settings; Chinese hand laundry workers who operated small neighborhood laundries; and industrial or linen supply laundry workers who cleaned linens, uniforms, and newly manufactured garments. The post-World War II popularity of dry cleaning and coin-operated laundries expanded the category to include new groups of workers. Although working conditions have varied considerably across time and place, laundry workers have almost always earned abysmally low wages, and at no time in history have a majority of the workers labored under the protection of union contracts.

Pre-Industrial Laundry Work

The occupation of laundress has deep roots in European culture. In pre-industrial Europe, laundresses washed garments by trampling them underfoot in a tub or shallow stream or by pounding them with a wooden bat or against rocks at the edge of a stream or well. While neither method required soap, some laundresses added a cleaning agent to the water, usually made of urine, dung, or lye. Like their European counterparts, colonial and nineteenth-century Americans with the economic means employed laundresses or domestic servants to do all or part of the family wash. In the pre-Civil War South, slaveholders often removed their female slaves from the fields to do the household laundry on the weekend. In 1870, there were close to 60,000 laundry workers in the United States. Gender ideologies associating laundry work with domesticity meant that almost all of these

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workers were women, significant numbers of whom were African-American.

Pre-industrial laundry required significant physical strength and endurance. Before the advent of private plumbing and urban water systems, laundresses had to collect water from springs, wells, creeks, or pumps and transport it home over what were often considerable distances. Using a stove, open hearth, or boiler, the water was boiled and transferred into wooden or galvanized washtubs, where the laundress scrubbed the pieces on a washboard or by hand. In the nineteenth century, most laundresses made their own soap and starch from lye, animal fat, and wheat bran. After rinsing the soapy garments in boiling or bluing water, the laundress rubbed boiling starch into the shirts, linens, and other pieces that had to be ironed. Excess water was squeezed out with a small hand-cranked wringing machine that pressed the articles between two parallel rubber rolls or by hand. Using heavy flatirons that weighed as much as 12 pounds, ironing, the final part of the job, brought no reprieve from the arduous labor involved in washing. Although by the 1850s laundresses could purchase small household tools such as wringers, the work remained hard. While many laundresses took in the washing of two or three families a week, in the nineteenth century, most laundresses earned no more than \$4 to \$8 a month, out of which they were expected to provide their own soap, starch, and wood.

While laundry work paid relatively little, it offered some advantages over household service work, one of the major occupational fields for women in nineteenth-century America. Unlike domestic servants who worked in their employers' homes, most laundresses worked in the privacy of their own homes, where they could set the pace of work and rely upon family members for help. Tera Hunter's study of African-American laundresses in the urban South (census data reveals that in the nineteenth century, laundresses were more numerous in the South than the North) reveals that laundresses often allocated space within their communities to do the work collectively, taking care of one another's children, pooling their resources, and engaging in community-building activities. Hunter's analysis also reveals that black laundresses engaged in acts of resistance ranging from "borrowing" their employers' garments to creating trade union-like organizations.

Industrialization and Laundry Work

By the 1860s, industrialization had created a wide divergence in how, where, and why people washed

clothes for money. While the overwhelming majority of laundry workers continued to wash garments by hand at home, by the 1860s a growing number of women and men were seeking employment in one of the nation's new steam laundries (by 1920 the U.S. Census had replaced the title steam laundry with power laundry; steam and power laundries have also been called commercial laundries).

In her comparative analysis of steam laundries in the United States and Britain, Arwen Palmer Mohun argues that technological and cultural factors facilitated the growth of the laundry industry. By the late 1800s, mechanized washing machines, flatwork ironers (large ironing machines that pressed flatwork between padded rollers and steam-heated chests or cylinders), extractors (centrifugal drying machines that expelled water from clothes by spinning them at high speeds), and steam presses could wash, dry, and iron clothing and flatwork in a portion of the time it took the laundress or housewife. The earliest machines were operated by hand cranks, foot treadles, or hand levers; by the 1920s, many of the machines were operated by pushing a button. The introduction of laundry machinery facilitated the move of the work from the home to the factory, where the labor process was broken down into increasingly smaller parts, and where the site of skill was transferred from the worker to the machine.

The proliferation of washable fabrics also played an important role in the emergence of the laundry industry. The development of manufactured cloth and the growth of the ready-made clothing industry in the nineteenth century meant that for the first time, most Americans could afford to own many articles of clothing, most of which were made of cotton, a fabric that was easily washed. Growing fears about the spread of germs and new middle-class social mores that condemned the wearing of smelly or dirty clothing contributed to the demand for laundry workers, and for new methods of laundering. Between 1860 and 1890, the number of laundry workers (both hand and steam) in the United States jumped from 38,633 to 246,739, a more than 600% increase.

Carole Turbin's examination of Troy, New York, the capital of the nation's shirt, collar, and cuff industry, and home to some of the nation's first steam laundries, reveals the impact that mechanization would have on the American laundry worker. In the mid-1800s, collar laundries in Troy typically employed 20 to 30 women who washed, starched, and ironed collars and cuffs by hand. Because the work required familiarity with different ironing techniques and starching, as well as manual dexterity, Troy's laundry workers were considered highly skilled. As skilled workers, the women, the vast majority of whom

were Irish, were among the first women laundry workers in the United States to establish formal trade unions. Under the able leadership of Kate Mulaney, in 1864, the women organized the Troy Collar Laundry Union and within a year had increased wages from \$2 to \$3 a week to \$8 to \$12. The activities of Troy's laundry workers challenged widely held beliefs that women made poor trade unionists.

In an attempt to increase productivity and reduce their reliance on women's traditional skills, as the nineteenth century progressed, Troy's collar laundry owners implemented ironing and starching machines and cut wages. Mechanization was accompanied by an increased division of labor, and the women found themselves confined to one part of the laundering process. Once considered skilled workers, mechanization transformed the women into machine tenders who could be easily replaced.

Laundry Workers at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Although until 1909, the U.S. Census aggregated hand and steam laundry workers, evidence suggests that in 1900, the vast majority of the nation's 385,000 laundry workers were still employed in private homes. As before, the majority of the workers were women. Between 1870 and 1910, women composed between 87% and 99% of the nation's laundry workforce. Census data reveal that laundry workers were on average older than women employed in most other occupations and were more likely to be married. As work that could be done at home using home-based skills, laundry work attracted women with families, who were able to combine paid work with domestic responsibilities such as child care.

Laundry work was not only gendered, it was also racialized. Between 1890 and 1910, approximately two thirds of the nation's laundry workers were African-American; in the southern United States, close to 90% of the region's laundry workers were black. Laundry work ranked third in importance in the employment of black women, preceded only by agricultural laborers and servants and waitresses. Conversely, relatively few native white women of native parentage were employed as laundry workers. In 1900, 2.4% of these women were employed as laundry workers, compared to 19.2% of all wage-earning African-American women. Of the approximately 75,000 women laundry workers of foreign parentage (many of whom were also of foreign birth), the predominant groups were Irish and German. Evidence suggests that at the turn of the twentieth century,

steam laundry jobs were open only to white women of native or foreign birth.

Alongside the more than 300,000 women employed as laundry workers in 1900, 50,000 men worked as launderers, half of whom were Chinese. Racially discriminatory hiring practices and exclusionary trade union tactics confined Chinese men to low-paying service work traditionally performed by women. Many of the laundries run by Chinese men were referred to as hand laundries, small, neighborhood businesses where clothes were washed and ironed by hand. By the 1910s, hand laundries (which by this time could be found in most large cities except those in the South) used either a combination of hand methods and electric appliances to wash the clothes on site, or sent them out to be washed in a steam laundry, after which they were returned to the hand laundry for ironing. Throughout the twentieth century, hand laundries remained small-scale establishments, often consisting of little more than two or three rooms where the owner and a few paid employees lived and worked. Although most hand laundry workers labored between 10 and 16 hours a day in hot, wet, and steamy conditions, wages were typically low.

The Ascendancy of Power Laundries, 1900–1950

While a relatively small number of cities had steam laundries as early as the 1850s, it was not until the early 1900s that the power laundry industry really took off. The dirt and grime that accompanied urban industrial living, the increased number of people living in apartments (many of which provided no washing facilities), the rising numbers of women working outside the home, and the decreased availability of household servants fueled the expansion of the industry at the turn of the century. In 1909, the first year in which steam laundries appeared in the census, 5,186 establishments employed close to 125,000 workers (called laundry operatives), over two thirds of whom were women. The steam laundry was one of the few industries in which the number of female employees exceeded that of males. The growth in the power laundry industry did not lead to the immediate elimination of hand laundering. In 1910, half a million laundry workers continued to work in private homes, using hand methods or an electrically operated washing machine. Thirty years later, the ratio between steam and hand laundry workers had reversed. By 1939, approximately 7,000 power laundries employed 249,000 workers, close to two thirds of whom were women. Conversely, by the 1950s, only

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75,512 laundry workers labored outside of commercial laundries.

In the early 1900s, power laundries could be found in every state of the union. They were, however, most numerous in large cities such as New York and San Francisco, and were less common in the South where technological developments lagged and where the abundance of poorly paid black washerwomen acted as a disincentive to industrialization. As an industrial job, increasing numbers of both native white women and men entered into the laundry trades. By 1930, 30% of the nation's power laundry workers were men, and over one half of the women were native white. Power laundries were also one of the first industries to employ significant numbers of African-American women. By 1930, close to 50,000, or one-third, of the nation's female power laundry workers were black, and an additional 10,000 African-American men were employed in power laundries. A U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau survey found that four in five power laundry workers in the South were African-American. In cities such as New York and Chicago, most power laundries had ethnically and racially diverse workforces. As in the nineteenth century, laundry work continued to be done by women who were on average older than women employed in other industries and who were more likely to be married.

Most power laundries were relatively small operations employing between 20 and 50 workers. In their early years, power laundries received the bulk of their business from commercial establishments such as hotels, and from the laundering of men's shirts. To increase sales from families, in the 1910s power laundry owners implemented cheaper semifinished services such as wet wash, in which garments were washed, but not dried or ironed. The wet-wash family bundle was a huge hit. By the 1940s, approximately half of the commercial laundry business came in the form of family service work.

In addition to power laundries that catered primarily to families and individuals, institutions such as hospitals and hotels sometimes built their own laundries. Linen supply and industrial laundries provided and laundered (usually on a rental basis) linens such as work uniforms, towels, bed linens and protective apparel to service, industrial, and government users. Alongside power laundries, in the early 1900s, in New York, Baltimore, and a number of other cities, social reformers and public health officials constructed public laundries where the poor could wash their clothing at a fraction of the cost of a commercial laundry.

In commercial laundries, approximately three quarters of the employees were productive workers,

defined as workers engaged in the actual laundering process. Under this broad heading fell the markers, washers, dryers, flatwork ironers, press operators, starchers, sorters, and checkers. Men were employed as washers and dryers, while women performed all the other jobs, usually composing over two thirds of all productive workers. Markers undid the soiled articles, marked them, and sent them to the washroom, where washers placed the articles into large cylinder washing machines. Next, garments were sent to the extractors or dryers, while sheets, pillow cases, and other flat pieces went to the flatwork department, where workers fed the pieces into moving rollers. At the other side of the machine, a group of workers caught and folded the hot, freshly ironed pieces. Flatwork ironing, which usually employed the largest group of women workers, was described as one of the hottest and hardest jobs in the industry. Articles that could not be handled by the flatwork machines, such as shirts or suits, went to the pressers or shirt finishers, who ironed the pieces on pressing machines. A small laundry would likely have a few general, multipurpose presses, while large laundries would have dozens of specialized pressing machines. In the early 1900s, starchers starched by hand or machine collars or other such pieces. Many laundries also employed hand washers or ironers to handle delicate pieces that could not be put through the machines. Finally, sorters or checkers collected all the articles and packaged them for return to the customer. Not all laundry workers were productive workers. Non-productive workers included routemen or drivers (who delivered laundry and engaged in sales work), repair maintenance or mechanical workers, office workers, and foremen. With the exception of office workers and sometimes foremen, most of these workers were male.

While the use of power-operated machinery increased daily output, it did not significantly lessen the workload, as power laundry workers spent long hours operating heavy presses and carrying bundles of heavy clothing in a hot, wet, and noisy working environment. As many of the machines lacked proper safety guards, mechanized laundry work was also extremely dangerous; workers regularly burned their fingers on the machines or chemicals, or worse, got a finger, hand, or arm caught in one of the revolving rollers or extractors. Unlike laundresses, who were usually self-regulated, in an industrial setting, laundry workers had to contend with the direct supervision of the owner or foreman, frequent speedups, and excessively long working hours. In 1909, 75% of the nation's power laundry operatives worked 54 hours or more a week. Despite laws prohibiting women from working

more than 10 hours a day (the constitutionality of which was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1908 in the famous *Muller v. Oregon* decision involving an Oregon laundry owner), 12- and 13-hour days were common.

Tainted by its association with women's domestic labor, power laundry work quickly became one of the lowest-paying industrial jobs. In the early 1900s, many workers earned as little as \$3 or \$4 a week. Labor investigations reveal that there were significant wage differentials between workers. Like most industries of this period, the laundry was organized along racial and patriarchal lines, with black women confined to the lowest-paying jobs of flatwork ironing and pressing, while men were employed as washers, drivers, and mechanical workers, the highest-paying jobs. A 1930 Women's Bureau survey found that median earnings for white women laundry workers were \$16.10 a week, and for black women workers \$8.85 a week.

Laundry Unions and Legislation, 1900–1960s

In 1900, in Troy, New York, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) chartered the first international union of laundry workers, the Shirt, Waist and Laundry Workers' International Union. With jurisdiction over all the workers involved in the making and laundering of shirts and collars (the union never tried to organize home laundry workers), the new union quickly spread to San Francisco, where in 1901 a group of workers organized a local of 1,000 laundry workers. Although the majority of laundry workers were women, most of the union's leaders were men, and union contracts tended to institutionalize existing sex-based wage differentials. In 1909, the AFL limited membership in the union to those engaged in laundry work and changed the union's name to the Laundry Workers' International Union (LWIU). Drivers were to be organized separately by the AFL-affiliated International Brotherhood of Teamsters. By 1930, the LWIU had only 6,000 members, and most of its locals were disorganized and poorly funded. Wages in the industry remained low and working conditions bad.

The New Deal ushered in the first national effort to regulate laundry workers' hours and wages. Under the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), in 1934, a nationwide laundry code established a maximum 40-hour workweek (with an allowance of overtime) and minimum hourly rates of pay that varied according to three population groups and five geographic

regions. Rates were set lowest in the South, where in many places a 14-cent hourly wage was established, and highest in Boston, New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, where a 30-cent rate was established. As most of the workers in the South were African-American, the code formalized existing wage differentials across racial lines. In 1938, like other service workers, laundry workers were exempted from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which established minimum working conditions for workers in interstate production. It was not until 1967 that amendments to the FLSA finally brought laundry and dry-cleaning workers under its umbrella, establishing a minimum wage of \$1 per hour, in many places well below a living wage.

The New Deal labor legislation with the most impact on laundry workers was the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act), which granted workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. The mid-1930s witnessed a wave of strikes and organizational activities among laundry workers across the country. By 1950, the LWIU had over 50,000 members and was no longer the only major union organizing laundry workers in the country. In 1937, laundry workers in New York City withdrew from the AFL-affiliated LWIU and affiliated with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), one of the founding Congress of Industrial Organizations' (CIO) unions. By 1941, almost all of NYC's approximately 30,000 laundry workers, significant numbers of whom were African-American, were organized under the ACWA. The new union secured major wage increases and established a health center and benefit fund for its members. Outside of New York City, Washington, and Detroit, most of the workers continued to organize under the AFL-affiliated Laundry and Dry Cleaning Workers' International Union (LDCIU), and in 1947, an estimated 30% to 40% of laundry workers labored under collective bargaining agreements. Unionized workers were concentrated in large cities in the Pacific region, Northeast, and Middle Atlantic. In the South, most laundry workers remained outside the trade union fold.

In 1957, the AFL-CIO expelled the LDCIU and its approximately 75,000 members on corruption charges and a year later chartered the Laundry, Dry Cleaning and Dye House Workers International Union (LDDIU). In 1961, 128,000 or 23%, of the workers in the laundry and dry-cleaning industry were covered by contract under the LDCIU, the LDDIU, or the ACWA. Most of the organized workers continued to be located in large cities in the Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and Pacific regions of the country.

The Laundry Industry and Laundry Unions, 1960–2004

By the 1960s, the laundry and dry-cleaning industry had become one of the major service industries in the United States. Well over half a million workers, two thirds of whom were women, were employed in power laundries (catering to families), linen supply and industrial laundries, hand laundries, diaper service laundries, dry-cleaning businesses, rug cleaning plants, cleaning and pressing establishments, laundry and garment service plants, and coin-operated laundries. In the 1960s, the rapid proliferation of coin-operated laundries, new fabrics which required little or no ironing, and improved and affordable home washing and drying machines forced power laundries to diversify and offer new services such as dry cleaning, carpet cleaning, and alterations. Many power laundries also implemented labor-saving technologies such as automated wash systems and automatic flatwork processing machines. While power laundries struggled to maintain sales, in the 1960s and 1970s, industrial and linen supply laundries capitalized on the increased construction of hospitals and nursing homes, institutions that produced large amounts of laundry. In the 1960s, laundry workers continued to be among the lowest-paid workers in the country. In 1961, gross average hourly earnings of workers in laundry and dry-cleaning plants were \$1.27, compared with \$1.70 for workers in the retail trade and \$1.49 for workers in general merchandise stores.

By 1987, of the approximately 400,000 workers employed in the laundry, dry-cleaning, and garment service industry, close to two thirds of whom were women, only 33,180 were employed in power laundries, compared with 45,416 workers in coin-operated laundries and a little over 100,000 in linen supply or industrial laundries. The largest group of workers in the industry now worked in dry-cleaning establishments, establishments that employed more men than women. In the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, most power laundry workers continued to labor in relatively small plants that employed around 20 employees, while linen supply and industrial laundry workers were employed in larger plants that were often part of multi-unit chains. In the 1990s, the largest private industrial laundering companies in the United States were California's Aratex, the National Linen of Atlanta, and Cintas, a uniform supply outfit headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. At the turn of the twenty-first century, many laundry workers employed in the public sector saw their jobs outsourced to private companies such as Cintas.

At the end of the twentieth century, laundry workers across the nation complained of poverty wages, dangerous and oppressive working conditions, and inadequate benefits. Workers described being forced to work in sweltering plants, denied water or bathroom breaks, and being forced to handle bloody sheets with little to no sanitary protection. Women earned less than men, who continued to work as washers and drivers. In cities such as New York and Washington, Hispanic workers, some of whom were undocumented, joined the already large numbers of black workers in the laundry industry. At the turn of the twenty-first century, undocumented Mexican immigrants were found working 72 hours a week in NYC laundries for as little as \$3.00 or \$4.00 an hour (in violation of minimum wage laws).

By the end of the 1990s, laundry and dry-cleaning workers in the United States were represented by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees union (UNITE), an AFL-CIO-affiliated international union representing workers in apparel, textile, and industrial laundries, and by the LDCIU (then affiliated with the Service Employees International Union). With only 8,000 members across the country, in 1998, UNITE began a massive campaign to organize the nation's industrial laundry workers. In November 1998, nearly 3,000 National Linen laundry workers in the South voted to join UNITE. Sparked by low wages, unaffordable health insurance, and unfair treatment, in the late 1990s, laundry workers in NYC, Baltimore, Washington, Chicago, and a host of other cities went on strike and secured what were in many instances groundbreaking contracts (including features such as immigrant rights protection and protection against sexual harassment). In April 2001, the nearly 9,000 members of the LDCIU voted to affiliate with UNITE, bringing the total number of laundry workers in UNITE up to almost 40,000, representing 90% of the unionized laundry workers in the United States.

In 2004, UNITE-HERE (UNITE merged with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union in 2004) began a major organizing effort among the mostly unorganized workers in the uniform laundry industry. With over 27,000 employees, in 2005, Cintas was the largest uniform rental provider and industrial launderer in North America, and, according to UNITE-HERE, was responsible for keeping wages low and working conditions bad in the industry. In 2003, current and former Cintas employees filed class-action charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, alleging widespread discrimination against people of color and women in hiring and promotion policies, job assignments, and work environment. Despite the efforts of

UNITE-HERE and the nation's laundry workers, in the early twenty-first century, many laundry workers continued to labor under highly exploitative conditions without union protection.

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See also African-Americans; Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; Atlanta Washerwomen's Strike (1881); Domestic Service; Fair Labor Standards Act; Gender; Housework; Minimum-Wage Laws; National Industrial Recovery Act; National Labor Relations Board; Springer, Maida

LAW AND LABOR

Law has profoundly shaped the experience of American workers both individually and collectively. Since the first European settlement of North America, an array of rules has governed the employer's authority, the labor market, workplace conditions, social insurance, equal employment, and perhaps most significantly, the legitimacy of protest. Given coherence by the status of its subjects rather than by a specific form or jurisdiction, the set of regulations we call "labor law" crosses traditional legal boundaries, touching on contracts, torts, association, antitrust, criminal law, regulation, and civil rights. Throughout this history, the state confronted workers most spectacularly during strikes, boycotts, and other disputes. Yet, in some periods, the law governing employment focused less on class conflict than on the free movement of labor,

the health and welfare of workers, and the rights of employees.

During the last four centuries, this mix of traditions, judicial precedents, statutes, and administrative interpretations traced an arc from the oppressively paternalistic laws governing colonial servitude to the free-labor precedents of the antebellum era, from the reactionary rulings of late nineteenth-century judges to the relatively proworker regulatory legislation of the twentieth century. Rather than evolving steadily, law changed dialectically, first strengthening employer authority, and then eroding traditional bonds; constructing new worker rights, and then weakening those protections.

Law profoundly influenced the trajectory of the American labor movement. The state's harshness alienated workers, severing organized labor's roots in antebellum reform and making its leaders skeptical toward the government. Only during the Great Depression, when lawmakers appealed to labor by guaranteeing the right to organize, did union workers fully embrace the law as a vehicle for improving their condition. Though labor's marriage to the state forced workers to suppress their most radical tendencies, the relationship proved fruitful into the 1970s, when an increasingly hostile government sped a decline in union fortunes.

Though the law gradually ceased supporting collective action, the government continued to shape the workplace in powerful ways into the twenty-first century. In particular, the civil rights legislation enacted between the 1965 and 2000 promised workers fair treatment regardless of race, creed, sex, or physical impediment. Such laws offered employees significant benefits, but required them to petition the government as individuals, not as members of a broader class.

Colonial governments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries regulated work by applying European (primarily British) precedents to the novel circumstances they found in North America. The colonies inherited long-standing doctrines giving masters authority over their employees. Moreover, while the shortage of labor in the colonies could have empowered workers, it instead led employers to use the law to secure their control over human capital. Thus, a large percentage of American settlers worked under some form of legal coercion, either as indentured servants, as sailors, or as slaves.

At first, the hazards of settlement prompted harsh laws compelling workers to labor. In 1612, the Virginia governor, Sir Thomas Dale, implemented "Laws Divine, Morall and Martial," which punished idle colonists by forcing them to lie all night with neck and heels together. Repeat offenders could be

whipped and eventually sent to a year's service in English galleys. As the colonies grew more secure, they adopted the more moderate British common law, but the courts still reserved harsh sentences for recalcitrant servants and slaves.

For the most part, colonial laws neither stipulated, nor enforced, specific codes regulating the workplace, but rather guaranteed the authority of the master and defined his responsibilities to his servants. The loose principle underlying such rules was paternalism. The law used the family as a metaphor for the workplace, identifying the employer as father and the employees as his offspring. By this logic, the law obliged servants to obey their master's will as the Bible commanded children to honor their parents. The government granted masters the right to physically punish refractory servants, and constables assisted employers seeking to recover runaway apprentices. In return, the law required the employer to provide room and adequate food for the worker. Economic realities seemed to affirm the familial analogy, as many employees were young, worked for blood relatives, and lived and labored in their master's home. Yet, the law of master and servant offered workers little protection, obliging the employer to provide only minimal provision for his employees. Without the emotional bonds that stilled the parent's switch and filled the child's bowl, many servants found paternalism miserable rather than comfortable.

For white workers, this wretched dependency was both temporary and contractual. Servants (or their parents acting on their behalf) consented to their condition by signing indenture papers and offering bonds against their disobedience. In return for years of toil, apprentices received training and access to a trade. Some indentured servants labored to repay the cost of their passage from Europe. Others were teenage girls, who worked for their keep while awaiting marriage. Sailors submitted to more extreme discipline than ordinary servants, but received wages and served only for a much shorter time.

By contrast, colonial law denied slaves brought from Africa the protections afforded by time-limited contracts. Because slaves did not negotiate legal agreements with their masters, their rights were subject to the continual depredation of legislatures. Beginning in 1661, colonies like Virginia expanded the master's authority, making enslavement a permanent inheritable condition and slaves a form of salable property. Laws gave the master the almost absolute right to punish his slaves as he saw fit, reserving only the power of execution to the state.

The law further bolstered slavery by enforcing severe punishments for resistance. When New York City slaves rebelled in 1712, killing nine whites, courts

ordered the execution of 21 insurrectionists by burning and the wheel. Moreover, such protests often encouraged newly repressive laws. After the 1739 Stono rebellion, South Carolina enacted the severe "Negro Act," which barred slaves from growing their own food, assembling in groups, earning their own money, or learning to read.

Though the War of Independence promised law more favorable to the laborer, the new republic quickly disappointed workers. Thousands of journeymen, sailors, apprentices, and slaves had fought on the colonial side, inspired by the rhetoric of social upheaval and democracy. Yet, the new government denied the franchise to men without property, while expecting these workers to pay for the war through excise taxes. The Constitution of 1787 not only greatly strengthened the position of creditors, but also guaranteed the slaveholder's right to human property.

Most significantly, early American courts re-implemented the common law, defying those workers who hoped the revolution might sweep away the oppressive vestiges of British rule. Early national magistrates not only guaranteed masters their traditional legal authority over servants, but also enforced employer control. Sheriffs routinely jailed irresponsible sailors, runaway apprentices, and fugitive slaves pending the return of their masters.

Courts also used common law to suppress the earliest American labor unions. In England, the doctrine of conspiracy had long prohibited journeymen from organizing. Though guilds and corporations could obtain charters from the crown granting specific rights and duties, independent journeymen's associations were seen as threats to the authority of the sovereign. Over the angry denunciations of workers, who felt the First Amendment to the Constitution guaranteed freedom of association, early American courts applied this principle to unions. The first such trial, *Commonwealth v. Pullis*, occurred in 1806, when the Philadelphia court convicted journeymen cordwainers (that is, shoemakers) on charges of conspiracy for seeking higher wages. Referencing British common law, the presiding judge, Recorder Moses Levy, condemned the defendants as dangerous outlaws. Later verdicts in cities like New York, Boston, and Pittsburgh affirmed this notion.

In the 1830s, three main factors—the market revolution, the establishment of universal white male suffrage, and the construction of a transformative liberal ideology—combined to shatter the common-law rules governing work in the North. Improvements in transportation, the specialization of labor, and the introduction of machinery eroded the economic basis for paternalism. Manufactories employing bands of independent operatives replaced master craftsmen

with dependent apprentices and journeymen boarding in their households. As white workers won the vote, they demanded the courts cease harassing their unions. And finally, with the rise of the antislavery movement, many Americans questioned the contradictions between Enlightenment individualism and traditional forms of authority.

Influenced by these forces, northern judges began undermining paternalism and offering workers an ambiguous new freedom. The foremost figure in this transformation was Lemuel Shaw, the chief justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. A Whig dedicated to market liberalism, Shaw made the worker's consent the basis for the labor agreement. Moreover, Shaw's rulings replaced asymmetrical relationships based on status, such as master and servant, with legally enforceable contracts between officially equal parties. Such decisions denied not only the master's special authority over his servant, but also the employer's responsibility to care for his employees. Finally, Shaw proposed abstract rules to govern these contracts and the rights of the individuals who made them.

In the year 1842, Shaw rendered two judgments that redefined antebellum labor law: *Farwell v. Boston & Worcester Railroad Co.* and *Commonwealth v. Hunt*. The *Farwell* decision is best known for limiting the employer's responsibility for workplace accidents, but it also enunciated Shaw's notion of the wage bargain as a contract between equal partners. The plaintiff, a railroad engineer, sued his employer after a switchman's negligence resulted in an accident that left Farwell's hand crushed. Shaw ruled in favor of the defendant, holding that the employer's liability for accidents was not implicit in the labor contract. Farwell might win damages from his "fellow servant," but not from the railroad, which was responsible only for mishaps caused by its overt neglect. Shaw further ruled that workers assumed the risks of employment upon accepting work. Employees who deemed a job dangerous might either demand higher wages, seek a contract explicitly indemnifying the employer, or quit. The *Farwell* decision thus also enunciated the principle of employment at will, which gave workers and businesses the equal right to make and terminate labor contracts.

Shaw's second key ruling, *Commonwealth v. Hunt*, also affirmed employment at will, this time giving workers the right to strike to protest labor conditions. The case arose when members of the Boston Society of Journeymen Bootmakers left their jobs, refusing to work alongside Jeremiah Horne, a former associate suspended for violating union rules. A jury convicted the society's members, including John Hunt, of criminal conspiracy. But what the trial judge saw as an

unlawful boycott, threatening to the peace and welfare of the community, Shaw interpreted as men exercising their constitutionally protected freedom of association. Denying the master's right to compel labor and affirming the worker's right to quit, Shaw could only view strikes as mere agglomerations of lawful individual decisions. By this logic, the bootmakers' union was no different from the fire companies, temperance societies, and party organizations that constituted the primary mode of self-improvement and political participation for millions in the Jacksonian Era.

While Shaw overturned Hunt's conviction, he did not give unions free rein. Rather, he subjected associations to a rigorous "means-ends" test. Workers could coordinate walkouts as long as their practices and goals were legal. Strikers could exercise their freedoms of contract and association by withholding their labor until they received a specific wage. But unionists could neither use threats, force, or violence (unlawful means), nor seek to injure an employer or nonunion worker (an unlawful end) through otherwise legitimate economic pressure. In essence, Shaw sought to make the conspiracy doctrine consistent with the Bill of Rights, while channeling collective protest into what he saw as socially productive forms.

These two decisions had a profound, if mixed, effect on workers. Shaw liberated Massachusetts laborers from the burdens of obedience imposed by master and servant law. Under employment at will, the state could no longer imprison employees who declined to fulfill their labor agreements. Shaw legalized the strike, offering labor unions a legitimate means of raising their members' wages. Yet, Shaw also eradicated the protections that paternalism had offered servants and greatly reduced the employer's implied responsibilities to his employees. Shaw left laborers liable for the exploding number of workplace accidents. Workers were free to quit but still financially responsible for the damages they caused by breaking contracts. And while the means-ends test legalized the wage strike, it barred a range of other union tactics, such as picketing and boycotts.

During and after the Civil War, lawmakers applied the principles of market liberalism to new regions and expanded their meaning for the American worker. But doctrines that had freed antebellum laborers increasingly confined the workers of the late-nineteenth century. The employee's formal equality in court merely accommodated the employer's superior power to set the terms of labor contracts. Moreover, the war initiated an economic transformation that only increased the scale, scope, and technological sophistication of American enterprise. Laborers

quickly found themselves free either to accept corporate terms, or to starve.

Workers in the former Confederacy found the end of paternalism liberating but not entirely emancipatory. With the end of slavery, the authors of Reconstruction sought to replace the old regime with a contractual scheme of northern origin. But the balance of power that emerged during Reconstruction greatly favored employers, for the new system offered freedpeople few special protections in acknowledgment of their poverty. Moreover, the white “redeemer” governments of the 1870s and 1880s further skewed the scales by passing laws restricting the southern worker’s ability to exploit his market value. Legislatures enacted statutes barring vagrancy, seeking to tie workers to their old masters. They made laws prohibiting northern agents from recruiting workers, protecting southern employers from the pressures of the national labor market. Southern states used the criminal law to maintain a pool of coerced labor, sending poor whites and blacks to chain gangs and prison farms for petty offenses including debt and breach of contract. And looming over all was the threat of white violence, which discouraged not only African-American protest, but also dissent, and even hard negotiation.

During the late-nineteenth century, labor law became increasingly pre-occupied with unions and worker protest. The law itself had provided a major impetus for the development of the labor movement. Beginning in the 1870s, workers bitterly dissented not against the degradation of their skill wrought by the second industrial revolution, but also the eclipse of antebellum republicanism, which had promised white male producers control over American government. As railroads, refiners, and manufacturers came to dominate the Gilded Age political system, unions like the Knights of Labor grew rapidly, promising to build a “cooperative commonwealth” that recognized workers’ rights.

Rather than accommodating this political dissent, the post-Reconstruction state acted to suppress the emerging movement. Faced with unprecedented worker activism, public officials concluded that normal legal institutions were insufficient to maintain the social order, and they asked the army to crush strikes. In 1877, for instance, President Rutherford Hayes called on troops to suppress “The Great Upheaval,” a nationwide railroad walkout. Firing indiscriminately into crowds of protesters, soldiers killed over 30 workers. Though politicians were generally reluctant to deploy the military in this fashion, federal troops or state militias crushed a number of major uprisings, including the Homestead Steel strike of 1892 and the Pullman boycott of 1894.

As workers adopted more aggressive methods and radical goals, they ran headlong into the conspiracy doctrine enunciated in *Commonwealth v. Hunt* (1842), which still barred boycotts or strikes designed to punish an employer. Moreover, many state legislatures superseded common law by passing criminal conspiracy statutes not only defining many forms of collective protest as unlawful, but also making union officials criminally liable for the actions of their constituents. Labor leaders found themselves subject to regular criminal conspiracy indictments, trials, fines, and imprisonment.

Most significant, Gilded Age unions had to overcome court orders restraining picketing, some strikes, and even speech itself. Before the Civil War, injunctions were uncommon; courts expected businesses injured by workers to either sue for damages or file a criminal complaint. Judges reserved their equity jurisdiction—the term for their authority to issue writs—for cases involving imminent and irreparable harm, such as the felling of an ancient tree.

Yet, late-nineteenth-century employers increasingly viewed traditional criminal and civil remedies as insufficient. Criminal trials were slow, and juries were sympathetic to labor. Suing a union for damages proved nearly impossible, for unincorporated unions had no legal standing in a court of law. They could neither sue, nor be sued, except in the name of their individual members, most of whom had few financial resources. Charging that labor’s legal incapacity made it impossible to seek redress through normal means, employers asked the court issue injunctions barring strikers from committing any act that might damage their trade or property.

Courts eagerly embraced these arguments, enjoining innumerable strikers over the course of the following decades. Painting themselves as defending civilization against barbarism, judges wrote expansive orders, barring even speech encouraging protest or educating the public about labor disputes. Additionally, judges often considered employers’ complaints *ex parte*, that is, without evaluating the union’s side of the story. Finally, judges often fined and jailed violators for contempt upon the mere allegations of the plaintiff. Thus, unions found themselves subject to serious punishments without any of the normal protections constitutionally guaranteed to criminal defendants, such as trial by jury.

The combination of indictment and injunction seriously hampered labor activism. The constant threat of prosecution restrained union ambitions, and the costs of defending members drained union treasuries. Courts played an active role in suppressing the most dramatic protests of the era, especially the Pullman boycott of 1894. When members of Eugene Debs’s

American Railway Union decided to honor striking workers at the Pullman Palace Car Company by demanding their employers uncouple Pullman sleepers from trains, federal courts sprung into action. Claiming authority under the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887—a recent law intended to regulate the power of railroad corporations—judges issued injunctions prohibiting continued protest and then jailed violators for contempt of court. Debs himself received a six-month sentence for violating a federal injunction.

Meanwhile, Gilded Age judges used their authority as interpreters of the Constitution to thwart the popular demand for legislation shielding workers from the market. Courts rejected statutes barring child labor, setting wages and hours, and ordering factory inspection, charging that these regulations interfered with a worker's right to make his or her own bargains. Such rulings radically expanded Lemuel Shaw's market liberalism, for these judges used the doctrine of "freedom of contract" not to alter common-law precedent, but to void acts of the legislature. Judges also developed new interpretations of the Fourteenth Amendment (1868), charging that regulatory legislation denied citizens their "life, liberty, and property without due process of law" while statutes giving workers special rights deprived employers of "equal protection." In the landmark case *In re Jacobs* (1885), the New York Court of Appeals used these arguments to invalidate a law barring the manufacturing of cigars in tenements, a provision meant to discourage sweatshops. Harkening back to Lincoln's free labor ideology and the powerful image of the independent artisan living in his shop, Judge Robert Earl construed the reform as an unconstitutional infringement upon the right to property.

Frustrated with such decisions, many workers abandoned their faith in government. While the Knights of Labor had lobbied for new law protecting the rights of producers, its rival, the Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions (later renamed the American Federation of Labor), aggressively enlisted craftsmen in trades like construction, obtained exclusive "closed shop" agreements with employers, and directly imposed their terms through strikes, boycotts, and fines. Contrary to common belief, AFL unions rejected legally enforceable contracts, asserting their own jurisdiction over the labor market, making their own private laws, and enforcing them through internal disciplinary procedures. Craft unions rooted their power in the skill and loyalty of their members, competing with, rather than capitulating to, the state. In doing so, they solved a problem long plaguing unions, namely, how to maintain a labor agreement without relying upon hostile courts.

Though private governance—often misleadingly termed "voluntarism" or "business unionism"—allowed unions to survive, it encouraged craft labor's ugliest tendencies. The emphasis on internal discipline and market control prompted unions to exclude perceived outsiders, not only African-Americans, women, and some immigrants, but also members of competing trades. For almost a decade, beginning in 1903, the United Association of Plumbers and the International Association of Steamfitters fought a pitched jurisdictional battle over who might install steam heat in the nation's buildings. The closed shop alienated middle-class observers, who saw the private enforcement of agreements, especially when violent, as a serious threat to the social order and rule of law. Union delegates often succumbed to the immense temptation to accept bribes offered by employers seeking to circumvent work rules.

Finally, the repudiation of the state made the AFL an inconsistent partner in reformers' efforts at gaining legislation sheltering all workers. Craft unions spent much of their considerable political energy seeking either license laws for specific trades like barbering, or statutes exempting unions from antitrust prosecutions and prohibiting judges from enjoining peaceful picketing. Seeing the courts as irretrievably biased, workers used their political influence to shelter themselves from judicial power.

Nevertheless, a coalition of professionals and some unions renewed the push for protective legislation during the Progressive Era (1900–1919). Reformers carefully constructed new statutes restricting child labor, setting maximum hours, and implementing minimum wages to survive judicial scrutiny. Lawmakers addressed the problem of workplace accidents through social insurance programs, such as workers' compensation, and by expanding the employer's legal responsibility for safety. By 1906, 25 states had modified or abolished Shaw's fellow-servant rule, while almost as many had revised the doctrine of assumption of risk.

Progressive Era judges slowly and intermittently warmed to such legislation, rejecting some statutes, but allowing those protecting populations deemed deserving public support. Most infamously, the U.S. Supreme Court's *Lochner v. New York* (1905) decision invalidated a New York state law limiting the baker's workday. But just three years later, in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), the same court upheld the state's authority to set maximum hours for women, a group of workers judges deemed worthy of public protection. The high court invalidated the federal child labor law, but affirmed similar state legislation. Though laws faced rigorous scrutiny, trends seemed to favor the reformers. For instance, in 1911, the New York Court of

Appeals voided that state's workers' compensation law. But in 1917, the U.S. Supreme Court issued decisions validating three different mandatory accident insurance schemes.

By contrast, the law continued to deny labor organizations legitimacy deep into the so-called Progressive Era. Judges still enjoined picketing and jail violators for contempt of court without jury trial. Grand juries still indicted union officials for conspiracy to boycott, restrain trade, and injure employers and nonunion workers. Meanwhile, criminal courts found ways to prosecute labor leaders engaged in graft, extortion, and embezzlement, responding to urban reformers who demanded that the state begin policing the internal administration of unions.

Similarly, Progressive Era appellate courts constructed new doctrines that affirmed employer prerogatives at the expense of unions. Adopting contemporary antimonopoly rhetoric to their own uses, "open shop" employers asked the courts to protect their authority to employ whomever they choose and to affirm the nonunion worker's right to choose his associations. Impressed by the arguments of new advocacy groups like the American Anti-Boycott Association, reputed reformers like the federal judge William Howard Taft turned restraint-of-trade laws against union pickets, boycotts, and exclusive agreements. Moreover, appellate courts affirmed open-shop premises, ratifying the worker's right to join an association and quit work, but severely limiting the union's ability to govern the economy. Most significant, in the series of decisions titled *Loewe v. Lawlor* (1903–1917), the United States Supreme Court ruled that the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890 applied to labor unions, upholding a Danbury, Connecticut, milliner's lawsuit against the United Hatters Union.

These victories oddly disappointed many businessmen. Though injunctions forestalled the unionization of manufacturing, they failed to break labor's hold on trades like construction. Moreover, employers struggled to collect the judgments that courts awarded. Indeed, victorious hat manufacturer Dietrich Loewe went bankrupt waiting for unionists to obey the court, forcing him to accept charity from a collection of wealthy businessmen. Here open-shop employers found themselves hoist on their own rhetoric. Seeing unions as unlawful conspiracies, businessmen refused to offer labor any form of legal recognition. But without "standing" or state-sponsored corporate form, unions could only be sued as mere associations of individuals. Under these conditions, even a successful claim like Loewe's proved impossible to collect, requiring as it did thousands of lawsuits for nonpayment.

Modern collective bargaining emerged from this paradox, as many Americans began seeing legally

enforceable labor contracts as a middle ground between individualism and the closed shop. Reformers, stability-minded businessmen, and some unions began working to construct frameworks under which workers exchanged strikes, boycotts, and violence for arbitration, higher wages, shorter hours, and employer recognition. Such contracts had appeared in construction as early as the 1880s, but seldom in manufacturing until New York's clothing producers signed the famed "Protocol of Peace" of 1910.

New laws such as the Clayton Act of 1914, which exempted unions from federal antitrust law, validated such agreements. Called "Labor's Magna Carta" by Samuel Gompers, the Clayton Act expanded labor's legitimate space for the first time since *Commonwealth v. Hunt* in 1843. Almost immediately upon its passage, however, courts began limiting the range of acceptable strikes under the exemption. For instance, in *U.S. v. Norris* (1918), the federal judge Arthur Loomis upheld the conspiracy conviction of Chicago teamsters officials for boycotting a building material dealer. The Clayton Act thus did not legitimize unions as such, but instead offered a contractual ideal to which they could aspire.

During World War I, the federal government further enshrined what was called "responsible unionism," aiding unions that engaged in lawful collective bargaining. Seeking worker support for the war and an end to costly strikes, Congress enacted statutes creating extraordinary new agencies like the National War Labor Board, which arbitrated over 1,200 industrial disputes, often siding with workers. Trumpeted as "industrial democracy," these laws appeared to apply the war's principal ideological justification to economic life, formally ending the state's traditional hostility to labor. Indeed, under the new regime, both craft and industrial workers gained significant improvements in their condition, including the eight-hour day.

Yet, the wartime institutionalization of labor also resulted in the demonization of unions that opposed American entry into the conflict. Federal officials imprisoned Eugene Debs, accusing the Socialist Party presidential candidate of violating the Espionage Act of 1917 by giving speeches encouraging workers to resist conscription. Federal courts suppressed radical labor unions like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), arresting their leaders for espionage and sedition, crushing their strikes, and permitting vigilante violence against rank-and-file Wobblies. Moreover, when governments removed and even reversed their support for labor after the 1918 armistice, unionization drives collapsed. Most famously, in 1919, steel manufacturers suppressed a national strike by marshaling local police and state troopers against

workers energized by labor's recent successes in other industries.

During the 1920s, Progressive law grew still more stifling. The courts demanded that labor act "responsibly," but declined to reward obedient workers by legitimizing unions or validating protective legislation. On the ground, indictments and injunctions bolstered open-shop drives in construction, teaming, metalworking, and printing. The federal judge James Wilkerson's expansive court order severely impeded the enormous railroad shopmen's strike of 1922. Higher courts blessed such judicial interference in labor disputes. In *American Steel Foundries v. Tricity Central Trades Council* (1921) and *Duplex Printing Press v. Deering* (1921), the U.S. Supreme Court narrowed the scope of the Clayton Act's labor exemption, ruling that federal judges could still enjoin unions engaged in coercive picketing, sympathy strikes, and secondary boycotts. As justices expanded equity jurisdiction in labor cases, they also made unions more vulnerable to lawsuit. In *United Mine Workers v. Coronado Coal* (1922), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that employers could sue unincorporated labor unions under the Sherman Act by name in court. This ruling effectively barred unions from presenting themselves as loose associations to avoid compensating individuals and firms injured by strikes. Finally, in *Adkins v. Children's Hospital* (1923), the Supreme Court revived the *Lochner* precedent, voiding a Washington, DC law creating a board setting minimum wages for women and children as an unconstitutional offense against freedom of contract. Under these conditions, union ranks shrank to pre-war levels.

The stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression transformed American law, unleashing an unprecedented wave of labor activism and broad improvements in the working lives of ordinary workers. Depression-era labor law continued long-term trends begun in the 1890s, but radically departed from the past in its overt sympathy for unions and its willingness to employ federal power. While prior reformers had urged that the state permit workers to strike, the law of the 1930s actively encouraged workers to organize and forced employers to collectively bargain. While Progressive lawmakers had offered support to unions that abided middle-class norms, the New Deal initially endorsed labor in almost all its forms. Finally, the Depression saw Congress establish a federal program of social insurance, not to mention national standards for minimum wages, maximum hours, and child labor.

As the Depression worsened, Americans demanded that government promote economic stability by fostering cooperation. The federal government

responded first by removing barriers to union activism. In 1932, Congress enacted the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which elaborated the worker's right to union membership. The law barred employers from forcing workers to sign yellow-dog contracts promising not to join a union. More significant, the law denied U.S. district and appellate court judges the authority to issue injunctions in nonviolent labor disputes. After years of fruitless lobbying, workers were finally free from constant federal judicial interference.

After winning election in 1932, President Franklin Roosevelt proposed New Deal legislation actually mandating various forms of economic organization, including labor unions. The centerpiece of Roosevelt's program was the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 (NIRA), which required businesses to organize "code authorities" and design industrial rules governing conditions in each field. Section 7A of the statute re-affirmed the worker's right to join a labor organization and required that industries permit unions to participate in the code-writing process. In theory, the federal government backed these provisions, giving union wage scales the force of law.

Many unions prospered under the recovery act. Even before the legislation became law, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) union appealed to prospective members by claiming, "the president wants you to join a union." Quickly organizing the bituminous coal miners, the UMWA gained employer recognition and a seat at the National Recovery Administration (NRA) code authority. Other unions found NIRA disappointing, and the experiment in cartelization was short-lived. In the *Schechter Poultry* decision of 1935, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the recovery act an unconstitutional delegation of executive power. But the NIRA nonetheless represented an unprecedented peacetime intervention on behalf of unions that began a two-decade-long expansion of the size and power of the labor movement.

The void left by the death of the NIRA was filled by a still more radical piece of legislation: the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (NLRA). Often called the Wagner Act, after its progenitor, New York Senator Robert F. Wagner Sr., the NLRA not only re-iterated the worker's right to join a union, but built a legal framework for collective bargaining that remains in place today. The law required employers to recognize unions winning certification elections as legitimate representatives of the workers. It created the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to oversee certifications and arbitrate labor disputes. Even more than the NIRA, the Wagner Act electrified the labor movement, enabling the long-awaited organization of basic industries like steel and auto.

The legitimacy offered unions by the New Deal was far less restrictive than any proposed before. Though the National Labor Relations Board used its power to favor certain unions over others, diverse organizations received state support. The federal government did take steps to ensure that labor's new power was not misused. Passing the Anti-racketeering Act of 1934 (ARA), lawmakers tried to protect workers from criminals like Murray "The Camel" Humphreys, who coveted unions for their treasuries and their power. Written in consultation with AFL leaders, the ARA reconfigured the relationship between labor and the criminal justice system. Rather than limiting worker protest, racketeering law aimed to limit the exploitation of labor by undefined outsiders. While this vagueness made unions susceptible to arbitrary prosecution in future decades, it represented a triumph for unions once buffeted by the simultaneous harassment of courts and gangsters.

Other New Deal programs and regulations similarly transformed the worker's experience. The Social Security Act of 1935 created a national, nearly universal, system of old age insurance, financed through a payroll tax. Retirement, once a luxury reserved for the wealthy, was now available to manual laborers. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 abolished child labor and established the 40-hour workweek for many job classifications, overtime pay, and minimum wages. Moreover, the law replaced the patchwork of competing state provisions with a national standard, ending the statutory race to the bottom that had long stymied protective legislation in poorer regions of the nation.

Finally, the Great Depression saw the U.S. Supreme Court purge its lingering hostility to government regulation of the labor contract. In *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish* (1937), the court upheld a Washington law setting minimum wages for women. In *NLRB v. Jones and Laughlin* (1937), the court disappointed corporations by affirming the constitutionality of the Wagner Act. Taken together, the 1937 decisions overturned two generations of precedent invalidating protective legislation. The individual's right to "freedom of contract" would no longer trump the public will.

During World War II, the state revived the principle of "responsible unionism," helping unions that endorsed government policy, but repudiating those deemed too radical or independent, such as the West Coast longshoremen and even the United Mine Workers. Offering significant aid to workers who agreed to forgo strikes and raise productivity, the federal government helped many internationals grow rapidly during this period. But it also foreshadowed the use of ideological and tactical litmus tests to suppress labor's most aggressive tendencies.

By the end of the war, labor's growing power inspired politicians of both parties to favor new laws containing unions. The 1947 Taft-Hartley Amendment to the NLRA ended 15 years of comparatively unfettered union activism. Though the law continued to support collective bargaining, it made organizing far more difficult. Under Taft-Hartley, federal judges regained the authority to interfere in peaceful labor disputes suspended by the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932. Taft-Hartley required union officers to file affidavits swearing they were not Communists. The law barred unions from engaging in "unfair labor practices," including jurisdictional strikes and secondary boycotts. The amendment allowed states to pass "right to work" laws, enabling employees in unionized workplaces to decline union membership. These provisions had a profound impact on labor organizing, especially in the South, where CIO attempts to unionize the textile industry stalled.

In the 1950s and 1960s, lawmakers also placed new restrictions on the administration of labor unions. In 1957, the Senate held hearings to investigate charges of corruption and gangster domination in unions like the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, leading to the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (aka, Landrum-Griffin), which proposed to guarantee democracy, freedom of speech, and official probity in unions. Seeking to promote politically conservative and personally honest leadership, the law forbade former Communists and ex-convicts from holding a union office for five years. Moreover, federal prosecutors began aggressively pursuing union officials under the 1934 Anti-racketeering Act and its successor, the Hobbs Act of 1946. Though these prosecutions undoubtedly stemmed the movement's most violent, collusive, and corrupt elements, they nonetheless put labor on the defensive, undermining the movement's reputation without offering well-administered unions any additional support.

The civil rights revolution of the 1960s radically altered the trajectory of American labor law. Once focused on the legitimacy of unions and their tactics, the law grew increasingly concerned with the rights of individuals to employment, fair treatment, and a safe workplace. The Civil Rights Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments prohibited employers from discriminating against prospective and current employees on the basis of race, creed, or gender. To help victims of workplace bias seek redress through the federal courts, the law created the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission. In 1970, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which set standards for safe work environments, protecting employees from hazardous materials, noise, machinery, temperature, or unsanitary conditions.

Though its support is often forgotten, the AFL-CIO lobbied hard for all these laws, occasionally over the objections of more conservative affiliates and their members.

By the end of the twentieth century, workers found their once-strong legal position under political assault. By filling the federal courts and administrative agencies with officials hostile to unions, Republican presidents like Ronald Reagan successfully vitiated the Wagner Act without amending it legislatively. Refusing to defend the right to join a union, the courts contributed to the decline of organized labor's share of the workforce. By contrast, employees actually gained new civil rights during this period. Despite business opposition, laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 retained the overwhelming support of both legislators and the public. It remains unclear, however, whether workers can retain these rights without a strong labor movement to lobby for their continuation.

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LAWRENCE STRIKE (1912)

For nine weeks during the winter of 1912, more than 15,000 Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile workers, most of them Southern and Eastern European immigrants, waged a spirited strike marked by creative mass tactics, cooperation among a dozen or more ethnic groups, determined activism by women militants, and assistance from the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Several thousand more stayed off the job but avoided strike activities. Often called the "Bread and Roses" strike, the walkout was the high point of the IWW's efforts among eastern factory workers and led to pay increases for workers throughout the New England textile industry.

Dominated by the worsted and cotton goods industries, Lawrence was a city of crowded tenement districts and huge factories. Southern and Eastern Europeans, who were an important part of New England's mill labor force, were especially numerous in Lawrence, where the textile industry had added 10,000 jobs since 1905. The strike highlighted Lawrence's ethnic fault line. Most strikers were Southern and Eastern European immigrants and Franco-Belgians, with important support among the Germans. The largest groups were Italians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Syrians (Lebanese). There were smaller groups of Jewish, Armenian, Russian, Lettish, and Portuguese strikers, along with a scattering from other ethnicities. Despite the strikers' overtures, relatively few Irish, French-Canadian, English, or Yankee workers backed the strike committee.

The strike was sparked by a state law cutting the workweek for women and minors from 56 to 54 hours effective January 1. Because of the integration of men's and women's jobs, nearly every worker was placed on the 54-hour schedule. The owners' refusal to adjust pay rates to maintain take-home pay triggered the walkout, which was fueled by underlying discontent over working conditions. IWW Local 20, a tiny 300-member organization, was the key reason Lawrence was the only Massachusetts mill town where a major strike erupted over this statewide issue. By pressing mill officials about their plans and agitating on the job and in the neighborhoods, Local 20 activists built a loose strike movement. On January 10,

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Strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, with many children posed on sidewalk. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-98168].

they convened a meeting of 1,000 Italians, who voted to strike unless they received their full wages. The next day, 300 weavers, mostly Polish women, struck the Everett Mill because their pay envelopes were short two hours' wages. On January 12, after paymasters distributed wages at the big mills along the Merrimack River, strikers ran down the aisles pressuring others to join them and spread the walkout by marching from mill to mill.

The national IWW had no role in the prestrike agitation; but once workers had walked off the job, the strikers sent for an IWW organizer, Joe Ettor, who helped them co-ordinate their efforts. An engaging speaker, Ettor encouraged the strikers by connecting local events to a broader social analysis and insisting that they would win because the owners could not "weave cloth with bayonets." With his assistance, the strikers refined their structure, which already included a multi-ethnic strike committee, set up relief and publicity subcommittees, and mobilized mass demonstrations. The strikers adopted demands that included a 15% pay hike, double time for overtime, elimination of the premium system under which some workers had to meet monthlong production or attendance standards to receive their full pay, and no discrimination against strikers.

After Ettor's arrest in late January, William D. ("Big Bill") Haywood became the IWW's lead organizer. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn also played an active role in the strike, working closely with women strikers, helping evacuate strikers' children, and assisting

with outreach. The IWW did not control the strike, but the strikers listened carefully to the organizers' advice. As many as 10,000 joined Local 20 before the strike's end.

The strikers promoted participation through mass meetings, parades, and open strike committee meetings. Carrying American flags and singing the "Internationale" and the "Marseillaise," thousands followed local Italian, Syrian, and Franco-Belgian bands in huge parades that wound through the tenement districts and the main business district. Hundreds packed daily strike committee meetings where delegates reported on developments in their communities and debated tactics and strategy. The strike's institutional core, however, was the committee's ethnic branches, which drew on individual groups' personal networks and institutional resources. Through these branches, strikers mobilized street actions, promoted solidarity, punished scabs, administered relief, reached out to fellow ethnics in other cities, and voted on policies proposed by the strike committee.

The strikers faced stiff opposition from civic leaders, the militia, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), as well the mill owners. Despite their ambivalence toward the mills, municipal leaders like Mayor Michael Scanlon worried about the social order. In particular, they distrusted new-immigrant-led mass protests. In mid-January, a prominent local undertaker, John Breen, planted dynamite at a Syrian strike supporter's laundry and at a cobbler's shop next to the print shop where Ettor received his mail.

Only Breen's transparent bungling betrayed this scheme to smear the strikers and jail Ettor. Most local AFL leaders also opposed the strike. Although the AFL's United Textile Workers of America (UTWA) had few members in Lawrence, its hostility to the walkout re-inforced this opposition. Motivated by organizational jealousy and antiradicalism, the UTWA's national president, John Golden, denounced the strike, tried to undermine relief efforts, and supported a back-to-work drive.

Local officers and out-of-town police challenged the strikers, and the militia sealed off the main mill district. After two weeks, the authorities stepped up the pressure. On January 29, marchers attacked trolleys carrying strikebreakers. The police and militia monitored the confrontations but did not interfere. In response, Governor Eugene Foss sent more troops. That evening, a striker, Annie LoPizzo was shot to death when police broke up a street demonstration. Police quickly arrested Ettor and the Italian Socialist Federation leader Arturo Giovannitti, who they feared would replace Ettor. Although the two were speaking elsewhere in town when LoPizzo was shot, the authorities charged them with creating a violent climate that caused her death. Several weeks later, the police arrested the striker Joe Caruso as a third accessory. All three faced possible death sentences. Besides the arrests, Colonel Leroy Sweetser, who directed the militia's efforts, banned strike meetings on the Lawrence Common and ordered mounted troops and infantry to patrol city streets, including the tenement districts. On January 30, John Ramey, a teenage Syrian mill worker, died from a bayonet wound in the back.

Women's Strike Activism

To avoid more bloodshed, the strike committee suspended mass demonstrations for two weeks. When large protests resumed, women took the lead. Although underrepresented on the strike committee and bargaining team, they played a central role in the strike. Nearly every Southern and Eastern European woman had a direct stake in the strike, either working in the mills or running her household with mill earnings from boarders and family members. Strikers' wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters joined together with women operatives, who composed roughly 40% of the strikers. Women's militancy was hardly unique to Lawrence, but their high-profile involvement both as strikers and strike supporters and their sustained, large-scale participation set Lawrence apart. Like men, they drew on gendered social

networks of daily life to mobilize demonstrations, administer relief, and promote the strike in their neighborhoods.

Effective relief work was crucial to maintaining the strike. The IWW and strikers raised over \$72,000 through labor, radical, and ethnic networks across the Northeast and Midwest. Working through ethnic subcommittees, strikers and their families investigated needs, distributed relief goods, and ran soup kitchens. The strike committee evacuated more than 250 children to other cities. The IWW and out-of-town supporters made careful preparations, investigating prospective foster homes, giving physical examinations to the children, and requiring signed permission from the children's parents. On February 11, 119 children left for New York. In the following weeks, others left for New York; Hoboken; Philadelphia; Barre, Vermont; and Manchester, New Hampshire. The evacuations, which eased parents' concerns and provided valuable publicity for the strikers, outraged municipal leaders. Besides strengthening the strike, the departures portrayed Lawrence as a grim city with ill-clothed, malnourished children. On February 24, police clubbed and arrested women trying to put their children on a train. The authorities then charged several mothers with child neglect. The depot incident backfired, prompting a U.S. House Rules Committee hearing in Washington, DC, where young strikers presented dramatic testimony about their jobs and living conditions.

Continued mass picketing, publicity from the Washington hearing, and congressional threats to investigate the woolen tariff cracked the owners' determination. With American Woolen, the largest employer, wavering, the owners tried to establish the framework for a citywide settlement with minimal concessions at the Arlington Mill, a corporation that employed relatively large numbers of English and Irish workers. When the strikers defeated this back-to-work maneuver, American Woolen offered to negotiate. Convinced that an agreement with the largest employer would set the terms for every mill, the strike committee dropped its insistence on citywide negotiations and sent a nine-member committee to bargain with American Woolen officials. These were the first negotiations between the mills and the strike committee. On March 13, the strikers ratified the American Woolen agreement that included a 5% raise for pieceworkers; a 5% to 22% increase for those paid by the hour, with the highest raise for the lowest-paid workers; a two-week premium period; time and one quarter for overtime; and a no-discrimination pledge. The other mills granted similar terms, although several refused a formal agreement with the strikers. On Monday, March 18, the strikers resumed work.

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After the settlement, unrest swept New England's textile industry. Workers in Barre, Vermont, and in Lowell and other Massachusetts mill towns transformed Lawrence strike support work into agitation for their own raises. Once they struck, operatives called in the IWW. In April, the Lowell showdown prompted New England mill owners to declare a regionwide 10% raise that benefited over 125,000 textile workers.

Lawrence workers and managers continued to struggle over poststrike power relations. Walkouts erupted over discrimination and working conditions. Despite some gains, workers often found themselves outmatched as the owners resisted demands from one department or ethnic group. Local 20 members were unable to wage constant strikes or to focus their full strength on narrow demands involving limited numbers of workers.

During the summer and early fall, the movement to free Ettor, Giovannitti, and Caruso grew into an energetic campaign with huge demonstrations, ambitious speaking tours, extensive publicity, and threats of a general strike. This activism mobilized support across the United States and sparked large European protests. In November, jurors acquitted the three prisoners. By then, the defense campaign had become entangled with Local 20's fate and Lawrence civic leaders' battle against the IWW.

Frustrated by shop-floor conditions and swayed by calls for a general strike to save the prisoners, Italians as well as some Poles struck several mills on September 26–28. To gain control over the agitation, Local 20 called a one-day citywide mill strike for September 30, the first day of the trial. The divisive strike left Local 20 ill-prepared for the mills' counteroffensive, which included an aggressive blacklist.

The September turmoil also provided an opening for municipal leaders. Seizing on the "No God, No Master" slogan on a sign carried by out-of-towners at an Ettor-Giovannitti-Caruso demonstration, Mayor Scanlon and Father James O'Reilly, the dean of Lawrence's Catholic clergy, launched an anti-IWW "God and Country" campaign. With a Columbus Day parade by over 25,000 as its high point, the campaign combined boosterism, nationalism, inflammatory anti-IWW rhetoric, and intimidation. In this volatile atmosphere, Jonas Smolskas, a Lithuanian mill worker, was killed in a fight provoked by his IWW button. Although the God and Country campaign had limited appeal to former strikers, it became the template for municipal leaders' future efforts to quell labor militancy and their struggle to stigmatize the 1912 strike as an affront to Lawrence and to the nation.

Unable to counter the owners' power on the job, Local 20 unraveled. Lawrence workers abandoned

the IWW, but the 1912 strike left its mark on local labor activism. During the next decade, Lawrence workers drew on their 1912 experiences as they mobilized strikes that eliminated the premium system (1918), won the 48-hour week for 54 hours' pay (1919), and blocked a 20% pay cut (1922).

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See also Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley; Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Industrial Workers of the World

LEAGUE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY (LID)

The League for Industrial Democracy (LID), an educational group devoted to the ideals of social democracy and trade unionism, began its existence as the Intercollegiate Socialist Society (ISS), founded in New York City on September 12, 1905. The socialist novelist Upton Sinclair had drafted a call for a meeting to found a group for the "purpose of promoting an intelligent interest in Socialism among college men and women." At the founding meeting of the ISS, Sinclair complained that in his own years as a college student, none of his professors had ever discussed "proposals to eliminate poverty and social injustices." Accordingly, he decided that "since the professors would not educate the students, it was up to the students to educate the professors." Sinclair was just a few days short of his twenty-seventh birthday when he chaired the meeting, and he was by no means the oldest person present. The group was not intended to be restricted to currently enrolled

college students; any college graduate who supported its aims could join.

Only a tiny percentage of Americans enjoyed the privilege of higher education in the early twentieth century, and college and university students had traditionally been as conservative as their professors. The creation of the ISS, which would grow within little over a decade to include roughly a thousand members at 70-odd campus chapters, thus represented an important turning point in the history of campus politics and the American Left as the first national organization of radically inclined students.

The years leading up to the First World War were heady times for American radicals, on and off campus. The Socialist Party grew to over a 100,000 members, and its presidential candidate, Eugene Debs, attracted a million votes in the 1912 election. The ISS recruits included many students who would later make their mark on American politics. Walter Lippmann, perhaps the most influential political journalist of the mid-twentieth century, founded the Harvard University chapter in 1910. The ISS began publishing a quarterly journal, *Intercollegiate Socialist*, in 1913, and sponsored speaking tours and conferences that were attended by many students. John Reed, a member of the ISS Harvard chapter, who would later gain fame as author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*, an account of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, would write that the ISS's impact upon prewar campuses "was potent":

All over the place radicals sprang up.... The more serious college papers took a socialistic, or at least a progressive tinge.... It made me, and many others, realize that there was something going on in the dull outside world more thrilling than college activities.

Harry W. Laidler, a junior at Wesleyan University when he attended the founding meeting of the ISS in 1905, became the group's executive director in 1910; he would define the organization's purpose as "primarily a study, not a political propagandist organization." (Laidler remained in the leadership of the ISS, and its successor organization, for an astonishing five decades.) But it was not going to prove easy to separate the intellectual fortunes of the ISS from the political fortunes of the broader radical movement.

American entry into the First World War in 1917 took the bloom of the socialist rose. The Socialist Party and other radical groups like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) came under official attack for opposing the war; radical leaders were imprisoned, and radical publications banned from the mails. College and university campuses were as intolerant as the larger society; antiwar professors

lost their jobs, and the ISS shriveled. By 1920, few ISS chapters survived outside of New York City.

In 1921, the Intercollegiate Socialist Society changed its name to the League for Industrial Democracy (LID). By dropping the reference to socialism, the new name was intended to be more inclusive and less inflammatory. The change also reflected a shift in organizational perspective. The LID would increasingly function as a kind of think tank for trade unions under socialist or social democratic leadership.

Although Harry Laidler had defined the ISS and the LID's mission as primarily educational, the organization and its supporters played an increasingly activist role in the 1920s. In the early years of the decade, the LID encouraged the creation of the nationally organized Farmer Labor Party, and in 1924, it endorsed the independent presidential campaign of Robert M. La Follette. Despite the LID's efforts, the 1920s would not prove a propitious decade for any group that challenged the status quo from the left. Corporate-sponsored "welfare capitalism" schemes attracted far more attention from the general public than the League's advocacy of a worker-controlled "industrial democracy."

However, the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s seemed to vindicate the LID's criticisms of capitalism, and the group's influence spread. In 1932, it organized a formal student affiliate, the Intercollegiate League for Industrial Democracy, in part to compete with the Communist-led National Student League (NSL). Chapters of the group were founded on over a hundred campuses, enrolling several thousand members who were active in backing Norman Thomas's presidential campaign on the Socialist ticket in 1932. In 1934, the LID's student affiliate adopted a new name, the Student League for Industrial Democracy (SLID). Meanwhile, the parent organization was also growing. LID's speakers were in demand in union halls as well as on college campuses, and the group's pamphlets circulated widely. Adopting a new form of communication, the LID sponsored a series of talks on current affairs on the NBC radio network.

In addition to its educational work, the LID plunged into social and political activism. The group published a magazine titled *The Unemployed* to spur the demand for unemployment insurance. LID members played a significant role in the revival of the labor movement in the 1930s; a Detroit LID member named Walter Reuther, for example, would make a name for himself in his efforts to organize an industrial union in the traditionally open-shop auto industry. The LID was also active in defending the civil liberties of workers and radicals, founding a legal defense group called the Workers Defense League (WDL).

But in the second half of the 1930s, the LID, like the Socialist Party, faltered. To the dismay of LID elders, its student affiliate SLID and the Communist-led NSL merged in 1935 to form the American Student Union (ASU). The Communists exercised effective control over the ASU until the group collapsed in disarray after the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Factional battles within the Socialist Party spilled over into and damaged the LID. And many LIDers disagreed with Norman Thomas's opposition to U.S. entry into World War II, leading Thomas to resign as LID's codirector.

In the aftermath of World War II, the LID shed much of its residual anticapitalist sentiments, supporting policies of liberal reformism at home, and anti-Communism abroad. Apart from reviving SLID in 1945 as a campus affiliate, the group undertook few new initiatives in the 1940s and 1950s. The LID was on its way to becoming an ideological retirement home for lapsed radicals, kept alive by the charity of a few leaders of the garment workers unions who retained a sentimental attachment to the socialist ideals of their youth.

Two political developments led to a brief revival in the LID's fortunes in the 1960s. One was the merger of a left-wing splinter group led by the former Trotskyist Max Shachtman with Thomas's Socialist Party at the end of the 1950s. The "Shachtmanites" included a number of talented and energetic young activists like Michael Harrington (soon to gain fame as the author of *The Other America*, the book that helped spark the "War on Poverty"). The Shachtmanites concentrated their political efforts within the LID, and in 1964, Harrington was elected the chair of the group. Writing in the *New York Post*, the journalist James Wechsler celebrated Harrington's new appointment and predicted that as a leader of the LID, he would emerge as a unifier of "the scattered legions among the liberal intellectual community, the civil rights activists and the more enlightened sectors of organized labor."

The other important development was the transformation of the largely moribund SLID into a new group called the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) between 1960 and 1962. The SDS would soon emerge as the center of the New Left, a radical movement destined to have an enormous impact on American campuses in the 1960s.

But for a third time in the twentieth century, the LID's seemingly bright prospects proved chimerical. The "scattered legions" of American liberalism would end the 1960s even more scattered as a result of conflicts over the Vietnam War and American race relations. The SDS split with the LID in 1965, after a series of bruising generational confrontations, most

famously the battle at the SDS's founding convention between Tom Hayden and Michael Harrington over the issue of anti-Communism. Harrington found himself in the unenviable position of being attacked from his left by youthful radicals like Hayden, and from his right by his former comrades among the Shachtmanites, who were increasingly adopting a neoconservative worldview. By the end of the 1960s, he had been marginalized within the LID leadership, and resigned soon afterward. Although showing few signs of life after Harrington's resignation, the LID survived for the remainder of the twentieth century and into the start of the next century, as a front organization for the Shachtmanite-controlled Social Democrats, USA.

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LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARY BLACK WORKERS

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers was founded in Detroit by a coalition of radical black autoworkers, students, and intellectuals in the early months of 1969. It was designed to serve as a coordinating body for numerous black revolutionary union movements that black workers had developed in the auto plants of Detroit in 1968. The League openly expressed a Marxist-Leninist orientation and focused its organizational efforts solely on black workers. The League contended that black autoworkers occupied a strategic position within the capitalist economy and should therefore be the primary focus of revolutionary struggle.

Detroit's black revolutionary union movement developed in the wake of the July 1967 uprising and was nurtured by a radical community that included prominent black Marxist writers C. L. R. James, James and Grace Lee Boggs, Uhruhu (a militant group of nationalist and socialist black students associated with Wayne State University), the Socialist Workers Party, and the Communist Party. In September 1967, caucuses of black autoworkers began meeting at Dodge Main (Hamtramck assembly plant) for discussions. Also that fall, *The Inner City Voice*, a radical black newspaper, began publication in Detroit. Its editors, John Watson, Ken Cockrel, and Mike Hamlin, would

later join with nine production workers from the Dodge Main plant in May 1968 to establish DRUM (Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement), the first of Detroit's black revolutionary unions. Founding members of the League included production workers Luke Tripp, General Baker, Chuck Wooten, Ernest Allen, and James Forman. The initial stimulus for the formation of DRUM was a spontaneous, interracial wildcat strike by 4,000 workers at Dodge Main on May 2, 1968. Chrysler responded by firing seven workers (five black, two white). Eventually, all but two (both black) were rehired. In the aftermath of the wildcat strike, DRUM began publishing a weekly newsletter and devoted its first issue to an assessment of the recent strike, which it argued was caused by a production speedup. In addition, the newsletter decried the unfair punishment administered to the striking black workers and accused Chrysler of racist labor policies.

After a series of more DRUM-inspired wildcat strikes, fund-raising, and a public attack on the Detroit chapter of the Urban League, the revolutionary union movement spread to other Chrysler plants, resulting in the creation of FRUM (Ford Revolutionary Union Movement) and ELRUM (Eldon Avenue Revolutionary Union Movement). As the black revolutionary union model spread throughout Detroit and the nation, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers was created in an effort to provide direction and coordination for the individual affiliates. The League briefly published its own circular titled *Spear*, but *The Inner City Voice* soon became the League's official newspaper. The League consistently demanded an increase in the number of black people employed at all levels of the auto industry, lobbied to get black workers' union dues channeled into the local black community for self-determination, and called for equal pay for black workers at Chrysler plants in South Africa.

Throughout its five-year existence, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers had a contentious relationship with the United Auto Workers International and Local 3. The League accused the UAW leadership of assisting Chrysler management in the maintenance of a racist system by failing to respond to black workers' complaints. The UAW and Local 3 considered DRUM a threat from its beginning. The UAW argued that DRUM would split the Dodge workers, rendering their union ineffective, and criticized the DRUM newsletter as extremist and hateful. Moreover, the League assailed the UAW for endorsing an annual Detroit police field day. Since the Detroit Police Department was widely criticized by the local black community for racist and brutal policing, the UAW's support for the Detroit police seemed

especially galling. The UAW's endorsement of the police field day was seen by many in the League as proof of an alliance between the UAW and the police department. The League intensified its confrontation with the UAW by calling for a demonstration and march on a UAW convention being held at Cobo Hall in Detroit on November 8 and 9, 1969. The League demanded that the purpose of the convention be changed to consider a complete restructuring of the UAW to a model that better reflected the needs of black autoworkers. The UAW chose to end the convention early to avoid an embarrassing racial confrontation.

The League made several attempts to gain control of local unions by running League candidates in official union elections. League members hoped that taking part in union electoral politics would lend them legitimacy in the eyes of nonaligned black workers, demonstrate black solidarity, raise worker consciousness, and ultimately increase League membership. Amid a massive turnout by retired white UAW members and accusations that local police assisted the UAW by suppressing the League's election-day carpooling efforts, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers failed to get any League members elected to a union office.

The pressures of national growth and intense internal dissension resulted in an organizational split in June 1971. The disagreements that contributed to the division included ideological differences concerning nationalist or class-based consciousness, cooperation with white radicals, whether the League's struggle should be national in scope or more local, and whether its focus should expand to include sexism and imperialism. Three of the League's seven executive board members left the League to work for the Black Workers' Congress, a national black Marxist-Leninist group. The various factions eventually decided that the League would be an affiliate of the Black Workers' Congress along with other worker organizations and student and community groups. But the intense debate exposed irresolvable tensions. Both organizations continued to exist in Detroit for a brief time. However, ideological tensions gave way to personal hostility and a battle over the League's Black Star Publishing company, Black Star Productions, and Black Star bookstore brought organizational activities to a minimum as the League gradually faded away. Many League members went on to join various other labor and political organizations.

Despite its ultimate demise, many Detroit observers credit the League of Revolutionary Black Workers for a significant increase in the amount of black foremen and union stewards in Detroit. The League's activities are often recognized as having resulted in

relatively safer and cleaner work environments. The League was also successful in establishing its own printing and film production facilities, which resulted in the production of numerous newsletters, a book on political theory, and a documentary film of the League's history titled *Finally Got the News*. In addition, several League members were actively involved in the Detroit chapter of the Black Panther Party.

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See also **DRUM, FRUM, ELRUM**

LEGETT, WILLIAM (1801–1839) Labor Activist and Abolitionist

Born in 1801, William Leggett was a writer, journalist, and Democratic Party activist who advocated prolabor and antislavery positions through his editorials and the "Locofoco" wing of the New York Jacksonian Democracy. Born in Savannah, Georgia, Leggett grew up in New York City. After a truncated course of study at Georgetown College and an 1819 stay with his parents on the Illinois frontier, in 1822, Leggett entered the Navy as a midshipman, but was court-martialed for insubordination after four years at sea under the brutal and often arbitrary disciplinary regime typical of the British and American navies. He soon published two volumes of maritime poetry as well as quite a few short stories regarding the sea and the frontier life he had seen in Illinois, all of which earned him some renown. Foreshadowing his future political views, his fiction often condemned abusive ship captains, and one story set forth a sympathetic portrayal of a free black on the frontier. In 1829, after 10 months of editing his own literary journal, the *Critic*, he joined William Cullen Bryant's *New York Evening Post* as a part-owner and literary critic, eventually editing the paper himself for 16 months in 1834 and 1835. Leggett left the *Post* in late 1836 and edited two journals, the *Plaindealer* and the *Examiner*, until both failed toward the end of 1837. Leggett's main contributions to the history

of American labor lie in his intellectual leadership of the Locofoco wing of the New York Democracy, his opposition to government preferences and monopoly, his support of labor organizing and the right to strike, and his advocacy of abolition and universal manhood suffrage for blacks. In 1839, soon after being appointed by President Van Buren as diplomatic agent to Guatemala, Leggett died before his voyage to Central America.

Although he proclaimed a lack of interest in politics when he began at the *Post*, Leggett proved a quick student of Bryant's Jacksonian Democratic views. From June 1834 to October 1835, while Bryant was traveling in Europe, Leggett assumed the editorship of the *Evening Post* and wrote many of the fiery editorials upon which his reputation is based. Those editorials, however, so antagonized key advertisers and Democratic Party officials that the *Post* approached financial ruin, hastening Bryant's return to America and Leggett's eventual departure.

Leggett argued that the principle of "equal rights," derived from Thomas Jefferson, and the principle of "free trade," derived from classical political economy, should be the guiding precepts of the Jacksonian Democracy. Leggett was an ardent opponent of the "Money Power," that interlocking constellation of banks, merchants, and capitalists that derived their wealth from the labor of the farmer and urban worker, because it violated both equal rights and free trade. Leggett was particularly suspicious of government action that violated these principles by distributing benefits to some and not to others, and sounded this theme of "antimonopoly" throughout his career. In Leggett's able hands, these ideas became potent weapons against wealth and privilege, and he wrote blistering editorials on numerous subjects, including banking, the rights of labor, and abolition of slavery.

The bank issue was a prime exemplar of Leggett's equal rights and free trade philosophy. Supportive of Andrew Jackson's veto of the Bank Bill, Leggett opposed state-chartered banks as well, while most Jacksonian Democrats supported the so-called pet banks where the Jackson administration deposited federal funds. On this question, Leggett applied the same critique of federal monopoly charters to state monopoly charters. Leggett argued that legislatively granted bank charters were available only to the wealthy and politically influential, and hence violated the principles of equal rights and free trade just as the Bank of the United States had done. Rarely one to criticize without offering an alternative, Leggett became a prime exponent of general incorporation laws to make the process of incorporating a matter of complying with statutorily prescribed conditions

open to all. Such statutes were passed throughout the Union in the decades after Leggett's death.

Of course, the bank issue was not simply or solely of interest to antimonopoly ideologists. Small-scale artisans and others in the "laboring classes" had long argued that the banking system was rigged to hold down the honest mechanic by limiting access to capital to those with wealth or political connections. Further, employers paid wage laborers not in hard specie, but in bank notes that often proved to be fraudulent or worthless. Thus, the bank issue was a labor issue. On other labor issues as well, Leggett was very supportive of the nascent American labor movement. Leggett condemned the doctrine of labor conspiracy, which held the organization of labor unions to be a criminal act, and he supported the right of workers not only to organize but to engage in strikes as well, though he believed strikes to be, for the most part, an ill-advised attempt to get around the laws of free trade.

Indeed, when labor activists seemed to violate the principle of free trade directly, Leggett parted company with them. Leggett had only harsh words regarding the flour riot of 1837, when a large crowd, believing that several flour merchants were holding large stores of flour from the market during that hungry winter of high bread prices, stormed their warehouses and made off with the flour. To Leggett, the flour riot was an inexcusable violation of the principle of free trade. Carrying these principles to their logical conclusion as usual, Leggett subsequently opposed legislation to compensate the flour merchants for their losses, because that would improperly involve the government in insuring the property of merchants but not of others.

It was on the issue of slavery that Leggett most raised the ire of mainstream Jacksonian Democrats. By the mid-1830s, several slave states had passed legislation banning abolitionist literature from their mails, and antiabolition riots occurred in various cities, including New York. Though critical of these attempts to restrict the flow of ideas and use violence against abolitionists, Leggett initially opposed abolition on the ground that it would create ruinous competition for white wage workers. Over time, however, Leggett found it impossible to reconcile his beliefs in equal rights and free trade with the forcible compulsion of labor inherent to the peculiar institution, and he joined the abolitionist cause. Unlike some abolitionists, moreover, Leggett favored not only the end of slavery, but equal political rights for blacks (and women) as well. For these apostasies, he was denied a Democratic nomination to Congress in 1838.

Leggett's intellectual leadership of the Locofoco wing of the New York Democratic Party represented a chance to put his equal rights and free trade

principles into action. Originating during the state banking fights of 1835, the Locofocos advocated measures to ease the burdens of debt on the laboring classes and found their ideological leader and guiding light in Leggett, whose principles of equal rights and free trade became their own. In the Locofocos, the emerging labor movement found, for the first time, a sympathetic ear within the political party system, though a minority one at that.

Though his equation of equal rights and free trade would become increasingly difficult to sustain in the decades after his death, William Leggett's contribution to the labor movement was substantial. Along with George Henry Evans and a few others, he was among the first to present a critique of slavery rooted, at least in part, in labor ideas, and his advocacy of equal rights for blacks and women was certainly quite progressive for his day. His use of the antimonopoly tradition to serve labor's cause continued to resonate throughout the nineteenth century. Perhaps most important, Leggett saw that the labor movement, even in its earliest days, was a political force to be reckoned with by the major parties.

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See also **Abolitionism; Antebellum Era; Evans, George Henry; Locofoco Democrats**

LEMLICH, CLARA SHAVELSON (1886–1982)

Clara Lemlich Shavelson (1886–1982) is best known as a leader of the *fabrente Yidishe meydlekh*, the fiery Jewish immigrant girls, whose militancy and dedication to the ideal of bread and roses helped

to galvanize the early twentieth-century U.S. labor movement. In 1909, the young shirtwaist maker delivered an impassioned speech in Yiddish at New York's Cooper Union that sparked an "uprising" of 30,000 garment workers—most of whom were East European Jewish immigrant girls between the ages of 15 and 25. The strike, which was the largest strike by women in the United States to that time, paralyzed New York's garment industry and set off a decade of labor militancy by garment workers across the country. Lemlich's role as the catalyst for the 1909 strike ensured her place as a bit player in histories of the early twentieth-century labor movement, East European Jewish immigration, and women's militancy before the 1960s. Lemlich even had a walk-on in the 1986 Broadway hit *I'm Not Rappaport* as the symbol of an idealistic generation of immigrants whose values had been abandoned in the materialistic frenzy of the 1980s.

While these mentions of Lemlich made her into an icon for her generation of immigrant women, telescoping her long activist career into one cameo appearance oversimplifies her complex legacy. Suffragist, communist, community organizer, and peace activist, Clara Lemlich Shavelson was active in revolutionary and left-wing politics from her teen years in the Ukraine until her last years in a California nursing home, where she helped organize the orderlies into a union and convinced the home administrators to honor the United Farm Workers' grape and lettuce boycott. She was also a dedicated promoter of Yiddish culture, cofounder and longtime member of the Emma Lazarus Federation of Jewish Women's Clubs, birth mother to three children who carried on her tradition of radical activism, and political mother to a generation of Jewish radical activists who came of age in the 1930s and modeled themselves on her example.

Lemlich was born in 1886 in Gorodok, Ukraine, to deeply religious Jewish parents. Like most girls in late nineteenth-century East European Jewish villages, she was taught to read and write Yiddish but was offered no further Jewish schooling. Breaking from the tradition of many of their Jewish neighbors—who distrusted everything associated with the Russian authorities—Lemlich's parents allowed her to attend the local Russian-language public school. When Clara was denied admission to Gorodok's only public school because she was a Jew, her parents reacted angrily, banning Russian language, books, and music from their home. Already a rebel, the young Lemlich refused to abide by her parents' prohibition. She had amassed quite a collection by the time her father found and burned her secret library of Russian classics. Undaunted, Lemlich began collecting again

and, now in her teens, she read and collected revolutionary texts by Lenin, Trotsky, and Marx, among others. By the age of 17, Lemlich was a committed socialist. She would remain so for the rest of her life. The violent Kishinev pogrom of 1903 convinced Lemlich's parents that the time had come to leave the Ukraine. The family moved to New York in 1905.

A highly skilled dressmaker, young Clara quickly found work in a Lower East Side garment shop. It took her little time to begin organizing her fellow workers to protest conditions that, she said, reduced human beings to the status of machines. Clara accepted the tutelage of older workers in the fundamentals of trade unionism, but she firmly rejected their insistence that women and unskilled workers could not be organized. Lemlich organized a series of strikes in garment shops around New York between 1907 and 1909, laying the groundwork for a general strike to improve wages, hours, and conditions in the shirt and dress trades. Despite the warnings of Samuel Gompers (the first president of the American Federation of Labor—AFL) and middle-class reformers in the Women's Trade Union League that young women workers could not sustain a general strike, Lemlich called on her fellow shirtwaist makers and dressmakers to attend a meeting in the Great Hall of the People at New York's Cooper Union in November 1909. After a series of labor leaders urged caution, Lemlich jumped on the stage and began exhorting the crowd of young women workers in Yiddish. "I am one of those who suffers from the abuses described here, and I move that we go on a general strike," she shouted. The New York garment uprising that followed sparked similar strikes in Philadelphia, Cleveland, Chicago, Iowa, and Kalamazoo, Michigan, resulting in an unprecedented 40% of women garment workers organized into unions by 1919.

After the 1909 strike, Lemlich was blacklisted from the garment trades. For a few years she channeled her considerable energies into suffrage activism, helping to found and sustain the Wage Earner's League for Woman Suffrage. Here again, Lemlich's uncompromising and fiery nature got her in trouble, this time with the historian Mary Beard, who controlled funds earmarked by more affluent suffragists to pay a working-class suffrage organizer. Beard fired Lemlich in 1912 for refusing to moderate her radical politics to suit the vision of cross-class sisterhood espoused by middle-class women reformers.

Retiring briefly into the role of wife and mother, Lemlich married the printer's union activist Joe Shavelson in 1913 and moved to the Brooklyn immigrant neighborhood of Brownsville, where she gave birth to three children: Irving, Martha, and Rita. Almost immediately, Clara Shavelson began organizing

wives and mothers around the primary issues affecting their workplace—the cost of food and housing. She organized kosher meat boycotts in 1917 to protest price increases in staple foods. After World War I, she led a rent strike movement that swept New York's immigrant neighborhoods, when a postwar housing shortage dramatically raised the cost of housing and inflation threatened the hard-won working-class standard of living.

In 1926, Shavelson joined the Communist Party USA and immediately began pushing its leaders to organize not only on the shop floor but in the sphere of working-class housewives—neighborhood markets, parks, and kitchens. That same year, Lemlich founded the United Council of Working Class Housewives (UCWCH). Like a women's union auxiliary, the UCWCH provided aid to striking workers by raising funds, opening community kitchens, and establishing collective child-care arrangements so that women workers could walk the picket lines.

The limits of such work quickly became clear, and in 1929, Shavelson and her neighbor Rose Nelson organized the United Council of Working-Class Women (UCWW) to organize around women's unpaid labor in the home. Shavelson and Nelson insisted that consumption was inextricably linked to production, making the working-class housewife as important a part of the class struggle as were her wage-earning husband, sons, and daughters. Through the UCWW, Shavelson led rent strikes; anti-eviction demonstrations; meat, bread, and milk boycotts; sit-ins and marches on Washington calling for controls on the costs of housing and staple foods, and the construction of more public housing and of more public schools. Over the next few years, she built a national working-class housewives movement. The UCWW changed its name to the Progressive Women's Councils and forged coalitions with a wide range of progressive women's groups, mothers' leagues, neighborhood groups, and union auxiliaries to protest "the high cost of living." In 1935, Shavelson and Nelson led a nationwide meat boycott that shut down 4,500 butcher shops in New York City alone. Though the strike began in Jewish and African-American neighborhoods in New York, it spread to Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Seattle, soon involving women of many racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. The 1930s housewives' coalition alleviated the worst effects of the Depression in many working-class communities by bringing down food prices and rent and utility costs; preventing evictions; and spurring the construction of more public schools, housing, and parks.

After World War II, housewife organizers conducted two more nationwide meat boycotts, and led

annual marches on Washington to lobby elected officials on matters of concern to working-class housewives. Through her decades of community organizing, Shavelson and the housewives' organizations she organized and spurred to action convinced many municipalities to pass rent-control laws. The housewives' movement increased support in Congress for federally funded public housing. It also paved the way for the modern tenants' and consumer movements. Finally, Shavelson and the housewife activists she inspired brought gender politics into union and working-class homes, illuminating previously hidden power relations between husbands and wives, parents and children. Long before the 1960s women's movement, Shavelson knew and made sure that other working-class activists understood that the personal was deeply political.

Shavelson returned to the garment shop floor in 1944, when her husband Joe became too ill to continue working. She quickly became active in a range of union causes, serving on the American Committee to Survey Trade Union Conditions in Europe. As an organizer for the American League Against War and Fascism, she spoke regularly against nuclear weapons and the intensifying arms race. Her passport was revoked after a visit to the Soviet Union in 1949. In 1951, the year her husband, Joe, died, Shavelson was subpoenaed to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Her husband had been under investigation before his death. Her son remained the subject of FBI surveillance for the next two decades. Government harassment did not silence Shavelson, however. Shavelson maintained a vigil in front of the Foley Square Courthouse and later in Washington, DC to protest the arrest, trial, and execution of famed "atom spies" Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. She also actively protested the U.S. role in the 1954 coup in Guatemala that overthrew democratically elected President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman. Her daughter Martha recalls Shavelson's courage in the face of government harassment during the 1950s. "Others burned books from their own shelves," Martha remembers. "Not Clara." She grew more stubborn and more certain. In 1954, when Shavelson retired from the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), the unrepentant radical was denied a pension on a technicality. After a long battle, she was awarded two honorary stipends by the ILGWU president, David Dubinsky, but she never did receive the pension she had earned from the union she helped to found—and which hailed her as a pioneer on every major anniversary.

Nine years after the death of her husband, Shavelson fell in love again and married an old labor movement acquaintance named Abraham Goldman.

She lived with him until his death in 1967. At age 81, beginning to suffer from Alzheimer's, Shavelson moved into the Jewish Home for the Aged in Los Angeles. While the home was located in Boyle Heights, Shavelson enjoyed a wide circle of friends among the area's Jewish radical community. When the home moved into the San Fernando Valley, she was cut off from her accustomed political and ethnic atmosphere and began to withdraw into herself. Still, Shavelson remained feisty into her 90s, advising and helping to organize the home's orderlies into a union. She also shamed the home's administrators into honoring the United Farm Workers' boycott of nonunion grapes and lettuce by reminding them how many of the home's residents were former union activists themselves. Even if they no longer understood, she insisted, they would be very upset to know they were eating "scab" grapes and lettuce. Shavelson died on July 12, 1982, at the age of 96.

Clara Shavelson was once described by her friend and political collaborator Rose Nelson as a "spark plug" who set off conflagrations wherever she was. Sparks and spark plugs are fitting metaphors for the life of this explosive woman revolutionary.

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See also **International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995); Jews; Women's Trade Union League**

LEWIS, JOHN L. (1880–1969) Founder, Congress of Industrial Organizations

John Llewelyn Lewis served as the president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) for four decades and was a founder and first president of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), from its origins in 1935 until 1940. During his tenure as a labor leader, he earned a contradictory reputation, both as an autocrat who repressed those who

challenged his authority in the UMWA and, later, as the militant voice for America's industrial working class during the massive CIO organizing drives of the New Deal era. Always controversial, Lewis later broke ranks with the CIO, became a strong opponent of President Franklin Roosevelt, and led coal miners during a series of national walkouts during World War II. Following the war, Lewis negotiated a groundbreaking pension and health-care system for union coal miners, but faded into obscurity as the coal industry and his union went into steep decline.

Early Career

Lewis, the son of Welsh immigrants, was born in 1880 in Iowa. While much of Lewis's early life remains sketchy, his family moved frequently, leaving the coalfields on at least one occasion. By the late 1890s, Lewis had followed his father underground, and he became the secretary of his local union in 1901. Lewis, however, had other ambitions. He managed the local opera house and performed in several productions. He ventured west from 1901 to 1905, where exactly and what he did remain a mystery. Lewis returned to Iowa and resumed work in the mines. He also ran unsuccessfully for local political office and failed in his efforts to establish a grain and feed business. Lewis married Myrta Edith Bell in 1907 and relocated with his extended family to the coal-mining town of Panama, Illinois.

Lewis soon rose to prominence in the UMWA in Illinois, where he caught the eye of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) president Samuel Gompers, who appointed him to various organizing posts and helped launch his career as a labor leader. Lewis continued his involvement in internal UMWA politics, however, and he remained a close ally of the then-president John P. White, who appointed him "international statistician" in 1917. Lewis soon became business manager of the *United Mine Workers Journal* and then vice president of the union after White resigned to take a post in the Wilson administration. Lewis quickly edged out the president, Frank Hayes, and became temporary head of the UMWA in 1919. The following year, Lewis won a bitter election to become the international president of the miners' union, a position he would hold until 1960.

Lewis spent his first decade as the president of the UMWA, consolidating his control over the union by eliminating his political rivals. Building on his victory in the UMWA, Lewis challenged Gompers for president of the AFL in 1921, presenting himself as a radical and more militant alternative. But Lewis was

soundly defeated at the AFL's national convention when opponents from within the UMWA openly opposed him. Lewis later had one of his UMWA lieutenants, William Green, named the AFL president after Gompers died in 1924. Lewis spent the rest of the decade running those who had opposed him in the 1921 election out of the miners' union, shrewdly pitting his more opportunistic opponents, like the Kansas militant Alex Howat and the Illinois leader Frank Farrington, against each other, isolating them, and using their own mistakes to eliminate them as political threats. Most of them were eventually expelled from the UMWA.

With his more principled opponents, like the Pennsylvania socialist John Brophy, Lewis often resorted to red-baiting to marginalize them within the UMWA. When that failed, he employed repressive tactics against his opponents. While Lewis became the best-known labor Republican in the 1920s, many of his specific political beliefs remained vague and ill-defined, perhaps because he had to contend with a substantial leftist challenge within his own union during his first decade as president. Brophy and many other UMWA activists supported mild efforts to nationalize the nation's coal industry, and the union had endorsed such proposals at some of its conventions. Lewis, a shrewd political operative, used their politics against them. He appointed Brophy and other leftists to a Nationalization Research Committee to study the issue. He then worked to undermine and demonize the committee, portraying the committee as the tool of outside liberal and socialistic interests bent on controlling the UMWA. When Brophy ran against Lewis for UMWA president in 1926, he faced the full wrath of the UMWA president's well-oiled political machine. Lewis closed the pages of the union's journal to Brophy, and then portrayed the District 2 president as a communist and socialist stooge. Lewis, in full control of the UMWA's electoral system, soundly defeated Brophy in the election. Like Lewis's less principled opponents, Brophy also found himself expelled from the UMWA.

Though Lewis emerged from the 1920s in full control of the UMWA, the union was just a shell of its former self. Throughout the 1920s, the coal operators mounted a concerted campaign to roll back union gains while nonunion companies continued to expand. The operators succeeded in banishing the UMWA from most of the southern and outlying districts in the years after World War I. The union's "Jacksonville Agreement," negotiated with federal help in 1924, sought to preserve wages and working conditions with large operators in the northern coalfields. The agreement proved unenforceable, and the companies that had signed it openly violated it. Without

federal support, UMWA membership declined from 400,000 to under 80,000 at the end of the 1920s, as the onset of the Great Depression ravaged the nation's coalfields. The economic crisis produced a final round of dissent, centered in Illinois, the only viable region left in the UMWA by the late 1920s. Heavily divided, the dissidents, who called themselves the "True" UMWA, met the same fate as those who had earlier tried to oust Lewis. They were red-baited and denounced as "dual unionists," and their attempt to wrest control of the UMWA from Lewis failed miserably. Lewis remained atop the union in the early 1930s, but the UMWA lay in tatters.

The CIO Era

At this low point, the miners and their president stirred to action, and they transformed the labor movement in the United States in the process. Though Lewis, a Republican, had endorsed Herbert Hoover for president in 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt and his New Deal helped bring the UMWA back. Encouraged by Roosevelt's programs, particularly section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act, miners flocked to the UMWA in 1933 and 1934, and the union and its president returned to national prominence. The UMWA controlled nearly 90% of the country's production in 1934, once again emerging as a powerful force in the nation. Lewis, meanwhile, reached out to his former opponents on the left, including the talented Brophy. He restored their union membership and drew on their organizing skill to expand UMWA influence. The UMWA president became increasingly disillusioned by the lackluster efforts on the part of the AFL, then headed by his old ally William Green, to organize workers in the automobile, rubber, and steel industries. Poor tactics by the craft union-dominated AFL had left these workers unorganized and disillusioned during the early years of the New Deal. The UMWA, which functioned on an industrial basis, had thrived with its aggressive organizing programs.

Events transformed Lewis into the most important voice for the millions of unorganized workers in the United States, and he embarked upon the most dramatic and successful phase of his long career in the labor movement. In his criticisms of the AFL, Lewis found important allies in Sidney Hillman, the president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), and David Dubinsky, the head of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). Together with other industrial union advocates, they began to push for reform

within the AFL, urging the organization to embrace the opportunities the activist federal government presented. Their efforts to encourage more aggressive organizing in heavy industries failed, and by the mid-1930s they were ready to branch off from the AFL. After a dramatic confrontation between Lewis and the carpenters' union president, William Hutcherson, during the AFL convention in 1935—Lewis punched him in the face after the two men quarreled—Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky, and other industrial union supporters created the Committee for Industrial Organization. Though the industrial unions essentially functioned independently of the AFL, they would remain within the umbrella organization until 1938, when the Congress of Industrial Organizations officially separated itself from its old parent. Dubinsky and the ILGWU, however, would remain in the AFL.

Lewis dominated the CIO in its early years, drawing on the UMWA's treasury to finance the organization's activities and staffing it with his miners' union allies. Brophy became the CIO's director, and Adolph Germer, a former miner who also had opposed Lewis, was named field representative. Even Powers Hapgood, a UMWA militant who had opposed Lewis and suffered beatings at the hands of his thugs, was brought into the CIO fold. Along with Lewis, these organizers demonstrated a stunning amount of skill that led to early organizing victories. In the winter of 1936, Lewis and the CIO staff encouraged the militance demonstrated by rubber workers at Goodyear's operations in Akron, Ohio. Thousands of workers idled the company's operations through March, when the CIO reached a settlement with management that resulted in modest changes. Most important, however, the workers and their union, the United Rubber Workers (URW), had survived.

Later, in December, workers at Fisher Body plants in Flint, Michigan, owned by auto giant General Motors (GM), shut off their machinery, forced company guards and foremen out of the shops, and took control of the plant, initiating a major sit-down strike. They refused to leave until the company agreed to recognize their union, the United Automobile Workers (UAW). Lewis initiated a complex series of negotiations that involved the company, the federal government, and state officials. The workers, boldly defying the company's efforts to evict them, remained inside the plant for six weeks, providing Lewis and the CIO with the support they needed to force an agreement with GM. Lewis, with the workers flocking to the CIO banner, refused to back down from his demand for union recognition through the winter months of 1937. Finally, under pressure from Lewis

and federal officials, General Motors agreed to recognize the UAW in February. It was perhaps Lewis's greatest moment as a labor leader, and he watched as other major automakers began to sign agreements with the union in the months that followed. CIO membership swelled.

Lewis and the CIO enjoyed less success in their attempts to organize the steel industry, a key sector of the economy, with close ties to the coal industry. The Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) was formed in June 1936, after the AFL's attempts to organize the steel industry faltered. The CIO put 200 organizers into the campaign, and Lewis installed his trusted UMWA ally Philip Murray as the president of SWOC, but the efforts made only limited headway. The CIO's victory at General Motors, however, convinced management at United States Steel, the industry's leader, to compromise. Lewis and the U.S. Steel head, Myron Taylor, began a series of negotiations in January 1937, after they famously met at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC. Near the end of February, the two leaders reached a deal that granted a 5% wage increase, a 40-hour week, overtime, a grievance procedure, and, most important, recognition of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). Lewis and the CIO ran into stronger opposition with the smaller "Little Steel" companies that made up the rest of the industry, however. The organizing drive in the spring of 1937 was met with violence, most prominently in Chicago, where 10 strikers were killed and dozens wounded in a brutal attack on Memorial Day. The drive to organize these companies had faltered by the middle of July.

The industrial organizing tactics pushed by Lewis and the CIO signaled a major shift in the manner in which labor unions sought to bring workers into the movement. This was particularly true with regard to African-American workers, who had largely been ignored by AFL unions, many of which practiced segregation or refused to allow black workers to belong to their organizations at all. By contrast, Lewis and his supporters in the CIO proved among the strongest advocates for the rights of African-Americans in the mainstream labor movement. When the UMWA moved into the southern coalfields in the 1930s, it reached out to black coal miners, welcoming them into the same local unions as white miners without hesitation. The UMWA did conform to many of the requirements of Jim Crow—in particular, African-Americans were relegated to secondary status in terms of leadership positions in the union, and many locals initially adhered to segregated seating arrangements—but in other ways, Lewis and the miners issued strong challenges to southern norms.

Lewis sought to equalize wage rates among black and white miners, and African-Americans participated in union grievance committees and were brought on as paid staff members.

The efforts at reform reached outside the workplace as well. Lewis and other UMWA officials denounced the disfranchisement of African-Americans in the South. Lewis addressed both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Negro Congress conventions in 1940, where he spoke strongly in favor of black rights. Brophy, in a 1938 address to the National Negro Conference, denounced lynching and stressed the interracial organizing efforts of the CIO. The UMWA secretary-treasurer, Thomas Kennedy, a close Lewis ally, sharply criticized racial discrimination in the labor movement at the same convention. These strong words resonated with African-Americans, who embraced the cause of industrial unionism and provided the foundation on which the movement rested in most parts of the South.

Going It Alone

At the height of the CIO's influence, however, Lewis did an about-face, and he began to clash openly with many of his former allies. His actions grew increasingly secretive and arbitrary in the late 1930s. He removed CIO staffers like Brophy and replaced them with family members or allies he could control. Tensions within the CIO grew between Lewis and Hillman, particularly after the ACWA president took a job in the Roosevelt administration. Hillman agreed with Roosevelt's foreign policy direction, which increasingly moved the United States toward intervention in World War II. Lewis, an isolationist, was staunchly opposed to the administration on this issue. Hillman also believed that co-operation between labor and government was positive, while Lewis worried that the increasing federal presence, and the defense industry buildup in particular, was a threat to the labor movement. Increasingly, Lewis began to issue a series of sharp attacks against Hillman for his support of administration policies.

Tensions came to a head in the fall of 1940. Lewis reverted to his Republican sentiments and endorsed Wendell Willkie for president, sharply denouncing Roosevelt and vowing to resign as CIO president if workers did not follow him into the GOP. While the CIO made no formal endorsement, most officials in the organization and its membership supported Roosevelt in the election. Lewis resigned soon after,

handing over the CIO presidency to his former UMWA lieutenant, SWOC head Philip Murray.

As the CIO president, Murray attempted to move the organization away from UMWA domination. Lewis responded with a series of harsh attacks on Murray, and he attempted to put the CIO president through a series of humiliating punishments for his independence. Lewis publicly advanced the idea that the CIO and AFL should re-unite, with both Murray and the AFL president Green retiring. He then billed the CIO for \$1.6 million that the UMWA had loaned the organization during its early days. When Murray suggested that Lewis was spreading chaos in the CIO, the UMWA president threatened to charge him with slander and had Murray's membership in the miners' union revoked. The UMWA formally left the CIO in 1942, closing the door on the most remarkable phase of Lewis's career.

The UMWA would mostly pursue an independent path in the years that followed. It briefly re-united with the AFL after World War II, but left again in 1947, after Lewis refused to comply with provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. Increasingly, the UMWA and its president became isolated from the currents of the mainstream labor movement. Lewis, in fact, would finish his career in relative obscurity.

Lewis first led the miners in a series of walkouts during World War II, defying both the federal government and public opinion. The war caused demand for coal to grow, and it took a toll on the miners as they struggled to meet production demands. Deaths in the mines increased, outpacing combat casualties during the first year of the war. As inflation surged, meanwhile, pay remained stagnant, due in part to the federal government's "Little Steel Formula," which attempted to control wartime inflation by limiting increases in wages and benefits. Lewis alternately led the miners and followed their lead in a series of walkouts during 1943 that idled the nation's coalfields. Eventually, the federal government intervened, seizing the coal mines and raising wages under a plan to pay workers for the time they traveled to and from the coal face (called "portal to portal" pay). When the government returned the mines to private hands, however, the strikes resumed. Eventually, the miners won a wage increase with the help of the Roosevelt administration, though not as much as they had initially hoped for. Meanwhile, the UMWA and Lewis became national pariahs. Congress passed the Smith-Connally Act in the midst of the UMWA's strikes. This measure made it a crime to encourage workers to go on strike during the war and required notices of the intent to strike, secret ballots on the issue, and a 30-day "cooling off" period.

The Final Battle

Beginning in 1945, Lewis began the last major initiative in his career as a labor leader when he pushed for the creation of a health and pension system for UMWA members that would be financed by a royalty on every ton of coal produced by union miners. In the spring of 1946, after another round of walkouts, the federal government imposed a settlement on the operators that included a jointly administered Welfare and Retirement Fund for injured, sick, and retired miners and their families. But it would take years of fighting and negotiations before the coal operators would actually agree to the proposal. In the meantime, they fought Lewis and the UMWA every step of the way. The opposition of the operators provoked a series of strikes throughout the remainder of the 1940s, culminating with the 1949–1950 national walkout, which saw the permanent establishment of the system.

After the 1949–1950 strike, Lewis established dominance over the board that oversaw the Fund when he engineered the nomination of his close ally, Josephine Roche, as a “neutral trustee” in 1950. Though Lewis realized his dream of a health and pension system for coal-mining families, the industry’s persistent economic problems led to rounds of cutbacks in the 1950s and 1960s. A series of hospitals constructed by the Fund that served isolated communities in Appalachia had to be sold or closed to keep the system solvent. Since the Fund was bankrolled by production, the UMWA encouraged mechanization, which cost miners jobs, and discouraged walkouts, including those over safety issues. Meanwhile, non-union production began to rise in the 1950s and 1960s, at the same time that the coal industry entered a deep recession. Miners responded with a series of violent organizing drives, particularly in parts of Tennessee and Kentucky, where the coal-purchasing policies of the Tennessee Valley Authority had encouraged the creation of small, nonunion operations. Despite these occasional violent episodes, Lewis became known more for his co-operation with the industry than for his confrontation with it during the 1950s. He grew increasingly close to Cyrus Eaton, a financier based in Cleveland, Ohio, and George Love of Consolidation Coal Company, the industry leader.

When Lewis finally retired in January 1960, both the Fund and his union were on shaky ground. The UMWA president spent his last years continuing to oversee the Fund, but overall, he faded into obscurity. The union, meanwhile, suffered under the leaders that followed Lewis. Thomas Kennedy succeeded him as president, but died three years later. W. A. “Tony”

Boyle became the UMWA president in 1963, but he lacked Lewis’s charisma and his talent for managing the union. Though Lewis had brought Boyle out of the union’s obscure Montana district, the new UMWA president had learned little from his mentor, and Lewis eventually repudiated him in private. When Joseph A. “Jock” Yablonski, a former Lewis loyalist, challenged Boyle for the UMWA presidency in 1969, many hoped the former president would endorse the insurgency. Though Lewis indicated his support, he died on June 11, 1969, before a formal meeting with Yablonski could take place. Yablonski lost the flawed election to Boyle—the UMWA president’s political machine made sure the results were favorable—and assassins later murdered the insurgent, his wife, and daughter. Boyle and several other UMWA officials eventually were convicted of arranging the killings. Many speculated whether the system within the UMWA that Lewis had built over the preceding decades had created the atmosphere that allowed such brutality and corruption to flourish.

Ultimately, John L. Lewis left a mixed legacy. In his early career as a labor leader, Lewis suppressed rank-and-file activism in the UMWA and solidified dictatorial control over the organization. Then, in the wake of the economic collapse of the Great Depression, Lewis emerged as a militant unionist and eloquent spokesman for the unorganized, creating the CIO and transforming the American labor movement in the process. In the midst of this effort, he suddenly reversed course, turning on his union and political allies and taking the miners down an independent path that ultimately left them on the margins of the American labor movement. In his final years, Lewis forced the coal operators to agree to a groundbreaking health and pension system for miners. But this, too, proved an elusive dream, as cutbacks and financial problems, the product of the problematic economics of the coal industry, continually plagued the program.

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See also Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; American Federation of Labor; Boyle, W. A. (Tony); Brophy, John; Congress of Industrial Organizations; Dubinsky, David; Gompers Samuel; Hapgood, Powers; Hillman, Sidney; United Mine Workers of America; United Rubber Workers of America; United Steelworkers of America

LIBERAL PARTY

Formed in 1944 after a clash with American Labor Party (ALP) leadership, the Liberal Party of New York State sought to continue the ALP formula of supporting President Roosevelt's re-election while endorsing liberal Democrats or Republicans (typically the Liberal Party endorsed Democrats) and occasionally fielding its own candidates. Although the Liberal Party consisted of a small membership compared with the major parties, Democrats and Republicans recognized the Liberal's Party's significance in deciding close elections. Although the ALP counted more registered voters than the burgeoning Liberal Party, the ALP grew steadily isolated during the late 1940s and early 1950s from the mainstream labor movement as communist influence within it increased. When the ALP ceased to exist by 1956, the Liberal Party became the sole labor party in the state and grew to increase its influence over the next three decades.

The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union president, David Dubinsky, and the United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers' International Union vice president, Alex Rose, led many labor leaders and rank-and-file members out of the ALP due to the increasing communist influence within the party. In many respects, the Liberal Party was a non-communist replica of the ALP, led by trade unionists but also including liberal thinkers and activists such as the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. Therefore, it competed for many of the same voters as the ALP during its early years, typically trailing behind in members. The Liberal Party's first attempt to make a splash in New York politics occurred in its incipient year when Dubinsky and Rose wanted the party to endorse the former Republican presidential candidate Wendell Willkie for mayor of New York City. They presumed that Willkie would be endorsed by the

New York Republican Party, making him a fusion candidate with support from the Republican and Liberal Parties. However, Willkie died of a heart attack shortly before the campaign commenced. Nonetheless, the Liberal Party persevered, supporting a number of liberal Democrats as well as liberal Republicans such as Jacob Javits, beginning with his first election to Congress in 1946. Over the next few years, however, the party worked diligently to develop a base and came to play a major role in the 1948 presidential election.

In early 1948, Liberal Party leaders recognized Truman's need to win New York, and they believed he would consider changes in his policies if those alterations would win him the state. New York State's 47 electoral votes offered a potentially decisive number of votes in a close election, and Truman appeared to be heading into a tight finish with the Republican nominee, Thomas Dewey. In 1948, an extraordinary division within the Democratic Party occurred, threatening to cost Truman crucial votes and tip the election to Dewey. To the political left, Henry Wallace of the Progressive Party threatened to carry off liberal votes. On the political right, Strom Thurmond endangered Truman's ability to win traditionally Democratic votes in the South. Winning New York offered a way to compensate for these likely lost votes.

Ostensibly, this led Truman to seek backing from Liberal Party voters. New York offered any presidential candidate the greatest number of electoral votes in the country. During the 1944 and 1948 presidential campaigns, the Republicans nominated Dewey, the governor of New York, specifically to win his own state. In the previous 70 years, only Woodrow Wilson had won the presidency without winning New York. With this in mind, Truman recognized the importance of securing as many New Yorkers' votes as possible.

Truman needed the votes of New York trade unionists and liberals to carry the state. He wanted the help of a political apparatus capable of publicizing his message among these union members and liberals. New York Democratic leaders did not have the same level of influence with this crucial voting bloc and more important, they believed Truman had no chance to win New York. The Liberal Party offered an organization with prominent labor leadership and an ability to galvanize labor and liberal voters through a party structure. It maintained a prominent position within the state electorate, its leadership enjoyed wide access to the local media, and its organizational and financial resources promised a candidate mass exposure to New York voters.

LIBERAL PARTY

By September 1948, the Liberal Party, satisfied with Truman's stances on issues important to it, including labor, housing, foreign policy, and civil rights, put its weight behind his candidacy. While the New York Democratic Party leadership distanced itself from Truman and focused on assisting local candidates, the Liberal Party provided Truman his most organized support system in the state. This was most evident when the Liberal Party sponsored a rally for Truman at Madison Square Garden. Typically, a presidential candidate's own party sponsored such an event, but only the Liberal Party offered Truman this promotional event in New York.

Ultimately, Truman lost New York in a close finish, but the Liberal Party had established itself as a player in national and state politics. With the ALP's demise and eventual extinction in 1956, the Liberal Party became the most important third party in New York State politics. In 1960, the party once again played a crucial role in a presidential campaign. The Democratic candidate, John F. Kennedy, sought support from the Liberal Party, and he gained crucial votes he needed to secure New York with much assistance from Liberal Party supporters. In 1965, the Liberal Party endorsed liberal Republican John Lindsay for New York City mayor. Again, the party put a candidate over the top, and Lindsay won the mayoralty. By 1969, New York City appeared on a downturn, and Lindsay lost the Republican primary for mayor. The Liberal Party offered Lindsay the opportunity to run as the Liberal Party candidate, and he won re-election with the backing of his new party.

With Dubinsky and Rose's deaths during the 1970s, the Liberal Party lost momentum. It drifted through much of the 1980s and 1990s. The party's support of Rudolph Giuliani in his three elections for mayor angered many of its constituents, leading to the formation of a rival party, the Working Families Party. By 2002, the Liberal Party failed to get the required 50,000 votes to qualify for the New York State ballot. This marked the first time that the Liberal Party failed to make the state's ballot since the party's inception in 1944. Accordingly, the party shut down its headquarters in late 2002 and ceased its existence in January 2003.

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See also **American Labor Party; Dubinsky, David**

LIPPARD, GEORGE (1822–1854)

Writer

George Lippard contributed to the imagination of the nineteenth-century American labor movement, through his journalism, his fiction, and his invention of rich and ritualistic culture of the American labor secret society, the Brotherhood of the Union. A romantic and eccentric figure, so self-denying that he could be seen walking around Philadelphia in clothes tied together with twine, he balanced dark thoughts about machinery enslaving the working man against his optimism that "The Continent of America is the Palestine of Redeemed Labor."

Early on, George Lippard had social and educational advantages over his eventual working-class audience. Born into a prosperous German farming family near Yellow Springs, Pennsylvania, in 1822, he was the son of a schoolteacher, Daniel Lippard, and his wife, Jemima. Due to a series of deaths in the family, George was raised by maternal aunts and educated with an eye toward first the ministry, and then the law. By 1840, he was beginning to write his first novel and, bored with the law, joined the Philadelphia newspaper *The Spirit of the Times*, covering the police beat.

Over the next decade, Lippard worked as both a fiction writer and a journalist, serving as chief editor of the *Citizen Soldier* and eventually founding his own newspaper, *The Quaker City*, in 1848. As a journalist, George Lippard covered labor issues, writing floridly about the dehumanizing power of machinery. As an author of sensationalist novels that first appeared in serialized form in "story papers," Lippard specialized in a form of the Gothic that drew on his experiences as a crime reporter, mixing pornographic levels of violence with patriotic narratives. His work reveals a strong sense of place, evoking the sights of Pennsylvania—from the woods of his boyhood to the teeming streets of Philadelphia—in his narratives. Unlike his contemporary and friend Edgar Allan Poe, Lippard created fictional worlds predicated on the idea that cities had secret lives and that working people were dogged by great, corrupt conspiracies. Although panned by contemporary critics, his novels hit a nerve and were best sellers with an avid working-class readership.

Lippard's concern for the "lower ten thousand" had appeared before his official involvement with the labor movement. In 1848, he found an outlet for his social reformism when he attended one of the annual Industrial Congresses then being held in cities up and down the East Coast. Like many labor reformers of his day, Lippard both feared and thought it possible to avoid the importation of European class differences. In a milieu in which Fourierism, land reform, the ten-hour day, and various other prescriptions swirled, Lippard proposed a harmony of interests between employer and employee. This would be achieved through the fraternity of a secret society, the Brotherhood of the Union. Founded September 1, 1849, the Brotherhood of the Union eventually had "circles" or locals in 20 states. According to Lippard's own statement of purpose for the organization, it took for its basis "the principle of Brotherly Love in the Gospel of Nazareth, and the affirmation of the Right of Man to life, liberty, land and home in the Declaration of Independence." This combination of patriotism and Christianity was intended to have the widest possible appeal to native-born artisans. Lippard also endorsed the popular movement, led by the National Reform Association, to secure a homestead for every working man—but by 1852, he had become convinced that the Industrial Congresses were nothing but a sham and that his Brotherhood was the only route to the regeneration of mankind.

Given the high profile of the secretive Masons in antebellum politics, Lippard emulated that group by using ritual and theatrics to bind the members of his union together. Initiates in the Brotherhood of the Union could buy, or have their wives sew, regalia for their meetings according to patterns that Lippard created. The speeches and initiation ceremonies that characterized the order were all written by Lippard himself. Dressed in their robes, members of the Brotherhood could eventually aspire to be leaders, the leadership positions having been named after great American patriots: not only the expected George Washington, but also Robert Fulton, who inaugurated the age of steam travel on the waterways, and Stephen Girard, the Philadelphia philanthropist who endowed a secondary school for the orphaned sons of industrious mechanics. Lippard himself was repeatedly elected to three-year terms as Supreme Washington of the Brotherhood of the Union—the highest possible leadership position—until his death.

The success that Lippard enjoyed as a journalist, popular author, and labor reformer was not mirrored in his home life. He had married Rose Newman in 1847 and fathered a son and a daughter, but between 1849 and 1851 both children died in infancy, and his adored young wife succumbed to tuberculosis. The

Brotherhood of the Union was the only bright star in his firmament, and he continued to promote it, traveling around the country giving speeches, and keeping in contact with local leaders by letter. Lippard died—reportedly of "a heavy cold"—at the age of 32, on February 9, 1854. He left behind not only his corpus of writings, but also an enduring legacy of labor activism in Philadelphia. The Brotherhood of the Union helped to unify labor reformers through some lean years of unionism and to provide a model for the ritual, the reformism, and some of the rhetoric of interclass harmony of the Knights of Labor. In a testament to the popularity of Lippard's blending of working-class patriotism and religiosity, the Brotherhood of the Union persisted as an organization into the twentieth century, describing itself as a friendly society based on the teachings of the Gospel of Nazareth and the Declaration of Independence.

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LIVING WAGE

The concept of the "living wage" has been central in the ideology of organized (and unorganized) labor since the 1870s. Generally defined by its working-class promoters as a wage sufficient to allow workers and their families to live in comfort, the living wage linked earning levels with contemporary standards of appropriate consumption. The British labor radical Hugh Lloyd Jones popularized the term in 1874, which was first used in the late 1860s, in a series of articles in *The Beehive*. Across the Atlantic, at roughly the same time, the Boston labor leader Ira Steward used the phrase "living wage" several times in his unpublished manuscript, "The Political Economy of Eight Hours," which was written between 1872 and his death in 1883. After the 1877 national railroad strike, "living wage" became a key word in American labor rhetoric. It remains so today. The key reason

for the popularity of the phrase “living wage” is that it provided a means for American workers to make the system of wage labor, which was becoming dominant in late nineteenth-century America, consistent with republic ideals of free labor. According to labor advocates, living wages could provide workers with the ability to maintain their position as key citizens of the American republic, a position previously ensured only by independent proprietorship.

For most of the nineteenth century, American workers decried wage labor. They claimed that wage labor denied workers the “full fruits” of their labor and reduced the proud American citizen-worker to a “wage slave,” a term of derision popularized in the Jacksonian era as the incipient crisis of wage labor led to the rise of the organized labor movement. Free workers did not want to be identified with lifelong “hirelings,” whom they condemned as emblematic of slavery. The very word “wages,” one worker in the 1850s declared, was “odious.” Wage work was a form of compulsion, the opposite of the free labor system that they valued. In a society that, until 1865, countenanced chattel slavery, these were serious charges.

In the decades after the Civil War, however, a striking transformation began, as many workers for the first time pondered the possibilities of wage labor. In coming to accept the necessity of wages, workers also redefined wage earning to make it consistent with their vision of a just world. They began to interpret wages not as slavery but as a potential means of escape from slavery. George Gunton, a pamphleteer for the American Federation of Labor (AFL), declared, “Wages are not a badge of slavery but a necessary and continual part of social progress.” While not all labor leaders shared Gunton’s optimism, almost a vast number of them participated in the redefinition of wage labor from slavish to liberating.

The linchpin of this transformation was the demand for a “living wage,” usually defined as remuneration commensurate with a worker’s needs as citizen, breadwinner, and consumer. Most workers closely paired the living wage with the idea of an “American Standard of Living,” a related idea that developed at approximately the same time. Indeed, proponents often defined one in terms of the other, as in John Mitchell’s comment that, “The living wage means the American Standard of Living.” The AFL president, Samuel Gompers, declared in a well-publicized 1898 debate that a living wage should be “sufficient to maintain an average-sized family in a manner consistent with whatever the contemporary local civilization recognizes as indispensable to physical and mental health, or as required by the rational

self-respect of human beings.” Although others put forth very different definitions, most proponents of the living wage shared a new, positive vision of wage labor, one that linked it to an expansive and expanding standard of living.

Living wages, proponents held, should offer to wage earners in the post-Civil War years what independent proprietorship had promised in the antebellum era: the ability to support families, to maintain self-respect, and to have both the means and the leisure to participate in the civic life of the nation. In this worldview, the level of wages became what Gompers called “the barometer which indicates the social, political and industrial status” of a society. Advocates of the living wage described it in explicitly political terms as a “right”—often they used the phrase “inalienable right”—the violation of which made republican citizenship impossible. Living wage advocates merged wage labor with citizenship rather than defining the two as incompatible. Workers “have burned the new words of the living wage into the bill of rights,” Henry Demarest Lloyd announced in a pamphlet published by the American Federation of Labor in 1893, connecting the economic realm of wages to the political realm of citizenship.

Labor was not alone in constructing the living wage discourse. Not all business leaders and politicians accepted the idea of the living wage. Many of its enemies associated the living wage with the rejection of the “natural” economic laws of supply and demand, freedom of contract. But from the start, a large number of reformers, politicians, and business as well as religious leaders joined labor in debating the meaning of the living wage. Pope Leo XII’s 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* advocated that “remuneration must be enough to support the wage earners in reasonable and frugal comfort.” An American priest, John A. Ryan, published *A Living Wage* in 1906, a book that helped shift the living wage discourse away from its working-class roots and toward a broader, societywide issue. Protestant ministers, influenced by the Social Gospel, also described living wages as a social obligation of employers. The idea was closely tied to Progressive Era minimum wage legislation and New Deal economic policy. Many of these middle-class promoters of the living wage endorsed it as a way to minimize working-class protest and to incorporate organized labor into the political system. In 1921, the Anthracite Coal Commission endorsed the living wage as a bulwark against revolution: “all American wage earners have a fundamental economic right to at least a living wage, or an American Standard of Living....Failure to realize this right-breeds revolutionary agitation, and prevents our self-governing Republic from being what it should be.”

Yet in the process of the broad diffusion and acceptance of the living wage, the working-class notion of a consumerist living wage was redefined downward. Many Progressive supporters of the living wage did not have in mind what Ira Steward and Samuel Gompers did when they endorsed a living wage, but rather what they called a “minimum wage,” a bare subsistence amount that fell far short of the consumerist ideals posited by workers. State minimum wage laws, first passed in Massachusetts in 1912, reflected the ideal of subsistence rather than abundance. Many politicians and commentators conflated this minimum wage with the much more robust living wage.

While use of the term in the expansive working-class sense had diminished, a consumerist complex of ideas flourished and became central to New Deal political economy, and indeed through the post-World War II years. The working-class and middle-class visions of the living wage occasionally found common ground in the 1920s, when prominent business leaders and politicians supported the living wage and policy makers began to promote the benefits of working-class consumption. In the next decade, a marriage was sealed; in the consolidation of the New Deal Order, the rival versions of the living wage ideology converged in public policy and political economy to become accepted as economic common sense. In language recalling labor’s consumerist turn, Franklin Roosevelt declared in a Fireside Chat of 1938, “We suffer primarily from a failure of consumer demand because of a lack of buying power.” By the post-World War II years, the living wage had become so integral to the American social contract that some commentators viewed the payment of living wages as a problem solved by the post-New Deal political economy. In these years, labor’s demands for high wages, purchasing power, and an American Standard of Living gained a receptive public reaction. The living wage was a central part of the “social bargain” of the post-World War II decades, in which business leaders and politicians accepted the existence and claims of organized labor in exchange for a reduction in shop-floor militancy.

With the economic turmoil of the 1970s, however, and the rise of global competition in many industries, many businesses once again rejected the ideal of the living wage. The weakening of organized labor in this period meant that the main champion of living wages had lost its bully pulpit. Discarding their faith in the broadening of mass consumption as the key to a modern economy, business leaders and their trade organizations argued that the only way for companies to compete was to keep labor costs to a minimum. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the federal

minimum wage, first set at 25 cents an hour with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and subsequently increased to account for inflation, stagnated in real dollars. In this period, as the “New Deal bargain” crumbled in the midst of neoliberal market forces, the living wage lost its hold on the popular imagination as an essential element of labor relations.

In the 1990s, the living wage idea was reborn, as an alternative to the legal minimum wage, which had dramatically declined in real dollars in the last third of the twentieth century. Advocates of the revived living wage brought back two related arguments of the idea’s originators. They claimed that the payment of living wages would improve, not weaken, local economies, and they argued that living wages were a political and moral necessity. As the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), an activist group that has promoted living wage campaigns, notes on its Web site (www.livingwagecampaign.org/): “The concept behind any living wage campaign is simple: Our limited public dollars should not be subsidizing poverty-wage work. When subsidized employers are allowed to pay their workers less than a living wage, tax payers end up footing a double bill: the initial subsidy and then the food stamps, emergency medical, housing and other social services low wage workers may require to support themselves and their families even minimally. Public dollars should be leveraged for the public good—reserved for those private sector employers who demonstrate a commitment to providing decent, family-supporting jobs in our local communities.”

The living wage campaigns of the 1990s and early 2000s generally sought to pass local ordinances requiring private businesses that benefit from public money to pay their workers a living wage, generally defined as the equivalent to the poverty line for a family of four (currently \$9.06 an hour), though ordinances that have passed range from \$6.25 to \$13.00 an hour, with some newer campaigns pushing for even higher wages. In 1994, Baltimore became the first city to pass a so-called living wage ordinance, raising the minimum wage for city workers and those businesses that did business with the city to several dollars above the legal minimum. By the end of 2004, more than 100 living wage ordinances were on the books in cities and counties across the country. In addition, students at many American universities have demanded living wages for university employees and for those who make the goods that bear their school logos. Furthermore, the living wage idea has been exported to other countries. Campaigns for living wages have been waged in countries ranging from South Africa to Canada. In an era of capital mobility and plentiful cheap labor, advocates have

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even promoted a “global living wage,” as an attempt to ensure that global capital pays livable wages wherever it employs workers.

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LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGNS

In 1994, faith-based, labor, and community activists in Baltimore, Maryland, pressured their city council to adopt a living wage ordinance, a law that required any firm holding a service contract with the city to pay its workers a wage high enough to allow a full-time worker with a family of four to meet the federal poverty line. The campaign was launched for several reasons. First, the federal government had been slow to raise the national minimum wage for the previous two decades, so in real terms its current value had fallen well below its historic peak. In 1994, the federal minimum wage was \$4.25 per hour: 38% below where it should have been if it had kept pace with inflation since 1968. The living wage ordinance was designed to begin raising the minimum wage for at least some workers.

Second, living wage campaigns built on the concept of prevailing wage laws, which set wage standards for government construction contracts. The Davis-Bacon Act, passed in 1932, was created in part to establish government as a model employer. Third, local efforts to revitalize urban centers had not resulted in living wage employment for the bulk of urban residents. In the late 1970s and 1980s, cities like Baltimore pumped millions of public dollars into economic redevelopment projects. Even when these efforts resulted in increased employment, residents found that the jobs tended to be low-wage, service-sector positions without benefits. Concerns shifted from simple job creation to the need for a living wage.

Finally, the living wage campaign built on a historical use of the term. In the late nineteenth century,

most workers in industrializing countries realized that they would not be able to stop the growth of wage labor. They then demanded that they be paid a living wage that would guarantee their subsistence and reduce their exploitation. Early advocates of a living wage for industrial laborers included Catholic priests, trade unionists, and women's movement activists.

Since the Baltimore victory, other coalitions formed around the United States to campaign for living wage ordinances in their cities and counties. As more and more campaigns were successful, the scope of the ordinances expanded. Soon, cities were passing living wage ordinances that applied to not only service contractors, but recipients of economic development assistance, firms operating food and beverage concessions on city-owned property, and direct employees of the city or county. The ordinances were also expanded in terms of content. In addition to mandating a higher hourly wage, new ordinances tended to include automatic indexing (so that the wage would increase each year with the rate of inflation) and a requirement that employers either provide health insurance or pay a higher wage to cover the cost of health insurance. Some ordinances also mandated paid days off and required local hiring from community hiring halls, and included language that assisted unions (such as giving employers with a history of labor law violations lower priority for receiving contracts or subsidies).

Living wage supporters then broadened their efforts in an attempt to cover more workers by launching campaigns to establish citywide minimum wage laws under the living wage banner. For example, in 2002, voters in New Orleans, Louisiana, passed a ballot initiative that would require all employers operating within city limits to pay their employees \$1 more than the federal minimum wage of \$5.15. This measure was eventually overturned by the State Supreme Court, but subsequent efforts are still on the books in several cities. Santa Fe, New Mexico, and San Francisco, California, set citywide minimum wage rates of \$8.50 per hour in 2003, indexed to rise with inflation. The Madison, Wisconsin, City Council also established a citywide minimum wage, starting at \$5.70 per hour in 2005, increasing to \$7.75 plus indexing in 2008.

In the late 1990s, the living wage concept also spread to college campuses. In the most publicized effort, students at Harvard engaged in a three-week sit-in during 2001, occupying an administration building. They had been calling on Harvard University to pay its direct and contracted employees a living wage for several years but met with no success. After their sit-in, the university agreed to convene a task force to

develop solutions. In the end, they agreed to several of the students' demands, including raising contracted workers' wages to the level of unionized direct employee wages.

Opposition and Support

By 1998, based on the popularity of the living wage concept and the rapid spread of campaigns, journalists and academics began to refer to a living wage *movement*. The concept of a living wage has generally received significant public support: for example, polls over the last several decades show that a majority of Americans favor an increase in the minimum wage. Nonetheless, the movement has, at times, faced strong opposition. This has included local and national business associations, most notably the Employment Policies Institute; many city administrators, particularly from economic development departments; and some academics. In the late 1990s, when it became clear that most living wage ordinances were passing at the local level, employer associations worked to pass state-level laws that would pre-empt local living wage ordinances. As of 2004, 12 states have laws that pre-empt various forms of living wage ordinances.

In addition to general public support, the list of living wage advocates includes a variety of community, faith-based, and labor organizations. Most prominent is the community-based ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), which runs a national Living Wage Resource Center. Also very active is the Brennan Center for Justice, at the New York University School of Law, which provides legal and technical support for campaigns around the country. Other groups that have been involved in a number of campaigns include Jobs with Justice, the Industrial Areas Foundation, and local legal services offices. Unions have also been involved in the movement, particularly locals of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE). These unions already represent some of the low-wage workers covered by the ordinances, and have been active in organizing new members through the living wage campaigns. The AFL-CIO endorsed the living wage movement at the national level, and local labor councils have provided support in many cities. Academics such as Robert Pollin from the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst have been very involved in the movement as well.

Relevance of the Movement

Judged as a social movement, the campaigns for a living wage have enjoyed much success. Ten years after the initial ordinance was passed in Baltimore, more than 120 local governments have passed a living wage law. Few campaigns have been defeated. In numerous cities, unions and community organizations have achieved a variety of goals through the living wage movement, such as building new labor-community coalitions and organizing workers into unions.

Judged as policy, the outcomes are less clear. First, critics have noted that ordinances cover only a small proportion of low-wage workers. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that in 2000, approximately 38 million workers were earning wages below the living wage level. Even a generous estimate of the number of workers receiving a raise through a living wage ordinance would suggest the campaigns are only providing living wages for fewer than 5% of these workers.

Second, some living wage advocates have discovered that getting the ordinances implemented can be more difficult than getting the law passed in the first place. Research by Stephanie Luce shows that cities are unlikely to rigorously enforce the laws on their own. However, she finds that living wage advocates who have become involved in implementation have had success in significantly improving monitoring and enforcement. Still, implementation remains an issue in many cities.

Third, debate is ongoing about whether living wage ordinances lead to lower employment. Research by the economists Scott Adams and David Neumark concludes that living wage ordinances do result in a modest reduction of employment, and these authors and others conclude that other policy tools such as the Earned Income Tax Credit are more effective methods to reducing poverty. However, these claims are disputed by economists such as Mark Brenner, Peter Hall, Ken Jacobs, and Michael Reich, who find in their empirical work little evidence of negative outcomes. Rather, they find that employers are able to absorb the costs of the living wage through other means. This includes savings achieved through lower turnover and absenteeism as well as reduced profits. It also includes "cost pass-throughs": in some cases, cities are paying a higher amount for their contracted services in order to ensure that workers are getting a living wage. In other cases, employers are able to raise prices for their goods or services.

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See also **Davis-Bacon Act; Minimum-Wage Laws**

LLOYD, HENRY DEMAREST (1847–1903)

Social Reformer

Henry Demarest Lloyd is not well known today, but during the nineteenth century, he was one of the most influential of American social reformers. His voluminous writings earned him the label of "the first muck-raker," and his screed against Standard Oil, *Wealth against Commonwealth*, has arguably become one of the masterpieces of the American reform tradition. Lloyd also played an important role in most of the critical events of labor turmoil in the United States from the late 1880s until his death in 1903.

Lloyd's relatively genteel background made it difficult to predict his eventual turn to radicalism. Yet, as was so common in the annals of nineteenth-century reform, Lloyd's strenuously Protestant background helped nurture a desire to improve the world. His father, Aaron, was originally a Dutch Reformed pastor, although when Henry was young, Aaron gave up the ministry to work in a customs house and operate a small bookshop. Henry got through Columbia College on a scholarship, and he also graduated from that institution's law school. Soon afterward, he became the public relations agent for the American Free-Trade League.

Decisive to Lloyd's political blossoming was his move to Chicago in 1872 to become the *Chicago*

Tribune's literary editor. Marriage to the wealthy daughter of one of the paper's owners, William Bross, followed the next year. He and Jessie went on to have four children. Lloyd worked his way up the ranks to chief editorial writer for the *Tribune* before resigning in 1885, the result of political conflicts with the newspaper's chief owner, Joseph Medill.

Lloyd had already turned his attention to pressing Gilded Age political matters while at the *Tribune*, but he gained national attention with the 1881 publication of "The Story of a Great Monopoly" in *Atlantic Monthly*. Here Lloyd explored the corrupt connection between railroads and corporations, particularly the ties between the Pennsylvania Railroad and Standard Oil.

The next 20 years of Lloyd's life would witness an astounding literary output as well as the cementing of his position as one of the age's most important allies of the labor movement. Always prone toward mental fragility, Lloyd suffered a nervous breakdown while traveling in Europe after leaving the *Tribune*. Lloyd's studies during his recovery pushed him far enough to the left that, upon his recuperation, he became one of the primary advocates for clemency for the Haymarket anarchists. This in turn led to his disinheritance from his father-in-law, but Lloyd's many real estate investments allowed him to continue his career as an agitator based out of two elegant homes in Winnetka, Illinois (his main residence), and Sakonnet Point, Rhode Island (his summer abode).

Lloyd's pre-eminent standing in the labor movement came with the publication in 1888 of his "The New Conscience; or, The Religion of Labor" in the *North American Review*. Standing firm against social Darwinism, Lloyd instead foresaw the coming of the co-operative commonwealth. Lloyd, however, never ascended to a purely philosophical plane. The following year, for example, Lloyd learned of the very concrete situation of coal miners in Spring Valley, Illinois, who had been locked out by a company with connections to the rapacious financier Jay Gould. Using to great advantage his background in public relations, Lloyd brilliantly exposed the plight of the miners in his 1890 *A Strike of Millionaires*.

The exploitation of labor was always one of Lloyd's main reasons to indict the large corporations inhabiting the new economic landscape of the Gilded Age. Yet one of Lloyd's strengths was his ability to also consistently keep his feet in the world of middle-class reform. Few works were more important to developing a joint labor/middle-class indictment of big business than Lloyd's magnum opus, *Wealth against Commonwealth* (1894). Here Lloyd accused John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil of being an enemy of consumers as well as a menace to representative government.

The same year as the publication of *Wealth against Commonwealth*, Lloyd threw himself insistently into the nitty-gritty of radical political affairs. Never comfortable with the stringent emphasis on class in both Gompersite and Socialist rhetoric, Lloyd believed it necessary to bring both farmers and the urban working class together before the age of the cooperative commonwealth could be declared. And this alliance did make it further in Chicago, and in Illinois, than anywhere else in the country. Yet soon the Populists embraced the cause of free silver, which alienated most urban workers, who then turned even more emphatically to the building of defensive craft unions—of which most farmers were suspicious. Lloyd's own overwhelming defeat for Congress on a Labor-Populist ticket portended the split in an alliance that, arguably, never had more than a small chance of success.

After the 1896 Populist debacle, Lloyd gave up his hopes of transforming the national political scene. In his final years, Lloyd grasped after a number of non-conventional reforms that might empower labor and bring about true social democracy. He first turned to producer and consumer co-operatives, writing *Labour Copartnership* in 1898. Two years later, he penned *Country without Strikes* to celebrate New Zealand's effective and just application of compulsory arbitration. Lloyd also threw himself into campaigns for municipal ownership of utilities—particularly, public transportation in Chicago.

A good part of the reason for Lloyd's eclectic reforms, and, in the end, for his ineffectiveness, was his attraction to but ultimate discomfort with much of the militancy and uncompromising nature of the socialist spirit. Lloyd hoped ultimately for a more broad-based political philosophy that could bring together citizens and create social harmony (and he did to some extent find this in the Christian and Fabian branches of socialism). While scholars have often viewed such dismissal of social conflict as a bourgeois fantasy, the overall historical failure of socialism might help us to rethink the value of Lloyd's often radical and staunchly democratic middle-class reformism.

Lloyd died young, broken in spirit and in health. The previous year had, ironically, seen his greatest conventional acceptance into the mainstream when he joined Clarence Darrow and the United Mine Workers president John Mitchell to successfully argue labor's cause before the commission set up by President Theodore Roosevelt to arbitrate the great 1902 Pennsylvania coal strike. Lloyd's memorial service brought 5,000 labor and civic reformers to Chicago to celebrate the life of this unconventional but most steadfast ally of workers.

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See also **Haymarket Affair (1886); Mitchell, John; Populism/People's Party**

LOCHNER v. NEW YORK (1905)

One of the most infamous cases in the history of the Supreme Court, *Lochner v. New York*, has, in many circles, a reputation close to that of *Dred Scott* or *Plessy v. Ferguson*. In striking down almost all forms of protective labor legislation in *Lochner*, the court majority seemed to go out of its way to sanction the most extreme form of laissez-faire capitalism. The case, however, had surprising complexities, and *Lochner's* legacy cast an incomplete shadow for American workers.

Although Supreme Court justices receive most of the attention of historians who study *Lochner*, the origins of the case lie in the agitation of workers seeking to create better work conditions. Concerned about low wages and long work hours, bakers in postbellum New York state formulated a two-prong response. One was unionization, which proceeded steadily but in an incomplete fashion through to the end of the century. The other was agitation for shorter hours, which began in earnest during the 1880s. By the end of that decade, employees of union bakeries were working 10 hours a day, but Italian and Jewish immigrants often labored up to 14 hours a day in nonunion shops.

In 1890, Henry Weissman, a German immigrant, took over editorship of the *Baker's Journal*, the voice of the Journeymen Bakers Union. Weissman turned the organ into an effective mouthpiece for protective labor legislation. By 1893, the New York legislature limited bakery work to 10 hours a day and 60 hours per week—although the law offered no sanction to employers who violated the limit. Such penalties came in 1895, and the legislature ratified the law in 1897.

For its first few years, the law was largely ignored, with employers little concerned about enforcement and employees themselves either intimidated or themselves ambivalent about a law that prohibited

overtime. Around 1900, at least one third of bakeries were apparently still working their employees longer than 60 hours per week. And while bakers were launching a major unionizing offensive, their employers were also organizing—to fight the rise of organized labor.

In the midst of these hostilities, conditions for bakers in New York City were generally improving, but employers held the upper hand upstate. There, in 1901, Joseph Lochner, a bakery owner in Utica, committed the offense that led the way to the Supreme Court. Lochner “permitted and required” Aman Schmitter to work more than 60 hours in a week. Moreover, Lochner had already been convicted of the same offense in 1899. He refused to offer any defense before the Oneida County Court, and upon his conviction, the Master Bakers Association announced a constitutional appeal.

The bakeshop employers argued along several main lines. First, they denied that the statute was a health measure, a purpose that courts seemed to be requiring of protective labor legislation before declaring such laws a legitimate exercise of the government’s police powers. Bread made by overworked employees did not represent a menace to the public health, and there seemed to be no convincing reasoning that overwork affected the health of the employees themselves. Second, the law was illegal “class legislation” because there was no compelling reason to single out bakers over other kinds of employees. Third, the statute restricted the liberty of employees to make their own full and free contractual arrangements, a right supposedly guaranteed under the Fourteenth Amendment.

Lochner lost his case in close split decisions through the New York state court system, with the majority of justices arguing that the legislature, and not the courts, was the proper body to decide such matters. The case then ascended to the Supreme Court, where the employers picked up a key ally: none other than Harry Weissman, the former editor of the *Baker’s Journal* as well as the secretary of their union, and arguably the key figure behind the passing of the New York law in the first place. Weissman had left the union in 1897 and, in a move common at the time, set up his own bakeshop. After that enterprise failed, he earned his law degree and entered politics. Weissman’s motivations for his ideological turnaround remain unclear. Indeed, after the Supreme Court made its decision in the case, he announced his actual support for the law—stating curiously that his only concern had been the statute’s outlawing of overtime pay.

The Supreme Court heard arguments in the case in February 1905. Initially, a majority of justices were

set to uphold the law, but a mystery justice (likely Joseph McKenna or Henry Billings Brown) switched and created a new 5-4 majority to strike down the statute. Accepting all of the key arguments of the bakeshop owners, Rufus W. Peckham composed the majority opinion. In turn, two separate dissents offered stinging rebukes to the majority. John Marshall Harlan argued that workers could not “voluntarily” agree to labor for long hours because they had so little power in relation to employers. Harlan also cited medical evidence to argue that the health hazards of long bakeshop work were indeed substantial enough to sanction legislative regulation.

The opinion of Oliver Wendell Holmes was even more emphatic, and it has become a classic in its own right. Holmes accused the majority of allowing reactionary economic perspectives to override the clear legitimacy of such legislation. The Court had no right to override the wishes of the majority of citizens as expressed through the legislature, and he decried the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment as supposedly enacting “Mr. Herbert Spencer’s Social Statics”—a key text of the era’s social Darwinism.

Public outcry against the Court’s decision came fast and furious, and scholars have largely agreed with Holmes and the other dissenters. Indeed, much of the period from Reconstruction to the New Deal is known as the Supreme Court’s Lochner Era—an age that supposedly witnessed the Court mandating an unrelenting conservatism. Yet while there is much truth to this portrait of the case and the era, other historians have noted that *Lochner* was a strange precedent, applied in a quite haphazard manner as the Supreme Court took up other related cases. Indeed, as early as 1908, the Court seemed to retreat significantly from *Lochner* when it upheld female protective labor legislation in *Muller v. Oregon*, and Holmes and others believed that the Court had effectively overturned *Lochner* in the 1917 case of *Bunting v. Oregon*. Yet, the Court re-affirmed *Lochner* in 1923’s *Adkins v. Children’s Hospital*, and it was not until the New Deal that the New York bakeshop case finally became a dead letter.

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- See also *Bunting v. Oregon* (1917)

LOCOFOCO DEMOCRATS

The term "Locofoco" was used first to designate the radical wing of the New York Democracy, then to refer to radical Jacksonians in other states, and finally as a synonym for the entire Democratic Party. The Locofoco Democrats flourished between 1835 and the early 1840s. Labor unions and labor activists provided much of the leadership, and working-class districts regularly voted more heavily for Locofoco candidates than more affluent areas. The rise of the Locofocos in New York was a direct result of Andrew Jackson’s Bank War, which the future Locofocos had strongly supported. Jackson’s 1833 decision to move federal funds from the Bank of the United States to state banks made banking a more attractive investment opportunity nationwide. In early 1835, the newly elected Democratic majority in Albany, despite heated opposition from Democrats like the newspaper editor William Leggett and various labor leaders, wasted no time in rewarding their friends and supporters with new state bank charters. To their critics, the same political, social, and economic problems would arise from New York’s grant of state banking charters as resulted from the Bank of the United States, namely, the corruption of the political process by cronyism and monopoly power, the raising up of a social elite composed of those able to secure charters, and the inflation and outright fraud suffered by wage laborers owing to the effects of the note-issuing powers of the banks.

At the October 1835 Democratic nominating meeting, the regular Democrats of Tammany Hall forced through their pro-Bank slate of candidates despite the opposition of many at the meeting, whose attempt to offer an alternative ticket was ignored and then cut short when the gas was turned off and the

room plunged into darkness. Ready for this tactic, the insurgents proceeded to light candles with new friction matches, known as locofocos. The Locofoco Democrats then nominated candidates opposed to the rash of state-chartered banks and supportive of hard money, antimonopoly, and labor union rights in general. Though these candidates lost to their regular Democratic opponents, the Locofoco wing of the party had been born.

William Leggett, the editor of the *New York Post* during William Cullen Bryant’s absence, became the tribune of Locofocoism by means of his vitriolic and cogent editorials during the spring and summer of 1835 attacking the charters and other policies of the legislature. Though he was an important intellectual inspiration of the Locofocos, a severe illness in late 1835 sharply curtailed his direct participation in the movement. Instead, the actual leadership was provided by the politician Alexander Ming Jr.; labor union leaders John Commerford, Levi Slamm, and Robert Townsend Jr.; former Workingmen’s Party activists George H. Evans, John Windt, Gilbert Vale, Isaac Smith, and Joel Curtis; and the political economist Clinton Roosevelt.

In January 1836, the Locofocos organized a separate party, the Equal Rights Party, which ran its own candidates as well as fusion nominees with the Whigs. In local elections in April 1836, the Locofocos defeated Tammany nominees for city office and in November elected two candidates to the state assembly. They also elected at least one congressman. However, the Locofocos never intended to build a new party, but to bring the rest of the Democracy around to their way of thinking. After Martin Van Buren’s administration adopted a large part of the Locofoco program, especially its hard-money financial policies, Tammany went along, and after 1838 the Equal Rights Party ran no further separate tickets.

Outside of New York, the term "Locofoco" was used to describe the left-wing tendency within the Jacksonian Democratic Party, particularly in the states of the Northeast, where the labor movement was strongest and bank issues most salient. Throughout the region, attempts at the state level to issue new state bank charters were met with criticism and hostility from those radicalized by the Bank War. In Pennsylvania, for example, Locofocos favored hard-money state-banking reform. Leadership of the Pennsylvania Locofocos was provided by the union leaders John Ferral, William English, and Thomas Hogan; the radical editor Thomas Brothers; and Congressman Henry Muhlenberg, who ran for United States Senate as a Locofoco.

The Locofocos were supporters not only of hard money, but also of antimonopoly generally, and of

the rights of labor in particular. The bank issue itself was a labor issue. Small-scale artisans and others in the “laboring classes” had long criticized the banking system, which they said unduly restricted their opportunities by limiting access to capital to those with wealth or political connections. Further, employers paid wage laborers not in hard specie, but in bank notes that often proved to be fraudulent or worthless. Locofocos believed that a hard-money policy that curtailed the issuance of bank notes, especially in small denominations, would cure these ills. The Locofocos also supported labor’s efforts to attain the 10-hour workday and the right to organize labor unions and strike.

By late 1837, the Locofocos had largely won over the Van Buren administration to their way of thinking, as demonstrated by Van Buren’s presidential message advocating the independent treasury plan, under which the federal government would no longer deposit its funds in private banks, but in its own treasury. Locofoco sentiment was at its high point through 1840, when the independent treasury plan was finally approved by Congress and Van Buren issued an executive order mandating the 10-hour day on federal public works. After the Whig victory in the 1840 elections, however, the radicals gradually lost power in the Democratic Party, owing in part to the issue of slavery, on which the Locofocos split, some calling for abolition while others rejected it.

The Locofoco Democrats are important to labor history because they represent the first instance of a major political party taking the labor movement and its ideas and interests seriously. The Locofocos advanced a broad agenda that was generally very sympathetic to the labor movement, and spoke a language of equal rights and popular democracy that struck a responsive chord in the working class. Their hard-money, prolabor, and antimonopoly policies continued to provide a wellspring of ideas and policies for left-leaning Democrats through the remainder of the nineteenth century.

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LONGSHORING

For the most part, longshoring work has been site- and job-specific. At first glance, it appears that longshoring is merely the loading and unloading of ships, whether sail, steam, or diesel. But at each port in the United States and throughout the world, the work has unique qualities and a distinct tempo. Some of this uniqueness is determined by the cargo that is being discharged. Whether it is cotton in New Orleans, iron ore in Detroit, or lumber in Portland, each in its own way prescribes a certain form of labor. Longshoring in various locales has also been affected by the ethnic and racial profile of the men engaged in the work. For every port along the incredible length of the U.S. coastline, there emerged a distinct but fluid racial and ethnic patterning. As the process of longshoring was changed by technological development, new groups undertook the work. In many cases the changing composition of the workforce was a bilateral process, whereby the men decided for themselves who should do what in and around the ship; at other sites it was employers who determined who should work and where.

Just as vital in this evolving story has been a collective sense of community. Unlike many other occupations, longshoring necessarily encompassed gang labor. Such labor created and re-inforced a group ideal, a sense of collective not always experienced by other workers. As will be seen, working in gangs encouraged a form of trust and dependency that could overcome ethnic, and at times, racial differences.

When examining longshoremen chronologically, one is struck immediately by the nearly total absence of colonial or early nineteenth-century studies. Historians have tended to focus their attention on the twentieth century, and such emphasis has left the earlier period relatively unstudied. What is certain is that longshoremen played an invaluable role in the emerging colonial economy and culture. Trade was the lifeblood of the British imperial system. The ports of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charleston were dynamic lynchpins in the economic

and financial success of colonial development. What is evident is that longshoremen held a tenuous social status. Surrounding communities long regarded longshoremen as brutes with no regard for long-term welfare for themselves and their families. They were stereotyped as short-tempered, quick to use their fists, and constantly in a state of near or total drunkenness. Such a perception would continue up to and throughout the twentieth century.

These colonial longshoremen generally lived close to their work, which necessitated obtaining cheaper lodgings along the waterfront. Such living arrangements forced longshoremen to work close in to the bustling environment of a port. Thus, incorporated into the longshoremen's world were heavy and exhausting work, and physical surroundings marked by taverns, brothels, gambling, and opium dens. Many of the longshoremen moved easily to and from laboring jobs along the waterfront. They also moved back and forth over the water's edge. Many were former seamen who wanted to enjoy a spell onshore or because of family circumstances needed to be close to home. Indeed, the job of longshoring has always constituted an entry point for seamen. Crispus Attucks, the first casualty of the American Revolution, was both a seaman and a longshoreman. Killed by British troops during the Boston Massacre of 1770, Attucks had been protesting British soldiers doing jobs normally done by dockside laborers.

Longshoring throughout the United States was structured as casual employment. That is, the men lined up for work every day and were then allocated jobs. Such a casual hiring system was rife with exploitation and danger. It was common to pay a kickback to obtain a job. Other than insecurity of employment, longshoring was an occupation that encompassed diverse job categorization. A myriad of jobs came under the rubric of longshoring. In New Orleans, for example, the job was broken down by skill and race. The highest skilled job was that of cotton screwman. These men packed the cotton bales into the ships' holds using specialized machinery that literally screwed the bales into place. The cotton screwmen's skilled status was predicated on judgment and strength. Each ship had a different size hold, and in some cases, a different shape. The ability of the screwmen to adjust to the differing hold designs ensured their skilled status. Elsewhere in the hierarchy labored longshoremen who loaded agricultural goods. Many of the latter jobs were held by slave and freed blacks.

Each group suffered from the same structural constraints, however. Although pay could vary widely, it was the unpredictability of work that was feared the most. Unlike factory work, the availability of work varied from day to day. The arrival of ships has

always been dependent upon the weather and the tides, and more crushing was the loss of a ship at sea, which reflected back at the dock with a loss of work. It was also a seasonal trade, as in the case of cotton in New Orleans.

Irregular work was a constant theme for longshoremen throughout the United States and the world—they were victims of the vagaries of the sea and weather, and trading patterns. International shippers were always looking for ways to cheapen the costs of transporting their goods. For longshoremen then, work was conditioned by insecurity.

Another common trait of longshoring was that it was an entry job for first-generation immigrants. In San Francisco, for example, Irish immigrants made up the majority of longshoremen at the end of the nineteenth century. Although the dominant group, the Irish composed just 25% of the total workforce. Other principal groups were Scandinavians (17%), Germans (14%), British (6%), and Italians (6%). African-Americans were not a presence at this time, but during World War I and II, their numbers exponentially increased. On the Great Lakes, a similar immigrant profile was clear: Irish immigrants predominated, joined by Swedes, Germans, and French-Canadians.

In New York, African-Americans constituted the largest group of longshoremen up until the 1840s. Once the Irish diaspora grew as a result of the Great Famine, African-Americans were displaced in Manhattan. The Irish then came to dominate the piers along the west side of Manhattan. In Brooklyn, large numbers of Norwegians and Swedes controlled the docks, although there was an Irish presence there also. Immigrant entry to the work was influenced by employer strategy. Beginning in the 1870s, a fledgling union was formed in the Port of New York. To counter this development, shippers and stevedores imported large numbers of Italian-Americans and African-Americans as strikebreakers. Such a tactic dramatically transformed the ethnic and racial profile of New York's longshoremen. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Italians had an entrenched hold on the docks in Brooklyn, Staten Island, and in Jersey City and Hoboken, New Jersey. African-Americans were not so fortunate in establishing control over certain docks. Unable to control a pier or piers, they were left to function as a floating pool of labor. Not for the first time, employers played a significant role in influencing the racial and ethnic makeup of its workforce. A similar racial and ethnic makeup was present in Boston, where Irish dominated, followed by Italians, and a small percentage of African-Americans.

African-Americans were a much larger presence in Philadelphia: by 1910, they composed nearly 50% of

the workforce. Many of these black longshoremen had migrated from North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. Following World War I, blacks increased their numbers to over 60%. Some of this increase can be attributed to the Great Migration, during which southern longshoremen migrated to Philadelphia from New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama. The Philadelphia port became a magnet for first-generation immigrants also. The largest ethnic group was the Poles, followed by Lithuanians, Italians, Irish, and Jews.

In the South, however, an ethnically diverse labor force was generally absent. Reflecting a distinct absence of mass migration into the region, the work was dominated by native-born whites and blacks—although in Galveston, Texas, workers of Hispanic origin were present.

In the early twentieth century, most longshoremen worked with little or no union protection. This lack of institutional protection ensured that erratic employment became the norm. Symptomatic of this insecurity was the method of getting work—the “shape-up.” The shape-up was a simple method whereby hiring foremen would pick the men who would work that day from the crowd. Such a system made for rank favoritism and discrimination. It was common on most of the nation’s waterfronts to pay a bribe or kickback to obtain a job. Such a system bred insecurity but also had another effect: it helped maintain a union-free environment. Anyone judged to be a union agitator or sympathizer could easily be ignored at the shape-up, effectively removing them from work and ultimately the docks.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, only a small number of longshoremen had won union recognition. They included Gulf Coast men in New Orleans and Galveston, Great Lakes longshoremen, and a few locals on the eastern seaboard and the West Coast. The principal union at this time was the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA). Its power base was the Great Lakes, and its first leader was Daniel Keefe. Keefe was instrumental in capturing most of the longshoremen working the ships along the Great Lakes, including Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, and smaller ports like Marquette and Escanaba. Keefe and his successors were conservative in their dealings with employers and shippers. Reflecting the dominant ideological stream of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the ILA leaders rarely challenged the status quo. Indeed, Keefe’s comfortable posture when dealing with employers was reflected in his membership in the National Civic Federation. By World War I, the ILA’s center of strength began to shift toward the eastern seaboard as union locals were established in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.

During this period, the ILA was directly challenged by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Philadelphia longshoremen overwhelmingly supported the IWW. Not until the 1920s was the ILA able to break the IWW’s hold, after importing ILA strikebreakers from New York. On the West Coast, the situation was just as volatile but did not have such a sanguine result for the ILA. The West Coast men vacillated between creating their own organization or a tenuous alliance with the ILA. After a failed strike, a company union was installed. A similar defeat occurred on the Gulf Coast. For decades, longshoremen in New Orleans, for example, had practiced a successful form of biracialism. But a strike defeat in 1923 ended years of union strength and racial compromise. Union strength of the longshoremen fluctuated between union stability on the Great Lakes and expanding representation on the Atlantic seaboard to outright defeat on the West and Gulf coasts.

The 1929 stock market crash and accompanying Great Depression would help transform the situation. The turning point for the nation’s longshoremen came as events unfolded on the West Coast. Longshoremen in San Francisco had long bridled at their lack of trade union protection and being forced to join a company union, the Longshoremen’s Association of San Francisco. A combination of forces transformed the situation in the early 1930s. The passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) gave the longshoremen at least a semblance of maneuverability. The ILA began to challenge the company union, and finally, communists, supported by seamen in the Marine Workers Industrial Union (MWIU), began to actively organize. The key to success, however, was the men themselves and their rank-and-file leaders. Most notably, Australian-born Harry Bridges took the helm. With the issue of union recognition uppermost, San Francisco longshoremen went out on strike in 1934. The strike was a bloody affair resulting in the violent deaths of two strikers. Other San Francisco unions pledged their support for the longshoremen, and threats of a general strike were made. With such an outpouring of support, the strikers won union recognition, but the victory also unleashed a battle within the ILA. The established leadership, dominated by the New York office, preached caution and patience. Led by Harry Bridges, West Coast longshoremen viewed such directives as superfluous. Suspicious of ILA intentions, the men decided to form their own union, the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU). This break from the ILA was to become permanent; in the twenty-first century, the ILWU continues to represent West Coast longshoremen.

The example set by the likes of Harry Bridges encouraged others to challenge the conservatism of ILA officials. In New York, for example, members of the rank and file emerged calling for greater democracy within the ILA. Led by Brooklyn longshoreman Pete Panto, the men challenged the ILA leadership of Joe Ryan. Mysteriously, Pete Panto disappeared in 1939, and not until after World War II would the true story of Panto's disappearance become public knowledge. He had been kidnapped by members of Murder Inc., strangled, and dumped into a lime pit in New Jersey. The removal of Panto effectively ended the rank and file's challenge. Unlike their cousins on the West Coast, New York longshoremen would continue to labor without effective union protection. By World War II, the ILA had been captured by rogue criminal elements resulting in poor wages and working conditions.

World War II transformed the work relations on the New York waterfront and elsewhere. Young longshoremen left the docks in droves to join the armed forces. But as the U.S. Army and Navy took ever-increasing control of loading and unloading in the port of New York, a more steady form of employment became the norm. Regular gangs were recognized as being far more efficient than individuals occasionally hired from a shape-up. By the end of the war, over 60% of longshoremen were laboring in regular gangs. Regular employment took away from the ILA and the shippers the power to hire and fire. Gaining expertise on certain cargo lines, the longshoremen in turn could now demand and receive on-the-spot wage awards.

The speed and rhythm of work had, however, increased. Sling loads became heavier, and thus the job was more hazardous. In terms of hours lost due to disabling injury, longshoremen outranked coal miners and were only slightly behind loggers. The most dangerous jobs involved working in the hold: falling objects were one of the major killers of longshoremen. Working on the deck or the dock was also dangerous, where common injuries included crushed hands, feet, and ankles.

Longshoremen throughout the United States adopted a fatalistic attitude toward the hazards of their job. While on the West Coast the ILWU worked hard to improve safety on the job, such activity was noticeably absent on the East Coast and Gulf.

Pilfering cargo was just as common. On ships and docks throughout the United States and the world, longshoremen routinely took possession of such things as candy, liquor, tools, and even food from the ships' galleys. The longshoremen had a sense of entitlement when justifying such action. Contraband was either consumed on board ship or taken off the

waterfront to either be sold or consumed at home. Nicknames tended to be correlated to place of origin, or related to form of dress or food eaten. So, for example, nicknames such as Staten Island Joe and Hoboken Harry were used to identify someone by their place of origin. Others pertained to the food eaten by longshoremen such as "Chicken" and "Cheese," or by their dress; for example, the man who always wore a red shirt to work was labeled as the "bullfighter." The common form of dress, uses of nicknames, and pilferage activities became identifying markers. Such clear markers ensured that longshoremen could recognize one another, both on the job and off.

The longshoring workforce was traditionally an older one. In most of the ports, older men dominated the work. By the late 1940s and early 1950s, the nation's longshoremen still labored with their hands. Winches on board the ships still carried the cargo to and from the hold, but the men continued to use the hook to fill or empty the sling. Younger men did play a large role in changing the trade union culture. This was especially true in New York. Longshoremen returning from the war challenged the established ILA hierarchy and unleashed a series of wildcat strikes that resulted in the end of the shape-up and the establishment of medical centers in Manhattan and Brooklyn. For the ILWU men, their focus was on the deportation hearings of their leader, Harry Bridges.

By 1960, the ILA and ILWU had become established entities in the lives of their members throughout the United States. The year 1960 also represented a turning point for longshoremen. Containerization had become a new phenomenon in their lives. The hand labor of the previous centuries had been replaced by the mechanized loading of vast tonnage. Both the ILA and ILWU negotiated deals with their respective employers guaranteeing protecting jobs while accepting the new technology. The introduction of containerization immediately transformed longshoremen's work. Smaller gangs were needed, and new skills were developed. The crane operator now became the lynchpin in the process. The longshoremen were able to barter certain arrangements where half the gang would work while the other half rested. Also, if the set work was completed before time, the gang was able to leave work but get fully paid. While able to negotiate a semblance of protection, the longshoremen witnessed women entering the job. In 1982, the first woman hired on the West Coast was the daughter of a longshoreman.

Containerization, then, dramatically transformed the longshoring process. Most dramatic of all was its effect on the numbers employed. The number of East

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Coast longshoremens dropped from 51,000 in 1952 to 15,000 in 1972. Generous retirement payments and incentives convinced many on the West and East Coast to accept redundancy. The job, however, would never take on the earlier qualities of gang solidarity, and traditional longshoring communities faded away.

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See also **Bridges, Harry Renton; International Longshoremen’s Association; Keefe, Daniel; National Industrial Recovery Act**

LORD DUNMORE’S PROCLAMATION

On November 15, 1775, John Murray, the fourth Earl of Dunmore and royal governor of the colony of Virginia, issued a proclamation concerning the ongoing military actions taking place in eastern Virginia. He demanded that all able-bodied white men in the colony rally to his banner immediately on pain of being declared a traitor. Further, Dunmore proclaimed that any able-bodied male indentured servant or slave who was owned by a rebel would be granted his freedom if he ran away to Dunmore and enlisted as a soldier in the loyalist cause.

Context

Colonial Virginia was a slave society, its economy dependent upon the racial and class-based exploitation

of African slaves for its continued existence. By the 1770s, there were close to 190,000 slaves in the colony, composing 42% of the overall population. These slaves primarily worked in the fields growing the staple crop of the Chesapeake region, tobacco. Though tobacco cultivation was becoming less lucrative in the long-settled Tidewater regions, white settlers from these areas were rapidly moving into the Piedmont and the backcountry. These settlers took slaves with them and began replicating the staple-crop, slave society of the Tidewater.

Earlier in 1775, during a period of heightened tension, Dunmore had threatened to grant freedom to the slaves. Slaveholding colonists were worried that slaves might be inspired to revolt anyway. Indeed, slave resistance and running away seem to have increased over the spring of 1775—one group even appeared on Dunmore’s doorstep at the Governor’s Palace in Williamsburg to offer its services. It was not, however, until fighting had broken out between royal troops and patriot militias that Dunmore seriously considered the idea. He signed the proclamation on November 7 but did not issue it until a week later, after his troops had defeated the Princess Anne County militia at the Battle of Kemp’s Landing in southeastern Virginia.

Slaves

Roughly 1,000 slaves escaped bondage by joining Dunmore. About half were women and children—expressly not covered by the terms of the proclamation. The freedmen and freedwomen served Dunmore’s army as sailors, foragers, and most notably as soldiers. A special “Ethiopian Regiment” was formed. The freedmen wore badges with the legend “Liberty to Slaves”—a direct response to their former masters, whose uniforms bore the slogan “Liberty or Death.”

The vast majority of slaves did not run away to Dunmore’s army. Many seem to have chosen instead to stay together with families and communities. Dunmore’s decision to offer freedom only to able-bodied men certainly caused fewer to join him than might have if emancipation had been offered to all slaves. Some, likely, were suspicious of such a limited declaration and chose the devil they knew over the one they did not. Dunmore’s influence was also largely limited to the Chesapeake Bay region—it would have been difficult for slaves from the Piedmont to have both heard about the proclamation and to have made their way across hostile territory to reach Dunmore’s camp.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Dunmore's proclamation influenced slaves both in Virginia and through the southern colonies to resist their patriot masters, lending outside support to an internal rebellion that the slaves had already begun.

Masters

On the other hand, the white population of Virginia found itself polarized by Dunmore's proclamation. The threat of a full-scale slave rebellion, while always in the background, now seemed closer than ever. Neutral and loyalist white Virginians quickly joined the patriot cause.

Whites in Virginia and beyond feared that slaves across the South would hear of Dunmore's proclamation and be inspired to revolt. Maryland cut off all communication with Virginia to prevent this event, while in North Carolina militias mustered with the dual objects of opposing a British incursion from the north and of apprehending Dunmore agents rumored to be working to incite slaves in that colony. In South Carolina, whites attributed the growth of a runaway population on Sullivan's Island to the effects of Dunmore's proclamation.

Significance

Across the colonies, whites assumed that Dunmore's radical proclamation would be rescinded by the Crown. When George III refused to recall the proclamation and remove Dunmore as governor, it became one of the final pushes toward independence. Indeed, the general complaint that the king had inspired "domestic insurrections"—a direct reference to the slave revolts of 1775—became the crowning grievance of the Declaration of Independence.

A historiographical shift in our understanding of Lord Dunmore's proclamation has taken place over the past several decades. The central point of this shift is the question of slave agency and slave resistance. Earlier authors (Selby, Quarles) have seen the proclamation as providing an inspiration for slaves to escape. More recent works (those by Frey and Holton) argue the reverse: slaves were resisting their masters before and during the events leading up to Dunmore's proclamation. It was this insurgency that persuaded Dunmore to issue his proclamation—he knew that slaves would respond to his call. Thus, slave resistance led to Dunmore's proclamation, not the other way around.

Further, this recent re-interpretation of Dunmore's proclamation supports a progressive reading of the Revolution. In Virginia, Holton and Frey argue, the Revolution was a class war: not between great planters and yeomen farmers but between slaveowners and slaves.

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LOUISIANA FARMERS' UNION

The Louisiana Farmers' Union was an organization of small farmers, tenants, and wage laborers that sought to improve conditions for rural workers in the state's sugar and cotton plantation regions in the second half of the 1930s. Although the union achieved some gains, its interracial makeup, communist affiliations, and the threat that it posed to the plantation system provoked violent responses from landowners and local officials. This repression, along with changing economic conditions during World War II, contributed to the union's demise in the early 1940s.

In the early twentieth century, rural workers in Louisiana were among the most poorly treated laborers in the nation. Sharecroppers and tenants in the cotton-producing parishes worked land owned by their employers in return for a portion of the income from the crops they produced. They received payment only once per year, after the crops had been harvested and sold. Lacking cash, they relied on landlords or local merchants to provide them with seeds, fertilizer, food, and other necessities throughout the crop

season. The costs of these supplies (plus interest) were deducted from their payments at settlement time. In the sugar parishes, tenant farming was less common, and planters relied on wage laborers, who were paid more regularly throughout the year. However, payment was often in scrip redeemable only at the plantation store. Both systems were vulnerable to abuse by employers, and many planters used their control over prices, credit, and accounts to cheat workers out of their earnings. The housing provided for workers on most plantations was also substandard, often consisting of leaky shacks with no electricity or indoor plumbing. White supremacist ideologies and the South's Jim Crow system of racial oppression helped to justify and maintain the conditions endured by the predominantly black workforce. If plantation laborers complained, they risked economic or physical reprisals from landlords or police.

In 1931, the Communist Party began organizing black sharecroppers in the South in an attempt to transform them into a revolutionary vanguard. Party activists soon learned that the region's rural workers were more interested in gaining concrete improvements in their living and working conditions than in overthrowing the government. Organizers in Alabama encouraged local people to form the Share Croppers' Union (SCU) and use collective action to put pressure on plantation owners. Planters retaliated by evicting, beating, and lynching union members. Seeking a more hospitable environment, the union moved its headquarters to New Orleans in 1936. The New Orleans office was run by a small group of communist and left-wing activists that included Clyde Johnson, a Communist Party member from Minnesota; Gordon McIntire, a Texan who had attended the left-leaning Commonwealth College in Arkansas; Clinton Clark, a native of Louisiana and former sharecropper; and Peggy Dallet, another Louisianan who had helped to organize local chapters of other liberal and leftist organizations. Most of the group were in their early 20s, and Clinton Clark was the only African-American among them.

After the move, union leaders sought to further strengthen the organization by forming alliances with other farmers and workers unions. Johnson believed that joining forces with the larger National Farmers' Union (NFU) might provide some protection for union members, and in 1937, SCU locals began transferring into the NFU. The Louisiana locals became the Louisiana Farmers' Union (LFU), a state division of the NFU. Although the union welcomed white people as well as African-Americans, most of its members were black.

Local leaders and activists played important roles in the LFU. Organizers encouraged them to write to

the central office about their problems and published members' letters in the union newspaper. The union's rank and file frequently made suggestions for action and debated new policies at the local level before decisions were made at state conventions. Union activities addressed long-standing grievances of rural black people, such as low pay, unfair crop settlements, inadequate school facilities, and exclusion from political participation.

To combat planter abuses of the tenancy system, the LFU offered literacy and math classes for members and lobbied federal officials to require written contracts between landowners and their employees when they participated in the new farm subsidy programs established during the New Deal. Union representatives attended hearings held by the Department of Agriculture to determine wages and conditions in the sugar industry and persuaded government officials to require modest increases in pay for plantation workers each year. The union also helped members obtain loans and other assistance for low-income farmers offered by the Farm Security Agency (FSA), providing a chance for them to achieve farm ownership and economic independence. Many locals attempted to improve educational facilities in their communities by raising money for buildings and equipment and pressuring school boards to provide more funding. The LFU also joined with other rural unions in the 1930s to advocate greater participation by poor farmers in setting policy and administering government farm programs.

Like their counterparts in Alabama, plantation owners in Louisiana responded to union organizing efforts with intimidation and violence. Local newspapers accused the union of fomenting class warfare and highlighted the participation of black people and communists in an attempt to discredit it. Employers threatened to evict workers or physically harm them if they joined the union. Police and local officials arrested and harassed union members, and in June 1937, local leaders Willie and Irene Scott had to temporarily flee their home in West Feliciana Parish to avoid being lynched. Activists organized to protect themselves and fight back against the violence, forming armed guards to protect their homes and families. Nonetheless, repression took its toll, and fear of reprisals prevented many people from becoming involved in union activities.

After growing to about three thousand members by 1940, the LFU began to lose support and resources as the nation prepared for and then entered World War II. The poverty of its members and their irregular dues-paying habits meant that the union relied heavily on outside contributors to fund its activities. Most donations came from liberals and other

sympathizers with left-wing causes, many of whom were angered by the union's stance on the war in the late 1930s and early 1940s. In keeping with the Communist Party line, LFU leaders advocated neutrality in the European conflict until Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. Party activists then switched to all-out support for the fight against fascism, refocusing their attention away from the rural South and further undermining the LFU.

Economic changes wrought by the war also contributed to the union's decline. New jobs in construction and defense industries drew many of the LFU's rural poor constituents away from the plantations. Landowners responded to the loss of their cheap labor supply by mechanizing as many operations as possible or by switching to livestock farming and other activities that required fewer workers. In the next few decades, the old plantation system gradually disintegrated, displacing thousands of rural workers and leading to increasing out-migration from the rural parishes. The political and economic shifts of the 1940s left few active LFU members by the end of the war. Although some locals may have continued to hold meetings, official union activity ceased after the mid-1940s.

For a brief period, the LFU provided a vehicle through which black plantation workers in Louisiana challenged the power of their employers and struggled against the system of white supremacy that kept them poor and oppressed. It brought improvements in the lives of many of its members in the form of higher pay, increased access to educational opportunities, and political empowerment. Perhaps more important, union activity was part of an ongoing fight for freedom and justice by African-Americans that continued beyond the 1940s. In the 1950s and 1960s, former LFU members were among the black farmers, workers, homemakers, and students who participated in the civil rights movement in Louisiana and helped to bring an end to the Jim Crow system.

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See also **Agriculture Adjustment Administration; Civil Rights; Communist Party; Share Croppers Union (1930s); Southern Tenant Farmers' Union**

LOUISIANA SUGAR STRIKE (1887)

The Louisiana Sugar Strike was carried out by overwhelmingly African-American wage workers on sugar plantations in southern Louisiana, organized by the Knights of Labor, in November 1887. It resulted in the infamous “Thibodaux Massacre,” in which a large number of strikers and organizers were slain. Among the most violent labor episodes nationally during the Gilded Age, the massacre culminated labor conflict on sugar plantations since the abolition of slavery and precluded further efforts to organize sugar workers until the mid-twentieth century.

The strike's origins can be traced to the slave era. During the nineteenth century, sugar plantations dominated the alluvial lands along the Mississippi River and numerous bayous. Sugar production required large concentrations of land, labor, and capital, and sugar planters ranked among the South's wealthiest slaveholders. Sugar making also gave rise to large, complex slave communities and a well-defined division of labor. The fall harvest necessitated a disciplined labor force to toil intensively yet with clocklike precision. The uncompromising nature of sugar production, which was a semi-industrial endeavor, and the delicate equilibrium of plantation routine caused contemporaries to liken sugar plantations to “factories in the field” and gave them their well-deserved reputation as death traps for slaves.

The federal capture of New Orleans during the Civil War led to the implementation of monthly wage labor. Responding to the breakdown of plantation discipline following their arrival, federal officers improvised a system in which workers received monthly wages and basic necessities. By war's end, wage labor was firmly entrenched on sugar plantations, and former slaves continued to work in gangs under white supervision. During the war, half of workers' wages had been withheld until completion of the crop, in order to secure planters sufficient labor, and this practice continued into the 1870s, despite workers' objections. Conflict also arose over wage rates, working conditions, provisioning, and other matters. In constructing the new labor system,

workers benefited from the exigencies of sugar production, the emergence of a functioning labor market, and their own political empowerment during Radical Reconstruction, but conflict and occasional violence characterized relations between planters and workers.

Although workers by the latter 1870s had secured full monthly wage payment and other favorable terms, the end of Reconstruction in 1877 strengthened planters by placing the state's coercive power at their disposal. Responding to dramatic changes in the world sugar market and to their own economic woes, planters lowered wages during the early 1880s and replaced cash payments with nontransferable plantation scrip. By the mid-1880s, the Knights of Labor—which first began unionizing railroad workers in Morgan City, a transportation hub west of New Orleans—was tapping into sugar worker discontent and organizing locals along Bayou Teche in St. Mary Parish and along Bayou Lafourche in Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes. In fall 1887, predominantly white labor leaders called for wage increases and abolition of scrip payment, and they set a strike deadline for November 1, around the traditional start of the harvest. As former slaveholders and as men of property, planters adopted a hard line—refusing to negotiate, vowing to evict strikers from their estates, and calling upon local and state authorities for assistance.

On November 1, some 10,000 workers along Bayous Teche and Lafourche went on strike. Most plantations remained idle, although some operated with white labor from New Orleans. A state militia detachment and several paramilitary groups arrived in the Lafourche Parish town of Thibodaux. Sheriffs' posses were organized, and local white men deputized. Planters evicted strikers and their families, many of whom congregated in Thibodaux and other towns. During the next three weeks, as attempted negotiations failed, tensions increased and the situation became more volatile. Sporadic violence also occurred. Strikers in several instances allegedly shot into operating sugar mills. During a "riot" in one St. Mary Parish town, whites killed several strikers. Newspapers fanned the flames of racial and labor conflict. Since the state militia could not remain on duty indefinitely, it eventually withdrew and was replaced by posses and paramilitary groups from as far away as Shreveport. On November 21, in response to continuing "lawlessness" and to rumors of strikers' plans to attack Thibodaux, the parish judge, Taylor Beattie, a former Republican, declared martial law in the town. Pickets were established, but tensions further heightened.

In the early morning of November 23, shots were fired at a picket guard. This so-called attack

precipitated a frenzy of violence, which lasted for the next three days, by various white forces against black strikers and Knights organizers. "Instigators" were identified and singled out for especially brutal treatment. State militia units returned to Thibodaux but did little to stop the slaughter. By November 25, the worst was over, although whites continued to comb the woods and swamps for strikers and labor leaders. Shots rang out for several more days, and bodies turned up weeks later. There was no official estimate of the number of casualties. Press reports, which downplayed violence against blacks, conceded at least 30 black fatalities, although some local white residents privately admitted that more than 50 strikers died. It became part of the oral tradition of the black community along Bayou Lafourche that the total number of casualties—killed, wounded, and missing—numbered in the hundreds.

The massacre ended both the strike and the Knights of Labor's organizing efforts in the sugar region, as the defeated sugar workers returned to the plantations on their employers' terms. Although planters would continue in the years ahead to bemoan their inability to control labor, and although employers could not exercise the same authority over free workers as masters had over slaves, black people in southern Louisiana were left with few alternatives to the plantation economy. In a few short years, moreover, a white supremacist social order characterized by legal segregation, disfranchisement, and racial violence would emerge. The 1887 sugar strike was but one among a number of setbacks suffered by the Knights of Labor that contributed to its ultimate demise, and not until the 1940s did a national labor organization again attempt to unionize black workers on southern Louisiana sugar plantations.

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See also Abolitionism; African-Americans; Antebellum Era; Civil Rights; Civil War and Reconstruction; Disfranchisement; Emancipation and Reconstruction; Family Wage; Gilded Age; Knights of Labor; Law and Labor; Living Wage; New South; Politics and Labor, Nineteenth Century; Powderly, Terence; Railroads; Sharecropping and Tenancy; Slavery; South; Strikebreaking; Thirteenth Amendment

LOVESTONE, JAY (1897–1990) Communist Party of America

Jay Lovestone, a leading Communist and then Communist oppositionist for nearly two decades before World War II, emerged in the postwar era as the major architect of the AFL-CIO's anti-Communist foreign policy through his leading of the federation's International Department until his retirement in 1974. Born Jacob Liebshtein in czarist Russia in 1897, his family immigrated to New York 10 years later, settling on New York's Lower East Side before moving to the Bronx. Graduating from City College after only three years in June 1918, Liebshtein had been radicalized in college, becoming the president of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society. Formally changing his name to Jay Lovestone upon becoming a naturalized citizen in February 1919, Lovestone, who had been an antiwar Marxist and identified with the Socialist Party of America's (SPA) left wing, expressed political sympathy with the Bolshevik Revolution. When the SPA split in late summer 1919, he joined the Communist Party of America (CPA) at its founding convention and was elected to membership on the party's Central Executive Committee.

Becoming a protégé of the CPA leader, Charles E. Ruthenberg, with the formation of the legal Workers Party, at the end of December 1921, Lovestone edited the party newspaper, *The Worker*, and quickly rose through the ranks, putting in countless hours under Ruthenbergs' tutelage. As one of the leaders of the American Communists and of the Ruthenberg Caucus, Lovestone traveled in January 1925 with his mentor and factional rivals, William Z. Foster and James P. Cannon, to Moscow so that the Communist International's American Commission could attempt to resolve the two groups' differences, which was not achieved. However, at the Workers Party convention in August 1925, the Ruthenberg Caucus, of which Lovestone was a main organizer, gained control of the party with the help of Moscow.

Throughout 1926, Lovestone worked diligently to bolshevize the American party. When Ruthenberg died in early March 1927, Lovestone was elected acting secretary, although the Foster-Cannon faction was not willing to concede the party's leadership to the young leader without a fight. After defeating his rivals at the convention in late summer 1927, Lovestone obtained strong control of the organization. Lovestone's leadership tenure would last less than two years. After the October 1928 expulsion of the Trotskyists from the party, Lovestone was expelled eight months later, with Moscow's blessing, at the end of June 1929 for supporting Bukharin and the policy of "American exceptionalism." Fellow Lovestoneites were purged by the end of August 1929.

Upon his expulsion, the inveterate Communist immediately organized a rival political organization in 1929, first named the Communist Party (Majority Group) and later the Communist Party (Opposition). In the organization's newspaper, the *Revolutionary Age*, later renamed the *Workers Age*, the Lovestoneites supported the Soviet Union while calling for more freedom for foreign Communist parties. Through Lovestoneite activity in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in the early 1930s, Lovestone developed close relations with and became an advisor of David Dubinsky, the union's president. Lovestone and his followers also became influential in the United Auto Workers, with more than a dozen serving in President Homer Martin's administration in the late 1930s.

Disheartened by Bukharin's execution in 1938 and disillusioned by Moscow's treatment of the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (*Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista*—POUM) during the Spanish Civil War, Lovestone formally broke with Communism and the Soviet Union in 1939. In response, he transformed his party into a democratic socialist organization, the Independent Labor League (ILL). However, the ILL survived for less than two years before being dissolved by Lovestone at the end of December 1940.

In 1941, without an organizational home or job, Lovestone was chosen by Dubinsky to run the labor division of the New York chapter of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (which later changed its name to Citizens for Victory). This position, which he held through 1943, required Lovestone to get the U.S. trade union movement to support FDR's efforts in aiding the British; after Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Lovestone was responsible for delivering labor support to Russia.

Introduced by Dubinsky to George Meany in 1941, the American Federation of Labor (AFL)

secretary-treasurer at the time, later to become the AFL president and the first AFL-CIO president, Meany selected Lovestone to run the federation's foreign affairs. Beginning in 1944 until his forced retirement in 1974, Lovestone led the AFL's, and then after the AFL-CIO merger in 1955, the combined federation's foreign affairs activities. As executive secretary of the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), formed at the 1944 AFL convention "with the mandate of assisting free unions abroad," Lovestone operated this group out of the ILGWU's headquarters in New York with only two assistants, working quietly behind the scenes becoming "one of the masterminds of the Cold War" (Morgan, p. 144).

In the immediate postwar period, Lovestone toiled diligently to prevent the European trade unions from becoming Communist-dominated. For example, in France, Lovestone attempted to split the Communist-led *Confederation Generale du Travail* (CGT) by financially supporting the anti-Communist *Force Ouvriere* and sabotaging CGT-directed strikes in 1947 and 1948. In Italy, Lovestone successfully adopted a similar strategy of dividing the major trade union federation, the CGIL, controlled by the Communists and Socialists, in the late 1940s. In addition, under Lovestone's tutelage, the FTUC promoted its anti-Communist agenda in the 1950s and 1960s in unions of African and Asian nations, such as Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, and India, many of which were beginning to emerge from colonialism.

Not surprisingly, Lovestone strongly backed U.S. involvement in Vietnam throughout the 1960s and 1970s, working with and financially supporting the anti-Communist Confederation of Vietnamese Labor (Confederation Vietnamienne du Travail—CVT). He even helped to organize the prowar demonstration among 100,000 construction workers in New York in late May 1970. Although Lovestone supported Nixon's foreign policy, he would renounce him for his opening to Communist China later in the 1970s.

There is no doubt that Jay Lovestone was a controversial figure in the U.S. trade union movement. To those anti-Communist Cold Warriors found in the upper echelons of the AFL-CIO, Lovestone was undoubtedly viewed as an unsung hero for the role he played in combating Soviet influence in the world's trade unions. However, for others, his legacy is viewed considerably more negatively. By turning the U.S. trade union movement into an instrument of government policy and for sabotaging other nations' unions that derived legitimate support from workers, Lovestone's actions demonstrate how the Cold War divided the working class to capitalists' benefit.

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LOWELL FEMALE LABOR REFORM ASSOCIATION (LFLRA)

The Lowell Female Labor Reform Association (LFLRA) formed in the winter of 1845 with 13 officers and two additional members drawn from the thousands of young women who then filled the textile mills of antebellum America's most famous industrial city. By spring, the association's ranks swelled into the hundreds, under the dual mottos of "Try Again" and "Union, for Power." Sarah Bagley, the association's president, stated that the organization's purpose was to give workingwomen a sense of both personal autonomy and collective responsibility to defend themselves from the increasingly exploitative conditions of factory labor. Workers needed not only to speak out against the injustices of the factory system, but also organize to fight those inequities and take back control of their labor. The association, clearly seeing links between gender and class on shop floors where male overseers always supervised female workers, insisted that female factory operatives had to challenge male corporate power, which had expanded virtually unchecked since the city began to produce cloth in the early 1820s. Yet, despite sometimes fiery rhetoric and bold assertions of women's rights to organize and agitate in public, this organization rarely made a sustained effort to confront directly the terms of industrial capitalism.

The LFLRA was one of the first stable organizations of female operatives in the nation. These women, who had often been excluded from workingmen's groups, helped publish the *Voice of Industry* and a widely circulated series of "Factory Tracts." The association also sponsored an industrial reform lyceum and various fairs and rallies to publicize its messages and raise money. Perhaps most important, this organization became an influential force in the campaign for a 10-hour workday through its publications, petition drives, and even testimony before the

Massachusetts legislature. In fact, the association's peak years of activism—1845 to 1847—parallel the high point of 10-hour agitation in that decade. The fortunes of both these crusades were intimately linked, and they rose and fell together.

The LFLRA, with Bagley at the helm, tried to steer a middle course between agitation and restraint in the campaign for labor reform. Unlike many antebellum craft unions, this association was filled with semi-skilled operatives who had little or no organizational experience or individual bargaining power, and hence received no meaningful recognition from management. Thus, the group did not propose any work rules to control production processes, or hiring procedures to regulate labor recruitment, or standard lists of piece rates to maintain wages. Moreover, the association's constitution called for strikes only as a last resort. The organization did not want to renounce this weapon, but there seemed to be a general agreement among most Lowell workers in the 1840s that strikes were not the most effective means to change the workplace. Therefore, the LFLRA, despite its frequent scorching public pronouncements against corporate abuses such as long hours, wage cuts, and increased workloads, did not direct any major walk-outs. Many women came to see the organization as a mechanism for airing their grievances forcefully and publicly and securing their rights through popular pressure and political activism, while at the same time avoiding direct conflict with overseers and mill owners.

Interest in labor reform associations spread to female operatives in other industrial cities. Larger factory communities may have been particularly conducive to organizing such groups because the sheer number of young female workers in these mills made collective protest a more realistic option for aggrieved employees. Workers in Manchester, New Hampshire, organized their own Female Labor Reform Association, as did operatives in nearby Dover and Nashua, and in the Massachusetts seacoast city of Fall River. The LFLRA's secretary, Huldah Stone, corresponded with these other groups and offered a vision of solidarity among women workers that transcended any one location, occupation, or industry.

Yet ironically, as the LFLRA and its sister organizations became better coordinated and perhaps better able to protest more forcefully at the point of production, they also remained cautious and continued to channel their efforts into petitions and publications. They still avoided strikes, perhaps because they now worried about compromising the very organizational structure they had built up. So, the LFLRA remained more outspoken than many workmen's groups in its written demands for significant

reforms in the factory system, but these women rarely engaged in direct confrontation with corporate power to press those demands.

As female operatives became more involved in these local labor reform associations, and eventually in regional organizations such as the New England Workingmen's Association (NEWA), they faced new challenges to their arguments for women's activism. Sarah Bagley, when she addressed the NEWA in May 1845, defended the right of women to speak publicly for themselves, even as she re-assured her mostly male audience that female activists would not threaten the men's sphere of power and politics. Bagley wedded her crusade for workingwomen to more traditional concepts of female nurturing and morality so as not to jeopardize the support of workingmen by making her demands seem too strident. She made the fight for labor reform, whether women acted on their own or in support of men, a key to protecting women's health and dignity. Those who protested did not violate ideals of female modesty; they defended women's true virtue from the encroachments of greedy factory owners.

By January 1847, just two years after its founding, the LFLRA transformed itself into the Lowell Female Industrial Reform and Mutual Aid Society. The association's name change was more than cosmetic; it reflected a deeper shift from a group centered on workingwomen's own agenda for labor reform, to an organization devoted to bringing middle-class notions of moral uplift to female operatives. The new society was not necessarily a wholesale capitulation to pressure from management, or to possible divisions within the women's own ranks. But the new group did prove to be even more cautious in its public actions and often quite limited in its critiques. The emphasis was now, more than ever, on ideals of female friendship and nurturing. Labor reform was now to be found in "the elevation and cultivation of mind and morals" and in this society's relief programs for destitute and lonely workers. The goal was to connect middle-class ideals of respectable womanhood with a working-class ideology of collective action and the dignity of labor. Yet this society never clearly explained how it would reconcile those divergent ideas into one unifying organizational philosophy. By the end of the decade, perhaps burdened by these internal contradictions, the society had disbanded.

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See also **Bagley, Sarah George; New England Workingmen's Association**

LOWELL TURNOUTS (1834, 1836)

In the winter of 1834, and again in the fall of 1836, thousands of young women workers walked off their jobs to protest wage cuts in the textile mills of Lowell, Massachusetts. The sight of female factory operatives taking to the streets in protest over their working conditions, in the midst of antebellum America's "model" industrial city, sent shock waves through counting rooms and drawing rooms across the nation. Managers may have aimed deliberately at the reduction of women's wages because they assumed these women would accept such cuts meekly; these men were gravely mistaken. The walkouts, some of the largest yet organized by American workers, served notice that the Lowell "mill girls" were also the "daughters of freemen"—willing to stand up for what they saw as the very rights their fathers and grandfathers had fought for not so long ago. Without a personal artisanal background to draw on, these women tapped into the inheritance of their forefathers' republican status—they organized themselves as workers to protect the legacies of their middle-class family roots.

The 1834 turnout began on a Friday evening, February 14, with the dismissal of one worker. But she was no ordinary factory hand, and the strike was not an entirely spontaneous action. This woman had already spoken up at several meetings where workers complained about a 15% pay cut scheduled to take effect on March 1 and signed pledges to quit work when wages were cut, or pay a \$5 fine for going back on their word. She urged her fellow operatives to give their notice to quit, withdraw their savings from local banks, and return to their country homes (if they could). After she learned of her discharge (which she may have been expecting) and received her pay, she waved her bonnet in the air to signal other workers looking into the office windows. Her compatriots immediately left their looms and spindles, gathered round their fired comrade, formed a procession of nearly eight hundred workers, and marched through

the city drawing out other employees from all the mills.

By the following day (Saturday), the protesters' ranks were reported to be over two thousand strong. Strike leaders issued a proclamation rooting their actions in the traditions of the American Revolution and pledging themselves to the ideals of solidarity and mutual assistance. The issue at hand was more than a matter of wages and money to these women. Yes, they had to preserve their economic rights as free labor; they deserved to be treated with respect and paid a just wage for their daily toil. But they also believed that it was imperative for all of them to band together to guard their political rights as citizens of a free republic (though they could not vote); they deserved to be recognized as the moral equal of any male overseer or owner. Furthermore, a worker's fundamental equality and independence was a right due all honest American workers, not a favor to be bestowed or removed at management's discretion. And these women saw a clear connection between asserting their status as American citizens and preserving their respectability as women. For only a free female operative paid a just wage could hold herself above any potentially contaminating influences in the factory.

Although the strike began with bold assertions of workers' unity and appeals for respect, the protesters' fervor subsided quickly. Advanced planning and enthusiastic rallies were no match for corporate wealth and power. The overall economic climate was sluggish, and the corporations seemed in no hurry to make concessions to resolve this disruption in production. The operatives discovered, by Monday, that they were the ones who would have to move rapidly if they wanted to protect their jobs. New recruits already streamed into the city inquiring about the jobs left open by strikers, several leaders were summarily fired, and others returned to work at the reduced wages.

But life in Lowell did not return immediately to the status quo. Some strikers left the company boardinghouses and rented their own quarters; others demanded that the banks pay out their accounts in cash and made good on their plans to hire wagons that took them back to their rural homes. One former overseer recalled that in some mills there were looms that lay idle until September 1835.

In October 1836, operatives in Lowell again turned out over the issue of declining wages. Actually, in this instance, the workers' boarding charges went up without any corresponding raise in pay, and the net effect was a decrease in earnings. Harriet Hanson Robinson, who wrote a book about her childhood in Lowell (*Loom and Spindle*), reported that the strike spread from room to room, and mill to mill. Protesters again

tried to do some advanced planning and targeted vulnerable areas in the production process, knowing if they shut down particular rooms, then the whole factory would have to stop running. For example, weavers—though they were relatively well paid and felt the increase in boarding costs less—were also well organized and led many facets of the walkout. They urged other workers to leave their departments; if enough workers joined in, even if they did not compose a majority of the workforce, they could still shut down the mills. Eventually, 1,500 women walked out and formed a procession through the city streets. The marchers did not have banners or music, but they sang their own songs.

This walkout proved to be a harder-fought battle than the 1834 protest. Once again, thousands of women assembled to hear speeches about their rights as the daughters (or more likely, granddaughters) of revolutionary patriots. Many operatives held out for more than two weeks. There were reports that a “Factory Girls’ Association” had formed and quickly enrolled 2,500 members. The organization demanded that manufacturers communicate with its officers and that no sanctions be taken against any members. Yet some strikers did face corporate reprisals. And after a month of agitation, the strike concluded much as the one in 1834 had. Some workers left the mills altogether and returned to their families; other straggled back to their jobs under the new rates. But one observer did report a crucial difference: this time, the corporations rescinded the board increase for workers paid by the day. Thus, about 40% of the women employees (those paid a daily wage) did win their basic demand. In this instance, the mills were faced with thousands of strikers and a shutdown dragging on for weeks in the midst of a sales boom. So, the owners may have been more anxious to settle this dispute than they had been two years earlier, and more willing to show some flexibility in making modest concessions.

The mill operatives of Lowell, in the turnouts of 1834 and 1836, protested as workers, as women, and as the “daughters of freemen.” The strikers, usually living on their own away from their families, still invoked strong images of their personal heritage in defense of their bold actions. Their rhetoric and conduct displayed a radical new vision of women’s power through public protest, embedded in a language of traditional rights inherited through their patriarchal lineage. Patriotism meant fighting for fairness, not blind obedience to those in authority. Militancy was a necessary tool to secure liberty and protect status. The strikers demanded that the historical ideals of respect, justice, and equity be honored within the new factory system. And they insisted that they would not play the role of dutiful daughters for any

substitute father-manager in the scheme of corporate paternalism. Rather, they would take the lessons of discipline and interdependence learned in the mills and use those principles to build networks for collective protest. Thus, these strikers drew on the ideology of republicanism, citizenship, and self-determination—all patriotic, mainstream democratic themes—blended with the language of class- and gender-consciousness and solidarity to support their struggles as workers and as women.

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See also Textiles

LOYAL LEGION OF LOGGERS AND LUMBERMEN

The origin of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen began with the 1917 Pacific Northwest lumber strike. By August of that year, 50,000 lumber workers shut down approximately 75% of the industry region-wide. The primary issues for the workers involved their demands for an eight-hour day, wage increases, and improvement in living conditions in logging camps. Employers were most intransigent over the eight-hour day. Even though striking workers were forced to return to the logging camps and lumber mills, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and American Federation of Labor (AFL)—both of which had competed for leadership of the strike—urged workers to “strike on the job.” This tactic of working only eight hours a day and intentionally slowing down on the job severely reduced production.

The federal government grew concerned over the low production of lumber and decided to act. Lumber, especially spruce, was a primary manufacturing material for building military aircraft. In early October, the War Department dispatched Colonel Bryce P. Disque to investigate the production problem and to find a solution that would meet the military’s needs. After consulting with members of the academic community, labor leaders, and lumber company owners in the region, Disque came to the conclusion that

the continuing problems of labor unrest were caused by difficult working conditions, low pay, and the lack of an eight-hour day among the lumber industry's workforce. Disque's plan was to use federal troops to begin logging operations in the spruce timber region of the Pacific Northwest and to create an organization to deal with the industry's labor-management problems. It was necessary for Disque to get as many lumber company owners to agree to this scheme as possible. With a sufficient number of them giving their approval, the War Department allotted him 100 officers and 25,000 troops to staff his Spruce Production Division (SPD). In order to solve the long-term problems of the industry as a whole, however, Disque established the Legion. This organization was designed to provide a forum for workers and employers to resolve disputes in the industry. The federal government and lumber company owners considered the SPD to be a temporary wartime measure. They considered the Legion as a possible permanent solution to industrial unrest. By December, the Legion grew in membership as loggers, mill and kiln hands, and employers joined. Its membership peaked by the war's end with more than 100,000 members and over 1,000 locals. The membership was primarily native-born men, though a small number of immigrants and women were also members.

Soon after the creation of the Legion, the issues that caused the strike and that continued to plague the industry were brought up at local meetings. In early 1918—at Disque's urging—employers began to implement the eight-hour day in an effort to bring their operations to normal production levels. On March 1, 1918, Disque, after receiving agreement from two hundred representatives of the Pacific Northwest lumber industry, declared the eight-hour day, the 48-hour workweek, and time and a half for overtime in effect throughout the Pacific Northwest. Living conditions and wages also improved over the course of 1918. These improvements in working and living conditions severely weakened the organizing efforts of the IWW and AFL.

At the end of the war, Legion locals overwhelmingly voted to continue the organization. Members elected delegates from each local to represent them at the district boards. Both worker and employer delegates were chosen by the boards to serve at the Headquarters Council, headed by Colonel Disque. Funding for the Legion came from member dues and contributions from employers. For several years, the organization remained a strong force in the region's timber industry. Locals could be found throughout the Pacific Northwest, including northern California. The Legion's constitution stipulated that locals elect a special committee for negotiations and grievance issues with

employers. The organization established a wage scale and continued to support the eight-hour day. It also published a bulletin and other periodicals.

Nevertheless, membership began to dwindle as employers grew less supportive of employee participation. The experiment in employer and employee collaboration in such an organization revealed its limits with workers' concerns over wages and working conditions in conflict with employers' concerns over profits and production levels.

By 1921, the Legion had a membership of just 10,000, never rising above that number throughout the decade. In 1935, a major strike again gripped the region. At first, the Legion opposed the strike but later demanded a wage increase, thus further alienating employer support. The final end came with the Supreme Court decision upholding the Wagner Act (1935). The act re-invigorated AFL organizing in the timber industry. The new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) also proved too competitive for the Legion. Even the last-ditch effort to remove employer members, accept the right to strike, and change the organization's name in order to meet the recognition requirements of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) could not save the Legion from extinction.

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LUCIA, CARMEN (APRIL 3, 1902– FEBRUARY 1985) Union Organizer

Carmen Lucia was a lifelong unionist who organized workers across the United States. Joining the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA)

at age 14, Lucia became a tenacious organizer for the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union (UHCMW), affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). While working for the UHCMW, Lucia led numerous organizing drives, became one of the union's first female vice presidents in 1946, was appointed a labor delegate to France in 1950, and participated in education, health care, women's rights, and other humanitarian causes.

Two years after her birth in Calabria, Italy, in 1902, Lucia's family immigrated to Rochester, New York, where several relatives had already settled to work in the city's thriving garment industry. Raised in Rochester, Lucia's worldview was shaped by her father's periodic layoffs at Stein-Bloch garment factory and, later, by his membership in the ACWA. Additionally, she was influenced by her older brother's experiences as an organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and, perhaps most poignantly, the death of a 17-year-old girl shot during a garment strike in 1913 while standing near Lucia, who had sneaked out of her house to picket with her father. Consequently, over the course of her upbringing, Lucia developed a hatred of poverty and a belief that unions could improve the lives of working people.

At age 12, Lucia dropped out of school to help raise her siblings, 13 in all, and two years later began working at Stein-Bloch as a machine operator. At Stein-Bloch she became chairperson of the ACWA local, in charge of roughly two hundred laborers. When tensions developed between the union and Stein-Bloch in 1924, Lucia was appointed spokesperson and in this capacity led her first strike. While the stoppage accomplished few gains, Stein-Bloch refused to rehire Lucia. However, Abraham Chapman, the vice president of Rochester's ACWA, was impressed by Lucia's charisma and at the time desired someone with Italian-language skills and hired her as his secretary. Between 1924 and 1930, Lucia worked for Chapman, became a valuable asset to the ACWA, and rose to the position of interpreter and director of complaints.

Although Lucia dropped out of school at a young age, her mother had taught her the value of a bilingual education by teaching Carmen to read through English and Italian-language newspapers. Thus, at age 25, upon learning that evening courses were being offered to female workers by the Industrial Department of Rochester's Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Lucia embraced the opportunity to participate. There, Lucia was mentored by Elizabeth Hiss, the department's director, who had Lucia take courses in labor history, debate middle-class university students on various topics, and attend

community functions at local churches and synagogues, where Lucia spoke out on behalf of Rochester's labor force. Through her friendship with Hiss, in 1927 and 1930, Lucia enrolled in the Summer School for Women Workers in Industry at Bryn Mawr College in Philadelphia, where she met Hilda (Jane) Worthington Smith (director of Bryn Mawr, 1920–1933), who further mentored Lucia. Soon, Lucia began writing labor and inspirational poetry that was published in *Shop and School* by Bryn Mawr; *Spring Magazine*, published by the Affiliated Schools; and the *Hat Worker*, the official newspaper of the UHCMW. In this context, Lucia befriended multi-ethnic Euro-American female workers, some of whom were Marxists. Later on she was appointed student representative for the Affiliated Summer Schools for Workers in Industry, Inc., a program affiliated with the Brookwood Labor School, the Barnard School of Columbia University, and the University of Wisconsin, where she would serve as secretary of the joint committee from 1934 to 1936. Lucia was also elected class president in 1930. Through these programs, Lucia developed a middle-class female support network and became a lifelong advocate of educational programs for workers and women in particular. In fact, Lucia would become the vice president of the National YWCA, a member of the League of Women Voters, and a board member of the Affiliated Schools for Workers.

In 1930, Lucia broke with the ACWA over a dispute concerning the treatment of Italian workers. However, through her studies at Bryn Mawr, Lucia met Louis Fuchs, of the Independent Neckwear Workers Union (NWU), who hired her as a full-time organizer, sending her to New Haven, Philadelphia, and then Chicago. In 1931, in New Haven, Lucia called a strike at the Seigman and Son Hat Company, during which she drew on her experiences at Bryn Mawr and obtained middle-class support from the broader community through connections to women activists and students attending the Divinity School of Yale. While the strike (which lasted from February to November) was ultimately lost, Lucia gained much respect from her union, given that during the ordeal she was beaten by three assailants, arrested, and boldly returned to the picket line.

During the Great Depression, Lucia married Leo Kowski, the financial secretary of the ACWA. She retained her maiden name as a marker of independence and delivered their first and only child, Margarita, in 1932. Due to illness, Kowski did not work, and when in 1934 the NWU asked Lucia to help organize workers in Philadelphia, she accepted. During a strike in Philadelphia, Lucia drew community support by highlighting the female members of the

labor force. Lucia asked women workers to picket while wearing white dresses with bright red sashes. After the strike was won, the NWU sent Lucia to Chicago, where another garment strike was in progress. While attempting to speak to a replacement worker, Lucia placed her hand on the female worker's shoulder and immediately after was dragged into an alley by a Chicago police officer, who beat her, pulled her arm out of its socket, and then arrested her. After she was bailed out of jail by the NWU, Lucia fearlessly rejoined the picket line. Embroiled in an internal altercation within the NWU, Lucia quit the union. In 1935, she met Max Zaritsky, of the Cloth Hat and Cap Makers of North America, who shared many of Lucia's ideals and hired her to organize West Coast garment workers.

Between 1935 and 1950, Lucia organized garment workers on behalf of the UHCMW in Los Angeles and San Francisco. She later went to Texas and worked in operations in Dallas, Garland, Longview, and Corsica. Upon briefly returning to Illinois (DeKalb), Lucia established herself at the union's central office in Atlanta (1944–1960), from which she led campaigns as far north as Norwalk, Connecticut, and Holyoke, Massachusetts. Lucia then chaired the union's southern organizing drive in Greenville, Alabama; Winchester, Tennessee; and Richmond, Virginia. In 1950, she was elected a labor delegate to France, under the State Department's Economic Cooperation Administration, in affiliation with the Marshall Plan. Upon returning to the United States, she continued to work for the UHCMW throughout the 1960s, by which time she was championing the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1974, at the age of 72, and after 39 years of union service, Lucia retired from the UHCMW. In 1980, she returned to Rochester, where several of her brothers and sisters still resided, and in February 1985, Lucia passed away.

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Selected Works

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See also Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; American Federation of Labor; Brookwood Labor College; Industrial Workers of the World; United Hatters', Cap and Millinery Workers' International Union

LUDLOW MASSACRE (1914)

The 1913–1914 southern Colorado coal strike was one of the most violent labor conflicts in American history. The strike's denouement came on April 20, 1914, when 12 children, six miners and union officials, and one National Guardsman were killed in a day-long battle between the Colorado National Guard, which had been called to break the strike, and residents of a tent colony near the Ludlow, Colorado, railroad station. Ludlow was the largest of seven tent colonies that the United Mine Workers (UMW) had built to house the more than 9,000 mostly Southern and Eastern European and Mexican immigrant miners who were thrown out of company housing when they went on strike. The massacre set off a 10-day-long war between National Guardsmen and incensed miners, who were intent on exacting revenge for the Ludlow killings. Twenty-nine more people were killed during those 10 days, before President Woodrow Wilson sent the Army to restore order.

Like many well-known historical events, the Ludlow Massacre has been distorted by misstatement and exaggeration. Though some histories of the massacre contend that the Colorado National Guard planned an attack on the Ludlow tent colony, the truth was more complicated. Relations between Guardsmen and the striking miners were far from harmonious during the six months the Guard was on strike duty. The poisoned atmosphere that developed between the Guard and the miners created the preconditions for the Ludlow Massacre.

By the spring of 1914, the coal-mine operators, led by the Rockefeller family-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company (CF&I), had all but defeated the miners' strike. The National Guard had helped the operators import thousands of nonunion workers into their mines, leaving the UMW with little leverage to negotiate a settlement. The miners, however, refused to surrender. On Sunday, April 19, 1914, the day before the Ludlow Massacre, the Greeks in the Ludlow tent colony treated their neighbors to a celebration of the Greek Orthodox Easter. After roasting lamb, the tent colonists played baseball. In what was perhaps an apocryphal story, several women participating in the game said later that a few National Guardsmen showed up at the ball field. The Guardsmen and colonists exchanged insults, and as the soldiers left, they hinted that they would soon attack the

colony. It was this story that has probably left the impression that the Guard had planned an invasion.

Next morning, a detail of National Guardsmen came to Ludlow looking for an Italian miner. Louis Tikas, a Greek immigrant who had become a union organizer and then the popular leader of the Ludlow colony, said the man in question was not there and refused to allow a search. Tikas thought he had good reason to keep the soldiers out. Guardsmen had frequently used intimidation and violence against the miners and their families as they attempted to force the strikers back to work. The Guard had also torn down the nearby Forbes tent colony several weeks earlier. Most miners and their families already loathed the Guard, and after Forbes's destruction, they vowed that they would not allow soldiers into their camps again.

What followed was a series of misunderstandings and mistaken perceptions. It remains impossible to determine who fired the first shot, but by 10 a.m., the Guard and the miners were exchanging a torrent of rifle fire. Charlie Costa, an Italian immigrant and striking miner who would die that day along with his wife and children, led the miners out of the tent colony in an effort to draw the National Guard's fire away from the women and children still in the tents. Costa's plan failed. In addition to keeping the miners pinned down just outside the colony, the Guard poured rifle and machine gun fire into the tents. The women and children inside rightfully believed that fleeing would get them shot, but the canvas tents provided scant protection from the gunfire. With little choice, some women and children climbed into the pits that many colonists had dug in the earth beneath their tents early in the strike after the Baldwin-Felts detectives hired by the coal operators fired on the tent colonies. These pits served as hiding places.

By early evening, the Guard had succeeded in fighting its way into the tent colony. They set the tents ablaze, but also found women and children still hiding in the tents. Guardsmen had a very difficult time getting these colonists to come out because they believed that the soldiers were going to kill them. The soldiers eventually pulled more than a few women and children out of the fire that quickly engulfed the entire tent colony, but failed to find all who were still alive and hiding underground. It was not until the following afternoon that the bodies of two women and eleven children were found in the pit beneath a tent. The Guard had also taken Louis Tikas and two other miners prisoner. All three men were killed while in the Guard's custody.

The miners who escaped Ludlow could think of nothing but revenge. For the next 10 days, they

destroyed the mine companies' property while fighting the Guard. The army's arrival in southern Colorado ended the violence, but the strike eventually ended in defeat for the miners. This outcome was not unique for workers who faced hostile military intervention during a strike. The National Guard's court-martial acquitted all the men charged with crimes stemming from Ludlow, but the Ludlow Massacre did have some lasting impact. John D. Rockefeller Jr. introduced his Industrial Representation Plan at the CF&I's mines shortly after the strike ended. The plan instituted a system of company-sanctioned representation for the miners and became a model for company unions. Nevertheless, Colorado's coal miners struck eight more times during the following two decades, and the UMW won a contract with the CF&I in 1933. For students of labor history, the Ludlow Massacre vividly illustrates the volatile conditions that military intervention in labor conflicts often created and reveals the class, racial, and ethnic tensions that drove military strike-breaking.

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LUTHER, SETH (1795–1863) Writer and Labor Activist

Seth Luther was born in Providence, Rhode Island. His father was a veteran of the Revolutionary War. His mother was active religiously. Trained as a

carpenter, Luther practiced a strain of Baptist egalitarianism that he preached in the streets of Providence and laced into the philosophy of the emerging national workers' movement in essays in the 1830s. These militant pamphlets in the Jacksonian Era extolled labor rights, like the 10-hour day, as well as the necessity for suffrage rights without property qualifications. Luther matched the ardor of his literary output with concrete union organizing on a local and national level. In Rhode Island, he was a key figure in a civil uprising in 1842—the Dorr War. He followed his own dictates and took up arms for the right of an unfettered franchise and landed in prison. Like many social pioneers he eventually suffered a nervous breakdown and was institutionalized until his death in an asylum.

His political career had its genesis in Providence's First Baptist Church, where Luther apparently offered his own take on Scripture not long after the War of 1812. At the same time he worked his trade as a carpenter, he also moonlighted as a bookseller and vendor of religious portraits. Despite his literary skills, Luther seemed to have little business sense and a host of medical problems that curtailed his activities. He went to debtor's prison in 1823, saddled with almost \$1,000 of liability. He successfully petitioned the General Assembly to release him later in the year. In 1824, the church expelled him for "disorderly walking," a catchall phrase that could include drinking, unsanctioned religious activity, or other problems.

Luther traveled frequently, allegedly walking hundreds of miles during various trips. He appeared in Rhode Island again in 1831 when he had an indirect experience in a racial riot in Providence. The state mobilized the militia, including Luther, who later complained that many male citizens had to serve as troops involuntarily without the right to vote due to a property qualification of \$134 of taxable realty. That seemingly small figure still disenfranchised about 60% of all white males in the state by 1840. Rhode Island, the most urban industrial state in the nation, soon had more propertyless factory workers than land-rich farmers.

The 1830s was an active decade in Luther's life and rise to labor prominence. He wrote his first pamphlet in 1833 about the voting situation in Rhode Island, *Address on the Right of Free Suffrage*. He agitated the question of the 10-hour workday—perhaps the linchpin of the era's workingmen's parties. He crisscrossed New England, hawking copies of a regional labor newspaper. He helped found the Trades Union of Boston and Vicinity and participated in the pioneering National Trades Union that flourished until the Panic of 1837.

Despite his broad, geographical labor career, Luther flexed his muscular efforts primarily in his home state. In the 1830s, he joined a band of skilled workers who challenged the role and rights of laborers throughout society and, in particular, agitated fiercely for local manhood suffrage. Employing the rhetoric of the American Revolution, these tradesmen joined forces with liberal-minded professionals in Rhode Island to boil the arguments into a material force in the upcoming Dorr War in 1842. In his quest for political freedom, Luther, who became a brilliant orator as well, often declared "Peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must!"

He was in a group of armed demonstrators who tried to capture the state arsenal in Providence in the year of the uprising, after his rebel cohorts used an extralegal election to bifurcate the state between reformers and the forces of the status quo. The ensuing insurrection, more smoke than fusillade, ended quickly when the ruling law and order group activated the militia and pursued the mutineers relentlessly but with only incidental violence.

Charged with treason under martial law, Luther spent a year in prison and published a rare poem of gratitude to the women who supported the campaign. After his release, he embarked on a tour to champion the uprising, which eventually became part of the 1844 Democratic presidential campaign. He spent time in Illinois recuperating mentally before rejoining his colleagues in Rhode Island and re-igniting the old labor quest of a 10-hour workday.

In 1846, he abandoned his usual tunnel vision for unions and suffrage by writing to President Polk, offering his patriotic services in the Mexican War. Apparently, on his way to the conflict, Luther entered a bank in Boston, brandishing a sword, and demanded a \$1,000 in Polk's name. He became a patient at two asylums in Providence before being transferred in 1858 to a facility in Brattleboro, Vermont, that charged less than its Rhode Island counterparts. The city fathers in Providence hoped to save scarce municipal funds in that depression year.

Luther died in 1863, unnoticed for the most part, in the midst of a much crueler civil war than the one he helped instigate. A local paper wrote that he led a useless life. He was buried in an unmarked grave at the Vermont asylum. He wielded the precepts of the American Revolution and natural equality more vehemently than his sword in the Boston bank. Louis Hartz wrote that Luther possessed a unique global consciousness in that era about the drive for class equality. The Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame inducted Seth Luther, the deranged bank robber, into its ranks in 2001.

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See also **Dorr War**

LYNN SHOE STRIKE (1860)

The great New England shoe strike of February and March, 1860, led by shoe workers in Lynn, Massachusetts, involved town-centered artisan men, women stitchers working by hand in their homes or by machine in small factories, and rural outworkers in Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire. The strike represented the most widely supported and powerful demonstration of American labor protest prior to the Civil War.

The 1860 strike was a response on many levels to the slow industrialization of New England shoemaking during the early nineteenth century. In the pre-industrial phase, artisan shoemakers produced the entire boot or shoe in small shops called "10-footers." As the market for their shoes expanded, daughters and wives in artisan families began to assist the shoemakers but did not enter the shops. In their kitchens, women hand-sewed the uppers for the shoes in a process called "binding." The female binders then passed that part to the artisans, who completed the shoe. A distinct gender division of labor became established. As demand for boots and shoes rose, shoemakers or the merchants, who handled the sale of the shoes and often supplied leather to the artisans, began to hire women as shoe binders. Their wages remained low. If possible, young women left their families to earn higher wages in New England textile factories.

The artisan system of shoemaking in New England became altered by centralization and mechanization. The shoemakers, now called "bottomers," began in the 1830s and 1840s to protest low wages and a lost independence. Merchants responded by hiring shoe bottomers in rural New England, linked by wagon. By the 1850s, the sewing machine was adapted to stitch leather. The merchants or shoe bosses brought sewing machines into their central shops, where they distributed leather and assembled the completed shoes for sale. Highly skilled leather cutters also worked in the central shops. At first, female stitchers

operated the sewing machines by foot power, but shoe bosses quickly attached the machines to steam engines. Meanwhile, shoe binders working at home in Lynn, Salem, and Marblehead had the chance to rent sewing machines. Their work remained in their homes, but the machines had to be laboriously hand-cranked, sometimes by children as their mothers or sisters stitched.

Machines run by steam power stitched uppers much faster, while the uniformity of machine stitching represented an improvement over hand work. Wages for stitchers in factories outpaced both machine work and handwork at home. Factory stitchers, usually young, unmarried women, worked for 10 hours a day, six days a week, under the constant discipline of centralized management. They earned high wages and did not, like shoe binders, have to provide or furnish their own thread, needles, and wax. All of these groups—shoe bottomers, shoe binders, home machine workers, and factory stitchers—participated in the shoe strike of 1860. The issues that arose during the strike revealed the opportunities and challenges of industrialization as it reshaped the work of men and women. The strike also featured the persisting values of artisan work culture and gender relations within the family.

Artisan shoemakers in Lynn launched the strike on February 22, 1860, the birthday of George Washington, to commemorate the link between their struggle for independence against the shoe bosses with the political rights of artisan men achieved in the War of the Revolution. Artisans in Lynn and Natick, Massachusetts, led the action. Male shoemakers sought the support both of other shoemakers throughout New England and of women workers in the shoe trade. Female moral support would blunt criticism of violence against teamsters taking materials to rural shoemakers and organize the support of families for the strike. But as the strike spread, conflicts began to emerge between men and women strikers and between factory stitchers and shoe binders.

Many shoe binders and factory stitchers saw the strike as an opportunity to advance their interests as workingwomen. A coalition forged between factory workers and lower-paid home workers held out the hope for higher wages for all women engaged in shoe work, whether married or single, family resident or boarder, and wherever they stitched. Higher wages for women's work in the home and in the factory meant that single women could anticipate—once they married—reasonable wages for homework. The factory girls occupying a strategic place in centralized operations could deny the shoe bosses sewn uppers to deliver to rural bottomers. Workingwomen organized

LYNN SHOE STRIKE (1860)

in early 1860 to demand higher wages for female factory workers and homeworkers.

Artisan shoemakers who had initiated and organized the strike objected, regarding men's rights and wages as primary. During the debates over the purpose of the strike, women homeworkers had to choose between supporting the strike as women workers with their own interests or as female members of artisan families. Many remained loyal to their husbands, fathers, and brothers, abandoning the coalition with factory stitchers and their wage demands. Women who supported the male strikers thus reflected gender relations within the artisan family, values that defined women as secondary earners in a family wage system within which they were socially and economically subordinate. The alliance of male bottomers and female homeworkers prevailed, and the factory girls deserted the strike.

Street processions and marches to other shoemaking towns featured the men and women strikers carrying banners proclaiming support for increases in male wages and female moral support for the strike. On March 7, one banner carried by women supporters summed up their position: "Weak in physical strength but strong in moral courage, we dare battle for the right, shoulder to shoulder with our fathers, husbands and brothers." The values of artisan culture shaped and dominated the 1860 strike, which represented the last stand of pre-industrial work against the emerging factory system. After the regional strike failed in March, the impetus of mechanization and centralization brought more male workers into the factory, eliminating both the work of artisan bottomers and shoe binders, the key supporters of the strike.

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MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

The most powerful labor organization in the United States at the turn of the twenty-first century was the Major League Baseball Players Union, an association of millionaire athletes who had turned the tables on management and seemingly had the upper hand in the sport, winning all eight negotiations since 1968. This was a dramatic reversal from the early days of baseball when players were described as chattel by shortstop John M. Ward of the New York Giants, organizer of the Brotherhood, the first baseball union in 1885. The Brotherhood fought against maximum salaries and the reserve clause (which restricted players to their teams in perpetuity), and established the short-lived Players' League in 1890. The next brief efforts at unionization were the Protective Association of Professional Baseball Players, formed in 1900, and the Base Ball Players' Fraternity in 1912.

In 1946, Robert Murphy, a Congress of International Organizations (CIO) lawyer, formed the American Baseball Guild to equalize the playing field between management and labor. He sought a \$7,500 minimum salary, an arbitration system for resolving contract disputes, replacing the reverse clause with long-term contracts, and insurance and pension benefits. He convinced the Pittsburgh Pirates, a team located in a strong prolabor city, to strike, but they backed down at the last minute under pressure from management. The owners did make concessions, including \$25 a week for spring training meals ("Murphy money"), a \$5,000 minimum salary, a small pension plan, and

representation on the owners' and league presidents' council.

In 1953, after Commissioner Ford Frick refused to give the players a full accounting of the pension fund and the owners refused to raise the minimum salary to \$8,000, team representatives, led by Ralph Kiner and Allie Reynolds, hired J. Norman Lewis as legal counsel. The owners excluded him from their meetings with player reps, and then the ballplayers founded the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA). In response, owners agreed to fund the pension with revenue from the All Star game and World Series.

In 1959, the weak MLBPA replaced Lewis with Judge Robert Cannon, whose goal was to become baseball commissioner. Seven years later the MLBPA offered Cannon \$50,000 to become their full-time administrator, but he declined. The members, led by Robin Roberts and Jim Bunning, chose a new tactic, influenced by rising NFL salaries, fears about their pensions, the dual Koufax-Drysdale holdout, and the social activism of the 1960s. They hired Marvin J. Miller, chief labor economist with the United Steelworkers, as executive director.

Miller sought to destroy the paternalistic character of player-management relations by introducing an adversarial model, learning the players' main grievances, and shaping their collective consciousness to see themselves as professionals meriting proper compensation. Miller scared the owners, who established the Player Relations Committee (PRC) to deal with him through professional negotiator John J. Gaherin. In 1968, after Miller threatened to seek federal

mediation, the owners signed the first Basic Agreement of any sport. The path-breaking 2-year contract raised the minimum pay from \$7,000 to \$10,000, granted players the right to be represented by agents, and established grievance procedures adjudicated by the commissioner. Then in 1969, veteran players sat out spring training to secure higher pension funding.

A bitter fight emerged between the union and PRC in 1972. Owners were upset at rising payrolls and their declining power, while the players were still concerned about pension funding. The union voted 663-10 to authorize a strike in spring training that lasted until April 13 and got their pension contributions raised to \$5.9 million. The press attacked the players as spoiled, pampered, and irresponsible.

In 1973, the MLBPA focused on securing independent grievance arbitration and a breakthrough occurred when the owners agreed that players with 2 years' experience could request "final offer salary arbitration" after the expiration of their contract. The player and owner would each submit a salary to a board comprised of a representative from labor and management plus an independent arbitrator, and they would pick between the two proposals. This opportunity helped many players get big raises as teams became more responsive to their demands in hopes of avoiding final arbitration.

The MLBPA and Free Agency

The union supported players' rights to control their own destiny. In 1969, the MLBPA financed Curt Flood's suit to block his trade from the Cardinals to the Philadelphia Phillies. The case went to the Supreme Court in 1972, which rejected his complaint because baseball was exempt from antitrust law. Two years later, Catfish Hunter was declared a free agent by arbitrator Peter Seitz because annuity installments stipulated in his contract were not paid. Hunter then signed a 5-year, \$3.75-million contract with the Yankees, which opened the eyes of star players.

Miller believed a player who completed a season without a signed contract, would become a free agent. In 1975, two players completed the season unsigned—pitchers Andy Messersmith of the Dodgers and the injured Dave McNally of the Expos. After the season Seitz ruled they were now free agents. McNally retired, but Messersmith signed a multiyear contract with the Braves for \$1.75 million. The owners responded by locking out the players from spring training, but Commissioner Kuhn ordered the camps open under pressure from television and certain key owners. That summer negotiators agreed to grant

free agency after 6 years, but teams signing these players had to give the old team a selection in the amateur draft. Players also won many perks, including firstclass airfare, severance pay, and input on working conditions. Average salaries shot up to \$76,000 in 1977, the first year of widespread free agency, and \$143,000 by 1980.

In the early 1980s, when there was widespread union busting and forced givebacks throughout the United States, the baseball owners also fought back. They wanted better compensation in the form of a comparable player. That would discourage teams from hiring free agents, which resulted in higher salaries, lack of control over their players, uncompetitive play, and economic uncertainty. The union responded with a strike on April 1 that lasted 8 days. Shortly thereafter, a 4-year Basic Agreement was signed that did not alter free agency, while raising the minimum salary to \$35,000 in 1984.

The growing hatred and distrust of players and management propelled a major strike in 1981 that began on June 12 and lasted 7 weeks. The public was irate and blamed the players. By then the players' strike fund was nearly spent, while the owners' insurance was about to expire, and they would lose their television revenue. The settlement gave owners who lost a free agent protection of 26 of their 40 man rosters, leaving only journeymen and minor leaguers as compensation. A split season was declared, and the winners of the prestrike season and the poststrike season advanced to the playoffs.

Miller retired in 1982 and was replaced by Ken Moffett, a former mediator, who lasted less than 2 years. Miller temporarily "unretired," and gave way to his assistant, Don Fehr, a brilliant attorney, who led the MLBPA to great successes, protecting players' jobs and rights.

In the 1986 round of negotiations, the owners cried poverty, claiming a total loss of \$166 million although attendance was high and television revenue was up to \$200 million. The union authorized a strike date on August 6 after they had made most of their salaries but before the owner would get 80% of the national TV revenue. Two days later an agreement was reached that established eligibility for arbitration after 3 years, the salary minimum was boosted to \$60,000, and compensation for free agents through the amateur draft was restored. Thereafter owners then stopped bidding for free agents. The union sued, and arbitrators twice found the owners and the commissioner guilty of collusion to fix the player marketplace. The teams were fined \$280 million.

The 4-year basic agreement signed in 1990 called for two new teams, boosted salary minimums to \$100,000, raised the pension contribution to \$55 million, and

granted salary arbitration to the most experienced second-year men. Two years later the owners hired a new negotiator, Richard Ravitch, with the hopes of busting the union.

In 1994, with players getting 60.5% of total revenues, the owners proposed sharing revenue with the players, with salaries capped at 50% of revenues, ending salary arbitration, and granting free agency in 4 years. The MLBPA was prepared to go to the barricades to maintain the status quo, and with a strike fund of \$165,000 per man, called a strike for August 12. The owners responded provocatively, refusing to make a scheduled \$7.8 million pension contribution. The bitter and suspicious negotiations fell apart, and the strike followed. The players returned to work after 232 days following a court injunction that restored the old terms of the expired Basic Agreement. In 1996, a new agreement was reached. The players accepted interleague play, which began in 1997, two more teams in 1998, a minimum salary of \$200,000 in 1999, and a 35% luxury tax on at least five teams. The current Basic Agreement, signed in 2002, established revenue sharing among teams and raised the minimum pay to \$300,000. Since then the union's main concern seems to have become protecting players accused of drug usage. Random testing for steroids was agreed to in 2003, and in 2005, year-round testing for steroid use was introduced, with a 10-day suspension for the first offense.

The MLBPA's successes set a standard for labor relations in professional sports. Miller remolded a company union into a powerful collective that won major gains at the bargaining table, which the players, through a united front, have since maintained and expanded. The achievement of a grievance procedure in 1968 was the foundation for all future gains. Thereafter the union used the strike as a tactic to demonstrate the solidarity of the membership to secure even more gains.

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MAQUILADORAS

Maquiladora is the name for a sector of the Mexican economy in which foreign-owned firms assemble products from parts and other inputs that come largely from outside of Mexico. Most of the assembled products are then exported from Mexico. The *maquiladora* sector's development has served as a model for similar activities in developing countries throughout the world. This type of development is an example of "flexible production" that has typified economic globalization. New technologies make it possible for the production of goods to be broken up into smaller parts so that the manufacturing of a product can occur in different locations.

The *maquiladora* sector has its origins before the birth of today's form of globalization. From 1942-1964 the United States and Mexico engaged in a cooperative venture known as the *Bracero Program* that enabled Mexican agricultural workers to enter the United States and help harvest particular crops during specified time periods. Once the crops were harvested, these workers were transported back to Mexico. The Mexican workers were needed in the United States initially because of labor shortages caused by World War II. Mexico for its part had a surplus of agricultural workers. But in 1964 the United States unilaterally canceled the *Bracero Program*, which caused a social and political crisis in the Mexican border towns. In response the United States and Mexico entered into a new agreement known as the Border Industrialization Program (BIP). It was designed to ease Mexican unemployment in the border towns. The United States and Mexico amended tariff codes to allow U.S. firms to export intermediate products to Mexico for assembly into finished products without paying Mexican tariffs. These products would then be exported from Mexico back to the United States with tariffs limited to the value added by Mexican assembly. Mexico at the time had a development strategy called "import substitution," which was geared toward promoting economic self-sufficiency. The BIP ran counter to this strategy because it relied on foreign investors. Nevertheless Mexico attempted to maintain its broader economic policy by placing restrictions on the BIP: Requiring dual U.S.-Mexican ownership of BIP plants, restricting their location to U.S.-Mexican border areas, and requiring that all BIP products be exported immediately from the country.

The initial size of the program was quite modest. By 1971, there were only two hundred *maquiladoras* employing about 30,000 workers. Working conditions in these plants were very bad and wages low. The government-controlled union, the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), deliberately took a

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hands-off policy in the *maquiladoras* in order to attract foreign investors. But they soon lost control, and militant independent union organizing ensued. As wages increased many owners threatened to pull out. When a major recession hit in 1975, employment actually declined in the *maquiladora* sector. In 1976, the CTM regained control over organizing in the *maquiladora* zones and allowed the Mexican government to take repressive measures against dissident worker organizations. Nevertheless from 1977–1981 continued militant worker activity enabled real wages to grow rapidly. But in 1981–1982, a severe recession and a drastic peso devaluation caused wages and employment to decline once again, and independent union activity ceased.

In 1982, there was a debt repayment crisis in much of the developing world, and Mexico was one of the first to declare its inability to pay off massive foreign loans. In response the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to provide a bridge loan to Mexico so it could continue making payments on its debts. By 1985, IMF pressure resulted in the adoption of a structural-adjustment program that constituted a new economic development strategy. At this point Mexico officially abandoned its import-substitution strategy. The new development model aimed to achieve economic growth through exports, wage, and inflation reduction, privatization of state enterprises, lowering tariffs on foreign goods, and easing barriers to foreign capital. The old BIP was transformed into the *maquiladora* sector and became the centerpiece of this new strategy. During the next decade, restrictions on *maquiladora* development were greatly reduced, including ownership provisions, location, and even the requirement that the goods be exported. *Maquiladora* products could now compete directly with Mexican manufactured goods.

The Mexican government with U.S. approval also initiated an aggressive program to recruit U.S. firms to move production to Mexico. As a result of these efforts the growth of employment in the *maquiladora* sector took off, growing 17.5% from 1982 to 1990 to nearly 500,000 workers. Most of these workers were employed in electric and electronic equipment and products and transportation equipment, particularly automobiles.

In 1994, Mexico, Canada, and the United States entered into an agreement known as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAFTA greatly accelerated the developmental approach initiated in 1985. This included removing any further restrictions on *maquiladora* activity. Militant labor activity had largely been eliminated at this point as well so that *maquiladora* wages and working conditions were generally poor. This resulted in a large jump

in employment in the *maquiladora* sector so that by 1998, there were over 3,000 *maquiladora* plants employing over one million workers. Their location was concentrated in border areas, but there were now *maquiladora* operations throughout the nation.

Part of the significance of the evolution of the *maquiladora* sector is that it became a model for other parts of the world. Beginning in 1971, there began a period of rapid growth of similar assembly operations known as export-processing zones (EPZs), largely in Asia and the Caribbean. There are now more than 200 EPZs in such nations as India, China, Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea, the Philippines, Honduras, and Columbia. Total employment in developing-nation EPZs is now more than four million.

The growth of EPZs generally has led to the displacement of many workers, contributing to the decline of union membership in the United States. It is part of the process of globalization in which capital has become highly mobile, which creates new challenges for organized labor. The EPZs have been controversial within the nations where they are located as well. This is due in part to the fact that wages, working conditions, and environmental impacts have been poor, and union activity has been suppressed by EPZ governments. But in addition there is considerable question of how great a positive impact they really have. In the Mexican case, *maquiladora* activity has ended up displacing more manufacturing jobs than it created. During the past decade, manufacturing employment has declined by nearly 10% even though output has increased by 38%. In part this is due to the fact that *maquiladoras*, like all EPZs, do not use goods produced nationally in the production process. The Mexican content of *maquiladora* products over the past decade is less than 3%. And the *maquiladora* operations have put some Mexican firms that had over 90% Mexican content out of business. Furthermore with the rapid growth of EPZs throughout the world, rising wages in one nation can result in firms leaving for lower wage locations. This is beginning to happen in Mexico as a number of *maquiladora* firms move to China's EPZs.

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See also **Globalization**

MARCH ON WASHINGTON MOVEMENT

The Negro March on Washington and its successor the March on Washington Movement were both efforts by African-Americans in the 1940s to mobilize around the related issues of racial and economic discrimination faced by African-American workers. Behind both efforts was A. Philip Randolph, a labor and civil rights activist, who by 1941 was a national African-American leader, who had led the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the National Negro Congress. Randolph's lifelong political commitment was to convince Americans of all races of the interrelationship between economic inequalities and racial discrimination. Such a commitment inspired his efforts in the 1940s.

The Negro March on Washington for Jobs and Equal Participation in National Defense, 1941

The origin of the Negro March was in the preparedness efforts in the United States in the late 1930s. As European countries increased their demand for certain American products, many American workers began to feel as if the Great Depression was relenting. African-Americans were less likely to notice, because the companies supplying weapons, engine parts, and other products to the Allies were often the same companies who were least likely to employ many African-Americans in well-paying jobs. Likewise African-Americans also found less opportunity if they answered the call of recruiters from the armed services. All branches discriminated against blacks, and all segregated them from white members. African-American organizations, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Urban League, and Randolph's National Negro Congress, took notice of this dual inequality and began to demand that the federal government intervene. But their testimony at congressional hearings, their leaders' meeting with President Franklin Roosevelt, and their reports had caused little change by the end of 1940.

Randolph resolved that different tactics were necessary. Inspired by his own involvement in mass marches and labor strikes, he called for other African-Americans to join him in a mass march on Washington to demand an end to segregation in the armed forces and equal access to defense jobs. He recruited the leaders of most major African-American organizations to lend their names to his efforts and began

recruiting marchers from cities with large African-American populations. Starting with a goal of 10,000 marchers, by late June he believed that 100,000 black men and women might attend the July 1 march. The march was to take place at the Lincoln Memorial and include addresses by all the major African-American leaders. In addition Randolph invited President Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to attend.

President Roosevelt, the first lady, and his aides did not believe the march was a good idea. They feared the march would be used by German officials to highlight the contradictions in U.S. racial policies. They also feared that a large mass of African-Americans in the nation's capital might result in rioting—of white people or black people. As a result they put pressure on Randolph and the other organizers of the march to cancel in June 1941. But these leaders refused to change their plans unless they received some significant action on the part of the president. The negotiations were tense and hurried, since the march was just weeks away. Finally on June 25, the president signed Executive Order 8802. This order did not address all the problems that had inspired the march; most noticeably, it did not directly address the segregation and unequal treatment of African-Americans in the military. Yet it did create a commission on Fair Employment Practices that had the power to investigate companies with defense contracts and punish those that discriminated on the basis of race, religion, or national origin. This commission had the most far-reaching federal powers to fight racial discrimination at the time. Its issuance was seen as a major victory of the Negro March leaders. And the march was canceled in response.

The March on Washington Movement's Successes and Failures

The problem of being a successful threat of a march but not an actual march struck the march organizers as soon as they had canceled. And this problem inspired the creation of the March on Washington Movement (MOWM)—a group that never marched on Washington but did train activists and keep African-Americans mobilized during the 1940s. In July 1941, Randolph and other leaders urged their supporters to stay mobilized to make sure that the president's executive order met their expectations. The American declaration of war in December 1941, however, made marching on Washington an even more radical act, since both Japanese and German officials might use such acts to publicize the pervasive



Civil rights march on Washington, D.C. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, U.S. News & World Report Magazine Collection [LC-DIG-ppmsca-03128 8].

discrimination African-Americans still experienced. Accordingly as Randolph organized the MOWM, he had to balance his desire to mobilize as many African-Americans as possible to work on both economic and civil rights issues with the need to remain patriotic. The need for the group became more obvious as it became clear that the Fair Employment Practices Commission held hearings but rarely invoked its powers to halt contracts with companies that continued to discriminate. The group sponsored a series of mass meetings in Detroit, New York, and St. Louis. Still Randolph found that leaders of other African-American organizations, such as the NAACP and the Urban League, were less inclined to support his efforts when they were associated with a permanent group rather than a single group. And without their support and funds, Randolph and his supporters began to foster protests focused on civil disobedience. Younger activists joined the organization because of this tactic of nonviolent direct action. For example Bayard Rustin, a former Communist, youth activist, and draft resister, became very influential in the group. The MOWM local groups and national conferences influenced such groups as Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which soon used direct action to challenge segregated buses and services for interstate travelers. Though the March on Washington Movement did not last past the 1940s and never held a march in the nation's capital, its influence was profound. People involved with the MOWM in the 1940s went on to play crucial roles in organizing

subsequent efforts to win better treatment of black workers in both the North and the South.

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See also **A. Philip Randolph Institute; Don't Buy Where You Can't Work Campaigns; Fair Employment Practice Committee; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Randolph, A. Philip; Rustin, Bayard**

MARINE TRANSPORT WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION

The Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union (MTW) was one of the largest, most important, and durable segments of the Industrial Workers of the



Marine truck transport units. Marine Corps transport workers study the assembly of one of the many weapons the leathernecks use in war exercises at New River, North Carolina. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USE6-D-005785].

World (IWW), commonly referred to as the Wobblies. The MTW organized sailors, longshoremen, and other workers in the marine transport industry—shipping—on an industrial basis. The MTW was the most international component of an organization ideologically committed to fighting global capitalism yet it was primarily a North American outfit. The MTW simultaneously engendered tremendous respect among many thousands of sailors and animosity from rival unions, employers, and governments.

Shipping, domestic and international, was—and is—essential to the global economy. There are few industries that better embody the market adage “time is money” than shipping. The knowledge that the ship must sail on time provided an opening for longshoremen and sailors to exert pressure “at the point of production” by declaring quickie strikes just before a ship set sail.

Shortly after its founding in 1905, the fledgling revolutionary union started organizing in marine transport. Wobblies first targeted the longshoremen of Hoboken, New Jersey, across the Hudson River from Manhattan. As the largest port in America by a large margin, organizing New York was essential to any maritime union. Interestingly the Irish immigrant James Connally spearheaded the effort. Connally

later took IWW ideals and tactics back to Ireland, where he organized simultaneously for the class struggle and Irish independence, ultimately martyred in the 1916 Easter Rebellion. The MTW remained active on the piers and aboard the ships that docked in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Hoboken into the 1940s.

However as in most other U.S. ports, the MTW never supplanted its rivals, the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) and International Seamen’s Union (ISU), both of which belonged to the more mainstream and conservative American Federation of Labor (AFL). The AFL operated on a craft model, spawning more than a dozen maritime unions divided by region and type of work; by contrast the MTW was an industrial union, meaning that regardless of craft, all workers belonged to the same organization. Also the MTW never signed contracts, so that its members always could deploy workers’ ultimate weapon, their ability to strike. This tactic raised the ire of employers but won respect from many sailors in an often-brutal industry.

In 1912, the IWW created the National Industrial Union of Marine Transport Workers (NIUMTW) as part of its efforts to establish nationwide unions in important industrial fields. The NIUMTW was founded in part to convince certain AFL sailors to

re-affiliate. Engine room workers, who performed some of the dirtiest and hardest work on coal-fired steamships, were overwhelmingly dark-skinned, a huge percentage on Atlantic vessels being Spanish and Portuguese. These men were alienated from the AFL because of its racist tendencies and more conservative policies. Efforts to get the thousands of AFL firemen to join the IWW failed, though the MTW continued to command loyalty from these radical sailors, who often were dual unionists (paying dues into an AFL union and the MTW). Around 1917, the IWW created different MTW sections for the Atlantic, Pacific, Great Lakes, and Gulf of Mexico. Curiously its largest branch remained a separate entity.

In a real sense the history of the MTW is that of Local 8, though technically it did not originally belong to the MTW. In May 1913, several thousand Philadelphia longshoremen struck for higher wages and union recognition. The union that this diverse dock workforce chose to represent them was the IWW, chartered as Local 8. Local 8 did what no other MTW or IWW branch did: Line up thousands of workers and keep them for years. Simply put Local 8 was the most durable branch in the entire IWW, representing Delaware River longshoremen for almost a decade, dramatically improving their wage rates, work conditions, power, and prestige. Perhaps most noteworthy about Local 8 was that approximately half of its members, and its most important leader, Ben Fletcher, were African-American. Though ideologically committed to equality, in practice there were few nonwhite Wobblies. Thus the IWW celebrated Local 8 for proving that IWW vision and tactics could overcome the traditional bogeyman of (working-class) America: Race.

For decades the MTW proved itself to be thoroughly international, apropos of the industry. A quick perusal of its newspaper, the *Marine Worker*, indicates in how many different ports of call throughout the world the MTW organized. True the parent union's name suggested a global strategy, but in practice the IWW was mostly U.S. and Canadian. By contrast the MTW had branches across the seven seas. The MTW organized in numerous Latin American ports, for instance, in Valparaiso, Chile, that nation's largest port, and Tampico, Mexico, using its control of area sailors to create a wedge into that city's important oil industry. The IWW gained the loyalty of sailors based in Hamburg and other German ports, as in Sweden and Britain. Similar to other movements, Wobbly sailors proved instrumental in the distribution of IWW literature and ideas. Moreover it was in this industry that a transnational working-class identity fully revealed itself; during Local 8's

1920 strike, for example, British sailors and Spanish firemen refused to scab on Philadelphia longshoremen. Wobbly sailors later castigated AFL sailors for working ships that supplied the Fascists in the Spanish Civil War.

In 1917, when the IWW suffered from massive federal persecution, the MTW was well-represented. Five Philadelphia residents associated with the MTW were arrested (Walter Nef, Jack Walsh, E. F. Doree, and Fletcher of Local 8; Manuel Rey, a Spanish-born sailor, led the MTW on the Atlantic Coast; he was replaced by Genaro Pazos, another Spanish sailor based in Philadelphia). In the aftermath of this repression, the MTW, now numbered 510, struggled to survive. The MTW maintained an active presence along both coasts (Boston to Norfolk, Seattle to San Pedro) as well as in the Gulf (especially New Orleans, later Galveston and Houston). Local 8, still the largest and most important branch, maintained its impressive strength notwithstanding the loss of its entire leadership.

Despite repression the MTW joined the postwar wave of labor militancy that swept the nation and world, in part inspired by the nascent Soviet Union. In 1920, Local 8 called out its four thousand members and thousands of other workers in a failed 6-week strike for the 8-hour day. In 1922, sensing the weakness of the IWW and a turning tide away from labor, employers locked out Local 8 members and exploited growing racial tensions to tear the most important MTW outpost asunder. The IWW maintained its presence in Philadelphia for the rest of the decade but never asserted the authority that it commanded in the 1910s. The MTW also undertook major strikes in Portland, Oregon, in 1922 and San Pedro (an L.A. port) in 1923. This last strike agitated for the release of the remaining Wobblies languishing in state and federal prisons due to the Red Scare. This persecution continued unabated well into the 1920s, notably when the San Pedro hall was raided and members brutally beaten in 1924.

While most IWW unions emerged from World War I far weaker, such was not the case for 510. In fact amid a crushing depression across the Atlantic maritime world in the early 1920s, the MTW challenged the ISU for dominance. Each union claimed more than 5,000 members, and the MTW flourished as a massive ISU strike failed in 1921-1922 despite strong MTW support. Throughout the 1920s, even though Lenin ordered American Communists to "bore from within" the AFL, the MTW remained strong enough that Communists considered whether it should be the target for infiltration. Though the IWW repeatedly rejected such overtures, many in the MTW still flirted with communism.

The MTW maintained significant influence among sailors in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf into the 1940s. It is clear that the insurgent sailor and longshore unions of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) drew much of their inspiration and ideology, as well as some members, from the MTW. By the same token, the Communist Marine Workers' Industrial Union (a clear rip-off of MTWIU) also were inspired by, and competed with, Wobblies. The MTW maintained halls in numerous ports on all four coasts into the late 1940s, so younger sailors in a second postwar world still encountered old-time Wobblies, but it faded by the end of that decade.

The legacy of the MTW is quite strong. Influential among sailors for more than 30 years, the MTW was a force to be reckoned with across the United States and the globe. Although rarely did the MTW command a majority of any ship's crew, it often was instrumental in securing gains for sailors—thanks to a militant and committed membership. And the story of Local 8 is among the most impressive in the entire IWW. The MTW also deserves notice for working tirelessly to challenge nationalist identities and create an international union.

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See also **Fletcher, Benjamin Harrison; Industrial Workers of the World; International Longshoremen's Association**

MARITIME LABOR

Maritime labor gave birth to the American colonies. In 1773, Newburyport, Massachusetts, was home to 700 adult males, of whom the jobs of nearly 600 have

been determined. Among the business and professional men were 140 who described themselves as merchants, shipbuilders, distillers, or shipmasters linked to the sea. The town's 21 shopkeepers depended on water imports. Maritime artisans included shipwrights, boat builders, sail makers, coopers, mast makers, and caulkers. Over 50 were mariners, truck men, or laborers working on the waterfront. Nearly 60% worked with some link to the sea.

Privateering, in contrast to piracy, was a legal trade in which warring states granted permits to loot enemy shipping. These permits were called Letters of Marque, and although the state often took a share, it was more profitable than service in the regular navy and attracted the best seamen. American fortunes were thus made during both the Revolution and the War of 1812. Privateering was the merchant sailor's main opportunity for earning income until it was ended by the Declaration of Paris in 1856. In New York City the roster of privateers was known as "the social register" by their wealthy heirs. Robert Randall, the conscientious son of a privateer captain, established Sailor's Snug Harbor "to support aged, decrepit and worn out seamen." Snug Harbor still serves Randall's intent, and over 14,000 older seafarers have passed through its eighteenth-century halls. Many of these were foreign-born, as were many American merchant sailors.

Most seamen were tied to ships like medieval serfs were tied to the land. The independent-minded United States ironically made this servitude into law in its first statutes in 1797 by outlawing resignation from merchant ships for the duration of the voyage. This law was in effect until phased out in the late nineteenth century. If a sailor left a ship, he could be apprehended by shore-side authorities and returned—or his pay could be forfeited and his belongings confiscated and sold in the captain's "slop chest." The nineteenth century saw the evolution of the "land sharks," the combination of boarding house owners, "runners," and saloon owners, who could bind a man in cycles of debt.

Brave sailors went on strikes even before they had unions. Indeed many mutinies might be considered strikes. Mutinies on merchant ships were single-ship actions and might be short and unrecorded, and unless they became violent, they were often successful. The first recorded strike was in 1803 in the port of New York City, as a result of which the men won an increase from \$10 a month to \$17 a month. The next portwide strike was in Boston in 1837, when pay was only slightly higher than 34 years previously.

The search for speed under sail created beautiful tall ships, but it also created more hazardous working conditions aloft, and perhaps it made the seafarers

more assertive. Strikes appeared early in the nineteenth century, and wages rose as did the length of the topmasts, although the unhealthy conditions remained stubborn. The glory days ended in the Civil War, as British steamers took over, and American crews were left on the beach. Further the Confederate raiding ships burned many of the beautiful clipper ships of that era of wood and sail.

The Search for Speed under Steam

In 1850, the Collins Line pioneered government subsidies to steam shipping—these totaled \$385,000 per year without any stipulations for labor conditions—although there was a safety clause that all Collins ships must be built to pass naval standards.

Labor unionism proceeded fitfully and by discreet maritime regions. One early organization of maritime labor was the Stewards' and Cooks' Marine Benevolent Society formed in New York in 1837. The first sailors' union was organized in New York by black Americans in 1863 as the American Seamen's Protective Union Association. In this same year Great Lakes' sailors came together in Chicago as the Seamen's Benevolent Union, which in 1892 became part of the International Seamen's Union (ISU) of the East Coast and the Gulf ports. The Great Lakes' men also established the Lakes Seamen's Union in 1878.

The first sailors' union on the West Coast was organized in San Francisco in 1866 as the Seamen's Friendly Union and Protective Society, but it did not collect dues and was replaced by the Seaman's Protective Association in 1880. This combination was founded to block the hiring of Chinese sailors, but it collapsed when its treasurer absconded with the union funds. Steamship sailors started their own union and opposed the radical Coast Seamen's Union until the two united under the conservative leadership of Andrew Furuseth in 1891 as the Sailors' Union of the Pacific. "Andy" Furuseth was so conservative that he quizzed prospective members on the elements of sailing ship rigging. Radicals at the turn of the last century were good organizers, but their appeal for violence may have cost public support. The modern Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union still has a logo of a fist holding up a cargo hook.

The Anglo-American-owned *RMS Titanic* went down in 1912 in an accident that seems to grow ever more complex in its causes because modern divers are still making discoveries. The contemporary British and American court proceedings found no liability, and so the owners went unpenalized for the problematic

design of the ship, marred by a slow rudder and short water-tight bulkheads. Captain Smith was drowned and could not testify about his errors of speed and observation. However just 3 years later, the capsized of the Great Lakes' excursion ship *Eastland* started a 20-year court battle over corporate responsibility.

The U-Boat Menace and Nationalized Shipbuilding

World War I brought on government shipbuilding by the Emergency Fleet Corporation, which built 2,382 ships in 18 months. These were the well-riveted "Hog Islanders," which gave good but slow service in both world wars. Seamen on these chartered ships were able to earn \$90 a month plus a dollar an hour overtime—the best wages in merchant history. Certainly there were hazards, like U-boats and the fatal influenza and the delayed enforcement of the LaFollette Seaman's Act. At the end of the war, the Merchant Marine (aka Jones) Act of 1920 added workmen's compensation to sailor welfarism. After the war the shippers, and Admiral W. S. Benson of the U.S. Shipping Board, beat down wages, and the International Seamen's Union membership dropped from 115,000 to 16,000.

Diversity afloat was partially and temporarily realized in the 1921 achievement of the Black Star Line, created by black Americans to promote trade with Africa. Black nationalist Marcus Garvey in 1921 raised money from black Americans to buy the ships, but Garvey was not a businessman, and the line was finally bankrupted by his incompetence and fraud—or perhaps by sabotage. Still the short career of the Black Star Line drew worldwide attention.

Radicals in Power

The 1930s saw competition between conservative and radical union factions, but there was still an advance in unionization. The radicals were often the most active in recruiting and particularly contributed to sympathy strikes. On the West Coast the venerable conservative Furuseth held on to power, along with his associate Victor Olander, national secretary of the ISU, through a combination of deference-from-below and highhandedness-from-above. They opposed radical leader Harry Bridges who wanted a federation of sailors with longshoremen. Olander asserted that this was a tactic to destroy the International Seamen's Union, and the conservatives prevailed.

In 1933, the crew of the *Diamond Cement* participated in the first U.S. sit-down strike. It succeeded with support by East Coast waterfront workers. On the West Coast, the *S. S. California* crew struck for parity of pay with East Coast scales. By striking in place in a sit-down strike, they kept nonstrikers from moving the cargo ship. The owners threatened to bring charges of mutiny until President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins intervened on behalf of the men, but Secretary of Commerce Daniel C. Roper supported the firing of strike leaders. Failure of the ISU to support the men weakened that union, while another sit-down strike on the *S.S. American Trader* divided the ISU and led to the rise of Joe Curran, a leftist disciple of Harry Bridges.

In 1937, Joe Curran and Jack Laurenson left the International Seamen's Union (ISU) to form the National Maritime Union. An election led to the fall of the ISU and its absorption into the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Harry Lundeberg, head of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific helped reorganize this into the AFL Seafarers' International Union (SIU), which rapidly assumed a more activist stance with its drive for hazardous—duty pay in war zones—achieving a 33.3% bonus for African runs. The SIU's bold actions before the war gained both bonuses and a mediation procedure that helped smooth the path to victory at sea.

During World War II, the American Merchant Marine went from 55,000 men to 215,000. Of these 6,830 were killed, about 11,000 were wounded, and 604 became prisoners, of whom 10% died in prison. The percentage of Merchant Marine deaths during the war was greater than the percentage for any other service, yet they were denied the benefits granted to other services. They did not get draft deferments until mid-1942. Their Liberty ships were often ill-equipped, lightly armed, and slow targets for the numerous U-boats—if they did not first burst their welded seams.

Hollywood gave the unsung merchant mariners public recognition in 1943 when it made the film *Action in the North Atlantic*, but otherwise the merchant mariners suffered from the stigma of radicalism. This film began in a union hiring hall and followed the all-star crew along their hellacious passage to Murmansk, where they met a beautiful woman line handler as the other dockworkers shouted "*tovarich!*"

The New Internationalism

In 1961, American freighters usually had a young crew of 45 men, with an average age of 30 plus.

By 1991, a similar ship carried 22. Maritime unions had their largest memberships in the 1970s. But now a union member's working time may be limited to a half a year to give more members a chance at the better jobs. After the voyage the seaman goes to a union hall and gets a dated National Shipping card, whose date determines the priority of that man—or since 1964—that woman. The person between ships then must drive from one port to another in search of a berth. The average age of persons in this system is now over 55.

Containerized cargo, which started replacing break-and-bulk cargo in the 1950s, dealt a heavy blow to the longshoremen's union, which had often supported seamen's unions in the past. Seamen themselves also suffered work loss from new labor-saving technology: Better metal finishes reduced the need for the constant chipping and painting of iron ship technology, frozen meals and microwaves needed only one cook, and the simple installation of a toilet near the bridge saved one person per watch. Electronics saved the time of the navigation officers, and the worried radioman was replaced by a few small boxes. The need for human observation with binoculars has been reduced by position-plotting radar.

The post-World War II emergence of Flags of Convenience (FOC) has dealt a further blow to the leverage of maritime labor. This practice of hiding ownership under weak-state flags has led to human rights' abuses, ecological abuses, and contractual abuses that are difficult to prosecute. Ship maintenance, crew training, paperwork, and crew communication can easily be skipped over and concealed. Mariners may be stranded in foreign ports, and marginal owners may simply cut all resources from a worn-out ship and let it drift, as in the case of *Mercedes I*, which went ashore at the Florida estate of Mollie Wilmot in 1984 and drew brief public attention. The best real hope for FOC seamen lies in the coordinated, global campaigns of the International Federation of Transport Workers.

Although the U.S. Merchant Marine has withered under international competition, there are still good careers available. The Merchant Marine Academy at Piney Point, Maryland, now accepts international students and places its graduates internationally. A union-run school is the Seafarers Harry Lundberg School of Seamanship of the SIU that trains beginning and advanced students in U.S. standards, also at Piney Point, Maryland. There are many regional and state schools in shipping, fishery, oceanography, and related seamanship studies, such as Maine Maritime Academy at Castine, Maine. Sailing-ship experience is still widely respected for its instinctive feeling for wind

and wave and its bravery. The American Sail Training Association can still teach tall-ship skills to students who dare.

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See also **Bridges, Harry Renton; Furuseth, Andrew; LaFollette Seaman's Act; Longshoring; Marine Transport Workers' Industrial Union; National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards; Perkins, Frances; Rosie the Riveter**

MARX, KARL (1818–1883)

Few have left so massive and complicated a legacy as Karl Marx. He wrote voluminously, politicked incessantly, and long after his death, his name and his thought—and all manner of variations on them, to various and hotly contested degrees of fidelity—continue to exercise an enormous influence on intellectual and political life across the planet. He vigorously denounced any "great man" theory of history, but for present purposes, it is difficult to avoid if for no other reason than his significance for labor history

and labor historians is virtually unparalleled. Marx never visited North America, but he wrote a great deal about the New World and the United States, and in addition to the global influence of his thought, there are two other main ways in which this significance relates to the American context. First his occasional reflections on the United States throughout his theoretical works and his many journalistic contributions analyzing the Civil War, indicate that the United States played an important role in the formulation of Marx's critical theory. Most notably it frequently serves as a counter-example to Europe in his analysis of capitalist development. Second his thought is enormously important to the practice of labor history in the United States and to American labor radicalism.

Life and Work

Marx was the great historicizer, and it is a crucial lesson of Marx's work that it is only comprehensible in light of the specific histories that produced it, especially the larger context of nineteenth-century European radicalism. He was born in Trier, Prussia, in 1818, the *petit bourgeois* son of a lawyer. The family was of Jewish heritage but converted to Protestantism when Marx was a young boy. He attended the gymnasium in Trier and studied philosophy at universities in Bonn and Berlin. While in Berlin he became associated with the so-called Young Left Hegelians, a group of thinkers interested in the revolutionary and atheistic possibilities they read in Hegel's idealist philosophy. He would later break with them, but he never let go of Hegel, whose *Logic* (1830) would prove essential to his critical dialectical method.

In 1841, Marx left Berlin for Bonn, but the political climate prevented him from finding the university post he sought, and he accepted an offer to help run the *Rheinische Zeitung*, a radical newspaper published in Köln. Not long after he was appointed editor-in-chief. The radical-democratic turn the newspaper took under Marx's leadership led to its official suppression in early 1843, and Marx moved to Paris to publish a similar journal, the *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbücher*. Only one issue of the *Jahrbücher* was printed, but in Paris Marx met Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), his life-long collaborator, friend, and financial supporter. With Engels he developed the materialist political philosophy they outlined in *The German Ideology* (1845), which denounced the Young Hegelians' idealism as blind to the true forces of history: the "mode of production," the historically specific manner in which real

individuals produce and reproduce their material life. He extended the materialist argument in his 1847 excoriation of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's utopian socialism, *The Poverty of Philosophy*.

At the request of the Prussian government, Marx was expelled from France for his revolutionary writing and political activity, and in 1847, he and Engels moved to Brussels. There they joined the Communist League, at whose request they cowrote the *Communist Manifesto*, which appeared in February 1848. The Manifesto develops a materialist theory of revolutionary social change from the contradictions and antagonisms immanent to the productive structure of bourgeois-capitalist society. Even if it is necessarily among his more programmatic, less subtle works, the *Manifesto* presents some of Marx's best-known ideas and commitments in their early stages of development. These themes include a materialist political economy, the movement of class and class-consciousness, a progressive-revolutionary theory of history and the proletariat, and internationalism (that is, "Workers of all countries, unite").

With the failure of the German revolution of 1848, for which he and Engels had returned to Prussia, he fled again to Paris but almost immediately went in exile to London, where he remained until his death. In England Marx and his family lived in poverty, often supported entirely by Engels, and for a time his political activity slowed. Eventually however London proved the stage of his most lasting political and intellectual contributions. On the one hand, in 1864 he helped found and lead the International Workingmen's Association (IWA)—the so-called First International, a worker's movement that helped plant the seeds of Communist internationalism. On the other hand, it was during this period of more than 30 years of relative sedentariness that Marx produced, with the exception of the *Manifesto*, his most influential works, among them the unpublished notebooks published as the *Grundrisse* (1939), written between 1857–1858, the *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy* (1859), and his *magnum opus*, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*.

Capital is Marx's greatest intellectual and political legacy. He only succeeded in completing and publishing the first of four projected volumes in 1867. Nonetheless since the end of the nineteenth century, *Capital* has been published as a three-volume critique of the capitalist mode of production. Volume 1 is primarily an analysis of the social relations of production under capitalism, Volume 2 (1885) discusses the process of circulation, and Volume 3 (1894) is presented as a consideration of capitalism in general. It is important to note however, that what stand today as Volumes

2 and 3—and as *Theories of Surplus Value* (1861–1863), sometimes described as Volume 4—were compiled by Engels and others from notes left by Marx after his death. Indeed the chronology implied by the volumes' ordering obscures the fact that despite much of interest therein, most of the material was written before Volume 1 appeared in print and represents in many cases early, and often presumably incomplete, formulations of the arguments in Volume 1.

Volume 1 develops in detail the critical theory of capitalism and its constituent concepts and methods. These provide the foundation for all subsequent Marxisms, of which there have been many (a short list might include Kautskian, Leninist, Trotskyist, Maoist, Gramscian, and Althusserian, among others). Common to virtually all of them however is Marx's fundamental historicization of capitalism. In contrast to those he called *bourgeois* political economists, who naturalize capitalism and its attendant individualism and competition as either a state of nature or as the realization of historical progress—thus the subtitle *A Critique of Political Economy*—Marx argues that capitalism is one historically contingent "mode of production" (and thus mode of social organization) in the trajectory of human development. Basing his analysis on the experience of industrial revolution in Europe, England in particular, he considers the evolution of capitalism from previous modes, particularly feudalism, and thus demonstrates that capitalism is neither natural nor an historical end point but a mode from which others will inevitably emerge.

His method of analysis was dialectical, derived from Hegel's theory of historical movement stripped of its idealism; as Engels later wrote, the materialist dialectic showed that Hegel had the form of movement right but that the relation between ideas and material life was "placed upon its head"—what was needed was to turn Hegel on to his feet. It suggested that the contradictions implicit in the struggle between the various classes capitalism produced, and in the inevitable conflict between humans' emancipatory desires and the increasing material and political burdens of life under capitalism, would lead to the supersession of capitalism by revolutionary forces with great liberatory potential. Although Marx does not suggest in his later work the precise forms the future will take, his critique is nonetheless based on the fact that if workers were to act, to determine the shape that revolutionary potential, then subsequent modes of production would increasingly provide for greater freedom, greater security, greater wisdom for all.

Volume 1 also contains many of Marx's most influential theoretical contributions. For example the

book begins with a discussion of the commodity, which Marx argues is the fundamental unit of capitalist production. In the often-cited passages on the “fetish of the commodity,” he argues that the relations of production under capitalism hide its fundamentally social basis, leading both capitalists (those owning and controlling access to the means of production) and workers (those without means of production, thus forced to sell their labor power to gain access) to imagine life under capitalism as constituted by the relations between things (inanimate objects are thus fetishized or accorded the qualities of living things), as opposed to the relation between people. It also presents, among other ideas, his theory of money as the standard equivalent (one commodity that over time emerges as the standard of measure), his explanation of the complex relation between use-value (qualitative value-in-use) and exchange-value (quantitative value-in-exchange), the distinction between labor and labor-power, and his outline of the labor theory of value (the hotly contested notion that all value is produced by labor, an idea he adopted from political economists David Ricardo and Adam Smith).

The importance of these ideas notwithstanding, Marx frequently described his discovery of the “law of surplus value” as his most important contribution. With the benefit of hindsight, it is hard to disagree. The concept is straightforward: Capitalist production is predicated on growth, but that expansion is impossible unless among the commodities mobilized by capitalism, there is one that is not only of value but produces value in excess of itself. The only such commodity is labor power, which produces surplus value, value that exceeds what is necessary for its reproduction. The ideological power of capitalist relations of production resides in the secret expropriation of surplus value in the “hidden abode of production.” There the wage-form, which represents the return to the worker for a specific amount of time and effort, conceals from the worker the fact that only part of the day is spent working to earn the means of his or her own reproduction, and the rest of the day’s value is appropriated directly by the capitalist. There is therefore no such thing as a just wage rate, for the wage form itself mystifies exploitation; capitalism is by definition exploitative. Even when the wage is high, constant agitation for better working conditions, better wages, and less work are always just and in workers’ interests. Wherever Marx’s legacy is heralded by wage earners, it is almost always with some reference to the idea of surplus value, and the critique of exploitation, politics, and theory of justice it generates. It is among his most direct influences on the politics and lives of working people, who even when

they have explicitly rejected Marx and Marxism, they have nonetheless often leaned hard on his concept of surplus value.

Marx and the United States

The meaning of the United States in the development of Marx’s critique of capitalism is underappreciated. For him and for other Europeans before and after, the United States was a crucial historical anomaly. Hegel called the United States “the land of the future”: “It is for America to abandon the ground on which hitherto the History of the World has developed itself” (*The Philosophy of History*, 1956). For Marx this land of the future was key to the process and analysis of capitalist development.

The United States thus stood as an instructive counterexample to the legacy of feudalism in Europe. It was a place “where bourgeois relations of production imported together with their representatives sprouted rapidly in a soil in which the superabundance of humus made up for the lack of historical tradition” (1970: 55). It was consequently a fascinating test case of the cultural and political-economic implications of unfettered capitalism: “The abstract category ‘labour,’ ‘labour as such,’ labour *sans phrase*, the point of departure of modern economics, thus becomes a practical fact only there . . . in the most modern society” (1970: 210). The transparency of the commodification of labor was part and parcel of American social relations’ bourgeois modernity: “Nowhere are people so indifferent to the type of work they do as in the United States, nowhere are people so aware that their labour always produces the same product, money, and nowhere do they pass through the most divergent kinds of work with the same nonchalance” (1977: 1014, note 23). Moreover in its struggle over the question of slavery, the United States suggested an analysis of the complex articulation of modes of production that characterized the capitalist world system. “The fact that we now not only call the plantation owners in America capitalists, but that they *are* capitalists, is based on their existence as anomalies within a world market based on free labour” (1973).

He followed the U.S. Civil War—“a world upheaval” (Marx and Engels, 1961)—with intense interest and wrote about it for the *New York Tribune* and the *Vienna Presse* (1861–1862). To Marx the war pivoted primarily on the increasing significance of the West in American national development (Marx and Engels 1961). He thus framed it as an historically determined destruction of slavery—and thus of its expansionary pretensions—by a bourgeois revolution, which despite

its contradictory possibilities, all workers had cause to celebrate. In the United States, as he writes in *Capital* (Volume 1) “Every independent workers’ movement was paralysed as long as slavery disfigured a part of the republic. Labour in white skin cannot emancipate itself where it is branded in a black skin. However, a new life immediately arose from the death of slavery. The first fruit of the American Civil War was the eight hours’ agitation, which ran from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California, with the seven-league boots of the locomotive” (1977).

Marx’s conclusions from his analysis of the United States were nevertheless far from salutary for American labor. He believed the political and demographic significance of the West was diminishing, stranding immigrants in the tenements of eastern cities. “The great republic has therefore ceased to be the promised land for emigrating workers. Capitalist production advances there with gigantic strides, even though the lowering of wages and dependence of the wage-labourer has by no means yet proceeded so far as to reach the normal European level” (1977). This only reinforced the fact that despite its relative lack of history, the United States was “economically speaking, still a colony of Europe” (1977). Indeed in many ways the postbellum era boded no better for American than for European workers, since it brought with it rapid concentration of capital in the hands of “speculative companies” and “a finance aristocracy of the vilest type” (1977).

The significance of Marx and his thought in American labor history is much more complex and diffuse. Marxism first came to North America with the political activities of German immigrants like Joseph Weydemeyer, with whom Marx corresponded frequently after 1848. Many of them joined the IWA, whose international headquarters were based in New York between 1872 and the organization’s collapse four years later. Marxism soon gained currency with many American radicals—prominent Socialists like Daniel De Leon, journalist, activist, and member of the Socialist Labor party; and Eugene V. Debs, trade union leader and member of the Socialist party, for example, both claimed a life-long reading of Marx had greatly influenced their work and ideas. De Leon, who emigrated from Germany, wrote an English translation of Marx’s best-known work of history, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852). Activist-intellectuals like W. E. B. Du Bois (1935) and Oliver Cox (1959) developed brilliant Marx-inspired analyses of the nexus of race and class oppression in the United States. Many others, like William Z. Foster, labor and Communist party leader before World War II, or Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, activist and founder of the American Civil

Liberties Union, populate American labor history. Inevitably the extent to which any of these was Marxist (not to be conflated with Communist) is contestable, and a laundry list of great men and women who considered themselves Marxists obscures the profoundly subtle ways in which Marx’s thought articulates with, or informs much of, the activity and intellectual vigor of the American Left. Even in the case of anti-Marxists like Samuel Gompers, Marx’s shadow is cast over the working-class politics of the United States.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which Marx continues to play a crucial part in American labor however is in its historiography. Marx’s thought has significantly shaped the work of some of the most prominent U.S. labor historians, many of whom make it clear that their historical work is itself an explicit and radical political statement. The work of such seminal contributors as Philip S. Foner, Herbert Gutman, Ruth Milkman, David Montgomery, David Roediger, and Alexander Saxton is situated in this tradition. In addition much nonhistorical scholarship that is of continued significance to labor historians in the United States, like Harry Braverman’s labor process analysis (1974) or the segmented labor market literature, are more or less orthodox extensions of Marxist political economy. Indeed any understanding of American labor historiography demands an engagement with Marx’s thought in a manner he would probably never have anticipated. And his American legacy as such is perhaps less constituted by his role in U.S. labor history than by the force of his ideas and their persistent capacity to illuminate and historicize the American working-class experience.

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See also Civil War and Reconstruction; Communist Party; DeLeon, Daniel; International Workingmen’s Association; Labor Theory of Value; New Left; Politics and Labor, Nineteenth Century; Popular Front; Socialist Labor Party; Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance; Socialist Workers’ Party

MASON, LUCY RANDOLPH (JULY 26, 1882–1959) Southern Labor Organizer

The daughter of an Episcopal minister, Lucy Randolph Mason was born in Virginia. To be born a Mason in the Commonwealth of Virginia was no minor matter; one forebear wrote the Virginia Bill of Rights, and another cousin was Robert E. Lee. Despite her lineage, Mason’s family relied on her father’s small church salary. But they bestowed on Mason a commitment to community service. In 1903, in an early example of her interest in the rights of labor, she refused to ride Richmond’s trolley cars, in support of a strike by streetcar operators.

At 22 Mason taught herself stenography and found a job with a Richmond law firm that often handled large insurance casualty cases stemming from industrial injuries. Mason witnessed how little protection employers afforded workers injured on the job. She toured factories and saw first-hand poor working conditions. She was particularly struck by the effects of these conditions on female workers. In one instance a 17-year-old woman lost part of her hand on the job. A lawyer who employed Mason convinced the woman to accept a 75-dollar settlement. Mason’s outrage directed the rest of her life.

Mason became convinced of the need for labor unions to assist working people. She noticed that union workers were the best paid, 8-hour days, and time off. Two years into her employment at the law firm, she became a member of the Union Labor League of Richmond and began lobbying for an 8-hour working day for women. Mason gravitated toward protective legislation for women, a position that would later divide suffragists but that reflected Mason’s belief at the time that white, middle-class women must protect women less fortunate than themselves.

In 1914, Mason resigned to care for her ailing father. She remained there until 1923, when her father’s death allowed her to accept a full-time position as general secretary of the Richmond Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). Mason’s work with the association cemented her concern for the working class and her belief that labor unions were a way of alleviating some of the problems among working people. In addition a growing interest in securing aid for all of Richmond’s citizens, both black and white, led to Mason’s public disavowal of segregation. While religion certainly played a major role in Mason’s thinking, it seems likely that her experience with the YWCA contributed much to her radical thinking on race. Mason almost single-handedly defeated the Richmond city council’s segregation ordinance in 1929.

Mason's work in Richmond drew the attention of national women's groups. In 1932, she went to work full time for the National Consumers' League (NCL), devoted primarily to labor rights for women. The NCL produced several well-trained women, including Francis Perkins. Prior to Mason's appointment, the league advocated primarily for white, immigrant, working-class women, creating a pattern of interclass cooperation with middle-class activists acting as liaisons between the working class and the government. In part Florence Kelley, her predecessor, designated Mason her replacement to redirect the league's focus to the newly industrializing South.

As part of her southern strategy, Mason traveled throughout the region in the 1930s, establishing local branches of middle-class women and female workers. Mason worked especially to develop either inter-racial branches or white and black branches that would work together. Such a task was not surprisingly very difficult in the South. Inter-racial branches working for fair employment practices not only challenged industrialists' ability to gain access to cheap, unorganized labor, but also assailed the notion of white supremacy that undergirded that system. Southern manufacturers typically opposed the league's efforts, and such controversy made the organization of local branches almost impossible for Mason. Thus while she could win converts on issues like protective legislation, she was not able to change many minds on the issue of race. Despite her energetic direction of the league and a growing friendship with Eleanor Roosevelt, Mason seemed unable to build a viable southern initiative. The tension within the league finally came to a head in 1937 and Mason resigned.

Mason's desire to work in her home region in support of organized labor directed her next profession. In 1937, when the Congress of Industrial Organizations' (CIO's) John Lewis tapped Sidney Hillman to direct the energies of the newly formed Textile Workers' Organizing Committee (TWOC) to create a southern campaign, he sent Mason to Hillman to assist in the work. As the head of an organization with purported ties to communism, Lewis immediately saw the advantages of having a public relations representative with "blood in her veins bluer than indigo." Hillman assigned her to his Atlanta office where she remained the rest of her life.

Union activists knew that a southern strategy was necessary for the strength of unions as a whole. The growing textile industry in the South represented over 200,000 virtually unorganized workers alone, the largest industrial group in the region in 1934. The lack of organization in the South forced down wages, with repercussions in the North. But the South presented its own organizing challenges. Race was the fulcrum

on which the southern labor drama turned. Southern capital was notoriously anti-union and a confederation of politicians, ministers, and newspaper editors reinforced that fervor. Mason's appointment as a southern ambassador for the CIO was meant to mitigate the ire of factory owners, ministers, and editors, who used race baiting, charges of communism, and the specter of outside agitators to control cheap labor. Mason's job was to organize among elite white people like herself to accept labor unionism and inter-racialism in order to smooth the CIO's way in the South.

Mason was almost alone as a female organizer in a male arena. Yet she was highly effective. As with her work for the NCL, Mason used her identity, her status as a southern lady, to camouflage her radical actions; in short she used her image self-consciously to accomplish her goals. In many instances of potential violence, the presence of a soft-spoken, white-haired, elderly lady from Virginia calmed tensions. Certainly the fact that a person like Mason would attach herself to such a suspect cause diffused its threat for many southern officials. More importantly Mason's status paved the way for many southern editors to listen to labor's demands and to consider union organizing because it seemed less dangerous when supported by Mason. Thus Mason lent legitimacy to the labor movement.

In time civil rights cases constituted the bulk of Mason's work for the CIO. While her focus was on persuading elite whites either to aid labor or at least to step aside, she also responded to the concerns of workers whose rights had been violated as they tried to organize. She visited their homes and helped with leaflet distribution to protest their cases. As war loomed, factory owners manipulated the issue of patriotism to elicit any anti-union sentiment. Sixteen states in the South and Southwest passed sabotage and sedition laws to prevent union organizing, and this restrictive atmosphere circumscribed union activity until the country entered the war in 1941. Mason's work garnered much suspicion. She wrote Eleanor Roosevelt that "a friend heard I am a dangerous person, that I am down here to incite the Negroes to an uprising as part of the CIO program." And she was.

The CIO sought to organize the textile industry, which presented unique challenges. There were over 6,000 textile plants in 29 states, employing over one million workers. Each plant represented an array of economic situations and organizing challenges. Although the South represented one of TWOC's greatest challenges, Hillman allocated only 30% of the textile campaign organizers to the South, including Mason, in what would prove later to be a serious underestimation of the need there as well as a

harbinger of the CIO's postwar defeat. She set off on a letter-writing effort to win support for TWOC's efforts. Hillman appeared to heed Mason and "preached the virtues of moderation" to his southern TWOC representatives.

Mason informed President Roosevelt of her plans. She would call for his intervention in the years to come when resistance to a particular strike became violent or a union organizer disappeared; more importantly in some instances, she would receive his help. At other times Mason wrote Roosevelt regarding a particular situation but received no detectable reply from the president. She did however use that relationship to pressure local authorities. She also used the contacts she had made through the NCL to aid in the labor struggle in the South, writing to Molly Dewson, among others.

Letter campaigns helped Mason to develop working relationships with an important contingent of liberal newspaper editors. She corresponded regularly with Ralph McGill, Hodding Carter, and Virginius Dabney. She grew especially close to Jonathan Daniels; Daniels would write Mason often for clarification of labor issues, and he attempted to introduce her to other editors. Mason also maintained a close friendship with the journalist and essayist Lillian Smith.

Mason was careful to investigate the conditions of workers and the responses to their attempts to organize, so that accurate information appeared in the press. A favorite forum for Mason was the college campus. She believed that labor and the higher education community must collaborate to support the union cause. Mason also increasingly involved herself in national events and became tied to a variety of progressive efforts in addition to her work with labor. In June 1938, President Franklin Roosevelt convened the Committee on Economic Conditions in the South, and in the summer of that year, the president issued a 15-chapter report it had drafted. Its most well-known assertion was that "the South was the nation's number one economic problem." Lucy Mason compiled much of the information in the report and was the committee's only female member.

In 1942, Mason turned 60 and years of traveling and intervening in stressful civil liberties cases began to take its toll. Illness limited the last 10 years of her work for the CIO. She focused on encouraging inter-racialism. Mason could not have predicted the impact the Cold War would have on the American labor movement. However tentative the CIO's commitment to inter-racialism may have been, the CIO's small steps across the racial divide made it vulnerable to charges of radicalism, where in the context of the Jim

Crow South, it surely was. In mobilizing against union organizing in the postwar period therefore, employers were able to marry inter-racialism and anticommunism by literally conflating unionism and miscegenation.

Given the even greater obstacles to unionization in the postwar period, Mason's ability to appeal to owners, government officials, police, ministers, editors, and other opinion-makers was especially important and offered the greatest potential to southern labor organizing in the postwar period. Ultimately however few resources, pervasive racism, and anti-union fervor overwhelmed her contributions, and the CIO's Operation Dixie. Labor unions backed away from civil rights activity and inter-racial work as their southern members increasingly joined newly forming White Citizens' Councils. However as the CIO relaxed its commitment to racial equality, Mason redoubled hers. Race relations captured her attention most fully at the end of her life. She participated in a variety of initiatives dedicated to eradicating racism and increasing inter-racial cooperation. She seemed to understand that education and intervention by whites were crucial to improved racial interactions.

Mason spent the last active years of her life writing a book that documented her experiences with the CIO. The process of writing the book was valuable but ultimately debilitating. With the book published in 1952, Mason was too tired to continue working. She retired from the CIO in 1953 and died in 1959.

Through moral suasion and an active campaign of publicity that used her access to an elite white base of power, Mason was able for a time to help aid the cause of labor and racial justice in the South. But it would fall to a new generation to enforce the truth of Mason's prediction that whites and blacks could work together.

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MAY DAY

May Day is the international workers' holiday. It was celebrated in the Soviet Union and then in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe as a major national holiday, and it is still celebrated by unions and workers' parties throughout Europe, but it actually originated in the United States.

The Origins of May Day

May Day emerged in the late nineteenth century out of the struggle by American workers for the 8-hour day. Throughout the nineteenth century, workers fought to shorten the workday, first to 10 hours, then to 8. By the 1880s, these fights had generally been unsuccessful. A work week of 10 hours, 6 days a week was the norm, with many workers putting in 12-15 hours, sometimes 7 days a week. The Knights of Labor (KOL), which was the largest and most important workers' organization for most of the 1880s, called for the 8-hour day but did little on a national level to organize fights for it. The KOL pushed Congress to pass a law limiting the workday to 8 hours, but this never happened. The American Federation of Labor (AFL), founded as the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada in 1881, also declared for the 8-hour day and at first also proposed legislation as the means to procure it.

The various attempts to get laws passed to limit the workday, going back to the original 10-hour movement in the first part of the century, had all been resounding failures. Even when specific localities did pass laws limiting hours, they invariably included the caveat that if workers contracted for a longer day, they could work it. A fight over just such a law in Chicago was actually the first May Day fight for shorter hours, though it was not yet called May Day. On May 1, 1867, workers paraded and struck throughout Chicago to try and enforce an Illinois law calling for the 8-hour day, but they were defeated. In the mid-1880s, a group of people within the AFL began pushing for militant action instead of legislation as the surest path to win the 8-hour day. To this end George Edmonston, founder and first president of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, introduced a resolution in 1884 that from May 1, 1886, 8 hours would constitute a full workday. This resolution passed 23-2, and May Day was born, at least as an idea. This date was probably selected for two reasons. First it was traditional for carpenters to rally together and get employers to sign contracts on May 1. It is also possible that Edmonston chose May 1 to commemorate the Chicago strikes of 1867.

There was a long distance between declaring that from May 1, 1886, on 8 hours would constitute a workday and actually putting that demand into effect. The first problem was to enlist the aid of the KOL, much larger than the AFL at that time. While the national leadership of the KOL refused to support any kind of national strike wave for the 8-hour day, many local assemblies of the KOL supported the plan. Throughout late 1885 and early 1886, both local KOL assemblies and unions affiliated with the AFL held mass meetings, put out circulars, and prepared themselves for a fight. Workers rushed into the movement as it picked up steam and put more militant leaders at its head. Anarchosyndicalists organized in the International Working People's Association gained mass support, especially in Chicago, by advocating militant action to win workers' demands. In Chicago alone these anarchists put out five papers in three different languages, had perhaps 5,000 members, and were in the leadership of the biggest unions in the city. This mass movement was not centrally coordinated; in New York, craft unions did most of the work, in Chicago it was the anarchists and the KOL; in Cincinnati a Trades' Assembly and the local KOL predominated. Despite this lack of central coordination, by late April 1886, about 250,000 industrial workers were involved, and many employers granted the 8- or 9-hour day before May 1 to avoid strikes.

On May 1, 1886, perhaps 400,000 workers struck and demonstrated across the country. This strike wave was centered in Chicago, though it included smaller cities and towns like Mobile, Alabama; Galveston, Texas; Argentine, Maine; Duluth, Minnesota; and many others. In Chicago about 30-40,000 workers struck, with 45,000 having already won the 8-hour day. In the first May Day parade in the world, about 80,000 workers marched up Michigan Avenue. Railroads, stockyards, and many other industries were closed. From May 1 to May 3, the movement grew. A 7,000 additional strikers went out in Milwaukee on May 2; about 20,000 workers paraded in Baltimore on May 3. Then, on May 4, tragedy struck.

Haymarket

The seeds of Haymarket were planted at the McCormick Reaper Works, where a lockout and strike that had started in February continued into May of 1886. On May 3, the Lumber Shovers' Union held an 8-hour rally near the plant where August Spies, one of Chicago's main anarchist leaders, was to speak. When the shift change bell rang at the McCormick plant, about 500 people left the crowd to demonstrate

MAY DAY



May Day Parade, women marchers, New York. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ggbain-03326].

against the scabs still working at the factory. In the ensuing scuffle, police fired into the crowd, immediately killing one demonstrator. Three more died later of their wounds, and many more were injured.

Spies called for a meeting in Haymarket Square the next day to protest police brutality. With rain threatening and competing demonstrations taking place throughout the city, only about 3,000 people arrived at the demonstration. During the speeches, it began to thunder, and by the time 180 police arrived to disperse the crowd, only perhaps 200 demonstrators were left. As the police encircled this small crowd, a bomb exploded in front of the police killing one instantly and wounding over 70. The remaining police fired indiscriminately into the crowd and at each other, killing at least one demonstrator and wounding many others. Six more police later died from the wounds, at least some of which were sustained from their fellow officers.

In the aftermath of this bombing, the city elites cracked down on the leaders of the working class movement. On May 5, the mayor of Chicago declared martial law. The main newspapers and business leaders of the city called for blood. The police arrested hundreds of people and finally prosecuted eight men: August Spies, Albert Parsons, Samuel J. Fielden, Michael Schwab, Adolph Fisher, George Engel, Louis Lingg, and Oscar Neebe. These were eight of the main leaders of the workers' movement, and none of them

could have thrown the bomb. Spies, Parson, and Fielden actually spoke at the rally. Fielden was the speaker when the bomb exploded. The others did not even attend the rally. At the same time, the elites of the other cities affected by the movement launched their own repression. Cincinnati deputized 1,000 special police. In Milwaukee militia fired on a crowd and killed at least nine workers. In the face of this repression, it was impossible to maintain the 8-hour day movement, and by mid-May the strikes were over. Some had been defeated, but almost 200,000 workers did gain the 8-hour day.

The eight Chicagoans were tried in June of 1886. The prosecution charged that they were guilty, not because they threw the bomb, but because the unknown bomb thrower was influenced by their ideas. Their trial was presided over by Judge Joseph Gary, future president of U. S. Steel and namesake of Gary, Indiana, who appointed a bailiff to select jurors who were evidently biased against the defendants. None were workers, and one was even a relative of one of the murdered police officers. After a farcical trial, all eight were convicted. Judge Gary condemned seven of the eight to be hanged, and gave Neebe 15 years of hard labor. Before sentencing, Spies and Parsons gave rousing speeches invoking the power of the workers' movement. After the verdict an international movement was launched to save the condemned men. Two of the condemned, Fielden and Schwab, had their

sentences commuted to life imprisonment. Lingg committed suicide, and Spies, Parsons, Engel, and Fisher were hanged on November 11, 1887. In 1888, Illinois Governor John Altgeld pardoned the Haymarket martyrs, one day after the Haymarket Martyrs' Monument was dedicated in Waldheim cemetery.

International May Day

The first international May Day was celebrated on May 1, 1890, in cities throughout Europe and the United States after a call from the AFL and the Paris Socialist Congress that also founded the Second International. May 1 was chosen for an international 1-day strike for the 8-hour day and to commemorate the Haymarket martyrs. In many countries workers demonstrated rather than striking, but across Europe and the United States, this first international May Day was greeted with such enthusiasm that May Day was celebrated again in 1891 and became an annual international day to demonstrate for the 8-hour day. In the United States, the peaceful enactment of Labor Day as a national holiday in 1894 took some of the steam out of May Day. The AFL decided to support Labor Day, and by 1901, it abandoned any mention of May Day.

In Europe workers organized massive demonstrations and strikes on May Day during the whole period leading up to World War I. In the United States, May Day became the holiday of the Left. The Socialist party and the Industrial Workers of the World organized the main May Day rallies, while the main unions did not participate. After the Russian revolution, when May Day became an official holiday in the Soviet Union, its celebration in the United States was repressed in the first Red Scare. During the Great Depression, the Communist party of the United States, sometimes in alliance with the Socialist party, organized large May Day rallies, but during the Cold War after World War II, May Day almost passed out of existence as an American holiday. In Europe and in much of Latin America however, May Day remains a major holiday of workers and the Left.

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See also **Haymarket Affair (1886)**

MCBRIDE, JOHN (1854–1917) President of Both the United Mine Workers and the American Federation of Labor

John McBride led the last and most substantial challenge to business unionism's domination of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), mobilizing forces that wanted to transform the federation into a partisan organization.

McBride was born in 1854 near Massillon, Ohio, to immigrants Thomas and Bridget McBride. Thomas McBride, a coal miner and part owner of a mine, served as an American Miners' Association official in the 1860s. McBride followed his father into the mines at the age of eight, working as a helper before becoming a full-fledged miner. He joined the local union and in the 1870s, became an officer in local and regional unions. By 1880, McBride had become the most important miners' union official in Ohio, leading the formation of the Ohio Miners' Union in 1882 and serving as president until 1889. McBride mixed trade unionism with politics, winning terms in the Ohio House of Representatives (1883–1887), receiving the Democratic nomination for secretary of state (1886), and losing an Ohio Senate bid (1890). He headed Ohio's Bureau of Labor Statistics from 1890–1892, when he became United Mine Workers (UMW) president.

In the 1880s, McBride insisted that market forces posed the greatest threat to the welfare of miners and that the fortunes of miners and operators were linked. With "too many mines and too many miners," the coal industry was suffering. McBride worked to eliminate this competition through the creation of a national miners' union and the negotiation of a nationwide agreement between miners and operators to set wages, divide markets, and establish price differentials based on costs. Without competition, coal prices would rise allowing operators to increase wages.

McBride's strategy was partly successful. He guided regional miners' unions through a series of mergers that resulted in the 1890 formation of the UMW and helped miners and operators forge an agreement on markets, wages, and prices covering much of the bituminous field stretching from western Pennsylvania to Illinois. Although the agreement probably improved conditions for miners and operators, too few operators respected the agreement.

The Panic of 1893 destroyed the union's agreement with operators. As demand for coal dropped, operators scrambled to find markets, cutting prices and wages. McBride (and many operators) thought that only the UMW could improve market conditions.

A strike would cut supply, increasing coal prices to enable operators to pay the negotiated scale. McBride convinced the UMW's annual convention to launch a nationwide strike on April 21, 1894.

The strike began well. By mid-May, about 180,000 of the nation's 193,000 miners were out. Initially there was cooperation between operators and miners, with some operators providing strikers with above-ground work. By late May McBride believed that market conditions would allow operators to pay the negotiated scale and met with operators in Cleveland in hopes of ending the strike. In Cleveland operators disagreed among themselves. Some were willing to pay the scale; others refused. McBride felt betrayed, charging reluctant operators with continuing the strike in order to unload stockpiles at inflated prices. Failure in Cleveland transformed the strike. Miners began disrupting shipments from nonstriking mines and stockpiles, and authorities in several states mobilized troops. The strike petered out.

The strike's failure and other events that year—Pullman boycott, Coxey's march, conviction of Eugene Debs—convinced McBride that cooperation between capital and labor was impractical, that state and federal governments had become tools of capital, and that only political action could help workers. In fall 1894, McBride, with support from Ohio's leading trade unionists and urban federations, engineered a state labor-Populist alliance. Ohio's Populist platform, written by McBride, demanded the "collective ownership . . . of all such means of production and distribution as the people may elect to operate."

McBride's support of Populism helped him defeat Samuel Gompers for the AFL's presidency that December. President McBride worked to expand the labor-Populist alliance, but his efforts were hindered by allegations of bribery, illness, the AFL's constitution, and business unionists on the federation's executive board. McBride's supporters and opponents saw the AFL's 1895 presidential election as determining the federation's political stance in 1896 and beyond. By a very small margin, Gompers defeated McBride.

The Populist nomination of William Jennings Bryan fragmented the coalition that had supported McBride's efforts to transform the federation, ushering in an era in which business unionism dominated the AFL. McBride campaigned for Bryan in 1896, and then disappeared from federation affairs. Returning to Ohio, he ran a labor newspaper and a saloon until his death.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Coxey's Army; Gompers, Samuel; Populism/People's Party; Pullman Strike and Boycott; United Mine Workers of America

McCARRAN-WALTER ACT (1952)

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, or the McCarran-Walter Act, served to reaffirm the principles of immigration restriction and the national-origins quota system first set in place in 1924. In part a reaction to the Cold War concerns about subversion and in part an effort to codify and restructure the many existing statutes on immigration, work on the act began in 1947 and ended 5 years later with the passage of the bill over President Truman's veto.

Although the 1952 act was largely an affirmation of the status quo, it did depart from the previous acts in several ways. First although it continued the national-origins quota system that allotted 85% of the 154,277 visas available each year to residents of northwestern Europe, it did end Asian exclusion and racial restrictions against naturalization, allotting a minimum of 100 visas to each Asian nation each year. At the same time, not only were quota numbers for Asian countries kept very low, they were also allotted on the basis of race, not country of birth as in Europe.

Second the act instituted a system of preferences to help determine which applicants of countries with oversubscribed quotas would be given the right to immigrate. The first preference was reserved for workers with special training or job skills of use to the United States; the second through fourth levels were allotted to various relatives of American citizens and residents. For countries with surplus quotas, like Great Britain, such preferences would not be used, but for other countries with considerable waiting lists, like Italy or Greece, the preferences were intended to help consular officers sort through the applicants to find the most desirable.

Other innovations in the act included providing nonquota status to alien husbands of American citizens and residents and the introduction of a system-of-labor certification to prevent new immigration

from having an adverse affect on the work and wages available to American citizens, though this particular provision was rarely put into practice.

Although the act passed by an overwhelming majority and even over the president's veto, the debate over the act was quite heated, and several of its provisions fraught with controversy. The most fundamental debate was between those advocating continued restrictionism and those arguing for a more liberal policy. While those advocating continued restriction, led by Senator Pat McCarran (R-NV) and Congressman Francis Walter (D-PA), highlighted the importance of safeguarding national security and maintained that the national-origins system was vital to these efforts, those favoring liberalization, like Congressman Emanuel Celler (D-NY), linked American immigration policy to foreign policy, and declared that an equitable system free from the charges of racism and nativism to be needed to garner international support for American leadership of the free world. One proposal for making the act fairer and less overtly racist was to pool unused quotas for the use of countries with many would-be immigrants and small quotas, like those in southeastern Europe.

An important issue receiving much attention in the hearings over the proposed bills was the issue of Asian exclusion. Cracks had already emerged in the system with the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Acts as a war measure in 1943 and the repeal of exclusion against Asian Indians and Filipinos in 1946. Although the McCarran proposal provided for the repeal of Asian exclusion, it did not mean equitable treatment of Asian and European immigrants, since it kept Asian quotas on a basis of race rather than one of nationality. Many witnesses, including a representative from the American Federation of Labor (AFL), advocated placing Asians on the same country-of-birth formula as Europeans, arguing that it would bolster American efforts to fight communism in Asia.

Another source of controversy in the debate over the bill was its provisions for restricting the immigration of subversives. The McCarran bill actually liberalized existing policies to allow former members of subversive parties to enter provided they had renounced their prior activities. Still some liberal reformers felt that these provisions were not open enough and moreover extended far too much discretionary power to the attorney general to make exclusion decisions without any provision for judicial review.

In spite of the controversy and extended debate, restrictionists won the day on all of these points. In the end the argument for protection of borders and

the importance of considering national security when determining immigration policy was paramount. Interestingly enough the economic argument was seldom raised by restrictionists although concern over immigrant competition with the American worker had been vital in past debates over immigration policy. A combination of the postwar boom, cold war security concerns, and a difference in opinion within organized labor over the act (the AFL was in favor of restriction, whereas the Congress of Industrial Organizations [CIO] was against it) lessened the impact of the economic factor in these proceedings.

Racial or ethnic considerations by contrast were vital, as can be seen by the final version of the act, which maintained the system of open doors for immigrants from northwestern Europe (and for non-Asian migrants from the Western Hemisphere, since the quota system was not applied in the Americas) and restriction against everyone else. Additionally in the final vote, the minority of senators and representatives against the bill were predominantly representing communities in the northeastern United States that had strong ethnic blocs opposing the bill. These concerns, when combined with the national mood of suspicion early in the Cold War, ensured that the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 did little more than maintain the status quo.

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MCCLELLAN COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Formally the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Improper Practices in the Labor or Management Field, this body commonly was referred to by the name of its chairman, Senator John L. McClellan, a conservative Democrat from Arkansas. The McClellan Committee's hearings helped to make labor corruption a national concern at the same time as the committee's conservative majority promoted a broad interpretation of the term corruption, one that justified

efforts to curb organized labor. The result was the passage of legislation, the Landrum-Griffin Act (1959), which imposed new restrictions on union-organizing tactics.

The committee's formation grew out of hearings on corruption in the Western Conference of the Teamsters' Union held in late 1956 by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation of the Senate's Government Operations Committee. McClellan, who chaired that committee, asked Congress to authorize and fund a more in-depth investigation in labor racketeering, and the result was the formation of this new select committee with an initial 2-year mandate and preliminary budget of \$350,000. McClellan and the committee's chief counsel, Robert Kennedy, brought together the largest investigative staff of any congressional committee up to that time. Over the next 2.5 years, the committee questioned 1,525 witnesses in testimony that eventually filled over 50 bound volumes. These hearings and the committee's findings were widely publicized, and they drew public attention to the problem of labor corruption. In 1959, opinion polls revealed that Americans now listed labor union problems as one of the nation's most significant problems, equal in importance to concerns about education, the space race, and national defense.

But at the same time as the committee drew public attention to the phenomenon of union corruption, it also promoted a particular political agenda. Conservative senators hostile to organized labor dominated the eight-member committee. McClellan was joined by another southern Democrat, Sam Ervin, while the Republican members of the committee included long-time anti-unionists: Carl Curtis, Karl Mundt, and Barry Goldwater. The moderate committee members with more sympathy for labor included John F. Kennedy and Irving Ives. The only prominent pro-labor Senator, Pat McNamara, a Michigan Democrat, resigned after the first year to be replaced by Frank Church, a junior Senator from Idaho. The conservatives who made up the committee's majority asserted that organized labor had gained too much power and they hoped that the committee's revelations regarding union corruption would build support for new restrictive legislation. Thus although the original mandate for the committee involved looking at the activities of employers and their representatives, in fact the committee focused almost exclusively on unions. Blame for improper activities was assigned to union leaders. When employers paid money to union officials, the committee almost always depicted those payments as examples of union extortion even if the employers had initiated the arrangement in hopes of

achieving a more lenient contract. Moreover the hearings promoted a definition of corruption that included organizing tactics by unions, such as secondary boycotts, that were aggressive but technically legal.

In its efforts to focus public attention on the problem of union corruption, the McClellan Committee investigated a number of different unions, including the United Auto Workers' Union, the Carpenters' Union, and the Operating Engineers, among others. But by far the committee spent the most amount of time investigating the Teamsters' Union, making this organization and its leader, James R. Hoffa, into prominent symbols of the problem of labor corruption. Ironically the early McClellan Committee hearings, which had brought down Hoffa's predecessor as Teamster president, Dave Beck, made Hoffa's rise to the union's leadership possible. The committee demonstrated Hoffa's connections to organized crime figures and raised questions about his administration of the union. The hearings made Hoffa notorious, but they failed to shake his political strength within the Teamsters.

The committee's investigation was also shaped by the advent of a gathering of organized crime figures in Apalachin, New York, that the New York State Police stumbled on in November 1957. Apalachin appeared to confirm the existence of the Mafia as a nationwide organization, and the McClellan Committee held a series of hearings on the threat posed to the country by this criminal conspiracy. Criminal figures testifying at these hearings regularly invoked their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination, and their refusal to answer questions was depicted as confirmation of the existence of a tightly organized conspiracy. The committee argued that the existence of the Mafia combined with its ties to such labor leaders as Hoffa made the need to pass new restrictive legislation all the more urgent.

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See also Beck, David; Hoffa, James R.; International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Landrum-Griffin Act, Organized Crime

**McENTEE, GERALD W. (JANUARY 11, 1935–)
American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees (AFSCME)**

Gerald W. McEntee was born in Philadelphia, and educated at parochial schools before attending LaSalle College, where he graduated with a degree in political science in 1956. The son of William J. McEntee, the original organizer and leader of Philadelphia's Municipal Workers' Union, McEntee's early years were immersed in the world of labor politics. Following the completion of his college education, McEntee took a position as an organizer with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and was placed on staff with his father at Philadelphia's AFSCME District Council 33. From 1957 to 1969, he worked as one of the council's lead political strategists and as a negotiator in bargaining contracts with the City of Philadelphia.

Gerald McEntee's place within the labor movement centers primarily on his successes as an organizer. In the late 1960s, he helped boost District Council 33's membership in a series of aggressive campaigns that brought in new locals representing cafeteria and library workers at the University of Pennsylvania, employees at the Philadelphia Zoo, and over 1,000 women who served as school crossing guards. In the summer of 1969, with approval from AFSCME International President Jerry Wurf, McEntee shifted his organizing activities beyond Philadelphia toward an ambitious attempt to organize the over 75,000 state employees of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Appointed director of the AFSCME's Pennsylvania Organizing Committee (POC), McEntee had just one other organizer assigned to work with him, Buck Martin, an AFSCME representative from Johnstown Municipal Employees' Local 630. Believing that a drive to organize all of Pennsylvania's state workers would take about 5 years, McEntee divided Pennsylvania's 67 counties between him and Martin and began making contacts with workers in union halls, private homes, and political gatherings in the last months of 1969. The success of the POC campaign would be based on two objectives: A political campaign to restructure Pennsylvania's existing public-sector labor laws and a simultaneous effort to secure support for AFSCME representation among the thousands of unorganized state employees.

The political climate for an overhaul of Pennsylvania's labor laws seemed promising in the late 1960s. Although Pennsylvania's laws officially recognized the right of state workers to join associations that advanced their position as government employees,

these laws stopped short of granting the right to bargain collectively. In the mid-1960s, however, challenges to state laws were initiated by Pennsylvania police and firefighter associations. With bipartisan support, Raymond P. Shafer, Pennsylvania's moderate Republican governor, approved of measures to grant collective-bargaining rights to uniformed personnel. Pennsylvania citizens voted in favor of the legal changes in a 1968 referendum, giving hope to nonuniformed state employees that they could gain similar rights. Soon after Governor Shafer formed a commission to review existing state labor laws, which ultimately recommended a complete overhaul of the Commonwealth's guidelines regarding public employees.

The AFSCME championed the committee recommendations and lobbied for the adaptation of a new law protecting the organizing rights of state workers. McEntee coordinated an extensive lobbying campaign in support of the newly proposed Public Employees Bargaining Law, also known as State Bill 1113, while also organizing activities among state workers to put public pressure on state legislators. A master of media relations, McEntee orchestrated a picket of 5,000 government employees at the state capital building in Harrisburg in April 1970, receiving much publicity across the state. In July 1970, such political pressures paid off with the passing of Act 195, providing Pennsylvania's government workers the legal right to organize and collectively bargain for the first time.

In the days immediately following the passing of Act 195, hundreds of state workers signed cards authorizing AFSCME to represent them in collective-bargaining sessions. Through early 1971, AFSCME continued to expand its membership among Pennsylvania's employees despite a crowded organizing field of competing unions. A key AFSCME victory came in March 1971, when the union gained exclusive bargaining representation for the Commonwealth's maintenance and trade employees, signing the first statewide unit contract covering approximately 17,500 members 8 months later. By July 1973, a master contract for 75,000 workers across the Commonwealth was signed, providing a 6.5% wage increase over 2 years. Soon after a new statewide organization Council 13, with eight regional district councils was established, with Gerald McEntee elected president. The success of McEntee's campaign became AFSCME's national model for similar organizing efforts, helping to expand its membership to the one million mark in 1978.

McEntee's success in organizing Pennsylvania—the largest and most successful organizing campaign in U.S. labor history—launched him into national

prominence. McEntee gained attention again in July 1975 when he led Council 13 in the nation's first strike against a state government, an action that resulted in substantial pay increases for Pennsylvania AFSCME members and underscored the union's militant stance. Following the death of AFSCME International President Wurf in December 1981, McEntee ran for the union's top position, challenging William Lucy, AFSCME's secretary-treasurer who many considered Wurf's handpicked successor. In a hard-fought campaign, McEntee won a narrow victory and has consecutively won re-election as AFSCME president since then. Among his innovations as national AFSCME leader was the establishment of labor's first in-house broadcasting studio, the Labor Network News, in 1982. Located in AFSCME's Washington, DC, offices, the network was equipped with television cameras, tape decks, and editing equipment for use in press conferences and panel discussions, with the capacity to broadcast to four million viewers.

McEntee has been an important voice in shaping debates over the goals and direction of organized labor in the twenty-first century. Most significant was his early involvement in the formation of the New Voice for American Workers' coalition in 1995. Formed in response to the failure of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) leadership to reverse downward trends in union membership, and in the face of such serious defeats of labor causes as the failure to stop enactment of the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the inability to secure health care reforms with the Clinton administration, and most importantly the 1994 loss of Congress to the Gingrich Republicans, the New Voice coalition sought to recharge organized labor as a potent force in U.S. politics and culture. In October 1995, John Sweeney, the international president of the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU), was elected as a reform candidate to the presidency of the AFL-CIO. With McEntee's support, Sweeney encouraged new organizing campaigns in the American workplace, including service and retail sectors, to bolster labor power in the United States. Despite the initiatives of the New Voice platform, organized labor continued to decline through the first years of the twenty-first century, leading some prominent leaders of the AFL-CIO, especially SEIU president Andy Stern, to question the federation's commitment to organizing and its ability to represent the concerns of working Americans. Through these debates, McEntee was a staunch critic of Stern's efforts to restructure the AFL-CIO and supported Sweeney's re-election as federation president in 2005. In the summer of 2005, the SEIU along with seven other national unions broke with the AFL-CIO to

form a new national labor federation, Change To Win, a move that McEntee strongly opposed.

A proponent of socially engaged unionism that addresses social issues beyond the formal workplace, Gerald McEntee has been at the head of numerous progressive causes since the 1960s. In 1999, he was among the national labor leaders who urged the formation of a new progressive political coalition at the Seattle protests against the World Trade Organization. McEntee has played a powerful role as the primary spokesperson of the progressive wing of the Democratic party. In 1999, he cast AFSCME's support behind Al Gore, leading to labor's early endorsement, helping him to secure the Democratic nomination. McEntee has been an outspoken critic of the policies of the George W. Bush administration and an active antiwar voice in Washington. In 2003, McEntee was an early backer of antiwar candidate Howard Dean but broke with him following Dean's disappointing performance in the Iowa Caucus, eventually shifting AFSCME's support to John Kerry. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, McEntee remains the most vocal spokesperson for organized labor in the United States.

FRANCIS RYAN

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See also American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Donahue, Thomas; Kirkland, Lane; McEntee, William J.; Sweeney, John J.; Wurf, Jerry

McENTEE, WILLIAM J. (JUNE 8, 1903–MAY 22, 1983) President of Philadelphia's AFSCME District Council 33

A native of Philadelphia, William J. "Bill" McEntee was one of the early pioneers of municipal unionism in the United States. In an era when public workers enjoyed no legal rights to organize, McEntee forged ahead in establishing a tradition of labor activism among this neglected segment of the U.S. labor force. His bold actions in organizing municipal workers,

especially in blue-collar divisions, and his success in gaining advancements in wages and job protection, set a precedent for big-city labor-management relations that would later emerge across the United States by the 1970s. As the original organizer of Philadelphia's Street Cleaning Bureau, which was one of the most ethnically and racially diverse workplaces in the city, McEntee helped forge a new tradition of interracial unionism in Philadelphia.

A sanitation truck driver who started with the City of Philadelphia's Street Cleaning Bureau in 1924, McEntee's union involvement began in the early 1930s when he initiated an organizing campaign among the city's sanitation workers, eventually securing affiliation with a chapter of Philadelphia's Teamsters' Union. In October 1938, McEntee led a week-long strike that stopped the city's trash services, securing an agreement with Philadelphia's Republican leadership guaranteeing wage increases and increased job security for 2,500 workers in the city's street-cleaning, highway maintenance, and water bureaus. During this strike McEntee allied the municipal workers with the new American Federation of Labor (AFL) union with jurisdiction over local government workers, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). In July 1939, the City of Philadelphia signed a contract with AFSCME, accepting the union as the exclusive collective-bargaining agent for all of its blue-collar employees, the first major city in the United States to accord AFSCME such recognition.

In 1944, McEntee was elected the first president of Philadelphia's AFSCME District Council 33, a position he held for 24 years. Under McEntee's leadership, AFSCME expanded its membership there, with new locals established across city departments, reaching a membership of 12,000 by 1960. Philadelphia achieved important settlements with the city through these years, including wage increases, establishment of a civil service system, and the securing of a 40-hour workweek. In 1947, pay demands by District Council 33 led to the forming of a financial review committee that uncovered corruption and graft in key municipal offices, giving rise to a powerful political reform movement that McEntee placed AFSCME behind. Through the 1950s, McEntee secured a political alliance with the reform administrations of Democratic Mayors Joseph Clark and Richardson Dilworth and with their support, secured the nation's first municipal employees' health and welfare fund supported completely through city funding, which became the model for all public-employee health programs across the United States.

Besides his position as head of AFSCME DC 33, McEntee also played an important role as a leader of

both regional and national labor movements, serving as a vice-president of the city's AFL Central Labor Union and as a regional vice-president to the AFSCME international board, positions he maintained for almost 25 years. Through his years as a national AFSCME leader, McEntee was a supporter of the union's founder and president, Arnold Zander, and remained a staunch ally through Jerry Wurf's insurgency for the union presidency in the early 1960s. In 1964, McEntee was Zander's running mate at the international convention in Denver, losing in a close election to Wurf's reform coalition. Following this defeat, McEntee continued to serve as a national AFSCME leader, working with Wurf on the union's Constitution Revision Commission that implemented changes in union procedure and regional planning that heralded the most successful membership drives in AFSCME's history. In 1968, McEntee stepped down as president of Philadelphia's District Council 33. In 1981, McEntee's son, Gerald W. McEntee, who successfully organized 75,000 Pennsylvania Commonwealth employees in the 1970s, succeeded Wurf as international AFSCME president.

FRANCIS RYAN

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See also American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); McEntee, Gerald W.; Quill, Michael J.; Wurf, Jerry

McGLYNN, FATHER EDWARD (SEPTEMBER 27, 1837-JULY 1, 1910)

Father McGlynn was pastor of St. Stephen's Church on East Twenty-Eighth Street in New York City from 1866-1887. His advocacy of social justice and defiance of ecclesiastical authority resulted in his excommunication in 1887.

McGlynn spent most of his formative years in New York's Lower East Side. His first assignment as a priest was as an assistant to Father Thomas Farrell, who was a vehement opponent of slavery and a staunch supporter of Abraham Lincoln. During the Civil War, he served as acting pastor in three churches in lower Manhattan.

McGlynn earned praise for his efforts in securing an orphan asylum within Stephen's parish shortly

after he became pastor. Yet in 1870, his refusal to establish a parochial school for Catholic children drew the ire of his superiors. Here he demonstrated a characteristic outspokenness that would lead to controversy. In an interview with the *New York Sun*, he recalled his own experience in local schools as he defended public education, rejecting the position of the church.

McGlynn became a centre of attention again when he enthusiastically embraced the views of Henry George, who proposed a single tax on land not used productively and advocated the cause of the Irish Land League in the early 1880s. In describing *Progress and Poverty* as “a poem of philosophy, prophecy and prayer” whose conclusion is “more like an utterance of an inspired seer of Israel,” he testified to the impact of George’s major work. Like many Irish Catholic Americans, he saw an intimate connection between the “struggle against landlordism” in Ireland and the antimonopoly movement in the United States inspired by Henry George.

Consequently Archbishop of New York Michael Corrigan demanded that McGlynn cease to espouse views that contravened church doctrine. Matters came to a head when McGlynn spoke at Chickering Hall in October 1886 on behalf of George’s independent candidacy for mayor, supported by a coalition of the city’s major unions through the United Labor party (ULP). Corrigan suspended McGlynn from fulfilling priestly functions for 2 weeks and extended the suspension when McGlynn in two interviews with the *New York Tribune* reiterated his support for the single tax. Then in January 1887, Corrigan named Arthur Donnelly as the new pastor of St. Stephen’s Church.

Neither Corrigan’s punitive measures nor the close defeat of George, who finished second to the Democratic party candidate, Abram Hewitt, dimmed McGlynn’s belief that the remedy to poverty remained “the abolition of private ownership of land and the restitution to all men of their rights in the soil.” He continued to insist that social and economic relations were accountable to a higher law than the rules of a free market. He quoted from the scriptures, especially Leviticus and Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount, to underscore his conviction that Christians had an obligation to seek justice for the less fortunate, which during an era of accelerating inequality meant opposition to the “monopolisation of land for profit.”

Encouraged by the support of parishioners who pledged not to contribute to the maintenance of St. Stephen’s Church until McGlynn was re-instated as its pastor and editorials in New York’s Irish press, including the *Irish World* and *Catholic Herald*, he remained unbowed. He was elected president of the

Anti-Poverty Society, formed in March 1887 to campaign for the single tax, and embarked on a hectic speaking tour that included Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and Cincinnati, among other cities. In June when Pope Leo XIII summoned McGlynn to appear at a tribunal to answer for his disobedience, the Anti-Poverty Society organised a march in his support estimated at 30-40,000 strong. In July the Vatican excommunicated McGlynn after he defiantly failed to appear at the tribunal.

Over the next 3 years, McGlynn dedicated himself to promoting the program of the Anti-Poverty Society, although his influence—as did the vitality of social reform—began to wane. During the 1887 state-wide elections, George ran for secretary of state as a candidate for the ULP, but a split between Socialists and the single-tax camp and the failure of the city’s unions to mobilise for the campaign resulted in a poor showing. Conspicuously such erstwhile supporters like the *Irish World* withheld its support from McGlynn and the ULP. Then in 1888 the alliance between McGlynn and George ruptured when the latter endorsed Grover Cleveland’s Democratic candidacy for president, an act that McGlynn felt sabotaged the integrity of the single-tax movement.

Meanwhile behind the scenes, McGlynn’s restoration within the church began. Mgr. Francisco Satolli on behalf of Pope Leo XII, conducted an investigation of McGlynn’s standing among Catholic parishioners and discovered the excommunicated priest had broad support among other clergymen and that the Vatican’s decision in 1887 continued to divide the Church. McGlynn helped his cause when he provided a lengthy statement explaining his views on the private property and the land question that appeared not incompatible with the sentiments expressed in Pope Leo’s Encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*” in 1891 that “workingmen have been surrendered...to the hardheartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition.”

Accordingly in 1892, McGlynn was re-instated into the church as a priest, and in 1894, McGlynn was appointed pastor of St. Mary’s Church in Newburgh, New York. Although he lectured around the country on the theme of social and economic justice, a chronic heart condition restricted his activities after 1899.

RONALD MENDEL

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**MCGUIRE, PETER J. (JULY 6, 1852–
FEBRUARY 18, 1906)
Cofounder, American Federation of Labor**

Peter McGuire was a central figure in the labor movement during the Gilded Age. He served as the general secretary of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners from its founding in 1881 until 1902. Along with Samuel Gompers, he helped launch the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1886.

McGuire cut his teeth as a labor activist at the onset of a protracted economic depression in 1873. He was elected as a member of the Committee of Public Safety, formed to press the authorities to provide public relief for the city's unemployed workers. He spoke, both in English and German, at impromptu street corner meetings and more formal rallies, culminating in the mass public meeting at Tompkins Square on January 13, 1874, which the police violently broke up, resulting in scores of injuries and the arrest of 35 demonstrators.

As unemployment and economic hardship mounted, McGuire increasingly became more involved in the nation's burgeoning socialist movement. In 1874, he helped to establish the Social Democratic party of North America (SDP), which was inspired by the writings of the German Socialist Ferdinand Lassalle. He contributed to the SDP's newspaper, the *Toiler*, which advocated independent working-class political action in pursuit of collectively owned and managed "productive associations in industry," and over the next 2 years tirelessly toured the country on behalf of the party. With the formation of the Workingmen's party, which encompassed the SDP, in 1877, McGuire's reputation as a rousing speaker and energetic organizer grew. He ran the party's election campaigns for local and state offices in Connecticut and garnered over 9,000 votes in Cincinnati's council elections that year.

Later in 1877, McGuire relocated to St. Louis, where he rose to prominence in the city's Trades' and Labor Assembly. He lobbied state legislators to

enact bills that would require adequate ventilation in mines, regulate child labor, and establish a State Bureau of Labor Statistics. For his efforts he was appointed deputy commissioner in 1879, but he quit after 6 months in post.

His remaining 3 years in St. Louis saw McGuire renew his commitment to independent political action. On his election as president of the Trades' and Labor Assembly, he was chosen as a delegate to the national convention of the Greenback-Labor party in 1880, and despite his vocal support of the party's election efforts, he refused the nomination to run for the office of secretary of state in Missouri.

By 1881, however, McGuire turned his attention to the nuts-and-bolts of trade unionism. The disappointing performance of the Greenback-Labor party led to a sober reassessment of the potential of independent political action. McGuire's intermittent stints as a carpenter gave him first-hand experience with the deteriorating employment conditions in the trade. Lastly his involvement in a wave of strikes by carpenters and railway workers in St. Louis convinced him that to sustain the momentum of labor militancy, effective trade union organization was necessary.

Accordingly McGuire directed his energies to building a national carpenters' union. In 1881, he was elected the general secretary of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters at its inaugural convention with a salary of \$15 per annum. He also became editor of the union's monthly journal, the *Carpenter*, where he gave practical council to newly formed locals as well as developed his vision of a transformative trade unionism that would uplift workers individually and collectively.

The union's formative years tested McGuire's organizing skills. Membership only incrementally rose in the first 3 years, since competition from three other unions, the United Order of Carpenters, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters (ACS), and the Knights of Labor (KOL) forestalled the Brotherhood's progress. However McGuire's and the union's leadership in the 8-hour movement in 1886 became a turning point, as membership increased more than threefold to over 21,000. The Brotherhood's growth spurred McGuire's efforts to seek agreements with competing unions. The Brotherhood overcame threats posed by the KOL assemblies in Washington, DC, and Chicago by 1887, and in 1888 at a special conference in Philadelphia, the United Order of Carpenters and the Brotherhood agreed to merge and form the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (UBCJ).

The UBCJ's continued growth and organizational stability represented a model for the AFL's leadership, which since 1886 had sought to promote

national unions representing distinct crafts or trades. In recognition of the UBCJ's achievements, the union agreed to spearhead a renewed drive for the 8-hour day at the urging of Gompers, the AFL's president, in 1890. The union's involvement in 141 strikes in 36 cities involving over 54,000 workers triggered another surge in membership, which more than doubled to 53,000 by the end of the year.

Nevertheless most of the 1890s presented serious challenges to the UBCJ. Firstly jurisdictional conflicts with the International Woodworkers' Union (IWU), which along with the UBCJ, claimed members in shops that made doors, blinds, sashes, and stairs, and with the ASC festered. Secondly McGuire and the union's General Executive Board discovered that their authority was contested by some districts dissatisfied with official union policies. Thirdly in 1893, and during the ensuing years of economic depression, pressure mounted at union conventions to join forces with the Socialist Labor party (SLP) in the political arena. Lastly McGuire, beginning in 1894, faced calls to loosen his grip on the union's operational affairs.

McGuire steadfastly faced these challenges. He was instrumental in negotiating an agreement with the ASC in 1895 that called for the mutual recognition of the membership cards of each union and used his diplomatic skills to prevent a breakdown in relations between the Brotherhood and the IWU. Likewise he steered the General Executive Board away from any direct confrontation with districts that did not consistently respect jurisdictional agreements. Although he remained a Socialist, McGuire's intervention in convention debates stressed that members' interests were not served by a political alliance with the SLP.

Ironically though in large measure because of the UBCJ's expansion in the 1890s, the General Executive Board sought to redistribute some of the general secretary's powers to other full-time, salaried officials. When attempts to modify the union's constitution failed, McGuire's opponents charged him with financial malfeasance, which initially resulted in his suspension in 1901 and his resignation in 1902.

Notwithstanding his anticlimactic forfeiture of leadership, McGuire could take a lion's share of the credit for the gains made by carpenters in the previous 20 years. Union membership rocketed to 122,000, the 8-hour day had been introduced in over 500 cities, and carpenters were among the highest paid manual workers in the nation. Whereas McGuire could envision only a national union capable of advancing carpenters' collective interests, by 1902 the UBCJ had become a flagship affiliate of the AFL at a time when

employers and the general public contested the very legitimacy of trade unionism.

RONALD MENDEL

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See also American Federation of Labor; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

McNAMARA BROTHERS

John J. McNamara and his younger brother James B. McNamara were union activists associated with the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers (BSIW) who were tried for murder after a dynamite bomb destroyed the *Los Angeles Times* building on October 1, 1910. The explosion caused the deaths of around 20 people and destroyed over half-a-million dollars in property. While many at the time considered the brothers' arrest to be a frame-up, and despite the retention of Clarence Darrow to head up the defense, both men pleaded guilty and served prison terms.

Los Angeles employers had long been hostile to unions, and Harrison Gray Otis, the owner and publisher of the *Times*, had helped organize the virulently anti-union Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association. When San Francisco unionists began a concerted organizing campaign in the Los Angeles building trades in the summer of 1910, Otis's *Times* served as a mouthpiece for the employers and goaded the metal trades workers who walked off their jobs on June 1. The metal trades' unions decided to engage in industrial terrorism in an attempt to better their bargaining position, a practice that had been effective in their struggle against the National Erectors' Association (NEA), an anti-union group fighting for the open-shop in the construction industry. In the period from 1908-1911, the BSIW had detonated 87 bombs in an attempt to gain union recognition from the NEA and its members. Most of these bombs were relatively harmless however, with no loss of life associated with any attack other than the October bombing of the *Times* plant.

When the metal trades strike began in June, the Los Angeles unions contacted John J. McNamara,

who was the secretary-treasurer of the BSIW, and requested the assistance of Herbert Hockin, who had been one of the leading dynamiters for the union. When Hockin was unavailable, John sent his brother James instead. James McNamara had been Hockin's apprentice since 1909 and was a skilled dynamiter in his own right. James set the bomb behind the *Times* printing plant, but he had only intended to cause minor damage to the building. Unfortunately he failed to notice the barrels of flammable ink that were stored in the alley where he had placed the bomb. After the building was destroyed, James was distraught and fled first to Salt Lake City and then to Chicago. Nevertheless by December, he appeared to have recovered, and he helped Ortie McManigal plant another bomb at the Llewellyn iron works on the West Coast. When that bomb injured a night watchman, plans for two more bombs, including one at the *Times* auxiliary plant, were scrapped. After a short break however, James and McManigal began bombing again, planting at least five bombs in March of 1911.

John J. McNamara was arrested on April 22, 1911 by agents working for William J. Burns, a private detective who had been retained by the mayor of Los Angeles to investigate the *Times* bombing. James and his partner McManigal had been arrested 10 days earlier carrying a suitcase full of explosives. McManigal agreed to cooperate in exchange for a lighter sentence, and the McNamara brothers were quickly extradited to California. The extradition was carried out with great secrecy and with minimal respect for due process, giving rise to the claim that the McNamaras had been kidnapped by the detectives, as had happened during the Haywood-Moyer-Pettibone murder case of 1906, when three leaders of the Western Federation of Miners were abducted by Pinkerton detectives so that they could be smuggled into Idaho to stand trial for the murder of governor Frank Steunenberg.

Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of labor (AFL) immediately began a campaign to free the two brothers. The labor movement maintained that the McNamaras were innocent and that the *Times* explosion was a result of Otis's negligence rather than a dynamite bomb at all. Labor Day 1911 was renamed McNamara Day, and massive crowds attended demonstrations across the United States demanding that the brothers be set free. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised for the defense fund, and the AFL retained Clarence Darrow to serve as the chief defense attorney.

Unfortunately the brothers were guilty, and Darrow knew it. He did everything in his power to ensure

that the McNamaras would be acquitted, going so far, it was alleged, as to bribe witnesses and jurors. The case against the brothers was too strong, and in order to prevent James from getting the death penalty, Darrow convinced the two unionists to plead guilty. James B. McNamara pleaded guilty to murder and was given a life sentence, while his brother John J. McNamara plead guilty to participating in the bombing of the Llewellyn iron works and was given 15 years. While the decision to plead guilty probably saved James's life, it had some harsh repercussions for the labor movement both in California and nationally.

Socialist labor lawyer Job Harriman was running for mayor during the McNamara trial, and when the brothers plead guilty, his campaign collapsed. Many on the Left criticized Darrow for his timing, since the lawyer chose December 1, four days before the mayoral election, for his clients to change their pleas. Before the McNamaras' confession of guilt, Harriman was the frontrunner for the upcoming runoff election. Moreover the guilty plea struck a blow at the reputation of Gompers and the AFL, which had protested so vigorously regarding the brothers' innocence. In the aftermath of the trial, Darrow was himself put on trial for the bribing of one of the jurors in the McNamara case, although he was eventually acquitted.

After his incarceration, James McNamara moved increasingly to the Left, eventually joining the Communist Party USA. He died in prison on March 8, 1941. His brother John was released from prison in 1921 but was shunned by the labor community. He died two months after his younger brother in May of 1941.

AARON MAX BERKOWITZ

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MCNEILL, GEORGE EDWIN (1837–1906) Eight-Hour Day Activist

George Edwin McNeill was born in Amesbury, Massachusetts, in 1837. His father was a Scotch-Irish immigrant who sent him to work in a local woolen mill

after he turned 15. There McNeill later remembered, he had his “baptism in the labor cause” when the factory’s workers unsuccessfully struck to retain the customary quarter-hour forenoon break.

After 4 years in the factory, McNeill moved to nearby Boston and soon became active in that city’s flourishing labor movement. There in a city known for its great orators and its radicalism, McNeill honed his elocutionary skills in both the temperance and abolitionist movements but gravitated to the 8-hour movement then being placed on a new intellectual footing by the self-taught labor economist, Ira Steward. Steward came to rely on McNeill’s organizing skills, later describing him as a “walking convention.” When Steward organized the Grand Eight-Hour League in 1863, an attempt to forge a union between elite reformers and trade unionists in the state, he tapped McNeill as its first secretary.

After the war McNeill’s scope of activities widened considerably. In 1867, he helped found and served as the first president of the self-improvement-oriented Workingmen’s Institute. Two years later he was nominated as the deputy director of the newly formed Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics, a post that he made into a bully pulpit for his 8-hour, labor reform, and anti-Chinese ideas. In 1874, he wrote the charter for the Rochester Labor Congress that would later be adopted as the statement of principles of the Knights of Labor (KOL). When Boston’s 8-hour men and New York’s German Marxists combined in 1878 to form a short-lived Marxist-inspired labor union, the International Labor Union (ILU), McNeill was tapped as its first president.

After the demise of the ILU, McNeill continued his labor reform efforts through the KOL, quickly rising to become an officer of Boston’s district. McNeill aligned himself with the KOL faction that advocated the organization of national trade unions within the order. Later when this idea was more effectively carried forward by the American Federation of Labor (AFL), McNeill became an advocate of some sort of functional alliance between the two organizations; and when that idea proved unpopular, McNeill jumped ship and became an ally of Samuel Gompers.

Through these years he supplemented his small official salary by selling insurance and by taking on the editorship of the *Boston Labor Leader*, a labor weekly. In 1886, he agreed to place his name in candidacy for the office of mayor of Boston on a labor ticket but with little hope of success. The last decades of his life were spent primarily as a writer, authoring a number of pamphlets that were widely circulated by the AFL, including “The Philosophy of the Labor

Movement” (1893) and the “Eight Hour Primer” (1889). His best-known work was as the editor of the historically important volume, *The Labor Movement: The Problem of To-Day* (1887) to which many of the key figures of the labor movement of that time contributed, including both Gompers, and Terence Powderly, leader of the KOL.

TIMOTHY MESSER-KRUSE

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MEANY, GEORGE (1894–1980) American Federation of Labor, American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization.

George Meany today remains among the most controversial figures in American labor history. Arguably the debates about his legacy are a function of the tremendous power he wielded. In fact in many ways, he was the American Federation of Labor’s (AFL’s) (and later the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations’ [AFL-CIO’s]) strongest, most influential boss, rivaling only John L. Lewis for his ability to project his will over others and over the American economic and political systems. As the leader of the largest labor organization in the United States, Meany used his office to transform and modernize the AFL so that it became more than just a bread-and-butter organization. Under President Meany’s administration, the AFL focused its political energies on improving the lives of workers and decreasing the pernicious influences of corruption and discrimination. Also under Meany the AFL (and AFL-CIO) increased its presence on the world stage, becoming a force fostering the growth of anti-Communist, pro-Western labor unions. What makes Meany’s career in labor politics all the more amazing is his circuitous and improbable rise to power.

Just weeks after the collapse of the Pullman Strike of 1894, a son was born to Michael J. Meany and Anne Cullen Meany. They named him William George Meany. The boy was known universally as George,

and in fact he only learned about his first name in his teen years. George grew up in a household that was infused with politics and religion. His parents were the American-born children of Irish immigrants who had strong feelings about Irish nationalism and Roman Catholicism as well as unions. As Meany later put it, workers in his neighborhood put labor “Organ-I-zation” on “par with their religion.”

Michael Meany was the president of a sizeable plumbers’ union in Bronx, New York, and a cog in the local Democratic political machine. George grew up aspiring to be just like this father. Specifically he wanted to be a plumber. But the craft that seemingly came naturally to his father did not for the son. In fact Michael did not want his son to follow in his footsteps. Perhaps he knew that George’s gifts did not relate to bending, fitting, and fixing pipes. Moreover the life of a construction worker was a precarious one, since lay-offs and slack times were unpredictable and potentially devastating. Against his father’s wishes, in 1910, George became a plumber’s apprentice working on various projects in the city. After 5 years of training, in 1915, he decided to take the test to become a journeyman plumber. Michael aided him as much as possible, handpicking the examining board. The help did not matter, since the 21-year-old apprentice failed his test. He did however pass the next year, sadly shortly after his father had died of pneumonia.

Despite how much Michael Meany was loved, George received a rude initiation into Plumbers’ Local 463 (later Local 2). The local of 3,600 plumbers was a closed local, meaning that it rarely accepted new workers in order to control the supply of labor and the availability of work. The introduction of new members always sparked fears in older unionists that there might be a glut of plumbers scrapping for a small number of jobs. At Meany’s initiation on January 17, 1917, five hundred angry plumbers showed up at the union hall to boo and harass their new brothers in a vain attempt to get them to quit before they went through the ritual. The rough treatment did not scare Meany away. In fact, 5 years later, he was elected to be the business agent of the union, checking wages and working conditions and ensuring that the plumbers honored their contractual obligations. Moreover Meany enforced the closed-shop arrangements on construction jobs, rooting out the nonunion laborers on job sites and sending them packing. The full-time post was a big step up for Meany, who now had more money to support his growing family.

Meany used his position as the plumbers’ business agent as a springboard to larger, more powerful bureaucratic positions. The 1920s and 1930s thus constituted the formative years in the development of not

only Meany’s power within the labor movement but also his political philosophy. With each step up the ladder in the labor movement’s hierarchy, Meany’s became more committed to certain ideological positions. For example in 1921, a major scandal was exposed in New York City. The city’s dock builders’ business agent, Robert P. Brindell, was sentenced to 10 years for taking a bribe during a strike. Needless to say Brindell lost his post on the citywide building trades council, a position that Meany filled in 1922. Meany’s hard-nosed political abilities along with his dedication to craft unionism and his unstinting probity caught the eye of his union brothers around the state, and in 1934, they made him the president of the New York State Federation of Labor. As NYSF president, Meany began to demonstrate the other major tenet of his labor philosophy. During the early 1930s, he became a strong proponent for governmental action to relieve the horrible effects of the Great Depression and to reform the economy in order to build more stability into the lives of workers. Specifically he backed state laws for unemployment insurance and for expanding prevailing wage protections. Meany’s lobbying also brought him in association with other labor leaders, most importantly the Teamsters’ Dan Tobin, who helped him get the post with the AFL that he held for 13 years: The AFL’s secretary-treasurer.

When he entered the office for the first time, Meany was quite disappointed. The secretary-treasurer had no power or duties. It was, as a Meany biographer once put it, like the U.S. vice-presidency, without the glory. William Green, the 72-year-old AFL president, liked it that way. Green had no compulsion to encourage the younger, more energetic upstart. Nevertheless within just a few years, Meany had transformed the post into a position of considerable power. His moment of opportunity came in heady months following the Japanese attack on the naval installation at Pearl Harbor. The AFL had been integrally involved in President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s defense efforts, and once the war formally started, the AFL role expanded greatly. Meany served as Green’s lieutenant on several wartime assignments, none more important than the National War Labor Board, a body that set wage, hour, and working conditions rules for the arsenal of democracy. Meany was also instrumental in President FDR’s attempt to bring the AFL and CIO together if only for the duration. Although this failed, Meany’s status as a powerful labor broker was nonetheless heightened.

After the war Meany’s power and influence within the labor movement continued to grow, especially during the disastrous fight over the Taft-Hartley Act. In early 1947, Senator Robert A. Taft (R, OH) and

Representative Fred Hartley (R, NJ) proposed a series of amendments to the Wagner Act designed to constrict the power of unions. Labor leaders and the rank-and-file unionists fought against the “slave labor act” tooth-and-nail but to no avail. To fight the law’s implementation and to ensure that organized labor developed a more potent political voice, Meany helped to form Labor’s League for Political Education (LLPE). The LLPE not only lobbied Congress for more favorable labor legislation but also got out the vote for labor-friendly politicians. The LLPE represented well Meany’s outlook on politics. More than other AFL leaders, he wanted to engage and influence politicians, elections, and public policy.

Meany had free reign to develop his political outlook when in 1952, he succeeded Green as the third AFL president. In his later years Green had become feeble and ineffective, but the new AFL president soon proved that he was a dynamo. Practically speaking Meany’s presidency had four central tenets. First Meany wanted the labor movement to become much more active in American and international politics. Second this new political influence was to be used to advance what one scholar has termed laborite Keynesianism, which called for government spending for jobs and economic security, not only in the United States but also elsewhere in the free world. Third Meany used his office to push out of the labor movement those he deemed as corrupt, particularly the racketeers and Communists. Fourth Meany sought to unite all workers under a single banner. Arguably this was Meany’s greatest achievement.

Partially the merger between the AFL and the CIO in 1955 was about timing. In 1952, both Green and Philip Murray died, and thus both the AFL and CIO gained new leadership. The CIO’s new chief, Walther Reuther, the former head of the United Automobile Workers, was no stranger to the labor schism that had divided the house of labor. And, yet like Meany, Reuther firmly believed that in the conservative 1950s the labor movement was stronger unified rather than divided. Almost immediately after entering their offices, Meany and Reuther started negotiating. In fact they restarted conversations begun during the Second World War when President Franklin D. Roosevelt had urged the labor federations to rejoin. This time however the old obstructions did not resurface. Within 3 years Meany along with Reuther had hammered out an agreement. Meany played a crucial role in getting his AFL colleagues to allow the new AFL-CIO to organize along industrial lines. As Meany explained later, he put down the “craft revolt” within the AFL that sought to prevent the new Industrial Union Department from operating.

The new AFL-CIO, whose formal marriage was consummated on December 5, 1955, indeed created a larger if not more powerful and more unified labor movement. As its spokesman Meany quickly used his new position to propel his agenda and philosophy on both a national and international stage. Among his first actions was to crack down on corrupt unions. As noted earlier Meany had long battled against corruption within the labor movement. As AFL-CIO president, he launched investigations into the worst offenders, namely, the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Both unions were eventually expelled from the AFL-CIO. The battle against the grafters however exposed a weakness within the labor federation and with Meany’s leadership. In 1959, 2 years after the Teamsters were kicked out of the AFL-CIO, A. Philip Randolph, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters’ president and still the leading civil rights figure in the United States, demanded that the AFL-CIO’s leadership take the same pro-active stance on civil rights and expel the unions who had broken code of the AFL-CIO by segregating and discriminating against minority workers. In Randolph’s view employment discrimination was akin to the kind of insidious corruption practiced by the Teamsters and ILA. Such a proposal drew the ire of Meany who at the 1959 AFL-CIO convention denounced Randolph, belittling him viciously saying, “Who the hell appointed you as the guardian of all the Negroes in America?” The convention’s fiery exchange became legendary and a touchstone moment in the history of the labor and civil rights movements. Although Meany had helped to draft and pass the initial AFL-CIO resolution on civil rights, he did not pursue the issue so vigorously as he did the other initiatives, such as the anticorruption campaign.

Rather for nearly three decades, the Meany presidency was synonymous with bread-and-butter unionism, the global anti-Communist crusade, and the growth of the AFL-CIO’s influence in American electoral politics. In a way Meany’s business agent mentality never left him. He constantly looking to defend his organization and expand benefits for its members. By the middle-1950s, this meant that Meany became a regular in the hall of Congress and the Oval Office. Moreover Meany’s impact on politics expanded after he set up the Committee on Political Education (COPE), the get-out-the-vote arm of the AFL-CIO. With his political connections and with his ability to deliver votes, Meany became an important ally of presidents. It was often Meany’s endorsement that either cleared or blocked a candidate’s path to the White House. Ignoring decades of AFL tradition, Meany took very public stands in every presidential

contest from 1952 to 1976 (with the exception of 1972). He was perhaps closest to President John F. Kennedy. The AFL's chief looked on the young president as his adopted Irish nephew. However Meany's relationship with President Lyndon B. Johnson may have been the most productive. In addition to lending support for Johnson's war in Vietnam and his War on Poverty, Meany helped LBJ with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. To this day, historians argue how much Meany influenced the Civil Rights Act, particularly its fair employment provision. It is clear that Meany's support and suggestions did have some salutary impact on the landmark law.

President Meany's political efforts were not always successful, and his record as labor's power broker is decidedly mixed. He was not always very adept at stopping the advances of conservative political forces. For example he proved powerless to stop the passage of the Landrum-Griffith Act in 1959, which further curtailed the power of unions. He also failed to exert any influence over Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter. Nixon refused to listen to Meany's objections to the creation of the Philadelphia Plan, the first attempt at affirmative action. Ford ignored Meany's ideas on curbing inflation. However Carter's relationship with Meany was the most contentious. Carter had earned the backing of Meany and the AFL-CIO by promising a more labor-friendly administration and offering the opportunity for the passage of progressive labor legislation long blocked by Republicans. But once in office President Carter turned his back on Meany and reneged on pledges concerning wages, taxes, and inflation.

Although one can blame labor's troubles on the ascendancy of modern political conservatism, Meany's frustrations were partly his own fault. He rarely allowed anyone to join him in the public limelight. In essence he was the sole public face for the AFL-CIO. It was Meany who met with congressmen, various presidents, and the press. It was Meany who made the appearances on television, especially the important and popular Dick Cavett Show. Not allowing subordinates or even others in the labor movement to share this national stage created two problems. First since Meany did not in fact represent all opinions in the labor movement, his inflated public presence generated considerable tension among unionists. In order to get their messages heard, labor leaders like Randolph and Reuther had to establish their own organizations outside the AFL-CIO. Although consequential, necessary, and useful in their own right, at times these groups like Randolph's Negro American Labor Council and Reuther's UAW-Teamster Alliance contributed to the divisions within the labor movement at a

time when conservative forces were on the attack. Second the appearance of Meany as the AFL-CIO's sole leader made the issue of succession problematic. Like Green, Meany did not give many public duties to his lieutenants. As such when Lane Kirkland, Meany's alter ego, assumed the AFL reins in 1980, few unionists, politicians, or citizens knew him well. And, at the dawning of Reagan's years, the lack of a strong, popularly backed chief of the AFL-CIO did not make it easy for organized labor to survive the onslaught of modern conservatism in the 1980s and early 1990s. Thus labor's modern troubles as well as its organizational strengths are both legacies of Meany.

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MECHANICS' LIEN LAW

Advocacy of stronger and more widely applicable mechanics' lien laws was a salient demand of the antebellum labor movement, starting with the Working Men's parties of the late 1820s and the Locofoco Democrats of the 1830s. The term mechanic meant a skilled artisan or craftsman, such as a carpenter, while a lien is a right or claim against property created by law as an incident of contract. Thus a mechanics' lien is a right or claim that secures to a craftsman a priority of payment for work performed or materials provided in the improvement of real property, for example, the construction or repair of a building. If the property owner fails to pay for work or materials used in improving his/her property, a mechanics' lien holder can file a lien against the property for the money owed. English common law did not provide for such a lien. Instead the mechanics' lien is a creation of statute whose origins are found in Roman law, which had a similar privilege.

The first mechanics' lien law in the United States was enacted in 1791 by Maryland. The statute applied only to master builders who provided labor or materials in the construction of buildings in the new capital in Washington, DC. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison were key members of the special commission that recommended adoption of the mechanics' lien law to speed construction of the capital by ensuring

builders that they would be paid. Neighboring Pennsylvania followed in 1803, and by 1855 at least 19 of the 31 states had passed mechanics' lien laws, but these often applied only to specified urban areas and only to the master builder who contracted with the property owner, not to subcontractors or employees, who were called journeymen in that period.

The mechanics' lien laws became a labor issue because journeymen artisans argued that they too should receive the protections of these laws. To them the main purpose of the lien law was to protect honest mechanics from insolvent or fraudulent master builders who refused to pay their workmen after construction was complete. The journeymen mechanics urged that in those circumstances, they should be able to file a lien against a property owner even if the owner had paid the contractor, concluding that this policy would not only serve the economic development goals touted by the master builders but also would ensure compensation to those whose labor actually created the wealth represented by the finished project. These nineteenth-century construction workers transformed a bourgeois legal innovation intended to encourage economic development into an engine of economic fairness and wealth redistribution. Indeed understood in the context of political economy, the mechanics' lien challenged the usual assumption underlying wage labor that the worker retains no interest in the product of his/her labor, which belongs entirely to the employer. Instead the mechanics' lien protects the wageworker by giving him/her a security interest in the product of his/her labor, even after it has become the property of the consumer.

Politically the Working Men's parties took up the cause of expanding the mechanics' lien and enjoyed considerable support from journeymen who worked construction like carpenters, masons, and laborers. The Jacksonian Democrats however were eager to lure journeymen away from the Working Men's parties and successfully made the issue their own by sponsoring laws to extend the lien to employees. Nevertheless the radical implications of the mechanics' lien law continued to rankle those who exalted contract and property rights over all else; they could not abide extensions of these statutes to cover entire states, to bind not only fee-simple owners of property, but also to those with any legal or equitable interest, including as early as 1836, a lessee. In 1848, Maine even extended the lien's protections to lumber workers who cut and floated logs down rivers to mills only to be refused payment by their employers.

The mechanics' lien law reforms of the 1830s were some of the first labor laws passed in the United States. The evolution of the nineteenth-century

mechanics' lien into the present-day contractors' lien, which is beyond the scope of this entry, would reveal much about the parallel development of the construction industry and the building trades, especially the struggle between employers and workers for control over wages and wealth. Despite the fact that contemporary contractors most often limit the property owner's liability to the contract price, the mechanics' lien laws constituted an important point of origin for the history of American labor legislation.

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MECHANICS' UNION OF TRADE ASSOCIATIONS OF PHILADELPHIA

This association of trade unions emerged in winter 1827–1828 following a series of meetings held by Philadelphia tradesmen in spring and fall and led by William Heighton, the English-born shoemaker and

radical labor activist. Heighton had called for such a union in two speeches in April and November 1827, and in January 1828, a meeting of his fellow unionists formally endorsed the constitution and bylaws of the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations (MUTA), launching what historians consider the first labor movement in the United States (and arguably in the world).

The MUTA was structured along the lines outlined by Heighton in his addresses. It was administered by executive officers and financed by dues of 10 cents per member per month levied by a finance committee composed of one representative from each affiliated union (nine at first, and then 15 at the height). The MUTA had a strike fund that was made available to unions on strike to raise wages or improve conditions. It also resolved disputes between unions and organized unions of skilled workers, bringing at least five trade societies and a benevolent society into the fold. Unskilled workers, female workers, and African-American workers did not belong to the MUTA as individuals or as groups even though Heighton sympathized with unskilled labor and personally supported the struggles of textile operatives in and around the city.

The vision of the MUTA reflected Heighton's ambitious vision of transcending the narrow concerns of trade unionists and the immediate interests of labor as a whole. It pursued the related objectives of raising the social awareness of workingmen and putting forth a program of economic reconstruction. The first of these gained expression in the *Mechanics' Free Press (MFP)*, the nation's first labor newspaper published and edited by workers for workers. The labor sheet, edited by a committee that included Heighton, covered the local and national economy, carried news of union and labor affairs, and offered editorial opinion on a wide variety of topics. It also founded the Mechanics' Library Company with reading and debating rooms that offered books and journals to subscribers and sponsored public debates on such propositions as "Should Money Be Eliminated from the Economy and Barter Stores Substituted Instead?" In a similar spirit, the paper reprinted texts otherwise inaccessible to struggling workers, most notably perhaps John Gray's, *Lecture on Human Happiness* (1825), the primitive socialist pamphlet that had strongly influenced Heighton's thinking. The MUTA members who took this doctrine more seriously could patronize one of several barter stores or a producers' cooperative-styled, "labor for labor," which used labor time as the medium of exchange.

The MUTA is perhaps best known for its precedent-setting foray into third-party politics under the banner of the Working Men's party. Such a step was

inevitable given the union's reconstructionist vision but still came as something of a surprise because of its timing. Heighton had hoped that the union's didactic organizations would prepare the membership for independent politics down the road, which is why the original constitution made no mention of political action. Nonetheless the MUTA was barely a month old when in January 1828, the membership passed a bylaw, clearly with Heighton's approval, stating that 4 months before the fall elections, the MUTA would nominate candidates for public office who reflected "interests and enlightenment of the working classes." The bylaw added that "party politics shall be entirely out of the question," indicating that the "workies" did not think of themselves as a party in the formal sense so much as an independent force out to run its own candidates and influence the regulars (L. Arky, "Mechanics' Union," 1952). Thus it reflected the aversion to "tyrant party" that would characterize third parties for the rest of the century. Indeed it was the mainstream press and the political regulars that called the MUTA's political association the Working Men's party, and it stuck.

Labels aside, the Working Men had no choice but to mimic the regulars of the new second-party system. They developed an ambitious reform platform headed by demands for tax-supported public schools (in favor of the state's spotty "pauper schools" for the poor), an end to chartered monopolies and paper money in small denominations, fairer taxation, and other planks reflecting popular needs and interests. They also nominated candidates every year from 1828 to 1831, concentrating on city races, and then including local races for the state senate and assembly as well as Congress, typically backing a minority of unaffiliated office seekers along with a majority of candidates on the slates of the regulars—usually more Democrats than federalists. The Working Men's amateurism proved harmful throughout but especially so in the initial campaign, as regulars disrupted nominating meetings and harassed their voters at the polls. Candidates endorsed by the Working Men mainly drew a disappointing 240 to 540 voters out of 9,000 cast. The party then ebbed and flowed over the next 3 years, in 1829 tripling its vote, helping elect over a dozen candidates, and boasting the balance of power; in 1830, the Working Men lost the balance of power despite increasing their tally by an average of 300 votes and electing about the same number of candidates as a year earlier. It then fared badly in 1831 and simply collapsed.

As for the MUTA, it faded and then disbanded in fall 1829. For his part Heighton went through a roller-coaster of feeling and emotion. Within days of the 1828 election, he called for disbanding the original

nominating machinery because it was too closely tied to the narrow base of the unions. Looking to expand the party's following, he restructured the political organization along geographic lines, starting with ward committees and building upward to district groups, mimicking the regulars. Though this reform increased turnout, the election of 1830 left Heighon bitterly disappointed. So much so that he turned on his own people, denouncing the "blindness" and "sappiness" of the workers and then leaving the city for good. (*MFP*, Oct. 29 1830 and Mar. 2, 1831.)

The MUTA was not simply the first of a long line of failed insurgencies that would litter the political terrain for the rest of the century. It essentially infused Jacksonian democracy with its popular agenda of educational reform and economic populism. Though President Andrew Jackson was no friend of the big banks, it is likely that when he declared war on the U.S. Bank in 1831, he was following the lead of the newly awakened workies of the city. The MUTA also established the organizational template and intellectual framework of reform unionism for the rest of the century. Its successors in Philadelphia and other cities after 1830 would establish their own presses, reading rooms, and other organizational forms of a "movement culture," inspired by the powerful idea that labor is the source of all wealth. It was those threads that bound the MUTA to the Knights of Labor in the last third of the century.

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See also **Heighon, William**

MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE (1937)

On May 30, Memorial Day, 1937, outside the Republic Steel works in Chicago, a large crowd of workers and their supporters rallied to protest the decision by the Chicago police to ban picketing at the steel mill. The city's mayor had affirmed the right of the striking workers to picket, and legal precedent seemed to uphold the right to picket peacefully as well. The rally began as a picnic held nearby the Republic Steel works, but after a series of speakers, a large contingent of the crowd decided to approach the factory and try to picket. In their way stood over 200 police officers, who refused to allow the marchers to picket the steel works. As a group of marchers approached the police line, the Chicago police opened fire, killing 10 demonstrators. Most of the strikers were shot in the back as they tried to flee. The police also launched tear gas canisters into the crowd. After the barrage of gunfire and gas, the police moved through the crowd swinging clubs, beating several people senseless. The police also allegedly refused medical aid to the injured and flung demonstrators into overcrowded paddy wagons. In addition to the dead, nearly 60 lay wounded, from both gunfire and the beatings that followed. It was later discovered that Republic Steel had helped to arm the police for their confrontation with the strikers and their sympathizers.

The crowd almost certainly held no real armaments, though some observers would later claim that a few marchers were carrying sticks and rocks. The police may have begun their rampage after a demonstrator threw either a rock or a tree branch at them. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that even if the police were provoked by a few rowdies in the crowd, they reacted with indiscriminate and massive violence. The police were never held accountable for their actions either. The coroner who investigated the bodies of the demonstrators—shot in the back—ruled their deaths justifiable homicide.

The U.S. Senate's LaFollette Civil Liberties' Committee held hearings on the Memorial Day Massacre in June and July of 1937. The Chicago police maintained that they had intervened to prevent the striking workers from invading the plant. Police claimed that agitators and radicals headed the crowd, that the crowd was heavily armed, and that the police acted only in self-defense. One crucial piece of evidence negated all of the police claims. A filmmaker from Paramount Pictures had captured the massacre on a newsreel. The motion picture industry had not shown the film publicly, fearing that it would incite riots. Yet the LaFollette Committee obtained the footage and held a private screening.

The committee allowed one reporter, Paul Anderson, to view the newsreel. Anderson wrote a vivid account in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* of July 17, 1937, recounting the violence in great detail. Anderson described the ordeal of a man who was paralyzed after being shot through the spine. The man struggled to rise as police dragged him toward a paddy wagon, then crumpled to the ground helplessly clawing at the grass. Anderson reported the beating of a young girl, shoved into a paddy wagon with blood streaming down her face. Perhaps most dramatically, Anderson revealed the singular shout that rose above the din on the sound track of the film, "God Almighty!" (R. Hostader and M. Wallace, *American Violence*, 1970). Anderson's article revealed to the public the injustice of the massacre. Until the *Post-Dispatch* printed his piece, most news organizations had either ignored the incident or congratulated the police for their heroism in defeating a revolutionary mob.

The LaFollette Committee concluded that the police had reacted with undue force. The committee held that the intent of the marchers had been to picket the plant, not to invade it nor engage in any sort of violence. The committee also found no evidence that revolutionaries had provoked the crown into a violent confrontation with the police.

The Memorial Day Massacre took place as the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) undertook an organizing campaign in the "little-steel" sector. The SWOC had already organized the giant of American steel, U.S. Steel. Yet smaller steel companies remained unorganized. The name little steel was something of a misnomer; over 200,000 employees worked for the firms that made up little steel. The CIO leadership mistakenly thought that organizing these smaller companies would be easy. But little steel remained staunchly anti-union, using police and private detective forces to beat back picketing strikers. The Memorial Day Massacre was just the most severe incident in a long summer of violence at steel mills nationwide.

Ultimately the brutal methods used by little steel prevailed. Almost every company in little steel remained nonunion as workers returned to the mills in the face of employer intransigence.

The defeat of the little-steel campaign struck a heavy blow to the CIO's organizing hopes, although the CIO still grew dramatically for several years. The defeat of the little-steel campaign stood as one of the CIO's first major defeats after a series of decisive victories in organizing the core industries of the economy. The extraordinary violence that accompanied the organizing drive also alienated President Franklin D. Roosevelt, usually a strong supporter of labor. At a press conference during the little-steel campaign, Roosevelt famously told the labor movement and the steel industry, "a plague on both your houses."

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MEMPHIS SANITATION STRIKE (1968)

The 1968 Memphis sanitation strike is most often remembered as the backdrop to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Yet the strike was much more than just a tragic setting. It represented a shift in the focus of the civil rights movement from a struggle for social and political change to a campaign for economic justice. The Memphis strike also embodied the promise and problems of coalition building between labor and civil rights activists who had long sought a more permanent alliance.

Historical Background

In the late 1960s, Memphis, Tennessee, was the perfect crucible for a labor-civil rights alliance. Mechanization of agriculture in the surrounding rural areas, especially the fabled Mississippi Delta, had pushed

MEMPHIS SANITATION STRIKE (1968)

thousands of black migrants off plantations and into the city over the preceding two decades. These migrants created a strong and vibrant community held together by the spiritual power of Christian faith and the cultural power of blues music. Economically however black workers in Memphis struggled for meager wages in a segregated job market. Though there was a relatively strong trade union movement in Memphis, it was dominated by white union leaders for whom civil rights were not a top priority.

The black employees in the Memphis Public Works' Department who handled the city's garbage collection were near the bottom of the labor ladder. The city openly discriminated against these men in hiring, promotion, and daily task assignments, sending them home without pay on rainy days, while their white coworkers remained on the clock. Until the mid-1960s, when the city grudgingly purchased pushcarts and mechanized trucks, Memphis sanitation workers had to carry leaky 50-gallon drums of garbage on their backs, suffering both humiliation and workplace injuries. In addition to discrimination and poor working conditions, the wages paid to black sanitation workers were so low that 40% of them still qualified for welfare even though most had a second job.

Workers had tried to organize a union in 1964 and 1966, only to see their efforts crushed by the city. Then in 1967 and 1968, a number of events galvanized black workers and the black community. First Henry Loeb, a conservative businessman and staunch segregationist, rode a white backlash against civil rights activism into the mayor's office. Then when a garbage truck malfunctioned, crushing two black workers to death, the city gave their families a month's salary and \$500 for expenses but sent no representatives to the funerals and offered no further compensation. Around the same time, white supervisors once again sent black workers home without pay on a rainy day. More than 1,300 black sanitation workers responded to these incidents with a strike on February 12, 1968. They demanded higher wages, an end to discrimination, recognition of their union, and dues check-off.

The Strike

Initially the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) provided most of the support for the striking sanitation workers. But on February 23, police attacked black ministers and community supporters as well as strikers during a march that followed failed negotiations with the city council. Within days black ministers led by James

Lawson organized a support group called Community on the Move for Equality (COME). This was now both a strike and a civil rights campaign. When a court injunction prohibited AFSCME members from leading marches and economic boycotts, leadership of the movement shifted increasingly to ministers and civil rights activists.

The AFSCME President Jerry Wurf came to Memphis within a week of the strike, but organized labor alone could not get the national publicity needed to win the strike. Roy Wilkins, the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Bayard Rustin, the organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, both appeared in Memphis. On March 18, Martin Luther King, Jr., came to the city and spoke to an overflowing crowd of over 10,000 people. At the mass meeting he promised to return and lead a march to pressure the city to negotiate with the union in good faith. He called for a general strike of black workers, joined by black students in a school walkout that could shut much of the city down.

On March 28, King returned to Memphis and marched at the front of a throng of strikers and their supporters. Many of the strikers carried or wore placards bearing the slogan that had become the strike's rallying cry: "I AM a Man." Workers and most of the marchers faithfully followed King's call for a nonviolent demonstration, but by 1968, many black youth had grown tired of such pacifist tactics. A group known as the Invaders popularized the arguments of Stokely Carmichael and other Black Power leaders that power would never be given by white authorities; it had to be taken. With King at the front of the march, nonmarchers and unidentified youth in the rear ranks turned to violence, smashing storefronts and breaking windows. Lawson and other ministers, fearing for King's life, removed him from the march. Police attacked marchers and looters indiscriminately, wounding many and later killing a 16-year-old youth named Larry Payne. The black community angrily responded with more arson and looting, and Mayor Loeb and the state's governor brought in the National Guard to occupy the town.

King's visit to Memphis was part of a movement against poverty, racism, and war, called the Poor People's Campaign, aimed at creating an encampment in Washington, DC, similar to the Bonus Marchers protest of 1932. Segregationists, conservatives, and some liberals now attacked King, claiming he could not lead such a demonstration in the nation's predominantly black capital without setting off massive riots. King promised that he would return to Memphis, this time to lead a truly nonviolent protest in hopes of maintaining his campaign and

his credibility as a leader. The Memphis sanitation strike had now become a microcosm of the movement. Devotees of nonviolence like King vied with advocates of armed self-defense like the Invaders. Economic justice and cultural nationalism were becoming as important to civil rights and black union activists as social equality and political rights. Civil rights activists were moving northward and into urban areas to tackle housing, job and school segregation, institutional racism as insidious as and perhaps more resilient than that of the rural South.

The strike along with other events made 1968 a turning point for both the labor and the civil rights movements. Some union leaders hoped that the racial divisions and political conservatism that had kept southern states solidly anti-union for decades might be overcome with an organizing drive among the region's newly mobilized black working class. The fate of AFSCME, through no choice of its national leaders, was also on the line. Wurf and his regional director P. J. Ciampa had not done anything to instigate the Memphis strike and did not welcome it. They considered a garbage strike in the middle of the winter bad timing, and they did not want to take on an anti-union southern administration. Black workers themselves, led by former sanitation worker T. O. Jones, had decided to strike back at a city that had exploited and disrespected them. With King's entry into the Memphis strike and with the March 28 riot however, the issues became larger, and the outcome more charged with meaning. Wurf believed the fate of southern labor organizing and AFSCME's future among public employees hung in the balance. At the local level, there was a practical question of how long the strikers could afford to rely on their families and the union for sustenance and support. The sanitation strike had become a campaign that King, the workers, and AFSCME could not afford to lose.

The Mountaintop

King returned to Memphis on April 3 and gave one of the most powerful speeches of his career, hoping to fire up the crowd for the upcoming nonviolent march. Tired, but unbowed, King expressed a guarded optimism for the movement, even though he knew that he might never live to see its triumph. He began his speech by chronicling the black freedom movement's victories up through 1968. He thanked God for the opportunity to be present for such historical struggles. As he reached the climax of the oration, he

imagined the movement as having reached a metaphorical mountaintop, a great vista from which he and his followers could see the land of freedom. "I may not get there with you," he concluded prophetically, "but...we as a people will get to the Promised Land."

The next day, April 4, 1968, James Earl Ray shot and killed Martin Luther King, Jr., at the Lorraine Motel. Riots erupted across the country as black communities expressed rage and frustration at King's cold-blooded murder, creating the most widespread urban upheaval of the 1960s. The nation mourned, as did the sanitation workers, but in Memphis the movement redoubled its efforts. The 1,300 striking men refused to stop marching and meeting even though the National Guard once again occupied their town. Though the federal government had been unwilling to intervene earlier, President Lyndon Johnson finally sent Undersecretary of Labor James Reynolds to mediate the labor dispute, and he sent Attorney General Ramsey Clark to find King's killer and prevent more violence.

The movement continued, and the specter of King's death haunted the negotiations between city and AFSCME leaders until April 16. That day the mayor finally agreed to a 15% pay raise for the workers, a ban on racial discrimination in hiring and promotions, a step-by-step grievance procedure, a guarantee that union members and strikers would not be fired or discriminated against, within a memorandum of understanding that informally acknowledged the union. The AFSCME did not get a union shop, but the agreement allowed union members to deduct dues through their credit union. All of these measures stabilized the union's existence and at last guaranteed city workers the freedom to organize. It was a victory not just for the sanitation workers, but for police, firemen, parks, hospital, and other city workers who had been denied union rights in the past.

The AFSCME Local 1733 grew to become the largest single union in the city, as employees in various city departments, both blacks and whites, organized. The victory of the strike also spurred public-employee organizing throughout the South and the country, as AFSCME became the fastest growing and one of the largest unions in the nation. Wurf said it represented the triumph of the principle of labor, civil rights and community alliances, and he hoped it would lead to unionization of the South. Out of this struggle also came a heightened visibility for black workers. William Lucy, one of the organizers in the strike, became secretary-treasurer of AFSCME, and head of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Others involved in the strike went on to play major

organizing roles. Lawson became a staunch ally of Justice for Janitors and other immigrant-organizing drives after he became pastor of a church in Los Angeles. King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, joined with Hospital Workers' Local 1199 to organize black hospital workers in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1969, and for a time it appeared that a labor-civil rights alliance might indeed open the way to southern unionization.

Though the Memphis sanitation strike provided an inspiring victory, it came at a serious cost. King's death was only part of the tragedy. The promise of a lasting alliance between the labor and civil rights movements floundered, as growing militancy and separatism in the movement coincided with a backlash among working-class whites cultivated by conservative political leaders. Plant closings and attacks by conservative national administrations after 1968 decimated both workers and industrial unions. The labor and civil rights movements retreated from the mountaintop that King had envisioned, and the promised land of freedom, equality, and economic justice seemed ever more distant as anti-union governments and corporate power overwhelmed local movements. Still the Memphis strike exemplified the potential power of the labor, civil rights, and community alliance even if such a national coalition has not yet materialized.

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See also African Americans; American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; Civil Rights; Poor People's Campaign; Rustin, Bayard; Wurf, Jerry

MEXICAN AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN WORKERS

Mexican and Mexican-American labor history has its roots in the eighteenth century when the southwestern states were under the control of Spain and Mexico. In northern Mexico, many colonial settlers engaged in ranching and subsistence farming, while some managed large landed estates. This frontier period ended in the decades after the Texas Revolution (1836) and the conquest and annexation of northern Mexico following the U.S.-Mexican War (1848). By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, this population became more diverse as Mexican immigrants entered the United States dwarfing the small colonial population of Californios, Tejanos, and the Hispanos of New Mexico and southern Colorado. Mexican-ancestry residents of the U.S. Southwest came from a variety of southwestern cultural groups, including mestizos (mixed Spanish, Mexican, and indigenous ancestry), former colonial settlers, U.S. citizens, immigrants, and aliens, with each of these mingling as they migrated across the North American continent beyond the confines of the U.S.-Mexico border or the American Southwest.

From Colonial Settlers to a Laboring Class: 1748–1890

In late colonial New Spain and Mexico, an estimated 100,000 colonials lived in northern communities stretching across the present day states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, and other U.S. states. Although there were many large landholding families in California settled on relatively new grants carved from the large, indigenous mission-trust lands, the majority of settlers in the former Spanish colony of *Nuevo Santander* in present day Tamaulipas, Mexico, and Texas, for example, were small-to-medium-sized family ranchers who settled in 1748, living on both sides of the Rio Grande River. Like earlier settlements in New Mexico, community life was local and family-based. This was a military frontier defined by warfare with *indios bárbaros* (Spanish for indigenous peoples) where settler soldiers engaged primarily in ranching and livestock husbandry. These frontier folk engaged in seasonal labor



Mexican workers recruited and brought to the Arkansas valley, Colorado, Nebraska and Minnesota by the FSA (Farm Security Administration), to harvest and process sugar beets under contract with the Inter-mountain Agricultural Improvement Association. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USW33-031869-C].

patterns as groups of Hispanicized indigenous people, many of whom did much of the killing and stripping of the cowhides and sheering of sheep each year, came together in communal work crews that involved adjacent landowners and hired hands in the annual round up and processing of hides and wool.

This colonial-ranching frontier ended in the decades after the U.S. annexation of Texas and northern Mexico. In the years after the annexation, colonials tried to maintain their property and customs in opposition to the waves of Anglo-American migrants who entered the Southwest intent on building their own ranches, often by accumulating Spanish and Mexican deeds across the region. Throughout the nineteenth century, downward mobility and land loss defined the era for these newly incorporated Mexican-Americans as much as agricultural, economic, and transportation development defined this period for Anglo-American settlers and U.S. capitalists who developed and incorporated the region. Many former landowners and skilled workers in Texas and California were proletarianized in this period of rapid change and economic and cultural transformation just as the

ethnic make-up of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans was changing itself.

Mexican and Mexican-American Migrants and Workers: 1890–1945

The postannexation period was one of rapid regional development of the agricultural, transport, and extractive industries across the Southwest, each of which relied on Mexican immigrant workers. This dependence became more acute in the period of European and Asian immigration restriction after 1917 and 1924 as western and midwestern employers sought out an ever-larger reserve of Mexican immigrant workers. Beginning in the 1890s, the annual immigration of Mexicans into the United States increased yearly, reaching a high point in the period from 1920–1930 and bringing the total Mexican ancestry population to just under 1,500,000, with the largest number, nearly 700,000, living in Texas, although many scholars agree that the number may

have been higher. As of 1930, some estimate that nearly 10% of Mexico's population resided in the United States. The majority of those who would come to call themselves Mexican-Americans in the twentieth century entered the United States at this time in search of work and stability.

Many Mexican migrants entered the United States as they fled from rural poverty, exploitation, and the violence and chaos of the Mexican revolution after 1910. Although many professionals and artisans retained some of their status in the United States, most workers from Mexico entered the United States as common laborers and unskilled workers in a time of economic development and expansion. Migration was often a multistaged process. Many migrated first within Mexico, often working in U.S.-owned extractive and rail industries in their home country before entering the United States to work in these same industries. Others escaped the vast *haciendas* (ranches) of northern Mexico in the revolutionary period for border cities before moving on to permanent settlement in the newly established agricultural boomtowns and modernizing cities of the Southwest. These migrants built communities of workers as they settled near their workplaces in the agricultural regions of Texas, California, and other southwestern states. Mexican migrants lived in communities rooted in Mexican politics and folkways even as life in the United States and the establishment of community institutions increasingly tied them and their children to their new homes.

Once in the United States newly arrived Mexicans established or expanded communal and ethnic institutions, much like other immigrants, which allowed for the maintenance of community through such entities as mutual-aid societies, Catholic churches and other religious organizations, and informal networks of kith and kin. In the western states, community and ethnically based institutions provided a foundation for community mobilization that the region's weak labor unions, then often restricted to Anglo-Americans and perpetually under attack by state and employer coalitions, failed to provide. In some circumstances these mutual-benefit societies and religious community organizations established their own independent labor unions, sometimes confined to a single labor action. In other cases these efforts led to the formation of more lasting organizations, such as the *Confederación de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos* (CCOM) in 1928, which at its height organized over 3,000 workers into 50 locals. In the mining towns of Arizona, *mutualistas* provided key support to Mexican workers and the mining unionization efforts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Organized labor in the United States was not welcoming when it came to Mexican and Mexican-American workers. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, despite several American Federation of Labor (AFL) organizing efforts in the Southwest led by Clarence Idar, high-level labor relationships with the Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers (CROM), Mexico's powerful labor organization, focused on convincing these Mexican unionists to support voluntary immigration restriction after the AFL had failed to restrict Mexican workers in the U.S. immigration acts passed following World War I. Prior to World War II, the AFL would not focus on organizing Mexican and Mexican-American workers in the United States as equals but rather on lobbying in the United States and Mexico to restrict Mexican immigration.

Although Mexican and Mexican-Americans labored in a variety of fields, many of these migratory workers began work in the United States in the years before the Great Depression as highly mobile railroad workers. Tens of thousands of Mexican immigrants worked for the railroads, often living in rail-car camps or in the urban neighborhoods of Kansas City, Milwaukee Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis-St. Paul, or Pittsburgh, as well as Los Angeles, and the border city of El Paso and numerous other railroad towns across the Southwest. In some cases these camps became the nucleus for the establishment of Mexican *colonias* (colonies or neighborhoods), which led to the establishment of Mexican religious, cultural, and social institutions. These institutional developments were often supported by Mexican consular officials who sought to maintain an affinity for Mexico and Mexican citizenship on the part of these laborers. Railroad work often led these workers into other industries in the places they settled, including meatpacking and the expanding steel industry in cities like Chicago, East Chicago, and Gary, Indiana.

For the large number of Mexican immigrants who settled in agricultural areas across the Southwest and Texas in particular, where nearly 400,000 Mexican-ancestry residents lived, these agricultural communities often became a home base for what increasingly became a migratory labor work world. Like those who established the *colonias* of the urban centers, immigrants to the Southwest established new social and religious organizations as they also often encountered established Mexican-American residents. In the rapidly developing agricultural industries of the Southwest and West, many of these settlers established homes in the cities of major harvesting regions, where their work often focused on a single citrus, vegetable, nut, or fruit crop in southern California and south Texas. From the start however, many

Mexican workers supplemented these local wages by migrating to harvest other nearby local crops or were recruited to work at the state or regional level with many traveling across the United States by the 1930s. Migration grew increasingly sophisticated as organized groups first traveled by horse-drawn cart at the local level and later moved across the nation in a migrant stream powered by railcars, large trucks, and eventually personal automobiles. The work these migrants (increasingly whole families) did was specific to the crops they traveled to harvest, yet relied on the specific skills one gained with experience tending and harvesting crops for processing and family consumption.

In the early twentieth century, Texas migrants harvested cotton, moving with the crop as it ripened in an annual migration pattern known as the "big swing," with similar migration patterns developing with the maturation of cotton production in other southwestern states. In California migration brought workers north from southern California each season as they harvested trees and vines in one of the largest annual human migrations in North America.

For many of the migrants who began their journey in Texas, migration became an annual and circular labor migration. This migrant stream brought them from the U.S.-Mexico border region to the West, Northwest, and Midwest each year. From Texas migrants traveled to the central valley of California, the Pacific Northwest, Great Plains, and Midwest, often moving in extended-family- and neighborhood-based work crews. Although often considered an uprooted population, migrant workers often hailed from relatively stable local communities where they returned home each season. At these home bases in Texas, migrants often owned small homes, businesses, and increasingly sent their children to school.

Although there were many attempts to organize harvest workers in winter harvest areas of California, Texas, and Arizona after 1900, most of these efforts succeeded in organizing workers yet failed when it came to establishing a permanent union. Agricultural unionism often failed due often to the seasonal nature of the workforce, the perishability of the crops, as well as sustained employer and police harassment of radical organizers and workers. From the Imperial Valley of California to the urban processing facilities of San Antonio, Mexican, Latino, and Mexican-American activists successfully organized these workers even if the unions failed to survive. Militant unionists in the West almost perennially sought to organize harvest workers on the large industrial farms in California and other states, and each year faced grower opposition backed by the state police power. In 1933, several California-based unions merged to form the

Confederation of Mexican Farm Workers' and Laborers' Unions (CUCUM), combining 5,000 members into a single agricultural labor organization yet failed to establish a permanent trade union movement.

In southern California, Mexican immigrants settled near the expanding city of Los Angeles and in smaller agricultural towns in a region where Mexican colonials had long been a settled population in colonial cities. In Los Angeles Mexican immigrants joined the settled community near the *placita* (center of original Spanish city) and entered into the heterogeneous, east LA immigrant neighborhood, joining Jews, Asians, and other immigrants in Boyle Heights and surrounding areas. By 1930, Los Angeles had a Mexican-ancestry population of nearly 100,000 of a total county population of over 2 million people. Working in Los Angeles factories, construction trades, and the service industry, these immigrants became the nucleus for the nation's largest urban concentration of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Like other southwestern agricultural centers, greater Los Angeles and southern California generally witnessed the development of agricultural boomtowns and large-scale farming operations that resembled those in south Texas and Arizona. Growers recruited Mexicans as a labor and harvest workforce, segregating them from the Anglo ranchers and small businesspeople in small Mexican districts that often stood in stark contrast to Anglo-American neighborhoods.

In the midwestern United States, Mexicans often found better working conditions and higher pay in that region's booming industries. Although most of these workers journeyed north as male contract workers, families soon took root in the developing ethnic enclaves of large midwestern cities. Like other ethnics and immigrants in the Midwest, Mexican-ancestry workers lived in work-based, ethnic communities, founding and attending ethnic churches and sending their children to public and parochial schools near their places of employment, thereby establishing a community life that would continue for much of the twentieth century.

With the onset of the Great Depression, the United States, with the support of nativist groups and the Mexican government, repatriated several hundred thousand Mexicans from 1929–1932. After 1932, with the continued support of the Mexican government, the number of annual repatriations dropped to the tens of thousands. Despite this troubling policy, Mexican immigrant labor was soon in demand as employers recruited workers from Texas and Mexico once again.

With the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1932 and the formation of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) by the

Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), Mexican-American workers joined the growing ranks of industrial unionists. The SWOC organized at U.S. Steel's Chicago South Works, where Mexican workers comprised 11% of SWOC membership. Mexican workers were also involved in the organization of "little-steel" plants on both sides of the Illinois-Indiana state line on Chicago's South Side. At a rally on May 30, 1937, commonly known as the Memorial Day Massacre, the Chicago police fired into a crowd of these Mexican and other ethnic union members killing and injuring several. When SWOC finally organized the mills of Chicago, Mexican immigrants across the region joined the ranks of the settled working class raising children who lived Mexican and American lives in the multiracial and multi-ethnic cities of these northern states.

Mexican-Americans in the midwestern and southwestern states were a largely working-class population engaged in migrant agricultural labor and settled industrial work, and in some cases both. The ties of ethnicity however allowed for the development of a small and often-unstable ethnic middle class that provided workers with Mexican foods, entertainment, as well as familiar social and cultural activities. The 1920s witnessed the birth of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), founded in 1929 as a departure from the often Mexico-oriented mutualist organizations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although considered middle class in orientation, LULAC pressed for naturalization and an embrace of U.S. citizenship as well as the maintenance of ethnic and cultural folkways, as they made social and civil rights claims as citizens and Caucasians within the United States. Granted the status of white ethnics by the naturalization provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), LULAC used this legal status to press for an end to the segregation, discrimination, and other disabilities faced by Mexican-Americans in the Jim Crow era.

Mexicans and Mexican-Americans after 1945

From midcentury to the end of the twentieth century, Mexican and Mexican-American labor history witnessed the continued influx of documented and undocumented Mexican immigrants, leading to greater heterogeneity in the Mexican-American population. While some came first as guest workers and others came illegally, many became residents and later citizens. Moreover, Mexican-American workers and returning veterans grew more aggressive about

their rights as American citizens to claim a place in civil society.

As Mexican-American citizens were making increasing demands for civil rights, the United States established and then extended a wartime bilateral program to recruit temporary workers from Mexico. The *Bracero* guest worker program began as an emergency labor program during World War II. The United States had operated a similar program without much input from the Mexican government during World War I. In theory, *braceros* were guaranteed basic wage rates and healthy living and working conditions and were not to compete with domestic workers.

The *Bracero* Program had mixed results. What began as a wartime program to remedy a labor shortage created opportunities for Mexican workers and some Mexican-American entrepreneurs. Yet when this program continued in peacetime, it pitted *braceros* and Mexican-American workers against one another, since the program subsidized and helped to maintain a low-wage labor market in agriculture and related industries through 1964, when organized labor and Mexican-American activists brought the program to an end. Even with this bilateral agreement between the United States and Mexico, the *Bracero* Program itself accepted illegal entry and allowed for the conversion of undocumented entrants to *braceros* and the "paroling" of captured undocumented workers to employers. From 1947–1949, for example, more than 140,000 illegal Mexican workers were legalized through these procedures. Likewise the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Border Patrol in some cases had a policy of lax enforcement during harvest seasons, and Mexico did little to stop or regulate the outflow. *Braceros* and undocumented workers displaced *Tejano* and other workers, since labor once done locally was now contracted to *braceros*. This competition, many Mexican-American activists feared, may have led domestic harvest workers to migrate to the midwestern and northwestern states in increasing numbers after 1940 in search of seasonal agricultural, food-processing, and cannery work, and higher wages.

The 1950s and 1960s witnessed increasing militancy and organization among Mexican-American workers. Union membership became a fact of life in the midwestern steel industry and the urban-industrial areas of the Southwest as Mexican-Americans continued to press for citizenship and civil rights in the United States. The perennial issue of agricultural unionism again gained prominence in the late 1950s as community and labor organizers sought to build harvest worker unions in California. In 1959, a coalition of Filipino, Mexican-American, and Anglo-American workers in California succeeded in organizing the

Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC) with support from the AFL-CIO. The organizing success of AWOC provided community activist Cesar Chavez with an opportunity to build his small United Farm Workers' Union in the mid-1960s as he joined the AWOC and eventually the two merged and formed the United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee (UFWOC). Chavez's leadership of this labor movement inspired the creation of similar agricultural unions in Wisconsin, led by Jesus Salas, and in Texas, led by Antonio Orendain, as well as a large number of community organizations and civil rights groups that also drew inspiration from Chavez. Until his death in 1993, Chavez's union was central to the Mexican-American community's effort to claim labor and civil rights in the United States. Together with Chavez's union, the only other union to maintain itself as a viable labor union into the twenty-first century was the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) founded in Ohio by former Texas farm worker, Baldemar Velasquez, which by the end of the twentieth century was organizing immigrant workers in North Carolina and the American South and operating a joint FLOC/UFW union office in Mexican cities.

Conclusion

The history of Mexican and Mexican-American workers has been defined by the constant overlap of Mexican-American workers, Mexican immigrant workers, and undocumented workers, a process that has created a heterogeneous and often-splintered Mexican-American or Latino population in the United States increasingly diverse and separated by layers of acculturation, English language proficiency, nativity, citizenship, and immigration status. By 2000, the total Hispanic population of the United States had grown to over 35 million, with nearly 60% of this total being of Mexican ancestry.

At the close of the twentieth century, Mexican and Mexican-American workers continue to include millions of undocumented workers who increasingly labor in the nonunionized service, domestic, agricultural, meatpacking, and light industrial sectors, providing a reserve of cheap labor for the U.S. economy as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) weakens the position of labor unions and the working class on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

There are some late twentieth-century cross-border success stories, such as the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which incorporated such organizers as Eliseo Medina, formerly of the UFW,

and immigrants to organize these often-transnational workers through the successful national Justice for Janitors campaign. For middle-class and mixed-ancestry Mexican-American workers, acculturation and prosperity have most prominently expanded in California and Texas, leading to rising income and education levels even as the majority of Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans remain an overwhelmingly low-income and working-class community today.

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MIDWEST

The Midwest holds an enigmatic place in U.S. labor and working-class history. It is popularly regarded as the conservative heartland of the United States, a racially homogenous and culturally traditional region dominated by employers and middle-class ideology. In contrast labor historians know the region for its militancy and organizational innovation. Indiana was home to railway union leader and Socialist Eugene Debs; Mineworkers' Union leader John L. Lewis was

an Iowan. Chicago was the birthplace of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the American Communist party. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) emerged from the massive auto, steel, and meatpacking plants of Flint, Detroit, and Chicago, as well as from smaller industrial centers like Akron, Ohio; Anderson, Indiana; and Austin, Minnesota. Racially and ethnically diverse since the mid-nineteenth century, the midwestern working class has been created by waves of migration from Europe, Latin America, and the rural and southern United States.

The story of midwestern labor and working-class history follows closely the rise and fall of a regional, industrial network based in its earliest days on proximity to natural resources and transportation routes and in the twentieth century, on supplying national and global markets for manufactured goods and agricultural commodities. Spread out across hundreds of small industrial towns, as well as concentrated in metropolises like Chicago, Detroit, and Kansas City, midwestern industry sustained a working class that significantly shaped the political trajectory of the United States, especially in the mid-twentieth century. A period of decline and reconfiguration from the 1970s to the 1990s decimated many of these working-class communities as employers and the federal government shifted investment to the American South and West.

The region we now know as the Midwest was once part of a global trading network linked to the French, Spanish, and English empires. In the seventeenth century, the interior of North America was too remote for much direct European colonization, but the French in particular succeeded in building a profitable trade in animal furs. This trade was based on the personal and economic alliances between French men, Indian women, and their mixed race (*métis*) descendants. Working as indentured or contract laborers, and less frequently as independent contractors, French *coureur de bois* (runners of the woods) packed out from Montreal for years at a time, trading and living with American Indians and in some cases becoming permanent settlers. The Indian women who married these traders and laborers played a central role in the fur trade as the cultural bridge between French and Indians, as the embodiment of family-structured trading networks, and as agriculturalists whose produce was crucial to provisioning fur trade workers.

With the independence of the United States from Britain, the region began to take on its modern political form, splitting the trajectories of U.S. and Canadian workers, although migration across the border has been a constant. American leaders like

Thomas Jefferson looked to the territory north and west of the Ohio River to fulfill dreams of a democratic society built on the foundation of yeoman farmers. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 stipulated that the region would be free of slavery and promised to treat Indian communities fairly. Most Euro-American settlers disregarded the latter promise, in large part because their ideas of private property and resource exploitation were at odds with those of Indians. After nearly a century of intermittent warfare, Euro-American settlers had succeeded in moving most American Indians out of the lower Midwest; however, a significant Indian and *métis* presence remains in the upper Midwest.

By the Civil War the region had a widely dispersed industrial network and working class. The first industrial centers of the region were Ohio and Mississippi River towns, and only later ports on the Great Lakes. Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and St. Louis provisioned their agricultural hinterlands, processing raw materials into preserved meats, timber, and pig iron. But they were primarily trading entrepôts rather than industrial cities at this point. A network of canals and railroads began to take shape after the 1830s, opening the region's interior and linking it closer to national and global markets. Canals and railroads created a broad network of small industrial towns, each with manufacturers who took advantage of some local advantage, such as access to resources or skilled workers.

With the canals came the first large wave of immigrant wageworkers. Canal labor was primarily drawn from Irish and German immigrants, and especially in the early years, they faced horrendous conditions. During the building of the Illinois and Michigan Canal (completed in 1848), contractors routinely held back pay for their laborers, often because they had not been paid themselves by the canal corporation. Malaria, cholera, and other communicable diseases swept through the shantytowns that shadowed the path of the canal, their victims buried in anonymous mass graves. Although the first railroads started fast on the heels of canals, both forms of transportation co-existed for several decades, with canals offering a lower priced alternative to the railroad for crops, coal, and timber. By the 1850s, railroad building far outstripped the canals, and railroads would remain a major regional employer for the next century.

The quickly expanding regional economy nurtured a vision of shared interests among workers, farmers, and small business owners—what historians call “producerism.” Although this notion benefited those who were able to settle down in one place, the dynamic regional economy also encouraged the

“boomers”—highly mobile workers and speculators who followed each new economic boom—to see themselves as always on the verge of breaking through. It would take the economic crisis of 1873, and the long deflationary period that followed, to shake the labor movement of this producerism. But along the way, the philosophy shifted from one that supported the emerging market economy to an oppositional, even millennial critique of capitalism as a betrayal of the American democratic project. Although the Midwest was certainly not alone in this producerist outlook, the region produced some of the most vocal exponents of oppositional producerism through the populist and socialist movements of the late nineteenth century.

The great rail strike of 1877 announced a generation of militant strikes and equally militant employer and government opposition to unionization. Originating in the East, the strike spread through midwestern rail centers rapidly. In Chicago the rail strike spread to other industries, especially among immigrant workers, and led to the infamous Battle of the Viaduct, in which an armed militia fired on a crowd of workers and their families gathered near a busy rail crossing on the city’s Southside, killing 14 people. St. Louis workers declared a general strike paralyzing the city for nearly a week.

These first mass strikes were followed a decade later by the growth of the Knights of Labor (KOL) and the Eight-Hour movement. As in other regions, the KOL assemblies in the Midwest were spread evenly between small and large industrial towns and included all kinds of workers: Men and women, black and white, wage laborers and farmers. Chicago and Detroit witnessed mass demonstrations on May 1, 1886, in support of the 8-hour day. Shortly afterward Chicago anarchist labor leaders were caught up in a dubious prosecution, and eight were found guilty of conspiring to bomb police officers. The wave of anti-radical suppression that accompanied the prosecution of the Haymarket defendants weakened both labor and radicalism in the Midwest. In the years after, radicals celebrated the Haymarket martyrs as working-class heroes, while mainline trade unionists learned to shun radicalism.

Whatever their political orientation, workers in the Midwest would play a central role in the long struggle for industrial unionism and government social provision that culminated in the formation of the CIO and the New Deal, respectively. The employers they faced were among the nation’s richest and staunchly anti-union, the same corporations that were transforming the United States into a leader of the industrial world, including the Pullman Palace Car Company, U.S. Steel, International Harvester,

Ford, and the meatpacking giants Swift and Armour. These heavy industries relied on a new wave of southern and eastern European migrants who took semi-skilled jobs that had been routinized following the thinking of Frederick Winslow Taylor. In a series of major confrontations from the 1890s to World War I, these employers were able to defeat unionization and maintain the open shop. The shifting position of the federal government in this struggle would prove decisive.

Railroad industry workers first sought to bridge their many craft union rivalries in the American Railway Union (ARU) of the 1890s, led by the charismatic Hoosier Debs. In 1894, the ARU took up the cause of the workers who built and repaired Pullman sleeping cars, declaring a boycott on the handling of Pullman cars. Employers and their supporters in the press labeled the boycott an insurrection. The federal government sent troops to Chicago over the objections of Illinois governor John Altgeld. Debs and other ARU leaders were jailed, and within a decade, most of the major trade unions had been crushed in massive strikes, including the meatpackers and teamsters in Chicago.

The intensity of employer and government anti-unionism pushed some homegrown labor leaders toward radicalism, most notably Debs, who became a Socialist while in prison. Responding to labor’s crisis, a group of radicals and industrial unionists founded the IWW in Chicago in 1905. At its outset the IWW included the well-established Western Federation of Miners, and was supported by Debs and other well-known Socialists, suggesting the seriousness of the effort. By 1912, the miners’ union and the Socialist Party (SP) had officially parted with the IWW. But left-wing Socialists like those associated with the Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company of Chicago remained supporters of the IWW. From 1915 to 1924, the IWW had notable success in organizing agricultural workers in the Great Plains and far West despite intense local and federal repression.

The advent of war in Europe during 1914 began a fundamental re-orientation of midwestern working-class communities and industrial structure. First and foremost the war cut off the flow of new workers from Europe, prompting employers to scramble for new sources of labor. The wartime labor shortage created an opportunity for African-Americans, Mexican immigrants, Mexican-American migrants, and working-class women to enter industrial employment in large numbers. The war also created opportunities for unions: As inflation undermined workers’ standard of living, unionization and radicalism gained a new hearing. The frequency of strikes in the United States reached an all-time high during this decade, as

workers, unions, and working-class activists put into practice a form of unionism that was appropriate for the new scale of work. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) experimented with forms of industrial unionism, especially in Chicago's Stockyards' Labor Council and in the effort to organize the steel industry. In both cases former IWW and future Communist leader William Z. Foster played a prominent role. Success in meatpacking proved short-lived, with employer hostility on the rise with the end of wartime regulations. Whether the union's collapse was due to hostility among European ethnic groups, between Europeans and African-Americans, or because of the union's complex organizational structure is a subject of debate among historians.

Midwestern workers and farmers were also active in politics, forming important factions within the Republican and Democratic parties as well as in various third-party efforts. In North Dakota for instance, former leaders of the state Socialist party repackaged themselves as the Non Partisan League and in 1916 won a statewide election. They were able to pass profarmer and proworker legislation and in the war years prevented the passage of a criminal syndicalism law, the likes of which was used in other states to cripple the IWW. Socialist and prolabor mayors were elected in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Sioux City, Iowa. With the collapse of the union and left movements after the war, the Progressive party emerged as the last gasp of midwestern opposition. With Wisconsin's Robert LaFollette as its presidential candidate, the party advocated nationalization of railroads and a variety of proworker and profarmer reforms. LaFollette won more than 16% of the national vote in 1924, including a majority in Wisconsin and as much as 40% in several upper midwestern and western states.

The mid-1920s were a time of reckoning for the region. The expansive post-Civil War economy that incorporated the vast lands of midcontinent North America in the national and international economy had spawned a widely flung society of small towns with a mixed industrial and commercial base servicing the agricultural and extractive hinterlands. World War I had masked the extent to which this process had reached its end even before the war, as railroad construction ground to a halt and capital investment began a re-orientation toward urban-centered mass production, construction, and cultural industries. The extractive and transportation industries continued to be important economic power centers and large employers in the region, but after the mid-1920s, farming, timber, mining, and railroads were all in decline. The small industrial towns that relied on them would languish first in the hidden

depression of the 1920s and then openly in the Great Depression of the 1930s. The recovery of the World War II years for the most part simply siphoned off population and business away from these smaller towns. Only in the 1950s, as industries began the decentralization of production away the metropolitan areas with their militant unionized workforces, would the population and economies of the towns grow again.

The 1920s also marked a shift away from the highly fluid labor markets of Gilded Age capitalism. The high turnover rates typical of modern factories were sapping profits, and many large employers sought to stabilize their workforces through welfare and training programs. Although the employee welfare programs pioneered by midwestern employers like Ford, Pullman, and International Harvester were generally sacrificed during the lean years of the 1930s, employers' hostility to high-turnover rates remained constant. The increasing stability of working-class communities, especially immigrant communities, translated into political power in the 1930s as the Democratic party solidified its New Deal coalition with programs like Social Security and the codification of collective bargaining in the National Labor Relations Act (1935). Nevertheless unionization remained elusive in many industries until World War II.

Contrary to notions of a Golden Age of employer-union harmony, the region experienced major strikes throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Moreover despite their alliance within the Democratic party, white and African-American communities continued to struggle over urban neighborhoods, a conflict that would create opportunities for employers and conservative politicians. Already in the early 1950s, large manufacturers moved production out of metropolitan areas to newer rural and small-town factories where the workforce was overwhelmingly white. The jobs that were left in the big cities usually went to the workers with the most seniority. In many cases these were white workers who had been in the factories since the 1930s, and black workers who had landed jobs during the war were thrown into unemployment with devastating effects on their communities.

Beginning with the oil crisis of the early 1970s, midwestern industry went into a long decline, with the automobile and steel sectors leading the way. Turning their early twentieth-century strategy of consolidation on its head, employers now sought industrial decentralization in order to escape the high land, transportation, and labor costs associated with their metropolitan operations. Rather than upgrading their urban midwestern plants, employers built new factories in rural areas and in the South. In this way they hoped to escape the power of militant and well-organized union locals.

Although unions sometimes fought these relocations directly, the more common strategy was to work with employers to increase the productivity of the older plants. The result was an intensifying split between rank-and-file workers bearing the brunt of the speed up and their union officials who seemed sometimes to side with employers. In Detroit and other auto industry towns, this brewing dispute over productivity combined with racial and generational divisions resulted in some cases in open rank-and-file revolt, as in the case of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement. Workers at newer auto plants, like the Lordstown, Ohio, General Motors assembly plant opened in 1966, faced intense demands for increased productivity. With an assembly line timed to produce a record 100 cars an hour, workers at Lordstown launched a strike in 1972 that became a national symbol of the rebelliousness of young workers.

The conflict over productivity became more intense as a number of large employers threatened bankruptcy, and others, like Wisconsin Steel, simply closed shop. Federal loan guarantees designed to save the Chrysler Corporation, for instance, required massive layoffs, wage and benefit cuts, and work-rule concessions by the United Auto Workers (UAW). By the mid-1980s concessionary bargaining held sway, and unions generally fought to limit the erosion of wages and benefits. Labor's defensive position was manifested in a series of strikes and lockouts that seemed to foster as much conflict within the labor movement as between unions and employers. The strike of Austin, Minnesota, Packinghouse Workers' Local P-9 against Hormel ended in failure and trusteeship for the local after the Minnesota National Guard was called out to protect replacement workers. The boom economy of the mid-1990s did little for mid-western industrial workers. A long-running battle between the UAW and Caterpillar ended with a clear management victory. A 3-year lockout of workers at the A. E. Staley corn products plant in Decatur came shortly after the firm was purchased by a British-based multinational. The unions' feeling of embattlement was best illustrated by their billboard advertisements outside of Decatur and Peoria, Illinois, that announced to drivers "You Are Now Entering a War Zone." Facing de-industrialization and intense employer anti-unionism, once powerful industrial unions like the Packinghouse Workers, and the Rubber Workers were forced to merge with larger unions.

The declining power of unions undermined the power of prolabor Democrats, and the party increasingly sided with probusiness positions aligned

with the emerging global economy. The 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), served another blow to the industrial base of the Midwest as employers transferred labor-intensive work to Mexico and capital-intensive work to Canada. The increasingly global outlook of midwestern industrial employers was illustrated best by a series of foreign buy-outs, most prominently the 1998 purchase of Chrysler by German automaker Daimler-Benz. In contrast to the manufacturing sector, public-sector and service-sector unions in the region experienced strong growth in the 1990s and 2000s, even expanding into previously nonunion workforces, such as home healthcare workers. However the vulnerability of public-sector unions was underscored in 2005 when Indiana's recently elected Republican governor revoked the collective-bargaining rights of state employees and canceled existing contracts.

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See also Debs, Eugene V.; Foster, William Z.; **Industrial Workers of the World; Knights of Labor**

MIGRANT FARMWORKERS

Workers who labor for wages on farms in the United States can be broken down into several groups: Year-round hired hands, local seasonal laborers, and migrant farmworkers—those who must leave their home for an extended period of time to work for wages on a farm. The first and second subsets of agricultural laborers were part of the American labor experience beginning in the colonial era. Migrant farmworkers however emerged later in time. The study of these workers poses unique problems for labor historians. Migrant farmworkers are ethnically and racial diverse, native-born and immigrant, men, women, and children, geographically mobile, lack long-term labor union affiliations and local community ties, and work in other nonagricultural jobs. These are only a few of the distinctive features of the migrant farm-worker

population that has evolved since the middle of the nineteenth century, making them a group of workers who do not fit neatly into any one, two, or even three areas of study.

Farmworker Origins

In the decades leading up to the Civil War, farmers began to specialize in commercial agricultural products, taking advantage of an advancing market economy and a revolution in transportation. In the old Northwest and prairie states, the first uses of migrant farmworkers took place, though on a scale much smaller than what would appear later in the century. With the introduction of the reaper and mechanical thresher in the 1840s and 1850s, western farmers could plant wheat and other grain crops on a much larger scale. Although farmers could plant and tend their crops with their own labor, that of their families, and perhaps with the help of a hired hand or two, the harvest of these crops required extra temporary labor. The sparsely populated countryside did



Dispossessed Arkansas farmers. Bakersfield, California. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-002327-C].

not have sufficient labor sources. Therefore, native-born men—white and black—and European immigrants from urban areas provided a migrant farm-worker supply for the crucial harvest period. These workers would migrate with the ripening grain from South to North in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Out in California Gold Rush miners stimulated an expansion of the existing agricultural economy. Native Americans became a major source of seasonal and migrant farm labor.

After the Civil War, the need for migrant farmworkers accelerated, especially in areas of the West: the Great Plains, California, and the Pacific Northwest. The Great Plains are a more arid region than the Midwest prairies in that annual rainfall is on average 20 inches or less a year. Despite modest precipitation, grain crops, especially wheat, thrived. By 1900, the creation of five transcontinental railroad lines with their connecting lines helped farmers reach growing urban consumer markets. Just as with the Midwest farmers, Great Plains farmers could plant hundreds and even thousands of acres of wheat. Still the limits of technology required that they employ seasonal labor for the harvest. Again sufficient harvest labor could not be supplied by area workers. Therefore migrant labor was necessary. California agriculture experienced a similar phenomenon. Wheat and other grain crops predominated in the state and required extensive use of seasonal and migrant farm labor. Even when the state's farmers moved to truck farming, that is vegetable and fruit production for sale in urban areas, limits of agricultural technology compelled both large and small farmers to use temporary harvest labor. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Pacific Northwest developed both grain- and fruit-growing agricultural industries that could not rely only on local seasonal labor. Whether picking apples or harvesting wheat, migrant farm laborers were essential to the region's farmers.

Work-Life Culture

Migrant laborers at this point in their history tended to be young, native-born, white men, though African-Americans and European immigrants could be found in the harvest sites on the Great Plains and in the West generally. California was unique in that wave after wave of Asian and later Latino immigrants made their way into the few employment avenues open to them, namely, farm labor. Nevertheless until the advent of World War I, young, white, native-born men dominated the migrant farm labor workforce. Migrant workers as a group made up a substantial

portion of the 150 thousand agricultural laborers employed annually in California. On the Great Plains, the migrant portion of 200 thousand or so agricultural laborers could be broken down into three major groups. One cohort migrated to work sites throughout the West and lived on their earnings during the winter months in towns and cities in the region. The second were farmers who supplemented their annual income by working harvests. Out-of-work tradesmen, students, and young men out to experience the West made up the final group. Migrant farmworkers though also labored in nonagricultural jobs on a seasonal basis as well.

Migrant farmworkers developed distinctive cultures of work and life on the road in search of employment. Before the advent of the automobile, migrant workers had to travel by freight train. They would stop in area farm towns to find employment where they were usually tolerated only during the harvest period. It was customary for workers to go to the center of town and wait for farmers from the countryside to arrive and to offer employment. Workers would have to determine whether to accept the wages, room, board, and hours offered. Once workers completed the harvesting job, they had to move on to find other employment. Though some purchased tickets on passenger trains, others stole rides on freight trains. Between jobs workers stayed in "jungles." Jungles were temporary communities situated well outside of towns but near a railroad line and a stream or some other water source. In these camps, a worker could make a meal, sleep, socialize, and become informed about other employment. As these workers traveled from workplace to workplace, they carried their bedding and other belongings on their backs in the form of a bundle. Migrant farmworkers were commonly referred to as bindle stiffs.

The East Coast was another region of significant migrant farm-worker formation. As early as 1870, the Northeast, specifically southern New Jersey, developed a truck-farming industry that could supply the major cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Newark with fresh fruits and vegetables. Unlike California, which had much larger farming operations and a larger workforce that tended to be isolated from the local workforce, the East Coast had smaller truck-farming operations, and farms had to tap into existing urban labor sources. Therefore Italian tradesmen and their families supplemented their income by turning to summer harvests. These Northeast farmers also relied on African-American men from the upper South to migrate seasonally to perform a variety of farm labor tasks. With refrigerated railroad car connections established between the Southeast and Northeast, truck farming expanded in the South,

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with farmers turning to sharecroppers and their families to harvest crops seasonally.

Radicalism and Reform

The first successful effort at organizing migrant farm labor in the early twentieth century was by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The IWW organized thousands of agricultural laborers with the Agricultural Workers' Organization (AWO), later renamed the Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union (AWIU). The strategy of the AWO and AWIU was to embrace the work life culture of migrant farmworkers. As long as these workers were predominately white and male, the IWW proved successfully. The AWO and AWIU job delegates rode the rails, lived in jungles, and worked the harvest job sites with the workers they sought to organize. From 1910 to 1925, the IWW had its greatest triumph in organizing workers on the Great Plains. As migrant farm laborers though turned to second-hand automobiles to search for work, the IWW lost its ability to bring new workers into the union. The AWIU job delegates failed to adapt an organizing strategy that could accommodate workers making their way through the harvest in small groups, living out of their cars and trucks, and soliciting farmers for work directly at the job site. Also changes in harvest technology of wheat and other grains crops, especially after 1930, eliminated the need for large numbers of migrant farmworkers on the Great Plains. In the second-half of the 1920s, farmers began to use the combine, which put into one mechanized operation harvesting and threshing wheat.

The federal government's interest in migrant farmworkers and agricultural labor generally began with the U. S. Industrial Commission (USIC). It met from 1898 to 1902 and determined that immigrant workers would benefit in the long run by taking up agricultural labor. The USIC believed that the agricultural ladder could provide agricultural workers with avenues to farm ownership and independence. First they would have to work as hired hands and seasonal workers, but eventually, the commissioners believed, they would be able to establish their own farms. Nevertheless the Division of Information, which was overseen by the Department of Commerce and Labor, was unable to arrive at an efficient distribution program. With the advent of the Wheatland Strike of 1913 and concerns about child labor, progressives sought to address the problems of migrant farm labor with reform of labor camps and improvement in working conditions. Another federal inquiry, the Commission on Industrial Relations

(CIR), investigated agricultural labor in the context of other industrial relations. The CIR focused on labor militancy, such as the success of the IWW, and the fact that armies of migrant laborers stole rides on freight trains to traverse major portions of the country searching for work. The CIR understood that the agricultural ladder had broken down in an era of industrial agriculture. Only with a national distribution system of labor could workers and employers have their needs met. During World War I, the Department of Labor created the U.S. Employment Service to deal with rationalizing farm labor needs. With several hundred free employment bureaus, the service placed tens of thousands of farmworkers. But with the end of war, Congress cut the service's funding.

Federal Intervention

The Dust Bowl and the Great Depression of the 1930s accelerated trends in migrant farm labor that had been developing for several decades. Even though single men, whether native-born or immigrant, dominated migrant farm labor through the 1920s, more and more families of harvesters made their way into the army of workers with the availability of cheap, second-hand cars and trucks. The Great Depression pushed farmers and their families into the ranks of migrant farmworkers due to the Dust Bowl and to other economic catastrophes. Urban families and single men were forced into farm labor as well. Streams of migrant farm laborers fed farmers' demand for workers. The most notable migrant stream was from the Great Plains to California. Workers from the plains though also trekked to the Pacific Northwest. Still other workers made their way from Texas to the berry harvests in Arkansas and Michigan. Other workers journeyed from the South to the Midwest and Northeast to find labor on truck farms and in sugar beet fields. These migrant streams were ethnically and racially diverse. Native-born blacks and whites, and immigrant workers, especially Asians and Latinos, could be found integrated into the same migrant labor streams and work places, but they could also be segregated in both labor streams and work sites.

At the end of the 1920s and through the 1930s, agricultural labor strikes erupted in California and in other farming areas of the country. Despite the effort of migrant and seasonal farmworkers to join unions—some of the most militant efforts led by Communists—their right to organize into labor unions was exempt in the Wagner Act (1935). Therefore subsequent efforts

by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) were seriously hampered during the rest of the 1930s and into the 1940s. Still workers were able to improve wages and working conditions due to some strike actions despite the brutal reaction by farmers' associations. The poor working and living conditions that led to strikes attracted public sympathy for migrant farmworkers, especially when coupled with the writings of John Steinbeck and Carey McWilliams and by government hearings, such as those led by Senator Robert La Follette.

Unlike progressives, New Deal officials tried to make migrant farmworkers the responsibility of the state. New Deal officials in the Departments of Labor and Agriculture tried to find ways that the federal government could act to help but not empower farmworkers. Their efforts resulted in attempts to settle strikes and to create migrant labor camps in order to alleviate difficult living conditions. Within the Department of Agriculture, officials in the Resettlement Administration (RA) at the end of the decade were able to create labor camps on both coasts. Their efforts to alleviate the problems that migrant farmworkers experienced whether on the East Coast, West Coast, or anywhere in between, were thwarted by officials in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, who were preoccupied with the interests of farm owners as opposed to migrant farmworkers, seasonal agricultural laborers, sharecroppers, or tenant farmers. Where farmers would not or could not provide farm labor housing, the RA's Migratory Camp Program did provide migrant workers a safe, clean place to live while working on truck farms. Employers though continued to complain about labor shortages and the fact that migrants organized successful strikes out of the camps. With the outbreak of World War II, the federal government transformed the camps into centers of labor distribution. A new agency, the Emergency Farm Labor Supply Program, brought agricultural laborers from Mexico and the Caribbean, along with over 100 thousand prisoners of war to meet the needs of farmers.

With war production moving into full swing in 1941, white, native-born agricultural laborers found more employment options. African-Americans, Latinos, and other minority groups found agricultural labor one of only several limited employment opportunities. The war though motivated government officials to focus their efforts on attaining sufficient farm labor for farm owners as opposed to assisting farm laborers in securing better working and living conditions. The Farm Security Administration, which succeeded the RA, created fixed and mobile farm labor

camps to facilitate the placement of farmworkers for employers. Eventually this commitment on the part of the federal government led to the Labor Importation Program, also known as the Bracero Program in the Southwest. Federal officials negotiated agreements with Mexico to bring thousands of Mexican nationals into the United States, to work as agricultural laborers. The program was extended to the East Coast, using workers from Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands. Despite the introduction of foreign workers, domestic migrant workers continued to be employed as agricultural laborers. After 1948, the Bracero Program continued but by state government arrangements rather than strictly through the federal government and Mexico. Several hundred thousand workers were imported during the 1950s on an annual basis. This practice ended in 1964 due to a series of legal challenges.

Postwar Unionization and Advocacy

Efforts by native-born and immigrant agricultural laborers to organize into effective labor unions continued after the war. There are three phases of postwar farmworker organizing. The first phase, 1947–1955, was led by the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU). The AFL chartered the NFLU with an industrial model for its structure. The union focused on large-scale farming operations in California, initiated several strikes, and lobbied against the Bracero program. Nonetheless the leadership failed to understand the cultural attributes of the significant migrant, ethnic minority, and immigrant portion of the workforce. The second phase, 1956–1964, was led by the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC). The AFL-CIO created AWOC, but again the organizational model was not well-suited to the migrant nature of the workforce. Moreover the leadership sought to organize white elements of the workforce and overlooked the strong presence of immigrant, Latino, and Asian farmworkers.

The third phase—beginning in the mid-1960s and continuing to the present—had its origins with the Cesar Chavez and other union and social reform advocates. A series of successful strikes in 1965 led to a grape boycott that galvanized critical nationwide support for migrant and seasonal farm laborers. The culmination of these efforts led to the formation of a union that both spoke to the economic needs and cultural attributes of a farmworker population that was primarily made up of ethnic minorities and immigrants. That union, the United Farm Workers (UFW), officially affiliated with the AFL-CIO in

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1972. With the passage of California's 1975 Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA), the UFW had the right to organize farmworkers and collectively bargain with employers. The ALRA however could be compromised by powerful associations of farmers and by employer strategies to undermine the effectiveness of the law. Other states with an agricultural economy that required migrant farmworkers did not follow California's lead with such protective legislation for agricultural laborers. Moreover government officials have tended to view migrant farmworkers as a social problem and a labor-distribution issue. Such media exposes as *Harvest of Shame* at the beginning of the 1960s and decade after decade of state and federal governmental investigations have led to school programs for migrant children and some improvements in housing and working conditions. However such legislation has not led to political or economic empowerment for migrant farmworkers.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, migrant farmworkers in the United States can be found in all 50 states, though most are concentrated in California, Texas, and Florida. A contemporary guest worker program, H-2A, allows employers to import immigrant workers when they can successfully argue that they are experiencing a lack of sufficient availability of laborers for their crops. Lack of available workers includes laborers unwilling to accept certain wages and working conditions. The result is to pit domestic workers against immigrant workers. Despite the current guest worker program and the lack of legal protection for organizing efforts among migrant farmworkers, agricultural laborers are still an active part of the labor union movement. The UFW in the West and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee in the East and such advocacy groups as Student Action with Farmworkers seek to empower agricultural laborers, placing them at the center of the struggle for economic and social justice.

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MILLER, ARNOLD (1922–1985) President, United Mine Workers of America

Arnold Miller was president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) from 1972 to 1979. He won his first term under the insurgent banner of Miners for Democracy (MFD) against Tony Boyle after a federal court overturned Boyle's fraud-ridden 1969 electoral victory over Jock Yablonski. Assassinated in December 1969, Yablonski had begun to unite the decentralized 1960s rank-and-file coal miners' movement around his candidacy. The MFD carried his fight to fruition with the election of Miller, who received 55% of the votes in December 1972.

A 1972 MFD convention had nominated Miller for president, Pennsylvania-based Mike Trbovich for vice-president, and Harry Patrick of northern West Virginia for secretary-treasurer. A southern West Virginia coal miner beginning at age 16, Miller was badly wounded in World War II, after which he returned to the mines as a repairman and electrician. He had served as president of his local for 1 year before black lung disease and arthritis ended his mining career at age 48 in 1970.

Miller had no connection to the old order (indeed he had never attended a national UMWA convention). However he was closely associated with the militant movement that won the landmark Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act (1969), establishing black lung benefits and federal responsibility for mine

health and safety. Miller had been president of the West Virginia Black Lung Association (BLA) and had supervised the association's widely circulated *Black Lung Bulletin*. Soft-spoken and modest in demeanor, he had a strong knack for the public relations side of organizing, which made him well-known among the networks of activist miners and organizers, and the media. He was also a newcomer to formal organizational leadership in a union that had long concentrated administrative power and responsibility at the top. Miller was about to take on the challenging task of restructuring and leading a union with some 140,000 members (down from over 400,000 a generation earlier) facing complex contractual and pension-related issues and difficult organizing tasks in a time of ongoing rank-and-file unrest.

The new leadership promptly carried out fundamental changes in the UMWA. Miller dismantled the corrupt Boyle apparatus. He removed both hired administrators and the 20 appointed International Executive Board (IEB) members and replaced them with people from the MFD's network of activists. Elections were held for the IEB positions within several months. The *UMW Journal* was transformed from a self-serving mouthpiece of the national leadership into a serious source of information for miners. The Miller administration cut salaries for top leaders and prioritized mine health and safety, securing the endangered Health and Retirement Funds, and organizing new members. It carried out the 1973 UMWA convention with unprecedented rank-and-file involvement and participation, and it implemented membership ratification of the 1974 collective-bargaining contract.

The new president, apparently fearful of organized factionalism and even "dual unionism," also hastened to abandon MFD as a rank-and-file vehicle. Furthermore Miller at times undercut the BLAs, which had spread from West Virginia to other states. However undermining the organized channels for the grassroots movement did not make his tenure any easier. A strong core of former Boyle supporters won IEB seats in Boyle's old strongholds and came to constitute a persistent base of hostile opposition to Miller. At the same time, rank-and-file protest continued in the mid-1970s. This included frequent wildcat strikes. With no unifying leadership or clear program, the unpredictable wildcats created legal problems and dilemmas for the reform administration. The wildcats also added pressure on the production-linked Health and Retirement Funds, which began making cuts in medical services. Increasingly isolated from the wave that had catapulted him to the presidency, Miller gradually became estranged from the network of activists, many of whom exited from his staff. The top three leaders split into hostile factions, and

Patrick opposed Miller for the presidency in a three-way race (1977). Miller won a second term, but his governance of the UMWA was becoming less effective.

The problems were most exemplified by the 1978 contract, signed after a 110-day strike, with few gains. The final agreement included replacement of the long-cherished across-the-board free medical care with company-by-company private plans, and the defeat of a hoped-for local right to strike between contracts. Many miners were disappointed. Fending off attempts to recall him and prematurely aging from the toll of work and war-related injuries, Miller suffered a stroke and resigned in 1979. Sam Church, a former Boyle supporter who had joined forces with Miller as the MFD leaders split apart, became president. Miller died in 1985.

Criticisms of Miller's shortcomings must be tempered by the fact that the weakening of the UMWA's bargaining power had deep historical roots that would have proved daunting for any leader. No one before or since has solved the problem of unionization in either the western states, where strip mines have continued to increase their proportion of production, or in the historically nonunion, small mines in Appalachia. But the UMWA's stubborn and often creative survival, furthered by the accession of a new generation of progressive leadership beginning with Richard Trumka and continuing with Cecil Roberts, certainly owes much to the election of Miller, to the reforms he implemented, and to the movement of which he was part.

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See also **Black Lung Associations; Boyle, (W. A.) Tony; Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act; Miners For Democracy; United Mine Workers of America**

MILLS, C. WRIGHT (1916–1962) **Sociologist**

As a sociologist and radical social critic, C. Wright Mills was one of the most significant intellectuals in the mid-twentieth-century United States. He was also one of the many American thinkers of his era to be profoundly shaped by an engagement with the labor movement. Born in Waco, Texas, Mills studied at the University of Texas before receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1942. Beginning in the early 1940s, Mills associated himself with a group of left-wing anti-Stalinist intellectuals centered in New York City and began to develop a radical critique of American society.

During World War II, Mills was pessimistic regarding the potential of organized labor to transform American society. However following the war, Mills was drawn to the upsurge of union activity and became hopeful that labor could serve as a radical agency of social change. In 1946, Mills joined the Inter-Union Institute for Labor and Democracy, a consortium of labor-oriented intellectuals headed by the venerable union journalist, J. B. S. Hardman. Mills also became a frequent contributor to the institute's magazine, *Labor and Nation*. Also in 1946, in his capacity as research associate at Columbia University's cutting-edge research bureau, the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Mills established a Labor Research Division of the bureau and began to conduct an extensive survey of American labor leaders. In 1947, Mills wrote an enthusiastic report on the United Automobile Workers convention for *Commentary* magazine.

Mills presented the results of this survey in his first book, *The New Men of Power: America's Labor Leaders*, published in 1948. The book alternated unevenly between the empirical results of Mills's study and his speculative analysis of the radical political potential of the labor movement.

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MINERS FOR DEMOCRACY

From 1970 through 1973, Miners for Democracy (MFD) led a coalition of insurgent coal miners in electing new leadership for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), who then democratically restructured the union. The MFD was born literally at the funeral of Joseph A. (Jock) Yablonski, his wife, and his daughter, who were brutally murdered on December 31, 1969. A coterie of his followers and family agreed to carry on. Yablonski had mounted a strong though unsuccessful challenge to incumbent W. A. (Tony) Boyle for the presidency of the UMWA in an election tainted by massive fraud. Boyle's 1969 election was ultimately overturned by federal intervention, and he was later convicted of ordering the murder of Yablonski.

Origins: Militancy, Despotism, Crisis

The roots of the MFD, and the insurgency from which it grew, lie in the legendary yet contradictory career of John L. Lewis, who headed the UMWA for four decades, ending in 1960. Alongside his legacy as standard-bearer of the early CIO, for which the actions of militant UMWA miners prepared the path, stands a more complex and conservative Lewis. He supported, even demanded, modernization and corporate consolidation of the historically fragmented and competitive coal industry, with collective bargaining as the price. The mixed results included the unionization of large mines under even larger corporations, with historic gains for coal miners. Among those gains were, post-World War II, the pioneering UMWA Health and Retirement Funds, won by militant strikes, with a network of clinics and hospitals in the underserved Appalachian coalfields.

Modernization, along with competition from other fuels, also resulted in massive job loss from 1950 to 1970, leaving Appalachia's coal-dependent economy in a devastating crisis, and the UMWA weakened. Lewis's project was incomplete, since a cost-cutting sector of mostly nonunion, small mines remained, especially in eastern Kentucky and Tennessee. Lewis ran the UMWA itself as both a dictatorship, gradually removing district autonomy, and in some respects, as a business enterprise, with growing cronyism in the 1950s.

Boyle, a UMWA functionary, soon stepped into the magisterial Lewis's ill-fitting shoes. He took to greater lengths the suppression of internal democracy and the corruption, which extended to the cherished Health and Retirement Funds. Sweetheart deals with

operators signaled Boyle's retreat from the redeeming elements of militant struggle.

Challenge from Below

As the 1960s began union miners faced economic insecurity and life-threatening health and safety problems. They were further stymied by near absence of district autonomy, by "bogus" locals of retirees under the national leadership's thumb, and then by violence and intimidation at the 1964 UMWA convention. Without access to leaders or voting rights on contracts, insurgent miners tapped into both their militant traditions of direct workplace action and the democratic spirit of rebellion in the 1960s.

Wildcat strikes grew throughout the eastern coalfields. Miners from eastern Kentucky creatively deployed roving pickets. Local and district electoral challenges were mounted in Pennsylvania's District 5 and Ohio's District 6. The Disabled Miners and Widows of Southern West Virginia challenged inequities of the Health and Retirement Funds, with both direct and legal actions, and the Black Lung Associations (BLAs), won unprecedented federal legislation in 1969, aimed at workplace health and safety.

Forging Unity

The diverse rank-and-file movement began to coalesce around Yablonski's 1969 campaign. Yablonski was a veteran UMWA leader from Pennsylvania's District 5, among the few areas where district autonomy had survived. Although he had long ceased to be an active miner and had in fact been part of Boyle's machine, Yablonski had an easy rapport with miners. Moreover during his brief time as a reform leader, he seemed to grasp the historical moment that had arrived. He understood the issues facing miners and connected the demands for union democracy with substantive issues from black lung and mine safety to problems of poor services in coal field communities and in a visceral way, to national political issues.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the MFD, in carrying the fight to victory, tended to see unity overwhelmingly in terms of wresting power from the Boyle clique. However the potential of the coalition to connect the many demands of the rank-and-file movement, which involved sharp conflict with the coal operators as well as with Boyle, was partly lost.

MFD's Base

By the early 1970s, the contours of the rank-and-file coal miners' upsurge had formed around a cross-generational alliance. Many young miners were entering the industry as it began to recover from its long slump. Impatient with conditions, without ties to the old guard's patronage and intimidation, they formed a receptive base for the MFD, especially in larger unionized mines. Older, often disabled miners had taken initiative in forming the militant Disabled Miners and Widows group, and the BLAs. African-Americans, such as Robert Payne, Charles Brooks, and Bill Worthington, and women, such as Helen Powell, Anise Floyd, and Sara Kaznoski (widow of a miner killed in the infamous Mannington disaster) played important roles, though they were little known to the media.

Such organizations and leaders sparked wildcat strikes on broad health, safety, and pension issues that gave the movement much of its momentum, and they often made connections to community-based and poor peoples' struggles. Most of these "movement soldiers," notably the African-Americans, were not brought into the leading core of the MFD, which points to the nature and limitations of MFD unity. Boyle's strongest base was among another set of older and retired miners who were susceptible to his influence and control, especially at smaller mines and in areas where the union was relatively weak.

Legal and Electoral Victories; the End of MFD

The MFD's legal arm, led by Yablonski's sons, Ken and "Chip" Yablonski, and other attorneys, secured the intervention of the Justice Department and the judiciary, which previously had ignored the Yablonski campaign's complaints. They won court-ordered restoration of district autonomy (which signaled the end of dictatorial control), the overturning of the 1969 election, and federal oversight of the resulting 1972 election. Three miners headed the MFD ticket, chosen at a 1972 convention that was attended by over 400 activist delegates. Arnold Miller, West Virginia BLA president, ran for UMWA president. Mike Trbovich, MFD vice-presidential candidate from Pennsylvania, had chaired Yablonski's campaign. Harry Patrick, from northern West Virginia, had become the self-styled spokesman for younger miners and ran for secretary-treasurer.

The campaign tapped into networks built by the grassroots movement, for example, through rank-and-file publications, such as the *Black Lung Bulletin* that Miller had started. It was estimated that the three candidates visited 400 bathhouses and talked to 60,000 miners. The MFD ticket won, capturing 55% of the 127,000 votes cast. That margin, while impressive, revealed also a significant residual base of support for the old guard and perhaps a mistrust of the MFD attorneys and other outsiders against whom Boyle endlessly railed.

Following victory the MFD withered. Apparently swayed by old fears regarding dual unionism, the top MFD leaders made no secret before the election of their belief that once Miller was elected, the MFD would be redundant, since “we will have democracy.” Miller would have even preferred the abandonment of the BLA, which survived thanks to the determination of Worthington. Among the MFD’s leading core, only Patrick mourned its passing, but rank-and-file objections were heard. In District 5 and West Virginia’s District 17, candidates kept the MFD apparatus and name alive in the 1973 elections, brought about by democratization, for district officers and the International Executive Board (IEB). The planned demise of MFD may have contributed to the winning of several IEB seats by Boyle supporters, which was to be one source of the Miller administration’s many problems. The profound structural reform of the UMWA is a post-MFD story.

Politically the last direct traces of the MFD disappeared (late 1970s) when the Miller-Trbovich-Patrick troika split into hostile factions, none of which retained power. Although Miller was a sincere reforming champion of coal miners, his gradual isolation from the continuing 1970s rank-and-file ferment helped to limit the movement’s accomplishments in that era. Whether preserving the MFD would have by itself made a difference is uncertain given the organization’s own limitations.

Nonetheless MFD’s accomplishments in its short history were considerable. The MFD’s stirring grassroots victory over Boyle rescued the nation’s longest surviving industrial union, and UMWA militancy lived to fight again. The celebrated 1989 Pittston strike, under the presidency of the young and dynamic Richard Trumka, with its direct action and appeal to communities and progressive networks, is in part a tribute to the legacy of the MFD and the movement from which it grew. The MFD can also be credited with helping to inspire rank-and-file activism elsewhere, for example among Teamsters and Steel Workers. Thus the MFD is linked to successful reform of the UMWA and to a post-1960s history of

workers fighting uphill battles to revitalize the labor movement from below as the economic retrenchment that first struck the coal industry spread throughout the economy.

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See also **Black Lung Associations; Boyle, W. A. (Tony); Coal Mining; Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act; Miller, Arnold; United Mine Workers of America**

MINIMUM-WAGE LAWS

Labor reformers began to call for a legal minimum wage in United States in the late nineteenth century, arguing that those persons forced to sell their labor for a wage should be paid fairly for their work. Workers called for a “living wage,” which was understood at that time to mean a familywage—an amount necessary for a male worker to support a wife and children at home. These demands grew into an effort to institute minimum-wage laws. As these were passed, the courts limited their coverage to women and children, framing them as protective legislation for the most vulnerable workers. Despite the gendered connotations of the term and legislations, many women were among the leaders of the early fight for wage

standards. The first state minimum wages were passed from 1912–1923, but by the 1930s, due to new court rulings and shifts in the strategy of female reformers and the labor movement, states and eventually the federal government passed minimum wages for most workers, male and female.

In 1938, the federal government ratified the first national minimum-wage law, called the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). In addition to setting a minimum hourly wage, it also required employers to pay workers working more than 40 hours per week overtime pay of time-and-a-half (this provision was amended significantly in 2004). The FLSA obviously had broader coverage than the patchwork of state minimum-wage laws, but it still included major coverage exemptions, such as domestic and agricultural workers. These exemptions particularly affected African-American workers, who were disproportionately represented in the exempted industries. The FLSA established a federal minimum wage of 25 cents an hour, to be raised to 40 cents by 1945. The law did not establish a formula for determining the wage level, and the wage was not indexed to inflation. This meant that future revisions were left up to congressional action. Over the years Congress revised the FLSA several times to raise the wage. Revisions also broadened coverage to retail establishments in 1961; to hospitals, nursing homes, schools and colleges, and laundries in 1966; and to domestic, and state and local government workers in 1974.

In the early twenty-first century, the minimum wage covers four specific categories. These include firms that have at least two employees and that do at least \$500,000 per year in business; government agencies, schools and preschools, and hospitals and businesses providing medical or nursing care for residents; individuals not covered in the first two categories but whose work regularly involves them in interstate commerce (for example, producing goods that will cross state lines); and domestic workers.

Several states have set state minimum-wage rates higher than the federal level at different times since the passage of the FLSA. As of 2004, 12 states had rates higher than the federal, ranging from \$5.50 in Illinois to \$7.16 in Washington. Only Washington state has a minimum wage that is indexed to inflation (Alaska passed but later repealed a law requiring indexing). Seven states, all in the south, have no state minimum wage. Two states—Ohio and Kansas—have state rates lower than the federal, although this affects only those workers not covered by the federal minimum wage.

The real value of the minimum wage (the value adjusted for inflation) rose relatively consistently from its enactment in 1938 to 1968, but it has fallen on average since then. By the end of the 1980s, the real value of the minimum wage was \$4.50 per hour (in 1999 dollars), the lowest it had been since 1955. By 2000, the real value had climbed slightly but was still far below its 1968 peak value.

As part of the national living-wage movement, local coalitions began efforts to pass citywide minimum wage laws in the late 1990s, searching for other ways to raise minimum wages besides waiting for a federal increase. (Before then only the District of Columbia had a citywide minimum wage, set at \$1 above the federal minimum.) As of 2004, Santa Fe, New Mexico; San Francisco, California; and Madison, Wisconsin had established citywide minimum wages ranging from \$5.70 in Madison (set to increase to \$7.75 plus indexing in 2008), to \$8.50 per hour plus indexing in Santa Fe and San Francisco.

The value of the minimum wage and the types of workers covered have always been hotly contested. Despite steady public support for regular increases to the federal minimum wage, employer lobbyists, particularly from such low-wage industries as restaurants and hotels, have been vociferous opponents. The issue has also been regularly debated among academics. While mainstream neoclassical economic theory predicts that an increase in the minimum wage leads to reduced employment, economists David Card and Alan Krueger gained attention in the 1990s with their research examining the real impact of minimum-wage increases in several cases. For example they compared fast-food restaurants on the New Jersey–Pennsylvania border after New Jersey raised its state minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.05 in 1992. Contrary to the conventional wisdom among neoclassical economists, Card and Krueger found that employers did not automatically reduce employment. Rather their findings suggest that several factors came together to pay the higher wage. First the fast-food restaurants were able to raise prices by a small amount. Second employers found that with the higher wage, they had higher productivity—perhaps due to lower turnover and absenteeism. These factors can allow employers to cover a higher minimum wage without reducing employment. However other economists, such as David Neumark and William Wascher, continue to challenge Card’s and Krueger’s findings, and there is no consensus within the field as to the merits of a minimum-wage increase. Even if political forces align to pass another increase to the federal minimum

wage soon, the lack of indexing assures the issue will remain on the agenda in years to come.

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See also **Living Wage Campaigns**

MINING, COAL

Coal is a fossil fuel that has been mined by working people, slave and free, in the United States since the colonial period. The labor of coal miners initially centered in the Appalachians and the Midwest provided the raw materials for heating homes, running the railroads, making steel, and keeping factories humming. Severe threats to miners’ lives and limbs, as well as economic hardships, were a regular feature of life for coal miners and their families. In response to these shared conditions, coal miners pioneered socially conscious industrial unionism. Coal mining became increasingly mechanized through the twentieth century. As a result employment of coal miners has dropped dramatically since its historic peak during the World War I era of more than 700,000 to some 74,000 today, though production of coal has doubled to over one billion tons annually.

Early Coal Mining Industry

The first recorded observation of coal by a European in what became the United States appears in the 1679 journal of Belgian-born missionary Louis Hennepin, who traveled with La Salle and noted deposits of coal on the Illinois River near modern-day Ottawa, Illinois. But long before Illinois coal miners were to begin digging in the early 1800s, colonists had discovered coal far to the east, and the coalfields of Richmond, Virginia, formed the first U.S. coal-mining region in the early 1700s. Early miners included European immigrant farmers who mined coal to use or sell to blacksmiths, as well as enslaved Africans, who were leased to owners of coal lands. Coal was discovered in western Virginia in 1742. By the early 1800s, mining in the Kanawha valley employed large numbers of enslaved workers, who mined coal for the booming salt industry of that region. Some slave owners who contracted out to the salt industry requested their slaves not be placed in the mines, so as to protect their investment in human chattel. In the United States as a whole in 1840, there were some 6,800 mine workers who produced less than 2 million tons of coal.

High-carbon, nearly smokeless, extremely hard anthracite coal was available in a six-county area of eastern Pennsylvania—Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, and Schuylkill—but iron makers preferred charcoal, since anthracite was difficult to burn. In 1840, however, the development of the hot-blast method for smelting iron, which successfully burned anthracite, boosted the value of hard coal. By 1853, anthracite miners brought up some 11 million tons, and until the 1860s, their region produced more coal than all other regions combined, which included bituminous or soft coal fields in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, western Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The baking of coal into coke as a fuel for the steel industry also expanded, with an annual production of three million tons by 1880, centered in the Connellsville region of southwestern Pennsylvania.

The spread of industry and railroads westward opened up new fields for soft-coal mining. In Illinois the completion of the Illinois Central in 1855 spurred coal development, and by 1879, the state’s miners had dug over 2.6 million tons. By 1907, the state was second only to Pennsylvania in coal production. Similarly in southern West Virginia, where Kanawha County operators had sent coal to their commercial customers down the Ohio River on flatboat, the arrival of the railroads in the 1800s transformed the industry. West Virginia coal production increased from a mere 489,000 tons in 1867 to over 89 million tons by 1917.

West of the Mississippi, in the Colorado and Wyoming coalfields, the Union Pacific, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe, and other companies wrangled over coal lands and employed miners in towns like Crested Butte, Colorado, and Rock Springs, Wyoming.

Mining Work: The Hand-Loading Era

Underground coalmines came in three basic varieties: Drifts, slopes, and shafts. Drifts were dug straight into a coal vein that was visible in the side of a hill or bluff. Slopes were dug on a gradual downward slant from ground level. Shafts were dug straight down, hundreds of feet in depth. Regardless of how miners entered the mine, the most common approach to getting coal out was the room-and-pillar method, still widely in use today. The mine was organized around a central transport tunnel called the main entry. Branching off from the main entry at right angles was a series of side entries. As one proceeded down a side entry along which coal was hauled, smaller tunnels branched off at right angles, like side streets, at regular intervals. Walking down one of these side streets, some 15–35 feet wide, depending on the quality of the coal, one sooner or later would confront a solid wall of coal, the “working face.” The side street, up to 400 feet long when the coal is fully mined or worked out was the room in which the miner worked. Along the side walls or ribs of the room, at periodic intervals, were cross-cuts. These were relatively narrow openings, equivalent to alleys between the side streets, which led to the adjoining room. The cross-cuts allowed the air to circulate up through each working room to the face and enabled miners to pass easily between rooms. Between two cross-cuts, stood a four-sided block of coal, the pillar, which served to hold up the roof of the mine. Coal veins varied in thickness from 2–25 feet. Lying both above and below the vein were layers of dirt, soapstone, and slate, which formed the bottom and roof of the mine.

The distinguishing characteristic of the early slope and drift mines was the multiplicity of roles taken on by the pick miner. On a typical workday, mine cap on and carbide lamp lit, he walked into the mine on his own power and headed toward his entry. As he arrived at his room, he surveyed the scene. There stood wooden mine props he had capped and pushed into place to support the roof. Next to the right rib sat his hand-cranked auger drill alongside a keg of black blasting powder, which he used to “shoot” the coal. Shooting involved drilling holes into the face of the coal, filling them with explosive, setting the fuses correctly, and then lighting the charges. Next to the

left rib, he spied his pick, which he had used for 3 hours the previous afternoon undercutting the coal-face. At times lying on his side, he had carved out a 6-inch-high and six-foot-deep empty shelf, so that the coal had room to fall. A length of wooden coal car tracks ran up the center of the room toward the face; he had just added the last section after undercutting the previous day. Sprawling across the front of his room were 5 tons of freshly cut coal he had blasted before leaving work the evening before. All he needed now was an empty coal car, which if the mine were small enough, he would fetch himself, fill with chunks of coal, and push to the mine bottom, perhaps towed by his trusty mine dog.

Until the mid-twentieth century, coal miners were paid by the ton. This meant that when a miner had dug enough coal for his own tastes, he put down his tools, walked out of his room and went home for the day. This miner’s freedom was the envy of many workers who labored under factory discipline and the bane of many a mine manager’s existence. The character of the pick miner as an independent contractor selling his services and product to the mine owner could also encourage divisions with other mine workers who were not, properly speaking, miners. In the anthracite fields in particular, it was common for pick miners to hire laborers as subcontractors. The nineteenth-century conception of the miner as an independent skilled artisan helps explain why early mining union leaders, such as Illinois’s Daniel Weaver, became small mine owners and did not see a conflict between their status as workers and businessmen.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the pick miner was joined by a growing army of mine workers, called company men, who were paid by the day. Trappers—often young boys—secured the doors. In anthracite boys also worked picking slate out of the coal in the aboveground breaker. Timbermen, mule drivers, and later locomotive motormen also took their place in the mines. With the introduction of shaft mining, a “cager” took charge of loading and unloading coal and miners between the bottom and the surface. A variety of general bottom laborers cleared coal and slate from the tracks, brought supplies to miners, built wooden “brattices” that kept the air course running correctly, and performed other needed tasks. With the proliferation of deeper and larger shaft mines in the late nineteenth century, the hoisting engineer became a regular addition to the mine along with the pumpman, who managed the process of forcing water hundreds of feet upward to the surface. Mine workers with a specialty in laying iron and then steel track were hired as tracklayers. They not only laid track on the entries, but gradually took over from the pick miner the laying of track in individual rooms.

While the pick miner held a special place in the more primitive mines, the development of new undercutting technology in the 1870s and 1880s began to eat away at the centrality of the miner's craft skills by providing a mechanical substitute for the miner's pick. Initial designs included a rotating cutter bar armed with steel teeth as well as a long cylindrical punch machine that repeatedly struck the coal like a jackhammer; both models were powered by compressed air. The preferred technology became the electric-powered chain undercutter, first sold in 1893, which worked like a wide chainsaw ripping into the bottom of the coalface. No longer did a miner need to be skilled with the pick—the machine did it for him. The widespread adoption of the undercutting machine heralded the entrance of a new brand of worker into the coalmines: The loader. Depending on the degree of mechanization and specialization in the mine, many loaders continued to timber their working places, lay rail, and set shots. Increasingly though loaders, who were often new immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and in the western mines, from China and Japan, spent their time on one task—shoveling coal.

In addition to facing the challenges of mechanization, coal miners, coal loaders, and mine laborers all had to contend with chronic underemployment. From 1913 to 1918 (a span that includes 2 years of economic depression as well as the war boom), the national average of coal-mining days worked was 206.5, or two-thirds of a possible 312. But this average conceals wide swings in employment over time. In Illinois for instance, in the year ending February 1919, mines worked an average of 256 days. But for the year ending June 30, 1924, the average dropped to 140. In local mines that produced fuel for home heating, miners were often laid off starting April 1. In shipping mines that sold to manufacturing companies and railroads, a number of factors limited regular work. The chaotic railroad system often left mines without cars to pick up coal, and the intense competition between mining companies operating at low margins meant that mines often shut down for lack of customers. At the same time, mines had to retain a skeleton workforce to maintain the mine physically and keep it safe, which encouraged overproduction, lowered coal prices, and created pressure to lower tonnage and day rates.

Coal Mining Hazards

From 1839 to 2006, there were 614 coalmine disasters killing five or more workers, totaling 13,805 deaths.

But the number of injuries was always far higher. During the 1930s, for instance, coal miners averaged annually 1,500 deaths and about 81,000 injuries. The dangers of coal mining stemmed from four main sources, described by miners as bad air, bad top, bad roads, bad shots. In the period following the Civil War, many relatively shallow mines were still ventilated by the natural method—that is, particularly in colder weather, the warmer air underground rose, pulling the colder air down the shaft and through the workings. Mine operators also commonly installed a furnace at the foot of the shaft, which had a similar drawing effect (and also tended to start mine fires, such as the landmark Avondale disaster that killed 110 miners in Plymouth, Pennsylvania, in 1869). Increasingly though as mines got deeper and miners demanded higher standards, coal companies installed large electrically powered drawing fans, which pulled the air through an intricate maze of entries, crosscuts, and doorways to provide air for every working area of the mine. Miners were particularly wary of methane gas, or “fire damp,” which is naturally emitted by coal, is colorless and odorless, hangs near the roof of the mine, and is highly explosive. Methane buildup caused many explosions, such as the Wadge mining disaster of 1942 in Mount Harris, Colorado, that killed 34.

Less dramatic but possibly even more deadly were a variety of gases that conspired to rob miners of their health over time. The primary two were black damp or choke damp (carbon dioxide), produced by burning black powder and given off by all organic matter, living and dead, underground; and white damp (carbon monoxide), produced mainly by powder explosions and fires. Odorless, colorless, and normally mixed in with healthy air, these two invisible poisons were slow and insidious underground killers. Coal dust as well posed a danger to the lives of mineworkers. Nearly every activity in the mine stirred up dust, from moving along the haulage ways by foot, car, or mule to undercutting, blasting, and loading coal. Not only did coal dust magnify the destructive effect of a gas explosion, but it killed miners “by the inches.” As late as the 1930s, while medical authorities had realized the dangers of silica dust, they failed to recognize the negative effects of plain coal dust on miners' health. Miner's asthma was not recognized by the federal government as pneumoconiosis, or black lung disease, until the 1960s, although doctors in the United States and England had identified the disease in the nineteenth century.

Roof falls, or bad top, killed more miners than any other mining hazard. A study of Illinois miners found that in 1916, for example, 63% of the mine deaths and 38% of the injuries in one region resulted from some

type of roof fall. Most of these incidents occurred in the miner's or loader's room. When coal companies were sued in court for injuries or death caused by bad top, they often claimed that the miner's inattention and irresponsibility had resulted in his death. In some cases miners had not taken full precaution in setting roof props, but one main reason for this was the piece-rate system of payment and miners' intermittent employment—if miners took more time to set props, they might miss the chance to load enough coal for the few days they were working.

Work on the haulage roads could also be a source of considerable anxiety. Rotten railroad ties, sagging rails, falling coal, failing entry props, lingering smoke from shooting coal, and above all, piled up coal-dust on the roads could make for treacherous conditions. The coal debris—known as “gob”—beside the tracks made walking hazardous. Mine managers did routinely order dusty entries sprinkled and cleaned, but state laws generally gave them wide legal latitude in deciding on the frequency of sprinkling.

Finally especially in mines where miners shot their coal “off the solid”—meaning it was not undercut, and they used extra powder to get the coal down—there was always the chance of a blown-out or “windy” shot, in which the deadly force of the explosion was directed outward into the room rather than into the block of coal. Such a mishap, perhaps combined with coal dust, is believed to be the cause of the worst mining disaster in U.S. history, the Monongah, West Virginia, explosion of 1907 that took the lives of 362 miners.

The Evolution of Coal-Mining Unionism

Anthracite miners pioneered the first short-lived union in the Schuylkill region in 1848–1849, when miner John Bates mobilized some 5,000 miners to fight for pay increases. Within another decade the first attempts at a national union of coal miners took root in the Midwest. Founded by British-born miners and former Chartists, Daniel Weaver and Thomas Lloyd, the American Miners' Association (AMA) emerged in the course of a successful 1861 strike in St. Clair County, Illinois. Strikers targeted mine operators who shortchanged miners on the true weight of coal they dug by claiming it was intermixed with too much slate. In response the AMA, and later unions, demanded that operators allow for a union check-weigh man, who would ensure that miners' daily tonnage was accurately weighed. Miners from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia joined Weaver and Lloyd in establishing the AMA,

which lasted until the economic depression of 1867 depleted its membership. As midwestern coal miners began to recover from the initial blows of the postwar economic depression, they formed in 1872 the Miners' Benevolent and Protective Association, which encompassed coal diggers from Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri. With a proven record of leadership ability and 23 years in the mines, Walton Rutledge was chosen first secretary, serving for 2 years until the organization became part of the Miners' National Association (MNA), established in 1874.

Meanwhile in 1868, led by Irish-born John Siney from St. Clair, Pennsylvania, in Schuylkill County, the anthracite miners struck to enforce a new 8-hour law. They then formed the Workingmen's Benevolent Association (WBA), which promoted cooperatives, sick and death benefits, trade agreements with employers, and arbitration of disputes. In 1870, its members signed the first written contract with coal operators. The price was the sliding scale of wages pegged to the price of coal. Strikes, in the WBA's view, were primarily for restricting the supply of coal to raise its price on the market, hence allowing employers to raise wages. This conception of the harmony of interest between coal miners and their employers, based on the model provided by famed unionist Alexander McDonald of the Scottish miners, would die hard, although the WBA lasted only until 1875. It was a casualty of the Panic of 1873 but also of an anti-union campaign unleashed by Franklin B. Gowen of the Reading Railroad, who bought up Schuylkill coal lands, lowered wages, and offered a benefit plan for miners to undercut the WBA. Gowen then collaborated with Allan Pinkerton to combat the Molly Maguires, whose brand of retributive justice Gowen linked in the minds of many with the cause of coal unionism.

For the next 15 years, a succession of national unions, none lasting more than a few years, followed the WBA. The MNA had limited participation from anthracite miners, though Siney served as its president and the group had 35,000 members spread across 12 states by 1875. But legal attacks on Siney and other leaders, as well as conflicts within the MNA over the utility of arbitration, severely weakened the group by 1876. Coal miners were also a large part of the Knights of Labor (KOL), often in mixed assemblies that contained a variety of types of workers, and sometimes in local trade assemblies of miners only. Complaints from coal miners about this situation led the KOL to establish National Trade Assembly (NTA) No. 135 in 1886. But just before the KOL acted, in 1885 prominent mining unionists John McBride, Chris Evans, and Daniel McLaughlin led the formation of the National Federation of Miners

and Mine Laborers. The federation called for the 8-hour day, state laws for miners' health and safety, an end to convict mining, mine run of coal (which meant miners were paid for the full weight of coal mined before it was run over screens), and an end to company stores. That year the federation's representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania—the Central Competitive Field (CCF)—met in Columbus, Ohio, with a group of coal operators and for the first time agreed on an interstate scale of wages. In 1888, some elements of NTA No. 135 left the KOL and merged with the federation to create the National Progressive Union of Miners and Mine Laborers (NPU). Formal rivalry with the KOL finally ended on January 22, 1890, in Columbus, Ohio, when 198 delegates of the NPU and NTA No. 135 joined together to form the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

The constitution of the new union set forth the UMWA's objectives: To secure decent earnings, to do away with payment in scrip to company stores, to advance mine safety, to win the 8-hour day, to obtain education for miners' children, to enact laws protecting miners' health and safety, and to adjust differences with employers peacefully, so that strikes would become unnecessary. A national coal strike in 1897 finally brought CCF operators and the UMWA agreement in 1898 on a union scale, the 8-hour day, and mine run of coal. While the agreement left out West Virginia, the anthracite miners, and miners in the South and West, it was a milestone for the new miners' union.

Mechanization of Mining

As the fledgling union began to flex its muscles and organize miners into a solid mass, coal operators were steadily mechanizing the mines. Undercutting machines were just the first step, as companies such as the Jeffrey Manufacturing Company and later, Joseph Joy and his Joy Machine Company, began to build and sell mechanical loaders. Joy's 4BU loader debuted in 1922 and was used mainly in non-union mines at first, given well-grounded expectation of opposition from UMWA members. The loader operated by means of rotating scooping arms that gathered the blasted coal onto a conveyer that carried the coal onto a shuttle.

As coal production plunged after World War I, UMWA President John L. Lewis championed the idea that there were too many mines and too many miners. A consolidation of the industry, with a higher degree of mechanization, would create long-term stable employment for the nation's miners. Indeed by 1948,

nearly two-thirds of all coal in the United States was mechanically loaded and 90% was mechanically undercut. All that remained to mechanize was the removal of coal still done by blasting. Jeffrey already had developed an entry driver, a machine that would cut through coal to create tunnels in the mine. The next step was the continuous miner, introduced in the late 1940s, which used a rotating drum equipped with steel teeth for cutting bits. By the early twenty-first century, the latest versions could mine coal at the rate of 38 tons a minute. Setting props was also mechanized by the introduction of machines that drill steel bolts into the mine roof. Not only were roof bolts safer, but they allowed mechanical loaders and continuous miners to move more freely through the mine.

Despite the overall decline in death and injury in the mines during the twentieth century, machinery introduced new dangers. From 1929 to 1944, for instance, explosions caused by electricity were responsible for the majority of mining deaths. Loading and mining machines kicked up a great amount of dust. And the huge capital outlay for loading machines put pressure to speed up production, to use more blasting powder to create more loadable coal, and to shoot coal with men in the mines. All of these combined to create the Centralia, Illinois, mine disaster of 1947 that killed 111 men.

The UMWA and the Changing Demographics of Coal Mining

Coal miners in the pre-Civil War era were overwhelmingly drawn from England, Wales, and Scotland. After the Civil War, they were joined by those of Irish and German extraction. As mechanical undercutters entered the mines, miners from southern and eastern Europe joined the mine workforce. In the West Union Pacific Railroad hired Chinese- and then Japanese-born coal miners in Wyoming. The early generations of miners often resented the new immigrant coal loaders, whom they viewed as interlopers, and in Rock Springs, Wyoming, in 1885 KOL miners rioted against Chinese miners, killing 28 and wounding 15. On the other hand, by 1907 in Rock Springs, Japanese miners became part of the UMWA local. Similarly starting in 1918, District 12 of the UMWA, covering the state of Illinois, printed its union constitution in English, Serbo-Croatian, Polish, Lithuanian, Italian, and French. And not surprisingly, in newly unionizing sections of the Pennsylvania coalfields, such as Windber in the 1920s, Slovak and Hungarian miners flocked into the leadership of the union. Unionized Mexican-born miners worked in the

mines of the Rocky Mountains and the southwest. A central leader of the Colorado miners was Louis Tikas, a Greek immigrant who was martyred in the Ludlow Massacre of 1914.

Negotiating the terrain of Jim Crow segregation was perhaps more difficult, and the extent to which the UMWA succeeded has been vigorously debated by historians. African-Americans were among the nation's first coal miners in the Chesapeake. After the Civil War, they continued to work privately owned mines in Tennessee and Alabama, hired out by prison officials to mine owners as convict laborers. A rebellion by black and white free miners in Tennessee helped put an end to private convict mine labor by 1896. At the same time, African-American miners also labored as free workers in the Alabama mines, where they formed over half of unionized miners by 1902, though they met in segregated locals. Similarly in West Virginia, black miners were roughly one-quarter of the coal-mining workforce in southern West Virginia in 1910, and by 1931 in some counties they made up one-third of the total.

While the image of coal mining as an exclusively male occupation persists today, female coal miners had toiled in British mines for centuries until forced out by an act of Parliament in 1842. Though they were kept out of American mines by custom, law, and union opposition, women did work sporadically in U.S. mines as part of a family labor system, primarily in small mines leased by coal miners in the Appalachian region. During World War II, the employment of women increased, as they took above-ground jobs working in mine shops and tipples. In the early 1970s, under the impact of the women's movement, affirmative action in the steel industry, which owned captive mines, and a spurt of new hiring due to the oil crisis, women were hired to work underground. They formed the Coal Employment Project in 1977 to advocate for women facing discrimination and sexual harassment from mine managers and male coal miners. By 1979, nearly 3,000 women had been hired as underground miners, mainly in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Alabama. The UMWA women were coldly received by the international union leadership, but with the election of Richard Trumka as international UMWA president in 1982, they began to receive more official support.

Coal Mining and the Government

As early as 1870, reacting to the horrors of the Avondale disaster, Ohio miners proposed legislation regulating the mines. An act passed in 1874 provided for

two separate openings in mines employing over 10 miners, specified the volume of air to circulate in the mines, required daily inspection before work by a fire boss or fire viewer, gave miners the right to appoint a check-weigh man at the mine, and mandated the appointment of mine inspectors to enforce the law. With the help of Illinois miners' leader Daniel McLaughlin, later elected to the state general assembly on the Greenback-Labor ticket, Illinois passed a similar mining law in 1872. Other coal-mining states followed in rapid succession, though coal operators strenuously opposed legal regulation. Passage of laws did not guarantee enforcement however, and mine inspector services were generally underfunded and understaffed, with West Virginia the worst and Ohio the best.

Federal regulation began with an 1891 act of the U.S. Congress that regulated coalmines only in federal territories. Revisions in the early 1900s provided for specialized shot firers to shoot coal when miners were out of the mine and for watering down or removal of coal dust. As of 1902, the law applied only to mines in Indian Territory (Oklahoma) and New Mexico Territory employing 20 or more miners. Popular outrage over the Monongah disaster and the Cherry, Illinois, mine fire of 1909 that killed 259 miners helped propel Congress to create the U.S. Bureau of Mines in the Department of the Interior in 1910. Even though the bureau established mine-safety stations in the coalfields, conducted research on coal dust, and promoted rock dusting, now standard practice in underground mines, its dual commitment to boosting the mining industry and protecting miners limited its effectiveness.

Federal government involvement in the coal-mining industry expanded in 1902 when President Theodore Roosevelt personally intervened to mediate a strike by coal miners against the Pennsylvania anthracite operators. While only a third of the 150,000 anthracite miners belonged to the UMWA, nearly all the miners walked out over a range of issues including tonnage and daily pay rates and disputes over weighing of coal. The UMWA International President John Mitchell publicly faced off against Reading Railroad President and coal operator George Baer, whose J. P. Morgan-controlled company owned many mines in the anthracite region. After 6 months on strike, as operators refused to budge, miners refused to return to work, and cold weather was approaching, Roosevelt called representatives of the miners and operators to the White House for a historic meeting. While the deadlock remained, pressure from Roosevelt on J. P. Morgan, along with the continuing intransigence of the miners, resulted eventually in an agreement from miners and operators to submit their claims to an

arbitration board. Once the miners returned to work in October 1902, the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, led by Roosevelt's Commissioner of Labor Carroll Wright, conducted 3 months of hearings involving over 500 witnesses. The outcome was a compromise on wages and hours and the establishment of an ongoing arbitration board to hear anthracite cases. While the UMWA was not recognized as a bargaining agent for the miners, Mitchell claimed victory, and some have viewed the settlement as a de facto recognition of the union. Though the anthracite miners were not solidly unionized by the UMWA for decades, the intervention of President Roosevelt is often seen to mark a progressive break in a long pattern of open federal strike breaking. The government was now in the mediation business, and a long series of federal coal commissions would follow.

It was not until 1941 that Congress empowered federal mine inspectors to enter mines in the states. In 1947, shortly after the Centralia, Illinois, disaster, Congress provided for the promulgation of a federal code of regulations on mine safety, Title 30 of the Code of Federal Regulations (30 CFR). Five years later, after the West Frankfort, Illinois, disaster that killed 119, Congress passed the Federal Coal Mine Safety Act. It provided for annual inspections of larger mines and gave the bureau the power to issue violation notices and imminent danger withdrawal orders. Civil penalties could be assessed against mine owners for violating such orders but none for violating safety provisions in the first place.

In 1966, the law was extended to cover all coal-mines. Under the impact of the Farmington, West Virginia, disaster in 1968, which killed 78, as well as grassroots pressure in West Virginia, powered by a broader Miners for Democracy movement against the Tony Boyle leadership of the union, Congress passed the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 (Coal Act). This law extended coverage to surface mines, required four inspections per year of every underground mine, initiated fines for company safety violations and criminal penalties for willful violations. It also for the first time provided compensation for miners with black lung. In 1973, the secretary of the interior created the Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration as a separate agency from the Bureau of Mines. Finally in 1977, Congress enacted the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act, establishing the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), which moved to the Department of Labor, enhancing miners' legal rights to report safety violations and consolidating all federal mining-safety regulations. In that year Congress also passed the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. It resulted mainly

from concerns about the environmental impact of strip mining but also provided for federal regulation of coal-mining safety on federal land as well as on Indian reservations, where Navajo and Hopi people mine coal for Peabody Energy.

Coal Mining Today

Coal miners work today in 25 different states. The majority, some 41,000, still work underground and one-third of them are unionized. Workers in surface or strip mines are a growing minority of the mining workforce and only 22% belong to a union. They mine the majority of coal, which is mainly used to fuel electrical power plants. Though most coal is still mined east of the Mississippi, the top coal producing state today is Wyoming, including its Powder River Basin, where miners extract over one-third of all coal mined in the United States. Death and injury rates have fallen substantially. But the Sago Mine disaster in Tallmansville, West Virginia, in January 2006, killing 12 miners at a nonunion mine that had been cited for numerous serious safety violations by the MSHA, points to the challenges facing coal miners today.

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See also **Anthracite Coal Strike (1902); Boyle, W. A. (Tony); Knights of Labor; Lewis, John L.; Ludlow Massacre (1914); Miners for Democracy; Molly Maguires; Trumka, Richard L.; United Mine Workers of America**

MINING, HARDROCK

Hardrock mining—mining metals from ore-bearing rock—was practiced for centuries to glean copper, tin, and precious metals. The work processes and labor relationships of U.S. hardrock mining varied

over time and region and with the kind of ore being mined. Hardrock miners have been prominent in U.S. labor history for their militant industrial unions, for brutal confrontations with employers and the state, and for their leadership in founding the Western Federation of Miners (WFM), Western Labor Union (WLU), Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). This entry covers the California Gold Rush through the post-World War II period, concentrating primarily on the earlier decades.

Industrialization

From the 1848 discovery of gold at Sutter's Fort, a series of gold and silver rushes drew prospectors to the North American West. Small groups of placer miners panned or sluiced ore from California's streams and gravel beds and developed a system of law and custom that required work and occupation in good faith to own a claim. Placers were rapidly depleted, to be replaced by lode, or quartz, mining: Deep-shaft operations that removed the rock from which placer metals had eroded, in which the ore was not naturally separated but must later be milled or refined. Mining rapidly became an industrial enterprise requiring massive capital investment to sink shafts, purchase machinery, build railroads, and refine ore. Work and ownership became separate: Miners worked for wages; mines belonged to stockholders who neither worked nor occupied them.

Industrialization brought new demands for metals. Wisconsin's lead mines attracted an international workforce by the mid-nineteenth century, and steel production drove the development of the Minnesota iron range. By the late nineteenth century, a burgeoning electronics industry spurred copper mining in Arizona, Utah, Montana, and Michigan. Silver camps closed throughout the Rockies after the 1893 repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, but gold-based currency and new cyanide and chlorination processes for separating base from precious metals made it profitable to refine low-grade gold ores. The U.S. government closed silver and gold mines during World War II to divert labor to base metals. Then new atomic industries led to a postwar boom in uranium mining. By the late twentieth century, rising gold prices and new refining methods, like heap leach cyanide production, made it profitable to work low-grade ores and prompted an extension of open-pit mining from base metals to gold. Leadville, Colorado, represented in microcosm the trajectories of

hardrock development: A brief gold boom after 1858 was followed by extensive underground silver mining after 1876, and then in the twentieth century, by molybdenum for steel production.

Mining industrialization eroded some skills but demanded new ones to run hoists, set dynamite charges to break out the most ore and least waste rock, run tramming systems, and refine complex ores. Underground miners risked cave-ins and explosions. The dangers increased with dynamite, cyanide, power drills that spewed rock dust, inadequate timbering, improperly grounded electric hoists, and other technologies that increased both the profits and the hazards of hardrock mining. Mining communities have borne the environmental costs of heavy metals and dangerous chemicals in their soil and water tables.

Mining Workforces

The instabilities of an extractive industry—limited ore supplies, high recovery costs, and unstable markets—created boom-and-bust hardrock communities whose mobile workforces followed the changing fortunes of the industry. Hopes for wealth or decent wages drew diverse workers. The California gold rush attracted hopeful prospectors, particularly from the U.S. North and Midwest, Mexico, Chile, China, Ireland, Cornwall (UK), France, and Germany. Some doubtless dreamed of riches; they were pushed as well by drought, famine, revolution, factories that eroded artisans' skills and independence, and by worked-out mines where they had honed their skills. Subsequent booms and the pits and shafts of industrial mining attracted selectively diverse workforces. International migrations fed the processes of workforce and class formation that determined who worked underground for wages and who mined the short-lived placers; who sojourned in the diggings, and who stayed to labor.

After the gold rush, native-born Americans tended to move quickly and disproportionately out of mining, as industrial operations attracted more immigrants and skilled miners from eastern coal and lead mines. By 1870, in the industrial mining town of Grass Valley, California, only one workingman in four was a native-born American. While French gold seekers and New England craftsmen might sojourn briefly in the goldfields, the Irish potato famine, diminished Cornish tin reserves, famine and warfare in China's Guandong Province, and other dislocations propelled more permanent migrants, followed in the early twentieth century by more Slavs, Swedes, Finns, Italians, Japanese,

and Greeks. British miners came from Wales, from the Yorkshire coalfields, and especially from generations of Cornish miners who had dug tin, copper, and china clay. By the end of the nineteenth century, Cornwall lost at least a third of its population. Many migrated multiple times: To dig lead in Wisconsin, copper in Australia and Michigan, silver in Nevada or Idaho, gold in Colorado. Some Irish miners dug coal in Pennsylvania; their sons sought the relative safety and higher wages of hardrock.

The ethnic compositions of local workforces varied. Chain migrations might draw Cornish to Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Irish to Butte, Finns to Michigan and Minnesota. On Nevada's Comstock Lode, the Cornish and Irish each comprised a third of all miners. A majority of Idaho miners in 1870 were Chinese; almost half of the rest were immigrants. In 1900, Butte was 26% first- or second-generation Irish; in the Cripple Creek gold district, 70% of miners were native-born, but three in ten adults were second-generation immigrants.

Racial hierarchies and barriers divided the hardrock social landscapes. Ethnicity could operate positively for the Irish who worked in Marcus Daly's Butte mines, or for the Cornish, hired by foremen and shift bosses for whom Cornishness connoted skill regardless of actual experience. In contrast Mexicans, Chileans, and Chinese were run out of many hardrock centers and restricted to the placers. Subjected to a selectively enforced California Foreign Miners' Tax from 1852–1870, the Chinese were allowed underground only in deadly quicksilver mines. Comstock miners organized a Workingmen's Protective Union "to protect the interests of the white workingman against the encroachments of capital and Coolie labor." Miners supported enactment of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and led anti-Chinese riots throughout the West in 1885 and 1886.

A "white man's camp" was idealized throughout the hardrock West, but the meanings of whiteness varied. In Rossland, B.C., most gold miners came from Britain, the United States, or Canada and traced their ethnic origins to England, Scotland, Ireland, or Wales, but significant minorities of Swedes, Italians, and Germans also labored there. More Italians and Chinese lived in Rossland than in Colorado gold camps, but they faced heavy discrimination. In Utah native-born miners and immigrants from northern and western Europe tried to exclude Greeks, Japanese, and Mexican Americans from their WFM local. Italians and Finns mined in 1910. Ethnic tensions divided the Butte Irish and Cornish, and these old-timers from the newcomers. In 1912, 500 Finnish miners complained that the Butte Miners' Union refused to support Finnish members. In Arizona and New Mexico, a dual

labor system separated white workers from Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. In Colorado Mexicans, Italians, and Greeks worked in coal but not hardrock. The white man's camp of Cripple Creek excluded Mexicans, Asians, southern and eastern Europeans, but not African-Americans.

White men's camps enforced the local practices of racial exclusion and the assumptions of a mining industry that employed only men. Women were vastly outnumbered; California mining populations were 97% male in 1850. In Colorado a year after the Pike's Peak boom, women were outnumbered 17 to 1. But as the placers dwindled and quartz mining stabilized, the ratios became somewhat more balanced—in 1870, almost 4 Californians in 10 were female. By 1900, there were three men to each two women in the industrial mining centers of Cripple Creek and Butte. Placers and boomtowns attracted more young single men, while stable deep-shaft mining attracted older, experienced miners who married, bought homes, built schools, and organized.

Hardrock communities offered narrow options for women. As wives, mothers, and waged workers they supplied men's domestic needs, their social and sexual desires, cooking, cleaning, sewing, washing, and providing companionship for the male majority. Not until the 1970s did women join men underground, when enforcement of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act opened mining to a few women who often faced considerable male resistance.

Hardrock Unions

Hardrock miners organized to protect their health, their families, their wages, and their control of the workplace. The international migrations that brought experienced miners to North America brought with them histories of ethnic and racist antagonism but also the class analyses and organizing experience gained in the mines of Cornwall and Durham and all the underground workings where experienced miners taught younger men their mining skills and lore.

Miners' agendas and their calculus of success developed from what they had left and what they experienced in the rapidly industrializing U.S. mines. Keeping women out of the mines was an achievement for Cornishmen; keeping children in school was a huge gain for the sons of eastern coal miners. Women and boys worked underground in England until 1842, when the Mines and Collieries Act forbade the employment of boys under 10 and of all females in British mines, although "bal maidens" continued the arduous labor of breaking ore for little pay on the surface.

Hardrock miners organized their first U.S. union as Nevada's Comstock Lode industrialized, founding the Virginia City Miners' Protective Association on May 30, 1863. By the end of the decade, there were miners' locals in most of the major lode-mining centers, many formed by mobile Comstock miners who patterned their constitutions on the Comstock unions. The Working Men's Association of Butte was formed in 1878; it became the Gibraltar of unionism as Local No. 1 of the WFM. Leadville miners founded a Miners' Cooperative Union as a Knights of Labor Assembly in 1879, lost it in a bitter strike the following year, and then reorganized in 1885. By the early 1890s, miners had organized in most Colorado hardrock camps, many in Knights of Labor Assemblies that offered mutual aid and sometimes more militant resistance. Four Idaho locals formed the first association of hardrock unions in 1889, the Coeur d'Alenes Executive Miners' Union.

Confronting new technologies that eroded experienced miners' skills and the shared dangers of underground work, miners sought uniform minimum wages for all mine workers and organized industrial unions to match the growing power of an increasingly integrated mining industry. They based their organizing strategy on the mutual cooperation necessary for workers whose safety underground was interdependent and on a labor theory of value reinforced by the placer camp ethos that based ownership of wealth on the labor that produced it. The WFM's slogan was "Labor Produces All Wealth; Wealth Belongs to the Producer Thereof."

Hardrock unions fought often-defensive battles to resist wage cuts or stripping orders and to protect jobs and the right to organize. The first locals on the Comstock established a \$4 minimum daily wage for all mining labor. In 1883, southwestern Colorado mine owners formed the San Juan Miners' Association and broke the \$4 day in Telluride and Silverton. Coeur d'Alenes miners struck in 1892 to resist a wage cut from a uniform \$3.50 day to \$3 for miners and \$2.50 for surface workers. In 1894, Cripple Creek gold miners struck to maintain a \$3 day for 8 hours.

As mine owners organized to oppose their workers' demands, the miners' locals recognized the need for a central organization of their own. The Coeur d'Alenes Executive Miners' Union corresponded with unions in Montana, Colorado, and Idaho, and representatives of 15 local unions met in Butte on May 15, 1893, to form the Western Federation of Miners.

Known for its commitment to industrial unionism, its endorsements of the Socialist party, its role in founding the Western Labor Union in 1898 (which became the American Labor Union in 1902), and the

IWW in 1905 as alternatives to the conservative craft unionism of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the WFM has engaged labor historians who debated the roots of its militancy and the violence of many hardrock strikes. The WFM won its first victory in the 1894 Cripple Creek strike, atypical because the state intervened to protect miners' rights and civil peace rather than mine owners' property. The WFM waged strikes in Leadville in 1896, the Coeur d'Alenes again in 1899, Telluride in 1901, throughout Colorado (including Telluride and Cripple Creek) in 1903–1904; in Goldfield, Nevada, in 1906–1907; Lead, South Dakota, in 1909; Calumet, Michigan, in 1913–1914; and Bisbee, Arizona, in 1917. Aptly called labor wars, the strikes often pitted unions, infiltrated by mine owners' detectives, against state force and organized mine owners. Yet the strikes were but one aspect of a union that provided health care, insurance, fellowship, and education for its members; that worked to extend union benefits to other workers; and that generated considerable internal debate about political and industrial strategies. It won a notable legal victory with a Supreme Court decision that legalized limiting hours of work underground.

The disastrous strike defeats in Colorado in 1903–1904 prompted the WFM to become the largest founding member of the IWW. In the 1904 strike aftermath, the Colorado legislature overturned the defeat of Governor James Peabody, who had sent troops to strike areas and used them to deport union leaders from the state, declaring him elected on condition that he relinquish the office to his lieutenant governor. This political manipulation led some miners to abandon politics in favor of industrial organization that might someday lead to workers' control of production. It convinced others to pursue political reform, and still others to continue to work for socialism.

The IWW seemed initially to offer an industrial alternative to the AFL; the WFM hoped that the United Mine Workers, who organized coal miners, might withdraw from the AFL and join the IWW, where the two miners' unions might merge. That did not happen, and political divisions within both the IWW and the WFM led the WFM to leave the IWW in 1908. Vainly pursuing a merger with the UMW, the WFM joined the AFL in 1912. In 1916, the union changed its name to reflect its industrywide jurisdiction and became the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (Mine-Mill).

Like many unions, Mine-Mill lost members during the 1920s, and then regrouped as one of the nation's most militant industrial unions to help found the CIO

in 1936. Struggling with racist divisions, the WFM began organizing Mexicans, Japanese, Italians, and Greeks before World War I and continued after World War II to organize Mexican miners in New Mexico and Arizona, and African-American miners in the U.S. South. But in the Cold War backlash, Mine-Mill leaders and organizers were prosecuted for allegedly falsely signing the anti-Communist affidavits required under the Taft-Hartley Act. Mine-Mill was one of the unions expelled from the CIO for alleged Communist domination. Some union leaders had been Communist party members, a not-uncommon commitment during the 1930s and World War II. Some resigned their party memberships in order to be able to sign the Taft-Hartley affidavits. But the threat of the union in the 1940s and 1950s, as in the preceding decades, lay in the power to organize hardrock miners regardless of race or skill, not in an international Communist conspiracy.

One moving legacy of the postwar period was a film, *Salt of the Earth*, a cooperative production of blacklisted Hollywood filmmakers and Mine-Mill, based on the strike of Mine-Mill Local 890 against New Jersey Zinc in Bayard, New Mexico. Most of the actors were Mexican-American miners and their families whose stories powerfully linked the inseparable inequalities of race, class, and gender in hardrock mining.

Mine-Mill persisted throughout the 1950s and 1960s but lost ground to raids by other unions, particularly the United Steelworkers of America. Its support dwindled in the face of racist attacks, anti-communism, and new challenges from an internationally organized mining industry. Mine-Mill merged with the Steelworkers in 1967.

Labor historians have long debated the heritage of conflict in hardrock mining, locating its origins in frontier violence, the lack of a middle class, or the recklessness of an unstable and mobile workforce. Yet hardrock miners' strategies are more accurately located in the industrial conditions they faced and in histories of class-based cooperation. For most radicalism and reform were not opposed strategies. The most militant union leaders were married men who protected homes, families, and communities. Hardrock miners confronted conflict but wrote a heritage of industrial organizing and mutual protection and of an industrial landscape wrought from the metals they dug and refined. This heritage continues to be written from sources as complex and as rich as the changing workforces, work processes, and the ore-bearing rock itself.

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See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations; Cripple Creek Strikes; Industrial Workers of the World**

MITCH, WILLIAM A. (1881–1974) President, United Mine Workers of America

William A. Mitch served as president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in Alabama for more than three decades, leading the organization back from a crushing defeat in the years after World War I and building District 20, as the southernmost

branch of the union is known, into one of its most solid strongholds. In the process he helped transform Birmingham into a center for industrial unionism, fighting to establish the United Steelworkers of America in the city's iron and steel mills and speaking out forcefully for the rights of African-American workers. Though he is best remembered for his efforts in the South, Mitch's union career actually began in Indiana, where he rose to prominence as an activist in the miners' union, supporting nationalization of the nation's coal industry and eventually becoming a close ally of legendary UMWA president John L. Lewis.

The Indiana Years

Mitch was born in Nelsonville, Ohio, in 1881, and he accompanied his father into the coalmines as a boy. He eventually settled in Indiana, where miners elected him secretary-treasurer of District 11 in 1915. Like many miners Mitch held socialist sympathies, and he unsuccessfully ran for Congress from the fifth district in 1920 as a member of the Labor party of Indiana. During the campaign Mitch garnered national attention for his denunciation of American Federation of Labor (AFL) President Samuel Gompers and his policy of supporting the friends of organized labor and opposing its enemies. Instead of supporting either Democratic or Republican candidates, as Gompers advocated, Mitch believed that workers should form their own party and use it to advance their interests. That same year Mitch helped deliver Indiana to John L. Lewis in the UMWA presidential election, cementing a political relationship between the two men that would last the rest of their lives.

In 1921, Lewis appointed Mitch to the union's Nationalization Research Committee, where he served with John Brophy, president of UMWA District 2, and Christ Golden, leader of District 9. Lewis, a conservative on economic matters, never fully supported nationalizing the coal industry, and though the concept had much support within the UMWA ranks, the union president merely used the issue to strengthen his control over the union. He and his supporters criticized the committee as a tool of union outsiders—"a bunch of Greenwich Village reds" in the words of Lewis's handpicked editor of the union's newspaper—and the other members soon resigned. Mitch managed to survive the crisis, distancing himself from Brophy, who emerged as Lewis's main rival in the UMWA. The nationalization effort faded away.

By the middle of the 1920s, Mitch was firmly in Lewis's political camp in the UMWA, but the Indiana branch of the union began to suffer. An employer offensive and the chaotic economics of the coal industry in the 1920s caused political turmoil within the national UMWA, and in the Indiana district as well. Though Mitch enjoyed enough support to remain secretary-treasurer throughout the decade, miners in District 11 regularly turned other state leaders out of office. Indiana remained one of the few regions with a viable union presence during the Great Depression, but the number of employed miners dwindled from 18,000 to just 7,500 in 1931. Mitch's support for Lewis eventually became a liability. He worked tirelessly to limit the spread of a rebellion against Lewis that swept through the neighboring Illinois district in the late 1920s. In response the rebels worked hard to unseat Mitch as an Indiana UMWA official. Their efforts bore fruit in 1931, when Mitch was defeated for re-election as secretary treasurer of District 11. Adolph Germer, a leader among the dissidents, proclaimed Mitch's defeat a success for Lewis's opponents in the UMWA. If so it proved one of the few victories ever recorded by the anti-Lewis bloc within the union.

The defeat caused something of a crisis for Mitch, who, after 16 years as a union officer had only limited options for employment in an industry ravaged by the Depression and declining union membership. He briefly considered practicing law, having been admitted to the Indiana bar after completing college extension courses. Lewis however rarely forgot his allies, and Mitch eventually landed a post as a "special representative" with the UMWA.

Out of this defeat however, Mitch was reborn. In the summer of 1933, Lewis sent Mitch to Alabama to head up the efforts to re-establish District 20, which had been destroyed in the wake of a disastrous strike in 1920–1921. The ravages of the Great Depression—Birmingham once was described as the worst hit city in the country—and the programs of President Franklin Roosevelt had dramatically altered the balance of power in Alabama. The coal miners of the Birmingham district meanwhile were ready to bring their old union back, and they enlisted in the ranks of the miners' union by the thousands. In Alabama Mitch joined his old friend William Dalrymple, a UMWA organizer and later, William Raney, a former Indiana associate. By 1934, the miners' union represented 90% of the miners in the state, and Mitch found himself president of one of the strongest districts in the UMWA.

Organizing one of the most important industries in an anti-union state however was not without

challenges. Mitch and the UMWA had a difficult time dealing with the local affiliate of United States Steel Corporation, called the Tennessee, Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company (TCI). Though the union signed its first contract with TCI in 1934, it would not enjoy exclusive bargaining rights with the company until 1941. The UMWA's battles with the notorious Alabama Fuel and Iron Company (AFI), headed by the reactionary Charles DeBardeleben, often resulted in violence and on at least one occasion, the outright murder of a union activist. The AFI remained unorganized until it closed in the early 1950s.

Mitch has been described as very conservative in his methods of organization. While there is a degree of legitimacy to this argument, on the issue of race, the District 20 president often defied southern customs. In particular the UMWA organized both black and white miners into the same locals in Alabama and often flaunted segregation ordinances during local meetings as miners of both races participated. Though the union remained in the control of whites like Mitch at a time when most observers believed it had a black majority, the UMWA provided a forum from which African-Americans could improve their standard of living and even stake a claim to limited leadership positions in the union. Mitch undoubtedly exercised caution when he confronted the color line in Alabama, but even his critics on the left recognized his ability to rally support among African-Americans. He fought against the poll tax and spoke out often for the rights of black workers outside the workplace.

As president of the state AFL, called the Alabama State Federation of Labor (ASFL), Mitch attempted to encourage craft unions to organize African-Americans, with mixed results. A former ASFL lawyer accused him of practicing "what the Communists preach on Negro equality in the ranks of the United Mine Workers of America and in Organized Labor." Later as president of the state Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), called the Alabama State Industrial Union Council (ASIUC), he supported the efforts of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, a popular front group that sought to bring liberals and leftists together to campaign against the poll tax and other instruments of oppression against African-Americans. Mitch's views on race were complex, and he admitted to another union official "that I have always handled it with gloves on . . . and the Negroes have cooperated splendidly."

Mitch resigned as president of the ASFL after the AFL expelled industrial unionists from its ranks and became the first president of the ASIUC. Lewis

also tapped the District 20 president to head up the southern efforts of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC). Under his leadership the ranks of union members in the state swelled, and Alabama became a center of union activity in the South with large numbers of miners and factory workers opting for representation. Almost a quarter of the state's workers were unionized by the mid-1950s, a testament to his legacy.

When the UMWA and CIO split in 1942, Mitch resigned as head of the ASIUC. Mitch, who had often found himself the target of red-baiting attacks by industrialists and craft unionists, engaged in his own round at his final ASIUC convention. He denounced critics of Lewis at the event and branded the UMWA president's opponents as Communists. The miners' union left the state CIO a short time later. During World War II, Mitch led the UMWA in Alabama during bitter national walkouts in 1943 and 1945. He also helped establish the landmark health care and pension system the union negotiated with both the federal government and coal operators in the years after the war.

Later Career

But the decades after the war were exceedingly difficult for the aging District 20 president and the union in Alabama. The coal industry in Alabama suffered from declining markets, and the number of miners dropped dramatically from 21,975 miners in 1945 to 7,400 in 1960. Production plummeted from 18 million tons of coal to 12–13 million tons a year in the 1950s. The UMWA's influence in Alabama waned along with the declining fortunes of the industry.

Lewis retired as president of the national union in 1960, but Mitch, by this time an elderly man, continued as head of the Alabama branch for several years. New UMWA President W. A. "Tony" Boyle began to tighten his grip on District 20, appointing one of his supporters as secretary-treasurer of the Alabama organization. Mitch resigned as president in 1963 but continued to represent District 20 on the international executive board (IEB) until 1967, when he retired from that position. Tellingly Boyle replaced Mitch on the IEB with Albert Pass, one of his loyalists who was then also the secretary-treasurer from the union's District 19 in Tennessee. Pass would later be convicted along with Boyle and other UMWA officials of arranging the murder of union insurgent Joseph A. "Jock" Yablonski, his wife, and daughter in 1969.

Mitch died in a nursing home in Birmingham on July 12, 1974. He was remembered for his efforts to bring the UMWA back in Alabama as well as for his work with the steelworkers and the CIO. "His weight and influence were felt throughout the labor movement in Alabama," proclaimed Howard Strelvel of the steelworkers. Indeed Mitch had played a role in most of the major developments of the UMWA and the southern labor movement in the middle of the twentieth century, a time that saw workers in the South and the rest of the nation realize a standard of living they could not have imagined during the depths of the Great Depression. Near the end of his career, Mitch had been hailed as a "dyed in the wood Alabamian" and "a man of integrity and a born leader of men" by the state's largest newspaper. Sadly few outside of Alabama recognized Mitch's contributions to the labor movement in the region, including the UMWA, which devoted just four sentences to his passing.

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See also Lewis, John L; **United Mine Workers of America**

MITCHELL, H. L. (“MITCH”) (1906–1989) Socialist Labor Activist

Harry Leland Mitchell devoted his life to organizing southern agricultural workers, a group often ignored by the mainstream labor movement and denied the protections of national labor law. Cofounder of the interracial Southern Tenant Farmers’ Union (STFU) in the 1930s, Mitchell can be considered a product of what historian James Green has called grass-roots socialism. The pre-World War I Socialist party had an especially strong presence in Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas, a tradition of agrarian radicalism rekindled by Mitchell and his fellow STFU organizers during the years of the Great Depression.

Born in Halls, Tennessee, in 1906, Mitchell spent his formative years in the small-town South during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Even then west Tennessee, the hinterland of Memphis, remained an area rooted in the plantation economy, cotton production, and the racial legacy of slavery. As a boy of 11, Mitchell witnessed a frenzied mob of 500 whites applaud the lynching of a black man in front of the courthouse in nearby Dyersburg, Tennessee. As a young man, Mitchell worked as a newspaper boy, a sharecropper, a deliveryman, and even a bootlegger.

His early experiences with hard work and witnessing racial injustice proved fertile ground for the ideas of the American Socialist party, which Mitchell first encountered in Eugene V. Debs’s 1920 presidential campaign. Largely denied the opportunity of formal schooling, Mitchell educated himself with the *Little Blue Books* published by E. Haldeman-Julius, editor of the Girard, Kansas, socialist mass-circulation newspaper, *Appeal to Reason*.

In 1927, Mitchell moved across the Mississippi River to Tyronza, a small town in the Arkansas delta, to join his father, Jim, who worked there as a barber. At first Mitchell tried his hand at growing

cotton but soon realizing that “the landlord got one bale, and the boll weevil the other,” he established a dry cleaning business and talked socialism to anyone who would listen.

By 1932, he and one of his local converts, gas station owner Clay East (their adjacent businesses in the center of town were known by community wits as Red Square), had chartered a Tyronza local of the Socialist party and invited Norman Thomas to the delta to address the area’s impoverished tenants and sharecroppers. While there Thomas conducted research for the Socialists’ pamphlet on cotton tenancy, *The Plight of the Sharecropper* (1934), which helped expose the planters’ misappropriation of Agricultural Administration Act (AAA) payments owed to sharecroppers under the New Deal.

Socialism was not entirely out of place in rural Arkansas in the 1930s. Mitchell, East, and Christian Socialist Howard Kester, who joined them in 1935, easily tapped into the dormant sentiments of southwestern agrarian radicalism, dating back to the Populists of the 1890s. From 1900–1920, the socialism of Debs had fired the imagination and expressed the aspirations of workers and farmers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. Radical interracial unions, including the Industrial Workers of the World—affiliated Brotherhood of Timber Workers, had a presence in the region. By the 1930s, small farmers and migratory workers who had sought economic opportunity in this region had sunk into the status of dependent proletarians and peasants. In response to this transformation, Socialists like Mitchell revived the radical tradition as rural working people cast around for a political response to the depression. The STFU became their vehicle.

Mitchell is best known for his work with the STFU, first organized in Tyronza in 1934. Founded by a handful of black and white sharecroppers, the STFU initially sought to secure a fair share of government AAA payments for those who worked the land and to protect them from unjust evictions. Part agricultural labor union able to conduct strikes, part advocacy and lobbying organization, this interracial movement of the poor pioneered many of the tactics that would come to characterize civil rights and labor movements in the rural South in future generations. Despite his own devout atheism, Mitchell joined forces with Christian Socialists like Kester and Ward Rogers, and local African-American preachers like E. B. McKinney. The union also embraced the principle of nonviolence but more out of tactical necessity than fundamental principle. Finally Mitchell recognized that the powerless and isolated sharecroppers of the delta would have to call on more established and well-connected organizations

in order to succeed. Thus he readily forged alliances with friends in New Deal agencies, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), liberal churches, backers of farm cooperatives, and by 1937, the industrial labor movement in the nascent Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The STFU's brief alliance with the CIO proved ill-fated however, in part because of the enmity between Mitchell and the Communist party leadership of the CIO agricultural workers union, UCAPAWA. During World War II many sharecroppers left the land to work in industry, further weakening the STFU. In the aftermath of the war, Mitchell took the STFU, now renamed the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU), into the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The NFLU retained its interracial leadership structure at a time when many AFL unions remained segregated or excluded blacks altogether.

As president of the NFLU from 1948–1960, Mitchell worked in Washington D.C., where he and his second wife, Dorothy Dowe, lobbied on behalf of farm workers' national interests and remained part of an active network of southerners attempting to liberalize their home region. Although unable to secure extension of NLRB coverage to agricultural laborers, Mitchell did help them win rights to social security benefits. Under Mitchell's guidance, the NFLU also spearheaded organizing drives in the late 1940s and early 1950s among fruit pickers in California's central valley and strawberry and sugarcane workers in Louisiana. Mitchell always claimed that the persistent efforts of the NFLU to turn organized labor's attention to the plight of agricultural workers helped pave the way for Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers in the 1960s.

During the late 1960s, Mitchell himself made efforts to bring student activists from the Southern Students' Organizing Committee together with trade union organizers in the sugarcane fields of Louisiana. In the last decades of his life, retired from organizing campaigns, Mitch continued to reach out to the younger generation. Traveling around the country to college campuses, he regaled students with the colorful history of union organizing among the dispossessed and made sure numerous libraries acquired the micro-filmed collection of the STFU's records. Through these activities Mitchell kept alive the memories of social activism that would help inspire a new cohort of students, scholars, trade unionists, and civil rights workers intent on bringing interracial social justice to the South.

ALEX LICHTENSTEIN

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See also Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen; Chávez, César Estrada; Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO); Industrial Workers of the World; Southern Tenant Farmers' Union; United Farm Workers of America

MITCHELL, JOHN (1870–1919) President, United Mine Workers of America

Along with Samuel Gompers and Eugene Debs, John Mitchell ranks as one of the most influential figures in the U.S. labor movement during the period from the late 1890s to World War I. It was during the early years of his tenure as president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), a position he held from 1898 to 1908, that the industrial union of coal miners, founded in 1890, emerged from years of depression and defeat to become the largest union in the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and a source of organized labor's new power during the Progressive Era.

After labor's debacles during the crisis-ridden 1890s, economic recovery and the political climate of the late 1890s brought about favorable times for the resurgence of the labor movement. The successful national strike that the UMWA launched in 1897, when it had less than 10,000 members, proved to be a turning point in its fortunes. Before the strike Mitchell had been relatively unknown, but his success in organizing southern Illinois miners during the conflict brought him attention and led to his election to the union's vice-presidency. The watershed strike resulted in the re-establishment of the joint-conference system, a system involving formal meetings and direct negotiations between the miners and the operators for the purpose of securing industrial peace. The unprecedented interstate agreement that followed in 1898 brought bituminous miners higher wages and the 8-hour day and stabilized the soft coal industry in the four key states that comprised the important central competitive field of production. Mitchell was a beneficiary of these events, and his meteoric rise to a position of power coincided with the UMWA's growth, newfound stability, and expanding influence.

Under his leadership the UMWA then went on to win prestigious victories in the hard-coal region during the strikes of 1900 and 1902, when the anthracite miners, mine workers, and breaker boys secured higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions. The victories won him the fierce loyalty of hard-coal miners, established the union in the district, and earned him widespread acclaim throughout the nation. Mitchell was lauded for his conservative rhetoric, his ability to unify the disparate nationalities and avoid serious violence, his ambitious efforts to garner broad public support, and his skill in mustering assistance from the nation's power brokers, including Senator Mark Hanna, President Theodore Roosevelt, and the financier J. P. Morgan, to win settlements from the virulently anti-union monopolistic coal-carrying railroads. Although the 1902 strikers did not achieve their most important demand—union recognition—they established a lasting tradition and proclaimed October 29, 1902, as the first Mitchell Day to honor the man and the union's achievements. The strikes had catapulted Mitchell into national prominence and increased middle-class support for the notion that conservative trade unions might be legitimate. By the end of 1902, the UMWA had over 300,000 members, the trade union movement was resurgent, and Mitchell was at the peak of his influence.

The UMWA president's greatest successes occurred during the general prosperity from 1898 to 1904, a time when he was as responsible as AFL President Gompers for eschewing radicalism and actively advocating a nonradical, pure-and-simple unionism course for the labor movement, a policy that many, then and since, have contested. Like Gompers, Mitchell accepted many of the basic tenets of capitalism and saw no irreconcilable conflict between capital and labor. In his view many employers were progressive, and contracts were sacred. He became an ardent champion of conservative trade unions and trade agreements with limited purposes. It was one thing for workers to seek to raise wages, end child labor, or eliminate the most exploitative working conditions, but it was something else for them to seek workers' control or challenge existing business prerogatives. In his speeches and writings, he ridiculed socialism and the radical political and economic alternatives of his day as unachievable dreams. Ultimately the complex and contradictory labor leader placed his faith for a solution to the labor problem more in the hands of prominent capitalists and powerful politicians than he did in the working classes. For such reasons he, like Gompers, readily joined the nation's power brokers and became a member (from 1899 to 1911) of the

National Civic Federation (NCF), a controversial organization of capitalists, labor leaders, and the general public that sought to avert socialism in the United States by promoting moderate reforms, business recognition of conservative trade unions, and acceptance of collective bargaining. The NCF and its goals were never accepted by the major coal corporations, the National Association of Manufacturers, or many other businesses.

Meanwhile the economic downturn that occurred in 1904 set the stage for Mitchell's undoing and revealed the shortcomings of his policies. The sentiment for radical political and economic alternatives was growing throughout the country. Union miners reluctantly accepted his decision to approve the operators' demands for a wage cut in 1904, but the failure of his 1906 strike policy to offset union defeat or even retain the much-valued interstate joint-conference system was decisive. Radicals and rivals combined forces against him, and he resigned the union's presidency in 1908. His questionable dealings with powerful class enemies, his ongoing participation in the business-dominated NCF, plus various shady business transactions had aroused serious conflict-of-interest issues and opposition. In 1911, a disgruntled UMWA convention forced the ousted leader to choose between membership in the UMWA or the NCF; he kept his union membership but retained his faith in the NCF and in conservative unionism. In the context of the changed times and the growth of radical movements, he became increasingly irrelevant to the labor movement.

Mitchell has been described as a complex man whose loyalties were divided, a miners' Moses, a failed labor bureaucrat, and the personification of all that is good and bad in the American labor movement. Perhaps the roots of his contradictory impulses lay in his early years. The son of an Irish immigrant coal miner, born in Braidwood, Illinois, in 1870, he had experienced a childhood fraught with family tragedy and extreme poverty. The difficult struggle for survival that he and working-class families endured in the coalfields left a deep and lasting imprint on him. That struggle prompted him to join the Knights of Labor in 1885, and then the United Mine Workers in 1890, and to become a fervent lifelong advocate of trade unions and trade agreements; but it also fostered his personal desire to escape the status of a permanent wage earner. When he died, largely unheralded, in 1919, he left a personal fortune worth nearly \$350,000. That money did not come from his employment on the New York Workers' Compensation Commission or the Industrial Commission of New York but from the dubious

investments he had made in notoriously anti-union corporations.

In many ways Mitchell was a tragic figure who embodied the greater tragedy of an American labor movement that once militantly challenged the capitalist system but eventually succumbed to the temptations of “business unionism.” Nonetheless to this day, union miners celebrate Mitchell Day to commemorate the historic contributions he made to the labor movement in 1900 and 1902 and to inspire contemporary generations to continue the broader struggle for workers’ rights.

MILDRED ALLEN BEIK

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See also American Federation of Labor; Anthracite Coal Strike (1902); Arbitration; Collective Bargaining; Debs, Eugene V.; Gompers v. Buck’s Stove and Range Co.; Gompers, Samuel; Hitchman Coal & Coke v. Mitchell (1916); Mining, Coal; National Civic Federation; Socialist Party of America; United Mine Workers of America

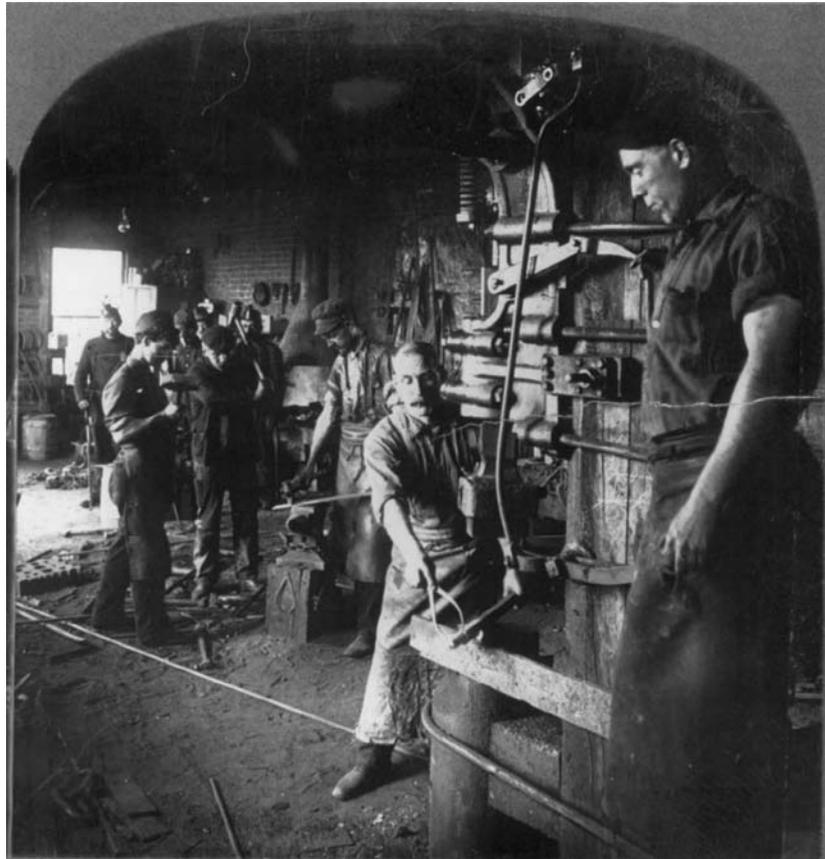
MOLLY MAGUIRES

Twenty young Irishmen were hanged in the anthracite region of northeastern Pennsylvania in the late 1870s, and 20 more were sent to prison, convicted of a series of killings stretching back to the Civil War. They belonged to an ethnic fraternal society called the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) and were convicted on the evidence of a Pinkerton detective and labor spy, James McParlan, who had infiltrated their organization. Because they left us virtually no evidence of their own, almost everything we know about the Molly Maguires was recorded by their enemies. At the showcase trials of the 1870s, the prosecution offered no plausible explanation of motive and nor it seems was one expected—for the explanation of Irish depravity was simply that the Irish were depraved by nature.

This argument, while perfectly circular, was surprisingly powerful in the nineteenth-century United States, and it laid the groundwork for a powerful and enduring myth. Nobody did more to articulate that myth than Allan Pinkerton, founder of the famous detective agency, whose ghost-written history *The Molly Maguires and the Detectives*, published in 1877 as the trials and executions were proceeding, celebrated McParlan’s triumph over Irish barbarity. Pinkerton’s highly pejorative account laid down a narrative line that would remain dominant for at least the next two generations, providing a staple plot for American dime-novel fiction and even for a Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Valley of Fear* (1914).

In certain Irish-American and labor circles meanwhile, a counternarrative flourished based on a notion of the Molly Maguires as innocent victims of oppression, whether economic, religious, or ethnic. This position however too often turned the dominant mythology on its head, retaining the central explanatory category of evil but transferring it from Irish workers to their nativist or capitalist enemies. Evil as a timeless attribute of individual or group character is not a useful category of historical analysis. The popular countermyth, while it was undoubtedly consoling and empowering, was ultimately as implausible as the pernicious narrative it arose to encounter. To state the matter bluntly, there were Molly Maguires in Pennsylvania, and they killed people.

The historian’s task is to explain why they did so. Clearly what is needed is an explanation that breaks free of the two extremes of interpretation—the Irish simply as savages or the Irish simply as scapegoats. Only in the 1930s did the task of historical analysis get underway when Anthony Birba (rather dogmatically) and J. Walter Coleman (with greater subtlety) pointed out what a handful of radical dissenting



Pneumatic steam hammer and forges, blacksmith shop at mines, Scranton, Pa. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-72474].

voices in the 1870s had tried in vain to explain: The Molly Maguires were one element in a concerted struggle between labor and capital for control of the lower anthracite region of Pennsylvania, and their story made no sense outside that context. If labor history provides one essential context for understanding the Molly Maguires, immigration history provides the other. Any account of the subject today must take as its starting point a precept widely accepted by American historians but difficult to put into practice, that is, we cannot make proper sense of the lives of immigrant workers in the United States without a detailed knowledge of the lands from which they came.

Irish Origins

To make sense of the Molly Maguires then we must begin with Irish history. In Ireland secret societies, generically known as Whiteboys and Ribbonmen had been waging a losing struggle against land enclosures, tithes, and rack renting since the 1760s, a

struggle that featured threatening letters (or “coffin notices”), beatings, burnings, and assassinations. The Irish Molly Maguires, who emerged toward the end of the Great Famine (1845–1851), were so-named because their members (invariably young men) disguised themselves in women’s clothing, used powder or burnt cork on their faces, and pledged their allegiance to a mythical woman who symbolized their struggle against injustice. Ireland in the first-half of the nineteenth century was notorious for its tradition of clandestine rural violence, of which the Molly Maguires were one of the last manifestations. In north-central Ireland, where many of the men involved in the Pennsylvania episode originated, the terms Molly Maguires, Ribbonmen, and Ancient Order of Hibernians were sometimes used interchangeably. Immigrant workers carried some of their traditions with them to the United States, and from the 1830s onward, faction fighters and Ribbonmen made their presence known on the public works, canals, and railroads of the United States, where Irish manual labor was in heavy demand. The Molly Maguires of Pennsylvania represented the most concerted, dramatic, and tragic

transatlantic outgrowth of this rural Irish tradition in the industrial United States.

According to the interpretation laid down in the 1870s, the Molly Maguires were a conspiratorial organization imported direct from the Irish countryside. There is however no evidence at all that anyone in Ireland conspired to export any such organization nor that any of the individuals convicted in Pennsylvania were involved in violent activities before they left Ireland. But they did arrive in the United States with particular forms of cultural memory and distinctive traditions of social protest; faced with appalling conditions in the mines of Pennsylvania, they responded by deploying a specific form of collective violence, rooted in Irish rural history, that featured the familiar tactics of coffin notices, beatings, sabotage, and assassinations. The Pennsylvania Molly Maguires do not appear to have worn women's clothing, but some of them reportedly "blacked up" for disguise. Like their Irish counterparts, they were led by tavern keepers, and they called on strangers from neighboring lodges to carry out beatings and killings, pledging to return the favor at a later date. There is no doubt then that the American Molly Maguires existed even if they never assumed the diabolical form depicted by contemporaries. They were not a figment of the conspiratorial imagination, whether nativist or capitalist; indeed if Irish immigrant workers had not been engaged in collective violence of some sort, the mythology created about them could never have carried the persuasive power it so evidently did.

But what was the institutional reality behind the exaggerated descriptions of contemporary observers? According to the prosecuting attorneys, the term Molly Maguires was just another name for the AOH, an assertion that made the Mollies appear like part of a vast national and international conspiratorial network. An otherwise peaceful Catholic fraternal society, the AOH had branches in Irish settlements across the United States as well as in Ireland, England, and Scotland. The local lodges in the hard-coal region of Pennsylvania, according to the prosecuting attorneys, acted as a cover for a group of depraved Irish killers. Some AOH lodges in Pennsylvania were undoubtedly used for violent purposes; yet that still begs the question of why the Molly Maguires operating within those lodges acted as they did and why contemporaries were so concerned about the threat they posed.

Labor Struggles

If the inherent depravity of Irish workers can no longer serve as an answer to this question, where do

the real answers lie? They are to be found neither in national character nor in individual pathology, but instead in the detailed history of labor and capital in Pennsylvania's lower anthracite region during the era of Civil War and Reconstruction.

There were two quite distinct, and only tenuously connected, waves of Molly Maguire activity in Pennsylvania, the first in the 1860s and the second in the 1870s. The first wave, which included six of the 16 assassinations, occurred during and directly after the Civil War. At the heart of this violence was a combination of resistance to the military draft with some form of rudimentary labor organizing by a mysterious group of mine workers, known variously as the Buckshots, the Committee, and the Molly Maguires. Nobody was convicted of any crimes in the 1860s; only during the trials of the following decade was the first wave of violence retrospectively traced to individual members of the AOH and hence to an organized conspiracy by the Molly Maguires. The violence abated after 1868, mainly because of the formation of a powerful new trade union, the Workingmen's Benevolent Association (WBA), which united Irish, British, and American workers across lines of ethnicity and skill. At its height in the early 1870s, the WBA enlisted some 30,000 members. Its rise and fall neatly divides the first wave of Molly Maguire violence from the second and much better known outbreak that followed the destruction of the union in the summer of 1875.

In the late 1860s and 1870s, the labor movement of the anthracite region took two distinct but overlapping forms: A powerful and inclusive trade union movement open to all mine workers regardless of ethnicity or skill; and a shadowy, sporadic, and exclusively Irish group, manned by unskilled laborers, led by tavern keepers, practicing violence, and known as the Molly Maguires. Favoring collective-bargaining, strikes, moral force, and third-party politics, the leaders of the WBA publicly condemned violence by labor as both inherently wrong and tactically counterproductive, singling out the Molly Maguires for repeated criticism. Yet Franklin B. Gowen, the president of the Reading Railroad, determined to secure his monopolistic goals, repeatedly insisted that the Molly Maguires were merely the terrorist arm of the union movement, whose claims to nonviolence were but a smoke screen. By collapsing the distinction between the two forms of labor organization, Gowen eventually succeeded in destroying the power of both.

Matters moved to their tragic climax after October 1873, when Gowen hired Pinkerton to gather information against both arms of the labor movement, and Pinkerton dispatched James McParlan to the

anthracite region. After infiltrating the inner circle of the local AOH with remarkable ease, McParlan spent 2.5 years working undercover among the mineworkers before fleeing for Philadelphia in March 1876 when his cover was blown. Several other Pinkerton agents infiltrated the WBA. In June 1875, after a desperate 6-month struggle against Gowen and his railroad (the legendary Long Strike), the WBA went down to its final defeat. In the disarray that followed, the Molly Maguires stepped up their activities, with the last six assassinations attributed to them taking place during that summer alone. In January 1876, the arrests began, and in the spring and summer, the famous trials got underway. With the labor movement in its various forms now utterly defeated, Gowen completed his conquest of the local economy.

The Trials and Executions

It was during the trials and executions that the myth of the Molly Maguires was perfected. The trials, conducted in the midst of enormously hostile national publicity, were in several respects a travesty of justice. The defendants had been arrested by the private police force of Gowen's private Coal & Iron police, acting in close cooperation with the Pinkertons. They were convicted on the evidence of an undercover detective whom the defense attorneys accused (albeit somewhat half-heartedly) of being an agent provocateur, supplemented by the confessions of a series of informers who turned state's evidence to save their necks. Irish Catholics were excluded from the juries. Most of the prosecuting attorneys worked for railroads and mining companies. Remarkably Gowen himself appeared as the star prosecutor at several trials, and his florid courtroom speeches were rushed into print as popular pamphlets. Mere membership in the AOH was presented as de facto membership in the Molly Maguires, which in turn was presented as evidence of guilt. Even by nineteenth-century standards, the arrests and trials were flagrant in their abuse of judicial procedure and their flaunting of corporate power.

The first 10 Molly Maguires were hanged on a single day, June 21, 1877, known to the people of the anthracite region ever since as Black Thursday or the Day of the Rope. Six men were hanged in Pottsville that day and four in the neighboring town of Mauch Chunk (now called Jim Thorpe), in a spectacle carefully choreographed to assert the outraged majesty of the law and the awesome might of

corporate capital. The Reading Railroad's Coal & Iron police patrolled the streets and guarded the jails; special trains were added to transport the coffins. Ten more men would die before the hanging was done. Some of those executed were no doubt guilty as charged; most of them were involved in some sort of Molly Maguire violence even if they had not committed the actual crimes of which they were convicted; all had fought for justice in their own way. Ultimately the Molly Maguires had no place in the industrial United States, and their rural-based tradition of direct, retributive justice died with them on the scaffold. Although the coalmines of Pennsylvania would see plenty of violence in years to come, the Molly Maguires were the last of their line.

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See also **Irish**

MOONEY, TOM (1892–1942) Socialist Party Activist

Thomas Mooney was born in 1892 to Bernard and Mary Mooney, Irish immigrants in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Mooney's father was a miner and an organizer for the Knights of Labor, and Tom grew up in an atmosphere pervaded with labor violence. Tom became an apprentice foundryman at the Dean Steam Pump Company when he was 14, and when he was 20, he joined the International Molders' Union. In 1907, Tom went on a trip to Europe that he won by selling subscriptions to a socialist magazine; there he was converted to socialism. When he returned to the United States, he moved west to Stockton, California, where he joined the Socialist party. Along with his wife Rena, Tom began to sell socialist literature and

in the process, came to the attention of Eugene Debs, who enlisted Mooney in his campaign. As Mooney's commitment to socialism deepened, he also became an advocate of industrial sabotage and direct action.

After 1912, Tom and Rena moved to San Francisco where they became involved in organizing the workers at the Pacific Gas & Electric Company. Along with his partner, Warren Billings, Mooney began to steal explosives from rock quarries and work sites and use them to bring down electrical transmission towers in an attempt to force the utility's management to deal with the union. Mooney managed to win acquittal when accused by company detectives of involvement in the dynamiting. Billings however served time for transporting dynamite on a passenger train.

On 22 July 1916, a bomb exploded during the San Francisco Preparedness Day Parade, killing 10 and injuring 40 others. The bomb went off during a bitter organizing drive at the Market Street Railway, part of the San Francisco streetcar system. Less than a month before, three transmission towers providing power to the streetcars were dynamited, and Mooney and Billings were the prime suspects. When the Preparedness Day bomb went off, Mooney and Billings were quickly apprehended along with a number of their associates.

Mooney's wife and associates were eventually acquitted, but Tom and Billings were found guilty of setting the bomb. It quickly became apparent however that most if not all of the testimony used against Mooney and Billings in the trial had been perjured. Moreover it appeared that the District Attorney Charles Fickert and Mooney's prosecutor, Eddie Cunha, had bribed and coached witnesses to place Mooney and Billings at the scene of the crime. Evidence that would have provided an alibi for Mooney, including a photograph placing Mooney blocks away from the blast at the time of the explosion, mysteriously disappeared. All in all the district attorney's office had engaged in a massive frame-up against Mooney and Billings.

While the initial trial did not spark much interest or concern in the American labor movement, once it was revealed that Mooney and Billings were the victims of a frame-up, the case became an international cause. With World War I still in full swing, the Germans used pro-Mooney propaganda in an attempt to influence European and American workingmen against the U.S. war effort. President Woodrow Wilson became involved in the case, intervening on behalf of Mooney after a group of anarchists protested in front of an American embassy in Russia. None of this was terribly successful however. Governor William Stephens of California refused to pardon Mooney,

and the California Supreme Court remained staunchly hostile to appeals by the two prisoners. When the Wickersham Commission, a federal commission set up by President Wilson to investigate Mooney's guilt, concluded that the case against Mooney and Billings was a politically motivated frame-up, the state government took up the mantle of State's Rights and resisted calls for new trials or pardons.

Meanwhile the Mooney-Billings defense committees were hampered by political sectarianism and personal conflicts. The original head of the defense committees, Bob Minor, was forced out as a result of factional conflicts within the International Workers' Defense League. Ed Nolan, who succeeded Minor, left after strategic disagreements with Mooney. Tom's wife, Rena, then succeeded as the head of the defense committees. Unfortunately Rena began an affair with another Mooney defense worker, which ruined her relationship with her husband. While Mooney was unable to publicly break with his wife for fear that it would hurt his image, the betrayal was a severe blow to the defense committees. Eventually Rena's sister, Belle Hammerberg, took over as head of the defense. Together Mooney and Hammerberg managed to convince the judge at his original trial and all nine of the jurors still alive to publicly state that they believed Tom Mooney to be innocent. Once again however in 1930, the California Supreme Court refused to grant Mooney or Billings a pardon.

Mooney's defense was dealt another major blow when Billings, in an attempt to win parole from prison, revealed the truth about his and Mooney's involvement with industrial sabotage. Billings admitted that at the time when the Preparedness Day bomb went off, he was squirting varnish remover on high-priced automobiles in an attempt to coerce local repair shops (who were bound by a 1-year guarantee to fix paint jobs on certain brands of cars) to deal with the Machinists' Union. Even worse for Mooney, Billings admitted to working as a spy and saboteur for a number of different unions. Billings even named Mooney and other high-ranking figures in the labor movement as being involved in these plots. Once again however Billings was denied a pardon or parole.

Mooney and Billings were eventually released from prison but not until 1939. Mooney was pardoned at the time of his release, but Billings was not pardoned until 1961. The Depression, along with such activists as Upton Sinclair, had done much to change the tone of California politics. When State Senator and Socialist Culbert Olson was elected governor, it was clear that both men would soon be pardoned. Billings emerged from prison repentant. One of the top chess

players in the country, Billings eventually became a watchmaker and served as vice-president of the Watchmakers' Union. Mooney however was rendered bedridden soon after his release and died on 6 March 1942.

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See also **Socialist Party of America**

MORGAN, ELIZABETH CHAMBERS (JUNE 16, 1850–FEBRUARY 11, 1944) Women's Labor Organizer

Elizabeth Morgan was a pioneering women's labor organizer, radical reformer, and advocate for working children. She was among the first women who publicly illuminated the serious hardship working women and children suffered in manufacturing industries, and she was one of the leading female activists to use political action in efforts to better the situation of working women and children. An avowed Socialist, through legislation and organization, Morgan attempted to protect and promote wage earners who suffered from what she believed were the evils of capitalism.

Morgan's experiences as a laborer drove her work as an organizer. She began working in a factory in Birmingham, England, when she was 11 years old. When she was 17, she married machinist Thomas Morgan; together they were able only barely to get by economically. In 1869, the couple immigrated to Chicago, where they had two children. Although they hoped to find a better life in Chicago, they were instead confronted with similarly harsh working conditions. The Morgans became staunch Socialists and both began careers as labor activists.

Morgan's first organizing efforts produced fleeting results. During the 1873 depression, she helped establish a cooperative society, the Sovereigns of Industry, which lasted only a short while. In 1881, Morgan was one of the founders of a women's labor union, Local Assembly 1789, which affiliated with the Knights of Labor. The union advocated for wages for women that were equal to men's, restrictions on child labor, and suffrage for women and African-Americans. By the

end of the decade however, it fell apart over political and ideological differences among its members.

In 1888, Morgan helped found a much stronger organization, the Illinois Ladies' Federal Labor Union No. 2703 (LFLU). The LFLU affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly (CTLA) as one of the few female labor unions in either organization. Morgan served as the LFLU delegate to the CTLA. Its membership included wage-working women from several different trades and middle-class reformers. Its mission was to protect laboring women and children from abusive employers through investigation, legislation, enforcement of laws, and organization. Toward this aim the LFLU organized 23 local craft unions for women, all affiliated with the AFL.

The work of the LFLU illuminated the need for an additional organization that would focus on reforming the social conditions that negatively affected most laboring women and children. Within months of its founding, Morgan and several other LFLU members, together with other female Socialists, union agitators, and settlement workers in Chicago, formed the Illinois Woman's Alliance (IWA). During its 6-year existence, the IWA fought for the elimination of sweatshops, compulsory education for children, and anti-child labor laws and worked to provide immediate relief for the poor through clothing drives and campaigns for public baths.

In the early 1890s, Morgan was a force in the antisweatshop campaigns in Chicago. In 1891, she investigated the working conditions in the city's garment industry for the CTLA and reported on the existence of sweating practices. She explained that women and children were hired to sew pieces of clothing for substandard pay and were required to complete the work either in their tenement or in overcrowded shops without ventilation for 10–14 hours a day, 6 days a week. Morgan's report demanded enforcement of the child labor laws and sanitation inspections of the shops.

In 1892, Morgan participated in additional local and national investigations of the sweating system. As a member of the IWA Committee on Child Labor, Morgan reported on the harsh labor conditions in a number of new sweatshops in Chicago. This and other reports prompted Congress to conduct its own investigation. Morgan was among those who testified and assisted in an investigation led by Florence Kelley and sponsored by the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics. Their report citing gross abuses prompted the state legislature to conduct its own investigation.

The Illinois legislature finally took action in 1893. Based on its own investigation of factory work

conditions, conducted by a committee that included Morgan and Kelley, the general assembly passed the Factory and Workshop Inspection Act. It established health standards for shops, set the minimum mandatory age to work in manufactories at 14, and limited the amount women could work to 8 hours a day, six days a week. Businessmen who opposed the act formed the Illinois Manufacturers' Association to challenge it. In 1895, the Illinois Supreme Court overturned the 8-hour day provision of the act.

In 1894, debates among IAW members over strategy caused divisions within the organization to intensify. Morgan and other socialist members of the alliance called for strikes and political agitations to secure their aims. Many of the IWA's middle-class members advocated less confrontational and more conventional means to effect labor reforms. Morgan left the organization when the IWA adopted the more conservative approach. Months later the differences resulted in the demise of the alliance.

Morgan's call for strikes and political action to support laboring women received a slightly better reception at the AFL. At its 1894 convention, the AFL approved Morgan's resolutions demanding the passage and enforcement of compulsory education laws, an 8-hour day for women and children, and abolition of the sweating system. The AFL's ambivalence toward women laborers however was reflected in its treatment of Morgan. Morgan's few supporters within the AFL nominated her for the office of first vice-president, the highest office a woman had sought within the federation. Despite her record of service, she resoundingly lost the election.

Morgan finished her career by assisting her husband in his new law practice, defending wage earners. When her final attempt to establish an organization of wage-earning women failed in 1894, she began to study law with her husband. Though she never sought her law license, Morgan spent 17 years providing legal assistance to workingmen and women.

Morgan retired in 1912 after almost 40 years of advocacy for laboring women and children. She was a leader who used radical strategies to expose publicly and alter politically the abuses laborers suffered in the industrial capitalist system. She was also one of the critical actors who attempted to build cross-class alliances among women to further the cause.

GWEN HOERR JORDAN

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See also **Knights of Labor; Morgan, Thomas J.; Sovereigns of Industry**

MORGAN, THOMAS J. (OCTOBER 27, 1847–DECEMBER 10, 1912) Socialist Trade Unionist

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the name Thomas J. Morgan became synonymous with the socialist movement in Chicago. Egotistical and combative, Morgan had a genius for organizing. He voiced the sentiments of the working class with personal knowledge, deep feeling, and stinging sarcasm. Morgan held a number of leadership posts and exuded enormous energy in his committee work, his editorial writing, and his fiery speeches. He possessed an uncanny gift for drafting resolutions. While holding fast to socialist principles, Morgan embraced immediate social reforms and sought short-term political alliances with progressive labor and farmer elements.

From Birmingham to Chicago

Born on October 27, 1847, in Birmingham, England, of English and Welsh parentage, Morgan was one of nine children. He began work alongside his poverty-stricken, nail-making parents at age nine. He obtained a rudimentary formal education in parochial and Sunday schools and later studied mechanical drawing in night school.

Morgan's father joined the Chartists, a political movement of reformers who would make Parliament

more democratic and responsive to the needs of workers. Young Morgan began reading Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and attending political mass meetings of workers. He joined the Brass Workers' Society in 1864 and 3 years later helped to organize a small cooperative grocery store.

He married Elizabeth Chambers Morgan on January 26, 1868. Born in 1850, Elizabeth came from a poor factory-operatives family of 10 children. Feeling trapped by the injustices of a society based on privilege and profits, the newlyweds decided to emigrate, seeking freedom and opportunity in the United States. Thomas Morgan arrived in Chicago on May 12, 1869, with 12 dollars in his pocket. He found work as a machinist and brass finisher, employed for most of his wage-earning career at the Illinois Central Railroad's Car Works.

Radical Political Activist

Morgan's political activities took him from a brief flirtation with the Republican party to independent labor and socialist political action. The turning point came with the onset of the national depression of 1873, when he endured 15 bitter weeks of unemployment. Disgusted by the major political parties' inaction and galvanized by the hard times, he marched with other jobless workers demanding the city provide direct relief and work projects. His experiences with labor activism brought him into contact with socialist ideas. Morgan's full commitment to socialism came after a Chicago address by P. J. McGuire in 1876.

During the nationwide railway strikes of 1877, he walked off his job at the Illinois Central railroad. Before the imposition of overwhelming force broke the Chicago general strike, he urged strikers to remain nonviolent as they pressed their wage and hour demands. He soon became a prominent figure in the Workingmen's party and its successor, the Socialist Labor party (SLP). In 1878, thanks in part to Morgan's leadership, the SLP elected Chicago's first socialist alderman as well as four members of the Illinois legislature and added three aldermanic posts in 1879. Despite Morgan's call for unity, friction between the SLP's political and trade union factions sapped the party's strength.

Following two local incidents that had a national impact, Morgan played the leading role in founding a new labor party. On May 3, 1886, strikers at the McCormick Harvester Works clashed with scabs and police, and the next day a bomb broke up a peaceful

protest meeting at Haymarket Square. Working with other labor leaders, Morgan channeled worker discontent into the United Labor party (ULP). Operating as a coalition of trade unions, the ULP became Chicago's most successful workers' party, winning eight seats in the state legislature and one aldermanic post. After 2 years however the labor party disappeared, a victim of factionalism, red-baiting, and the lure of the major parties.

Morgan also made common cause with money and agrarian reformers. In 1880, he supported the Greenback-Labor party and in 1894 joined Henry Demarest Lloyd in backing a labor-Populist alliance. His political action brought some notable legislative victories. Morgan authored Chicago's first factory inspection statute and assisted his wife in securing passage of similar legislation at the state level. He successfully spearheaded the long-standing labor demand for the establishment of an Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Trade Unionist and Labor Lawyer

As a militant trade unionist, Morgan left his imprint on several labor bodies. His affiliations included the Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union, the Knights of Labor, the Chicago Metal Workers' Union, and the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. He helped organize the Chicago Trade and Labor Assembly and the International Machinists' Union.

At the 1890 convention of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), Morgan won approval of the first women's suffrage resolution in the federation's history, but the delegates refused to accept direct representation of the SLP. After contentious debate the 1892-1894 conventions turned down Morgan's socialist initiatives to endorse independent political action and collective ownership of all means of production and distribution. Morgan received only scant support in his quest for two AFL offices, president and second vice-president.

With the outbreak of the 1893 depression, Morgan quit his job at the Illinois Central, enrolled in the Chicago College of Law and was admitted to the bar in 1895. He saw the law profession as an opportunity to contend for both workers' rights and public ownership. He condemned the rise of Chicago's anarchist movement and led the political wing of the SLP into the new Socialist party (SP).

No longer a wage earner, alienated from the new, young party professionals, and outraged by

stock-jobbing schemes and what he considered leadership misconduct, Morgan's influence waned as he became half muckraker and half traducer. He stayed active by attending national conventions of the SP in 1901, 1904, 1908, and 1910, by editing a caustic little paper called the *Provoker* (1909–1911), and by organizing the Socialist Education League (1912). Headed for retirement in California, he was killed on December 10, 1912, in a train wreck in Williams, Arizona.

Often partnering with his wife, Morgan's activism spanned an era in Chicago of economic and political reform and radicalism. Morgan achieved national recognition as a militant trade unionist and a socialist firebrand.

Throughout his life Morgan retained his faith in political action as a remedy for labor's ills. He believed that immediate social reform could be achieved through legislative action. He ran unsuccessfully on socialist tickets for a variety of public offices, including alderman, mayor, and U.S. senator. He used independent labor parties as a vehicle for educating workers about socialism. An agitator rather than a theoretician, Morgan maintained a steadfast belief in independent politics and socialist principles.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Great Upheaval (1886); Greenback-Labor Party; Knights of Labor; McGuire, Peter J.; Morgan, Elizabeth; Populism/People's Party; Railroad Strikes (1877); Socialist Labor Party; Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance**

MORRISON, FRANK (1859–1949) American Federation of Labor

Frank Morrison served as the secretary of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) from 1897 to 1935 and was its secretary-treasurer from 1936 to 1939. He was born in Frankton, Ontario. In 1865, his family moved to Walkerton, Ontario, where he became a printer. In 1886, he moved to Chicago, where he joined the International Typographical Union, Local 16. He studied law at Lake Forest University from 1893 to 1894, and became a member of the Illinois bar in 1895. From the inception of the AFL to his death, Morrison was a major political ally of Samuel Gompers. Among other posts, he chaired the wages and hours subcommittee of the Committee on Labor of the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense during World War I and attended the International Labor Conference of 1919 organized by conservative unionists at the same time as the Peace Conference that produced the Treaty of Versailles.

For his entire political life, Morrison stood for moderation and cooperation with the government as well as pure-and-simple unionism. Morrison was consistently opposed to socialism as well as to most strikes. Along with Gompers Morrison consistently argued that labor should win a place for itself as a conservative, responsible partner with business owners and the government. As a result Morrison often testified in Congress and played a role in much of the labor legislation passed during the early twentieth century. For instance he advocated in Congress for the creation of a separate Department of Labor, distinct from the Department of Commerce, in the hopes that such a department might regulate wages, hours, and working conditions from a friendlier standpoint than the Department of Commerce. In 1934, he testified before the National Advisory Council in favor of the creation of the Social Security System.

Morrison consistently defended the AFL's stance against organizing unskilled immigrants or black workers. During the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, steel strike of 1909, for instance, Morrison was reported to say of the strikers, "They are only hunkies." While the AFL did not officially exclude black workers, it did in practice, and Morrison was complicit in this position. In 1934, under pressure from the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the AFL conducted an internal investigation of race discrimination in the federation, but it declined to present the results at the 1935 convention, though it did bring the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters into the AFL.

Morrison was also opposed to the drive to organize the mass-production workers during the early 1930s. When John L. Lewis and other American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders split from the AFL to form the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), Morrison remained a staunch defender of the old union federation.

At times however Morrison's activity on behalf of the AFL got him into trouble with the system he tried so hard to win a place in, especially since before the New Deal, the government at all levels was generally opposed to any kind of union activity, no matter how moderate. In 1908, Morrison was sentenced to 6 months in prison along with Gompers and John Mitchell, another AFL leader, for violating a court injunction against boycotting Buck's Stove and Range Company, though he did not actually serve any time. He also presented Robert M. La Follette with the endorsement of the AFL as candidate of the Progressive party in 1924, an exception to the usual AFL policy of opposing working-class political action outside the two-party system.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Gompers, Samuel**

MUSIC

Music has always been an integral part of work and the labor movement. Work songs are those sung during the process of work, and they refer to the job itself or attitudes toward work. Labor songs by contrast are used to exhort workers to join unions, to explain their circumstances, and offer a collective solution. Work songs can be traced back to pre-industrial society, while the tradition of labor songs developed along with the large-scale industrialization that took place after the Civil War.

Work Songs

The richest tradition of work songs in the United States comes from African-Americans. Slaves used music both to coordinate their work and to reflect on their fate. In use and style the songs they sang

reflected the African cultures they had been forced to leave: Music was a central element in daily life, involving verbal improvisation and participation. Songs had a variety of uses, among which was setting the tempo for work. Yet even in work situations, songs might comment on all sorts of issues ranging from gossip to protest against slavery itself.

Hymns and spirituals expressed the slaves' most profound hopes and concerns and like secular songs were subject to the folk process whereby old songs were constantly revised to fit new situations. These were not sung only in church but were used as rowing, field, and work songs, and their call-and-response patterns meant the individual participated in an ongoing dialogue with his or her community. Often the songs spoke of ultimate justice and freedom.

In the years following emancipation, black laborers continued to work to the accompaniment of song, increasingly secular rather than religious. Song leaders played an important role in setting the pace of work, communicating instructions, and providing diversion. Work songs described and commented on shared problems, including the foibles of white bosses. While such songs declined in the latter part of the twentieth century, from the 1930s to the 1960s, work songs could still be found in southern prisons, where working conditions most resembled those of slavery times.

Other categories of songs related to work include agricultural and pastoral, domestic, street cries, and chants. There is also a large volume of songs related to specific occupations. Sea shanties are the best example in the Anglo-American folk tradition, but such songs also encompass farmers, cowboys, lumberjacks, and prison work gangs. These songs also have historically served a variety of functions, from directing particular tasks to providing diversion from work itself.

Nineteenth-Century Labor Songs

Social movements have always used music to unite, encourage, and inspire participants. The labor movement is no exception. Music is less easily suppressed than political tracts; it appeals to emotion as well as intellect and does not require a high level of education for the listener to understand and be moved by it. In pre-industrial times work songs, spirituals, and ethnic music served important community-building functions. But the formative years of the U.S. labor movement in the late nineteenth century brought with it a tradition of songs and song-poems that directly addressed the dramatic changes in working conditions that accompanied industrialization and offered a simple solution: Join the union.

This tradition began with the struggle for the 8-hour day, but the songs associated with it also commented on working conditions, the experience of immigrants, and a common dislike for the boss. The rousing chorus of “8 Hours”—“8 hours for work, 8 hours for rest, 8 hours for what we will!”—one of the most popular song-poems in U.S. history, could be heard at rallies, demonstrations, and parades.

The most popular song-poem of the nineteenth century came from the Knights of Labor. Typical of the songs of this period, “Storm the Fort, Ye Knights,” based on the tune “Hold the Fort”) exhorted workers to participate in a moral crusade and projected a vision of an alternative republic based more on cooperation than competition. It offered an optimistic, determined working-class message, which was pegged to a melody borrowed from an evangelical hymn. From this came a long heritage of labor songs based on familiar melodies. Other songs from this period portrayed the United States as a land controlled by an aristocracy of wealth in which workers had lost the rights their forefathers had fought to achieve. These songs often offered alternative visions, especially a republic of and for workers. Poets used the terminology of the Revolutionary Era and the shared heritage of the idea of freedom as tools to criticize social injustice and keep up the spirits of struggling workers. In a later period recorded songs of work and the labor movement reflected a wide variety of musical styles and perspectives.

Songs by and about immigrants also emphasized issues of social justice, pointing out discrimination and calling for genuine equality of opportunity. For instance, “No Irish Need Apply” suggested that Irish immigrants sometimes had a difficult time finding employment because of the stereotypes about them. The Protestant majority questioned their loyalty and their work ethic, criticizing them for celebrating different holidays and drinking too much. The song asserts the pride of the Irish and their determination to make a place for themselves.

Labor Songs and the Left in the Twentieth Century

Some of the most well-known and long-lasting labor songs came from the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), whose vision of “One Big Union” was relatively popular among workers in the early years of the twentieth century. The IWW (or Wobblies, as they were known) printed and distributed a *Little Red Songbook* that was used as an organizing tool.

“Songs to fan the flame of discontent” reached workers in mines and mills, lumber camps, and hobo jungles across the United States. Most often the songs were based on new lyrics written to a familiar tune, often a hymn. One of the most well-known Wobbly songwriters was Joe Hill, who was executed in Utah in 1915. His words, “Don’t mourn, organize,” and his songs left a significant and lasting legacy to those who continued to fight for workers’ rights. A song later written about Hill by Earl Robinson, set to a poem by Alfred Hayes, was sung and recorded many times.

Another Wobbly songwriter, Ralph Chaplin, penned the words to “Solidarity Forever,” generally considered to be the anthem of the labor movement. The melody came from “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which had already been transformed into “John Brown’s Body.” Instead of “Glory, glory hallelujah, his soul is marching on,” the chorus says “solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong.” The song was used not only by the IWW, but again in the organizing drives of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s.

Some immigrants to the United States brought with them a musical heritage that was qualitatively different than either the African-American or the Anglo-American folk and religious traditions. Urban European workers were used to singing in choruses, and those who wrote songs about their work and their labor-organizing efforts in the United States at first attempted to use this choral tradition. Thus such composers as Charles Seeger and Elie Seigmeister wrote art songs aimed at secular European immigrant workers. One problem with such songs was that they were difficult to use at a march or a rally because they were technically difficult. Thus writers concerned about workers’ fate turned to using a more indigenous, rural folk style in their compositions. The songs may not have been authentic folk songs, but they were more accessible; both words and melody were easily remembered, and a group could sing them on the move if necessary, without musical accompaniment. These labor songs, written and sung in a style loosely based on Appalachian folk music, served an important purpose in the 1930s when labor organizing was at its height.

The Great Depression brought enormous problems for working people around the world who struggled to make ends meet. In the United States, songs played an important part in calling attention to these struggles and encouraging workers to fight for their rights. Yip Harburg’s “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime” evoked images of people who had worked and fought for their country but were now going hungry. More commonly popular music denied that

problems existed—“Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries”—or at best offered escape—“No Depression in Heaven.” The tradition of labor songs thus developed outside the bounds of popular music, particularly in the hands of Communists and other left-wing writers who were critical of Tin Pan Alley for its avoidance of the most pressing issues of the day. The Communist movement drew on earlier traditions and materials to write and adapt songs addressing such working-class issues as unemployment and labor unions. In their preference for folk-style music, they intended to create an alternative musical tradition as well as an alternative vision.

Many of the songs written and sung during the Depression Era suggest that if workers joined unions, many of their problems would be ameliorated. In 1932, Florence Reece, the wife of a miner, wrote a song called “Which Side Are You On?” in the midst of an intense strike by the National Miners’ Union in Harlan County, Kentucky. Many prominent outsiders—artists, writers, and journalists among them—came to observe for themselves the events in “bloody Harlan,” and it was these observers who helped spread the song along with the issues raised in the strike.

The first distribution of such songs by a union was the 1935 recording of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) chorus. The 12 songs on the two 78-RPM records included “Hold the Fort” and “Solidarity Forever.” The ILGWU also produced the popular labor musical *Pins and Needles*. Another musical that addressed workers issues in a more esoteric form, *The Cradle Will Rock*, based on Marc Blitzstein’s original music, had a big impact on labor theater if not on song.

Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and People’s Songs

One of the most well-known singers and song writers from the Depression era is Woody Guthrie, whose many original compositions about labor and other issues left a lasting legacy. Guthrie was an authentic folk singer whose compositions came from personal experience—he hailed from Oklahoma and had seen the Dust Bowl firsthand—but he was also a member of a broad Communist movement that intended to use song as a weapon to help workers overthrow the capitalist system. Guthrie’s theory of songwriting was less crude than the phrase “song as a weapon” might suggest, and many of his songs continue to be recorded and sung, from “Pastures of Plenty” to “So Long, It’s

Been Good to Know You.” Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land” still is sung by school children all over the United States, but few people know the origins of the song as a critique of an economic system that, in Guthrie’s view, bred vast inequalities.

Songs were disseminated by performers such as Guthrie and Pete Seeger. They were also created, revised, and spread through the interactions of writers, singers, and labor organizers at such institutions as Commonwealth College in Arkansas and Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. “Roll the Union on” came from Commonwealth and “We Shall Overcome” from Highlander. The first album of general union songs was recorded in 1941 by the Almanac Singers. *Talking Union* consisted of class-conscious lyrics set to traditional folk tunes, many of which became classics.

After World War II Seeger began an organization called People’s Songs, Inc., with a vision of a singing labor movement. In its short-lived existence (1946–1949), People’s Songs disseminated songs on a variety of issues, including labor, racial equality, and peace. The work of People’s Songs carried on the links between labor and other movements for social change. Such connections are exemplified in the song that became the anthem of the civil rights movement, “We Shall Overcome.” Originally a hymn, “I’ll Overcome Someday,” the song was adapted by black textile workers and brought to Highlander Folk School. Zilphia Horton adapted it and taught it to others, including Seeger, who added more verses to it. When Guy Carawan sang it in the North Carolina sit-ins in 1960 to protest segregation, the word overcome took on new meaning.

Popular Music

By this period some labor songs had carried over into popular music. Merle Travis had already composed and recorded two of the most famous mining songs, “Dark as a Dungeon” and “Sixteen Tons,” but by the 1960s, country music regularly included commentary on work. In the late 1970s, “Take This Job and Shove It” was number one on the country music charts. In the 1960s and 1970s, songs also documented contemporary labor struggles, such as that of migrant farm laborers.

As the conditions of labor changed however, and sessions at the bargaining table became more common than picket lines, songs became less useful as tools for labor organizing and expressions of solidarity. As the context and the nature of work

changed, so did the songs, with less emphasis on accessibility and participation. The 1960s brought more attention to individual singer-songwriters who performed and recorded for a mass audience in contrast to the group singing and songwriting activities of an earlier era. Yet writers and performers, such as Bob Dylan, drew on the legacy of Woody Guthrie and the issues of the People's Songs era. Rock musician Bruce Springsteen carried on this tradition in subsequent years, writing and singing about the conditions of workers and promoting a vision of a more cooperative society. Harkening back to Guthrie as well, Springsteen argued that the point was not to write propaganda but to tell stories in order to enable a mass audience to walk in the shoes of the oppressed. While he did write and sing about his own experience, Springsteen was still an interpreter whose recordings differed, particularly in style, from those of workers who performed their own songs.

Singers and songwriters addressed new themes from the 1970s on, including the environment, women's liberation, consumerism, and jobs moving overseas. Their songs did not always comment directly on issues of work and labor organizing, but many writers continued to make these links. Dave Rovics for instance called one of his songs criticizing U.S. imperialism "Pray for the Dead and Fight Like Hell for the Living," evoking memories of the feisty Mother Jones, one of the most important and successful labor organizers in the early twentieth century. New occupational songs appeared as well, such as those about truck driving. Old and new songs commemorated heroes and heroines of the labor movement, such as Mother Jones and those who wrote and sang about them, including Joe Hill and Woody Guthrie.

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MUSTE, A. J. (1885–1967) Pacifist and Labor Activist

Abraham Johannes (A. J.) Muste gained his greatest renown as a respected leader and public spokesperson for the radical wing of the post-World War II American peace movement, where he promoted militant pacifism's vision of a nonviolent world through the pursuit of social justice and peace. For almost two solid decades, from 1919 through the late 1930s, Muste worked to create opportunities for working-class empowerment. His grassroots organizing efforts, his work as director of an innovative program in worker education, and his promotion of a revolutionary model of labor action and politics emphasized the potential of militant protest and foreshadowed the radical democratic thrust of Depression Era industrial unionism. In the process Muste helped sustain a tradition of independent radicalism and militant democracy among the American working-class.

Accidental Beginnings: The Lawrence Strike of 1919

Muste began his career in the early 1910s as a sheltered and inexperienced Dutch Reformed Minister.

Born in the Netherlands and brought to the United States as a child, Muste initially adopted the orthodox Calvinist inclinations of his family and the west Michigan Dutch immigrant community in which they lived. He attended seminary in New Jersey and New York, where he gained basic theological training, and then accepted his first ministerial job in upper Manhattan. Life in New York City changed Muste's life. The activist members of Muste's congregation and the tumult of the city brought this novice minister into contact with the precepts of the social Gospel, the reform agendas of leading social welfare advocates, and the public struggles of local workers fighting to improve the conditions of their lives. By the time of U.S. entry into the First World War, Muste, who had moved to a new congregation in the Boston area, had thoroughly imbibed of these progressive impulses, and by the end of the war, he had learned both the perils and promises of taking a principled and nonconformist stance. His outspoken advocacy of Christian pacifism during wartime cost him his job, forcing him to seek work and build community with nearby Quakers and other Christian opponents to war. At the same time, Muste's growing commitment to socialist ideals and working-class struggles began to alienate him from the same liberal antimilitarists who had come to his aid. He emerged from the experience a committed radical and respected organizer of the unorganized working class.

A 1919 strike in the textile mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts, the site of an earlier general strike of 1912, became Muste's crucible. In February of that year, a renegade group of workers revolted against a pay cut instituted by Lawrence employers and agreed to by their union representatives and walked out on strike, bringing 15,000–30,000 workers onto the streets with them. As part of a small fellowship of faith-based activists then living in Boston, Muste and two friends traveled to Lawrence to observe the events and quickly found themselves swept into the center of events. The members of the strike committee, acting in opposition to the American Federation of Labor (AFL), were essentially on their own, with little experience, minimal command of the English language, an immigrant constituent base divided by ethnicity and language, and almost no contacts outside their limited circle. Aware of the obstacles they faced and their desperate need for help, they asked the visiting Muste to become their committee's executive secretary. Although he had no formal union training or working-class credentials, Muste accepted the invitation, stepped into the political vacuum, and helped lead these workers through 16 weeks of difficult protest to victory.

Brookwood Labor College: An Experiment in Worker Education

The lessons Muste learned from the Lawrence experience—the importance of having strong and capable leadership at the grass roots, the need to forge unity among disparate groups, and the ways in which principled risk-taking could foster solidarity and political power—shaped his activism and defined his work on behalf of the organized and unorganized working class. Muste immediately moved into the newly formed Amalgamated Textile Workers of America, where he worked for 2 years as the unions' general secretary. His more lasting influence came through his work with Brookwood Labor College in Katonah, New York, which he directed from its inception in 1921 until his departure 1933. At Brookwood Muste advanced a unique vision of worker education that helped shape a generation of militant labor organizers and union advocates.

Brookwood Labor College began, as did Muste's labor career, as an outgrowth of the progressive strain of politically engaged pacifism that ultimately moved in a more revolutionary direction. Its founders, William and Helen Fincke, were members of the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation who, like Muste, sought to link the quest for peace with the fight for social justice, a difficult quest during a time in which labor and progressive activists faced full-scale repression and attack. With Muste at the helm, Brookwood forged ahead, making strong connections to leading progressives and militant trade unionists and developing an innovative curriculum that linked intellectual development to organizing experience. The school's goal was simple: To create effective labor leaders at the local level. To achieve this goal, Brookwood recruited students from a variety of regions and occupations; taught classes that ranged from sophisticated studies of psychology and sociology to basic public speaking, writing, and organizing skills; and sent its students out to apply what they learned to real-world situations. It was a stimulating environment that built community and confidence and gave Brookwood and Muste strong reputations within the progressive wing of the American labor movement. Brookwood's pedagogical emphasis on worker democracy and militant action, which strongly encouraged its students to think outside of established bureaucratic and political frameworks, ultimately brought the college into conflict with the more conservative elements of organized labor. In 1928, the leaders of the AFL publicly condemned the college as antagonistic and subversive and instructed member unions to no longer supply Brookwood with students or funds. Ironically the school's nondoctrinaire approach to labor activism

also earned it the ire of the Communist party, which also denounced the school that very same year. Charting an independent radical course was no easy task during the tumultuous years of the 1920s.

The Era of the Musteites

Neither Muste nor Brookwood folded in the face of these attacks. According to Muste, the school maintained its vitality for several more years but ultimately closed as a result of Depression Era financial constraints and factional infighting. Muste in the meantime had begun to develop what he hoped would become a politically powerful revolutionary workers' movement. In May 1929, he founded the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (CPLA). Through the CPLA Muste and his cohorts, many of them graduates of Brookwood, advanced an explicitly Marxist but non-Communist agenda that presaged much of the later work of the not-yet-formed Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Their efforts reflected the growing dissatisfaction felt by progressive and radical unionists with both the rightward-leaning AFL and the Soviet-dominated Communist party. The CPLA believed that it could encourage alternative forms of labor activism that better served the needs of the American working class.

The Musteites, as CPLA's followers were called, called for organizing the unorganized into broad-based industrial unions (a direct challenge to the bureaucratic trade unionism of the AFL); advocated wide-ranging nondiscrimination clauses; and worked on behalf of the unemployed. During their heyday the Musteites lent skilled and militant leadership to a number of important strikes, including a series of violent labor conflicts in southern textile mills in 1929 and a mass protest and picketing campaign among autoworkers at Toledo Auto-Lite in April 1934. The CPLA also made a strong impact by organizing jobless Americans into Unemployed Leagues in Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. Seeking direct political power, the CPLA merged in December 1933 with the Trotskyite Communist League of America to form the short-lived American Workers' party. In all of these efforts, the Musteites displayed their commitment to increasing the power of American workers at the grass roots.

The Return to His Pacifist Roots

In the summer of 1936, Muste experienced a religious reconversion that brought him back to his Christian

pacifist roots. He reconnected with the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) where he won election to the organization's National Council and found employment as chair of the FOR's Committee on Industrial Relations. There he continued his pursuit of social justice for working-class Americans and participated on the periphery of vanguard labor protests, including a 1936 nonviolent "lie down" strike at a textile mill near Reading, Pennsylvania. In May 1937, Muste took on the directorship of New York City's Labor Temple, where he preached a doctrine of Christian social responsibility that linked religious practice to the defense of working-class struggle. In April 1940, he returned to the FOR as executive secretary, beginning the next and final phase of an activist career that would not end until his death in 1967. Even with peace and nonviolence at the center of his political agenda, Muste retained his militancy, his belief in the importance of skilled and visionary leadership, and his dedication to economic justice as a fundamental part of his work for social change.

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See also **Brookwood Labor College**

MYERS, ISAAC (JANUARY 13, 1835– JANUARY 26, 1891) African-American Labor Organizer and Activist

From the Civil War years until his death in 1891, Isaac Myers was one of Baltimore's most prominent African-American citizens. Over the course of three decades in public life, Myers wore multiple hats, including those of labor organizer, community activist and spokesperson, postal detective, businessman, newspaper editor, and church leader. During the

Reconstruction years, Myers emerged as perhaps the nation's most staunch and well-known advocate of trade unionism for black workers. By the 1880s, however, his commitment to labor organization had waned as he became embittered by white workers' reluctance to abandon their hostility toward their black counterparts. Business, Republican party politics, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church occupied his organization and emotional energies in the last decade of his life. Myers's transformation from a preacher of the gospel of trade unionism to full-throated opponent of organized white labor illustrates the contradictory impulses toward black advancement in the late nineteenth century and the persistence of racial barriers to labor unity.

Myers was born free in Maryland, a slave state with the country's largest free black population, in 1835. Little is known of his parents, who were reported to be poor, not unlike many other free blacks in the border states. Late nineteenth-century accounts of his life state that he attended a private religious day school—no public schools were open to free-black children at the time—where he received the equivalent of a common school education. At the age of 16, he apparently left school and apprenticed to a prominent local black caulker, James Jackson, and within 4 years Myers was reported to have been superintending the caulking of some of Baltimore's largest clipper ships under construction. In 1860, he left the ship yards to assume the position of chief porter and shipping clerk in the wholesale grocery of Woods, Bridges, and Company, where he would learn crucial business skills that he would shortly put to good use on behalf of the city's black community.

The outbreak of racial conflict in Baltimore's shipyards immediately following the Civil War pushed Myers into a public leadership role as a community activist. In September 1865, white caulkers engaged in a successful month-long strike against Baltimore's shipyards, resulting in an all-white employment policy requiring the eventual dismissal of black shipyard workers. Displaced black caulkers quickly mobilized community support on their behalf, winning local support for the creation of a Mutual Joint Stock Company that soon became the Chesapeake Marine Railway and Dry Dock Company. Myers, who local accounts named as one of the black caulkers' leaders, was the likely source of the proposal to form the all-black company; joining with other community leaders drawn from the ranks of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church. Myers became a founder and director of the new enterprise, which leased facilities and gave employment to as many as 300 black dockworkers before it closed its doors in 1883.

Active on behalf of the Republican party in Maryland in the years immediately following the Civil War, Myers also organized black workers in cities across the South, earning a reputation as a strong supporter of black labor activism. In 1869, he accepted the invitation of the National Labor Union (NLU), an assemblage of white craft unions, to address its delegates. Speaking on behalf of the small black delegation at the convention, Myers sought to transform the white labor federation's unprecedented invitation into a permanent interracial relationship. On a practical level Myers assured his white listeners that they now had "nothing to fear from the colored laboring man," who desired only to see "labor elevated and made respectable," just as whites did. But he did express concern with the racial division of labor that relegated blacks to unskilled work. "American citizenship with the black man is a complete failure," he concluded, "if he is proscribed from the workshops of the country," as had long been the case. Myers called on white workers of the newly reunited nation to follow the NLU's example by finishing "the good work of uniting the colored and white workingmen of the country." Notwithstanding Myers's endorsement of Republican President Ulysses S. Grant and his opposition to the repudiation of the national debt (positions white workers objected to), his address was apparently greeted with respect, punctuated by enthusiastic applause.

Although the NLU was not interested in pressing its constituent white unions to drop their policies of racial exclusion, black workers in the upper South pressed forward with plans to organize. In July 1869, Myers presided over a gathering of 30 black delegates at the Douglass Institute in Baltimore to establish a statewide black labor association. In December of that year, Myers, representing the Baltimore Colored Caulkers' Trade Union Society, joined with over two hundred black delegates in Washington, DC to spearhead an effort to establish a Colored National Labor Union (CNLU) aimed at fostering black trade unionism. In its brief existence, the CNLU served as a clearinghouse for black trade unionists and politicians. Preaching the fundamental unity between labor and capital, it opposed employment discrimination; endorsed cooperatives, vocational training, and public education for blacks; supported the Republican party; and memorialized Congress on behalf of black southerners seeking public land, low interest loans, and civil rights. As the CNLU's first president, Myers traveled widely to encourage black workers to organize in self-defense and avoid becoming "the servants of servants." The "watchword of the colored men must be organize!" he told a group of African-Americans in Norfolk,

Virginia. In 1871, the former slave and noted abolitionist Frederick Douglass succeeded Myers as CNLU president, a testament to the growing influence of black Republican politicians in the organization. The CNLU quickly faded from the scene.

Over the course of the 1870s and 1880s, Myers was active in his support for the Republican party. For his efforts he was rewarded with a patronage position in the U.S. Post Office as a postal detective. By 1879, he was operating a coal yard in Baltimore; in 1882, he became owner and editor of a political newspaper, the *Colored Proprietor*, and held another patronage job as a U.S. gauger, a post he held until early 1887, when a Democrat assumed the position as collector for the port of Baltimore. Myers remained active on behalf of the Republicans, organized a Colored State Industrial Fair Association in Maryland, and founded and led a Colored Business Men's Association.

By the 1880s, if not earlier, Myers's stance toward organized labor had turned decidedly negative. "All branches of the trades are governed by rules and regulations which are so framed as to exclude the colored man," he explained to the readers of the *Christian Recorder* in 1881. Myers attributed the greatest antiblack animus to working- and middle-class whites, particularly immigrants. "Everywhere, the white trades unions prohibits the admission of colored men as members, and white contractors, no matter how favorable, are prohibited from employing colored mechanics," he complained. With white oppression and black workers' own failure aggressively to embrace what few opportunities there were, he predicted that black "mechanics will gradually drop into obscurity and the grave." The evolution of Myers's perspective from pro- to anti-union reflected less an objective shift in the relationship between black and white workers—the white hostility he objected to had not changed considerably over time—than it did Myers's growing pessimism about

the realistic prospects of interracial labor collaboration. When the rise of the Knights of Labor in Baltimore in the mid-1880s temporarily united black and white workers, Myers was nowhere to be seen. This new opportunity to create an interracial alliance, which many Baltimore blacks embraced, failed to win back the man who had once been the country's most prominent black labor leader.

Myers's final years were devoted to politics, business, and the church. For 15 years he served as the Bethel A. M. E. School of Baltimore as superintendent, transforming it, one contemporary claimed, into "the banner Sunday-school of the world." In his final years, he had been elected president of a project to build a home for elderly A. M. E. Church ministers. He died of a stroke after a brief illness in 1891.

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See also African-Americans; Emancipation and Reconstruction; National Labor Union; South

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NATIONAL AD HOC COMMITTEE OF BLACK STEELWORKERS

The National Ad Hoc Committee of Black Steelworkers was founded in 1964 by African-American members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). The first nationwide African-American protest organization in the USWA, it waged major struggles against racial discrimination in USWA policies and practices. Although it did not achieve all of its goals, it succeeded in improving African-Americans' prospects within the union and the steel industry. Its struggles led to changes within the USWA that paved the way for its agreement to sign the Consent Decree in 1974. The Committee disbanded in the early 1970s.

At the dawn of the 1960s, African-American steelworkers faced significant barriers to advancement due to discriminatory policies and practices within major steel companies. Although African-Americans formed a significant percentage of the USWA's membership, they felt that their issues were not adequately addressed by the union. Departments were highly segregated by race, which affected the type of work performed as well as black workers' mobility within a company. In general, African-American steelworkers were confined to unskilled, dirty, dangerous, lower-paying jobs such as in blast furnaces and open hearths, and were denied access to cleaner, safer, and more highly compensated positions dominated by whites. They were able to rise to skilled positions only in so-called black departments and advanced into skilled positions in "white departments" only after years of hard work and persistence. Blacks' mobility

was further constrained by the fact that seniority was accrued within departments—that is, blacks who transferred to other departments risked losing their hard-earned seniority. The situation was worse at the executive level, as an exceedingly small percentage of leadership positions in both the steel companies and the USWA were filled by African-Americans. African-Americans were discriminated against in promotions, and their positions were the most vulnerable to automation and layoffs.

These disadvantages remained despite the existence of a top-level USWA Civil Rights Committee, union contracts that contained nondiscrimination clauses, fair employment committees at the local level, and public pronouncements by union leaders. The USWA president, David McDonald, promised to fight racial discrimination, and the union vowed to work with the federal Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), but significant racial disparities persisted.

In the 1950s, organized labor and unions responded to McCarthyism by taking more conservative stances, as organizations that called for social justice and racial equality were increasingly branded as Communist and anti-American. By the early 1960s, African-American unionists in many industries, frustrated by barriers to progress and inspired by the growing civil rights movement, began to organize protest groups. Among these were the Negro American Labor Council (NALC), which brought together over one thousand union members from the steel, rubber, and auto industries, and the United Negro Protest Committee. However, organized labor was not

receptive—even unions considered to be progressive, such as the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the USWA, denounced the African-American activism as anti-union and counterproductive. This is the context in which the National Ad Hoc Committee of Black Steelworkers was founded.

The Ad Hoc Committee formed in the summer of 1964, when a group of African-American activists within the USWA called a meeting at the union's International Convention in Atlantic City. Important members of this committee included Curtis Strong, Rayfield Mooty, Aaron Jackson, and Hugh Henderson. Elections for key USWA offices, including the position of president, were scheduled for 1965, and the Committee members recognized this as an opportune time to organize and use the African-American vote as leverage to force changes in the union's racial practices. They agreed to present a three-point agenda to both presidential candidates: 1) the re-organization of the union's Civil Rights Committee into a full-blown department led by an African-American; 2) greater African-American representation on district and national staffs; and 3) the inclusion of an African-American on the union's international executive board.

In December 1964, the incumbent president, David McDonald, dismissed the demands of Committee representatives in a meeting that lasted less than 15 minutes. The Committee fared better with the challenger I. W. Abel, who recognized that African-Americans, then composing 20% to 30% of the union's membership, could swing the vote in his favor. Abel agreed to the first two of the Committee's three demands, contending that the third would require a change in the union's constitution, and thus won the support of the group. Abel defeated the incumbent McDonald in a very close election in which the northern black vote sealed Abel's victory.

As promised, Abel re-organized the union's Civil Rights Committee into a new department, led by an African-American. He appointed other African-Americans, including Curtis Strong, to the staff and addressed the 1966 conference of the NALC. However, Abel failed to fully integrate the union's decision-making bodies, and the union's system of delegating blacks to low-paid, unskilled "black jobs" persisted. In 1966, the group picketed U.S. Steel's Pittsburgh headquarters and openly criticized Abel at the USWA convention later that year.

The Ad Hoc Committee continued to fight for change, holding two national meetings in 1967. The meetings spawned demonstrations against major steel companies, letters of protest, and discrimination lawsuits against both the USWA and the larger steel industry. The Committee tried repeatedly to meet with

Abel to discuss the union's racial problems but was continually ignored. It decided to up the pressure by organizing a picket line protest at the USWA's International Convention in August 1968; this would be the group's first action that directly targeted its union. The Committee also agreed on three new demands: 1) elimination of all discrimination in the USWA; 2) full integration in policy-making positions within all levels of district and national offices (including the earlier demand of an African-American on the Executive Board); and 3) revision of the union's civil rights program. Abel and other USWA leaders tried to preempt the strike through various political means, but their attempts were ineffective—the picket line garnered national media attention. The Committee's resolutions were voted down, but after the convention, Abel responded by hiring more African-Americans in staff positions.

The Committee continued its organizing and recruiting efforts and began to include more women in its efforts. Responding to Abel's efforts to hire black staff after the 1968 protests and by his promise to fight for an African-American on the Executive Board, the Committee endorsed his re-election in 1969 and helped him win a second term. In 1972, the USWA agreed to appoint an African-American to the Executive Board. Committee members viewed it as a hollow victory, however, criticizing the appointment—in a new position of vice president for human affairs—as tokenism and yet another instance of institutional segregation.

By this time, black steelworkers were increasingly turning to the courts for help, as well as forming new organizations outside of the USWA. Committee members, recognizing the limitations of a black reform movement within a predominantly white institution and acknowledging the frustrations of its constituency, voted to disband. Some local chapters continued on but lacked the power of a national movement. African-American steelworkers never again achieved the level of power they held during the high points of the Committee's fight for equality. In 1974, the USWA signed the Consent Decree, agreeing to pay \$31 million in damages to minority steelworkers and promising more progressive hiring practices.

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See also African-Americans; National Negro Labor Council; Steel and Iron; United Steelworkers of America

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS UNION

See Southern Tenant Farmers' Union

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF POSTAL AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees (NAPE) evolved over the course of the twentieth century, from an all-black industrial union to an interracial trade organization. Founded in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on October 6, 1913, by African-American railway mail clerks, the National Alliance of Postal Employees came into existence only after the American Federation of Labor (AFL)-affiliated Railway Mail Association adopted a Caucasian-only clause in its national constitution. At the time, the Railway Mail Service formed one of the central departments of the postal service, operating wooden cars that created hazardous work conditions, and subsequently large casualty numbers, for the black mail clerks who worked on them. Given the risks, whites were reluctant to work in these positions. However, when the major railroads replaced the cars with steel containers in 1913, the Railway Mail Association launched an effort to systematically remove black clerks from its memberships. Along with a racially discriminatory program implemented by President Woodrow Wilson's newly appointed postmaster general, Albert Burleson, to make the railroads' postal operations “lily white,” the black clerks faced dismal job prospects.

Led by Robert L. Bailey of Indianapolis, Indiana, Louis J. Harper of Atlanta, Georgia, and Henry Mims of Houston, Texas, representatives from railway centers in 13 states held a national convention to draft a constitution that advocated protective measures for

their families (such as the creation of a beneficiary and insurance department), established a national journal that advanced their common cause, and created an organization to represent black workers who wished to file grievances and petitions with the Post Office Department. Throughout its early history, the Alliance grew rapidly from its southern base, establishing branches in New York City, Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati. Between 1920 and 1939, 11 districts were formed and the number of Alliance memberships grew slowly.

District and local Alliance members engaged in a wide variety of civil rights issues affecting the employment of African-American postal workers throughout the 1920s and 1930s, such as: demanding equal promotion and pay raises for postal employees; calling for an end to the Wilson Administration's use of photographs to accompany civil service applications; and waging an extensive publicity campaign against the segregation of mail crews and sorting rooms in southern areas. Branches of the National Alliance also co-operated with other organizations working for the political and economic advancement of African-Americans, such as the antilynching campaigns waged by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the employment initiatives of the National Urban League, and the “Back to Africa” movement of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association.

In the Great Depression years of the 1930s, NAPE membership faced new challenges when the Postmaster General instituted pay cuts and furloughs without monetary compensation for mail employees. World War II witnessed the involvement of organization leaders in Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) hearings throughout the country in response to complaints of job discrimination in post office hiring and the promotion of Africans as timekeepers, window clerks, and scheme examiners. The Alliance campaigned for the hiring of black women to permanent positions in federal service. In 1945, Alliance activism reached a high-water mark when NAPE leaders pushed for permanent FEPC legislation. Branch applications for memberships declined sharply after 1948, however, when black postal employees faced wholesale suspensions under President Harry S. Truman's Federal Employees Loyalty Program, most notably in Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia. Postal Loyalty boards directed their investigation against black and Jewish employees, inquiring about the employees' attitudes toward topics ranging from interracial marriage and community activism to items relating to national security such as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

In addition, NAPE members faced increased scrutiny as a result of a measure stipulated in the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947. While much of the legislation focused on industrial-labor management relations in the private sector, a section of the measure barred Alliance employees and other postal union members who wished to exercise their right to bargain collectively in the workplace from doing so. By the close of the 1950s, however, the Alliance had succeeded in pressuring the U.S. Post Office Department to create a Board of Appeals and Review as an impartial body to adjudicate the grievances of postal employees. Throughout the nation, Alliance local representatives worked diligently to promote grassroots voter registration drives and civil rights issues affecting its membership.

In 1962, the Alliance was dealt an administrative blow when the union's industrial status prevented its rank-and-file membership from being included in Executive Order 10988 as a "national exclusive" craft entity and entitled to collective bargaining rights. However, the Alliance managed to reach new heights despite these administrative setbacks. In 1965, the Alliance opened its memberships to include all federal employees. Changing its name to the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees (NAPFE), the Alliance worked in collaboration with the leadership of the Manhattan-Bronx Post Union (MBPU) and the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) when New York's clerks, mail handlers, maintenance workers, and letter carriers walked off the job for higher wages in 1970. By the late 1970s, the Alliance had created a definitive public image, with its representatives making numerous visits to Capitol Hill to appear before committees of the House and Senate to discuss legislation affecting the Union's interests.

In the early twenty-first century, with over 70,000 members organized into more than 141 local chapters in 37 states, the Alliance was at the forefront of employee-management relations, addressing issues such as mail security, federal job privatization, and health care, not to mention the challenges of globalization. It held biennial conventions throughout its 10 districts and published the *National Alliance* and the legislative newsletter for all federal employees in every branch of government. Furthermore, it offered the Ashby B. Carter Memorial Scholarship Program and a host of grants to the dependents of its rank-and-file membership and hosted a number of fund-raising activities for community organizations and auxiliary affiliates. It also forged alliances with the World Confederation of Labor and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

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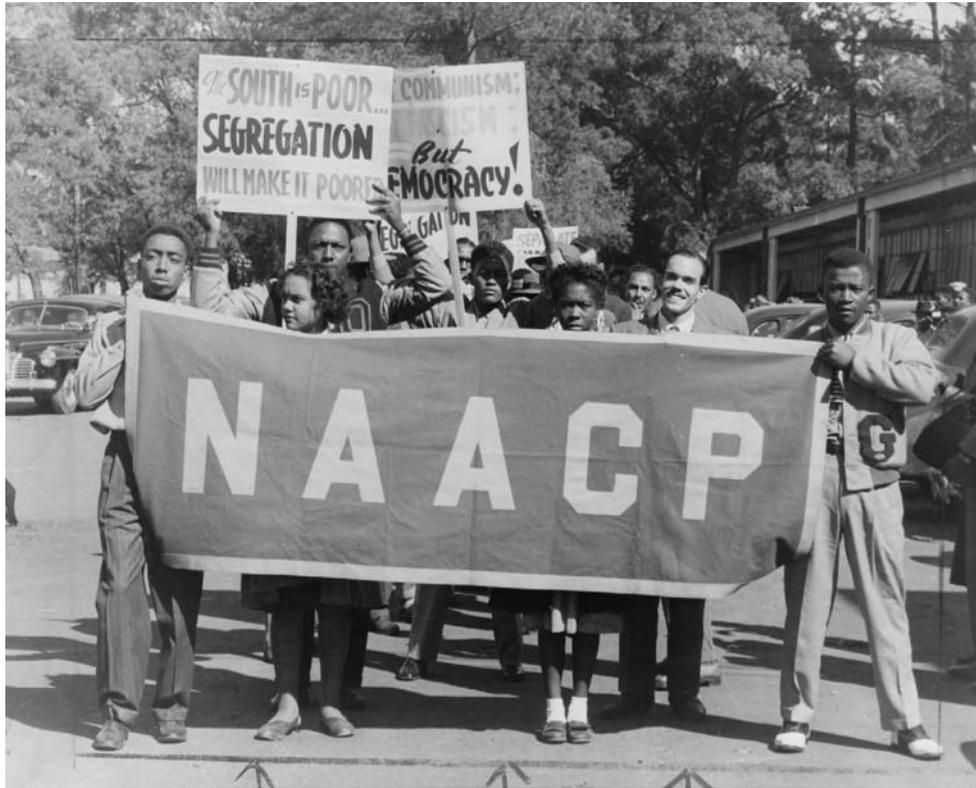
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

One of the nation's most prominent civil rights organizations, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is most famous for its Supreme Court victories in the 1950s and 1960s. In cases like *Brown v. Board of Education*, the NAACP remade constitutional law. In particular, the NAACP successfully attacked racially segregated education, transportation, and housing, as well as racially discriminatory voting procedures. For much of its history, labor issues were peripheral to the NAACP's wide-ranging agenda. Nonetheless, the NAACP consistently struggled with whether, and how, it would represent poor and working-class African-Americans.

The Early NAACP

Founded in New York City on the hundredth anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birthday, the NAACP emerged in 1909 in direct response to riots in Lincoln's birthplace of Springfield, Illinois. The increase in white-on-black violence after the turn of the twentieth century might have been the immediate catalyst, but the problems the new organization sought to challenge extended far beyond such incidents. As laws and customs pervasively established racial segregation and discrimination in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Supreme Court largely eviscerated post-Civil War constitutional protections for the formerly enslaved. The founders of the interracial NAACP sought to reverse this negative trend by expanding legal protections for African-Americans.

Throughout its history, the NAACP struggled to develop a strategy for addressing the problems of African-American workers. One of the Association's



People marching with signs to protest segregation in education at the college and secondary levels. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Visual Materials from the NAACP Records [LC-USZ62-116817].

original goals was to help African-Americans find employment. Early in the NAACP's history, however, it informally arranged with the National Urban League to divide the pursuit of African-American advancement into legal equality and economic advancement. The NAACP focused on the former through litigation efforts and lobbying, while the Urban League concentrated on the latter through social work and community organization.

The Association's peripheral treatment of economic issues reflected the elite status of its founders. Although they were well equipped to handle their mission, the founders were unrepresentative of the vast majority of African-Americans who sought to fulfill basic economic needs. As a result, the Association thought that attacking the segregation and discrimination that affected the race as a whole was the best way to represent working-class as well as higher-status African-Americans.

Despite its focus on racial discrimination in education and housing, the early NAACP did not entirely eschew economic matters. Legal and economic inequalities were often inextricably linked in a Jim Crow system that completely subordinated African-Americans. In the first two decades of its existence, the NAACP frequently struggled with how best to

incorporate workers' interests into its program. Theoretically, union organizing might have been the most effective way, but it presented major obstacles for African-Americans. Most unions in the early twentieth century were defined by the race of their membership—white—as well as by their class composition. Unions' exclusionary and discriminatory practices led many African-Americans to view employers as friendlier than fellow white workers. The twin problems of hostile unions and African-American views contributed to the NAACP's reluctance to embrace union organizing as an answer to black workers' difficulties.

Instead, as reflected by articles in *Crisis*, the official organ of the NAACP, the Association considered numerous, sometimes inconsistent ways to assist working African-Americans: promoting socialism, cooperatives, northern migration, and black-owned businesses. The NAACP advocated on behalf of southern agricultural workers by publicizing egregious incidents of racial violence and horrifying working conditions. The NAACP, usually represented by fieldworker Walter White, investigated and publicized lynchings, massacres, and widespread practices of peonage and involuntary servitude. In particular, it publicized the Elaine, Arkansas, massacre in 1919 and the peonage that followed the Mississippi River flood in 1927.

The NAACP in the Great Depression

During the Great Depression, the NAACP's labor-related activities greatly expanded as a result of several factors: the Depression's devastating economic impact on African-Americans, widespread criticism of the NAACP for its labor policies, discriminatory federal responses to the economic crisis, and competition for loyalty from other organizations.

In a nation pre-occupied with poverty and saturated with class politics, the NAACP realized that it could avoid economic issues only at its own peril. Stinging critiques came from a group of young Howard University intellectuals dubbed the "Young Turks." They criticized the NAACP for placing too much emphasis on racial discrimination and not enough on economic inequality and working-class solidarity. For them, the upper-class status of the NAACP prevented it from representing workers and seeking equality beyond that needed for elites.

With a myriad of left-leaning organizations embracing the more class-based strategies the Young Turks favored, the NAACP's claims to race leadership faltered. As the Communist Party, the International Labor Defense (ILD), the National Negro Congress (NNC), and other Popular Front organizations attempted to gain African-American members, the NAACP competed for loyalty and membership. The ILD notably challenged the NAACP when it battled to represent nine young African-American men "legally lynched" for rape in Scottsboro, Alabama.

As a result of these pressures to address labor issues, the NAACP took on a variety of projects targeted to help poor and working-class African-Americans. One of its main tasks was to address race discrimination in federal programs. It called on the Roosevelt administration to implement New Deal programs in a nondiscriminatory fashion. It also lobbied (albeit unsuccessfully) to require the withholding of federal certification under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to any union that discriminated on the basis of race. Beyond these federal targets, the NAACP also adopted a grassroots approach to economic issues by supporting local boycotts of retail businesses that refused to hire African-Americans.

The creation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1935 offered the NAACP a more politically mainstream way of helping African-American workers—by allying with organized labor. Unlike the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the CIO officially opposed racial discrimination from its inception. Although in practice CIO member unions at the local level continued to exclude African-Americans, the

NAACP saw the CIO as a friend and began a long and ambivalent alliance with organized labor.

Overall, during the 1930s, the NAACP expressed a greater commitment to economic issues than it had in the past, and some branches and youth councils even more actively pursued economic goals. Nonetheless, the NAACP never adopted labor issues as part of its core litigation agenda. The NAACP's notable litigation successes were reserved for areas like equal pay for teachers and access to graduate education, which garnered more support from middle-class than working-class African-Americans.

The NAACP in World War II

During World War II, the NAACP broke with previous practice by including labor issues in its core litigation agenda. This decision stemmed from the growing political and economic power of African-American workers during the war. Economically, after the high unemployment rates of the Depression years, war production needs created an economic boom, a far tighter labor market, and greater market power for African-Americans. On the political side, African-Americans in the North became swing voters valued by the Democratic Party. They became increasingly vocal about their demand for victory over fascism not only abroad, but at home where discrimination still hampered African-American progress. In this context, African-American workers began demanding the same rights that white employees had insisted on during the Depression.

As employment discrimination became the most nationally prominent civil rights issue of the day, the NAACP saw political, economic, and institutional opportunities to attack the problems African-American workers faced. Although the NAACP occasionally intervened to assist agricultural workers suffering peonage and other egregious labor practices in the South, it usually limited such intervention to passing on the complaints of agricultural workers to the United States Departments of Justice and Agriculture.

In the main, the NAACP addressed black industrial workers' concerns in the North, Midwest, and West. Industries frequently excluded African-Americans from jobs altogether, segregated them into the lowest-paying jobs, and denied them promotions. Unions also discriminated against African-Americans by excluding them altogether or segregating them into largely powerless auxiliary locals.

Under Walter White's leadership, the NAACP made significant headway in the 1940s tackling labor

problems with political and legal tools. In the political arena, the NAACP joined A. Philip Randolph and his all-black Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters to compel the Roosevelt administration to end employment and union discrimination in war industries. They successfully pressured Roosevelt to create the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) in exchange for halting a massive protest march during the war. Following this success, the NAACP persisted in its efforts, lobbying to transform the FEPC into a more powerful and permanent administrative forum to redress race discrimination in employment. It joined lobbying groups such as the National Council for a Permanent FEPC to help in these efforts.

In the legal arena, the NAACP pursued litigation in three main areas during the 1940s. The lawyers Thurgood Marshall, Prentice Thomas, and Marion Wynn Perry brought lawsuits across the country against boilermakers' unions that excluded African-American shipyard workers and segregated them into auxiliary locals. It challenged union and employer discrimination in New York under a pioneering fair employment practice law. And it supported the lawyer Charles Hamilton Houston's efforts to end employer and union discrimination on the railroads.

These lawsuits frequently pitted the NAACP against discriminatory labor unions, but the NAACP managed simultaneously to strengthen its alliance with organized labor. Following a 1941 strike at Ford Motor Company's River Rouge plant in Michigan, unity grew between the NAACP and the CIO. Labor leaders increasingly spoke at NAACP annual conventions, and the NAACP represented itself at activities sponsored by organized labor.

The NAACP's World War II emphasis on industrial concerns reflected the Association's recognition that African-American workers might bolster the Association's membership. Previously, the NAACP sought support from middle-class blacks and wealthy, philanthropic whites. The NAACP had therefore focused on issues of middle-class concern like education, as well as on issues like lynching, whose shock value garnered support from whites. As black industrial workers earned wages in the 1940s that enabled them to afford NAACP membership dues, the Association began to consider working-class African-Americans fruitful targets for membership. In an attempt to attract such workers, the NAACP created a new staff position in its Washington office devoted entirely to labor issues. Clarence Mitchell, a political activist who had worked for the federal Fair Employment Practice Committee, was hired for the job.

The new attention to workers appeared to pay off in membership terms, as the size of the NAACP

expanded considerably during the 1940s. The NAACP grew from 355 branches and a membership of 50,556 in 1940 to 1,073 branches and a membership of around 450,000 in 1946. The Association's budget grew from \$54,300 in 1930, composed of a combination of contributions and membership dues, to more than \$319,000 in 1947, entirely from membership dues. This tremendous growth was due at least in part to the new membership of working-class African-Americans.

The NAACP in the Postwar Era

The NAACP continued to pursue labor activities in the decade after World War II ended, although its school desegregation cases overshadowed its other work. The NAACP continued its two-pronged attack on labor problems. First, the NAACP cooperated with other civil rights, labor, and religious groups in lobbying for civil rights and labor legislation. In 1950, the NAACP formed the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), which included over 30 organizations and a wide array of labor leaders, including the liberal Democrat Walter Reuther and the more conservative AFL leader George Meany. The NAACP-labor alliance lobbied for a permanent FEPC, the repeal of antilabor laws such as the Taft-Hartley Act, and an end to union and employment discrimination.

That alliance stood in tension with the NAACP's second labor program: challenging race discrimination in unions. Unions at local levels often remained uncooperative with their national leaders' efforts to end discrimination and ally with the NAACP. Some black unionists nonetheless cautioned the NAACP against prioritizing its civil rights agenda over labor policies. When the Association conditioned its support for a pro-union railroad law on a nondiscrimination requirement, one African-American union member warned the NAACP not to defeat the bill entirely.

The conflict between supporting and condemning unions took an institutional form. Clarence Mitchell, who graduated from labor secretary to director of the NAACP's Washington Bureau in 1952, not surprisingly emphasized co-operation with unions on a national level. His replacement as NAACP labor secretary was his institutional rival, Herbert Hill, who primarily attacked discrimination within unions. Roy Wilkins, who became executive secretary in 1955, frequently attempted to mediate between the two.

To challenge discrimination in labor unions, Hill used grassroots economic political pressure as well as

state and federal administrative tools. In 1953, he began conducting workshops to teach black union members how to wield power in discriminatory unions. After the AFL-CIO merger in 1955, the NAACP educated the labor federation's staff about race discrimination. Also among the NAACP's main goals during this period was targeting large corporations that adopted discriminatory labor practices when moving to the South to capitalize on cheap labor.

Hill also launched direct attacks on particular unions. In New York, he was instrumental in the desegregation of New York City's Sheet Metal Workers Local 28. In Atlanta, he targeted discrimination in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, a longtime ally of the NAACP that did not receive the criticism well. Nationally, the NAACP challenged widespread race discrimination in the steel, oil, automobile, and airline manufacturing unions. Building trades unions were especially recalcitrant and opposed NAACP challenges to their racial practices. In 1969, Hill facilitated the creation of the National Afro-American Builders, Inc. to help African-American builders gain skills necessary to bid for larger construction jobs.

Under Hill's direction, the NAACP also addressed agricultural labor practices in the 1950s. Hill investigated the conditions of migratory farmworkers and wrote a compelling booklet on the subject titled *No Harvest for the Reaper: The Story of the Migratory Agricultural Worker in the United States*. In New York, the NAACP called for government reform of agricultural labor camps. Hill had exposed several upstate New York camps where African-American farmworkers recruited from the South labored in oppressive conditions. On the federal level, when the NAACP supported raising the federal minimum wage in 1955, it lobbied for inclusion of both domestic and agricultural workers.

Throughout the 1950s, the NAACP used federal and state administrative agencies to redress labor problems. Lacking a federal law to attack discrimination, the NAACP turned to state fair employment agencies as well as less effective federal agencies. It filed complaints of employment discrimination with the Office of Government Contract Compliance, an agency President Eisenhower created by executive order in 1954 to supervise businesses with federal contracts. It also filed complaints against segregated and discriminatory unions with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

In the early 1960s, direct action protests by groups such as Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee spotlighted the concerns of

African-Americans. In December 1962, two civil rights leaders sought to capitalize on momentum from these protests. Known for their long-standing advocacy of African-American workers, Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph planned the event with economic issues in mind. They decided to call the protest a "March for Jobs and Freedom." The NAACP was one of the many organizations that took part in the historic march, which is now remembered for Martin Luther King's antidiscrimination focus in his "I Have a Dream" speech. Other speakers, including Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers, focused on economic issues.

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund after 1956

After 1956, the NAACP and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) became distinctly separate organizations with different agendas. The two groups had essentially served as a single organization since 1939, when the NAACP created the LDF largely for tax reasons. The 1956 split was apparent in the types of activities undertaken by the two groups. While the NAACP continued to pursue lobbying for pro-labor legislation, the LDF focused on school desegregation litigation.

The LDF turned its litigation focus toward labor issues after passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Under the direction of Jack Greenberg, the LDF launched a plan to file 1,000 complaints after the law's equal employment section (Title VII) went into effect in 1965. The LDF targeted large corporations such as General Motors and U.S. Steel, which offered well-paying blue-collar jobs in areas with high black unemployment. Rather than seeking employment per se, the LDF aimed to perfect the law itself.

One of the LDF's first successful cases authorized the use of class-action suits. The case targeted discrimination in Tennessee's Werthan Bag Company, later mentioned in the 1989 movie *Driving Miss Daisy*. In another notable LDF victory, the Supreme Court established that job qualification tests must relate to abilities needed to perform a job. It accepted LDF arguments that a test by the Duke Power Company unfairly discriminated against blacks who were equally capable to perform a desired job.

The LDF successfully targeted discrimination in the federal government after 1972, when Congress amended Title VII to allow such suits. The LDF notably won discrimination cases against NASA, the Postal Service, the army, the navy, the air force, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

It also proved successful in discrimination suits against city and state governments involving teachers, police officers, and firefighters.

Since the 1990s, the Legal Defense Fund has won court cases against Shoney's Restaurant, the Nashville Banner, and Shell Oil Company. It has also pursued employment discrimination cases against Abercrombie & Fitch clothing retailers, AVX (a South Carolina-based high-tech components manufacturer), the City of Chicago's fire department, and the New York City Parks Department and Board of Education.

The NAACP after 1964

Like the LDF, the NAACP's labor activities changed with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The law, a result of public pressure following violent demonstrations in the South, appeared to spell victory for the NAACP's years of efforts lobbying for such legislation. The NAACP leader, Herbert Hill, organized local committees to educate African-American workers about their rights under the statute. He helped numerous African-American workers file complaints against governmental and private employers as well as unions. Between 1965 and 1977, the NAACP filed several thousand complaints on behalf of African-American workers with federal agencies like the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the National Labor Relations Board. The same year the Civil Rights Act became law, the NAACP legal counsel, Robert Carter, finally convinced the NLRB to deny certification to segregating and discriminating unions.

Throughout the 1970s, the NAACP looked beyond workers to the poor more generally, lobbying for expanded assistance to the poor and pressing for higher minimum wages, welfare reform, and full employment.

Under Benjamin L. Hooks, who headed the NAACP from 1977 to 1993, Benjamin Chavis, who took over until 1995, and Kweisi Mfume, who led the organization from 1995 to 2005, the NAACP has continued to pursue litigation against companies when complaints are insufficient to redress employment discrimination. In 1996, the NAACP launched its Economic Reciprocity Initiative to publicize the practices of major American industries in areas such as hiring, job promotions, advertising, and charity work. The goal was to promote those companies with favorable practices toward African-Americans while economically harming ones with poor results. The NAACP successfully sued Cracker Barrel in 2001 for employment discrimination and intervened in a

lawsuit against Coca-Cola filed by current and former employees.

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See also African-Americans; Civil Rights Act of 1964/ Title VII; Elaine, Arkansas Massacre (1919); Fair Employment Practice Committee; March on Washington Movement; National Negro Congress; Peonage

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORED GRADUATE NURSES

There is no record of what prompted Martha Franklin, in the fall of 1906, to write about five hundred letters to other black nurses to find out about their work. She wrote to individual nurses, to directors of training schools for black nurses, and to members of black alumnae and other nursing organizations. Franklin must have known that their situations were difficult at best. Soon after formal nursing education appeared in the United States in the mid-1870s, scores of hospital nurse training schools sprang up all over the country. Students spent two or three years working in the wards until they graduated, when a new group of students were enrolled. Most hospital nurse training schools were segregated, and black graduates found particular difficulty finding employment where race, as well as gender and occupation, factored against them.

Franklin was a Connecticut native who graduated in 1897 as the only African-American in her class at the Women's Hospital Training School for Nurses in Philadelphia. Franklin was a private-duty nurse in Connecticut when she started her marathon correspondence. In August 1908, Franklin's letters resulted in 52 black nurses meeting at St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City. They gathered at the invitation of Adah Thoms, the president of the Lincoln School for Nurses Alumnae Association. During this three-day meeting, goals were developed to advance the standards and best interests of trained nurses, break down discrimination in the nursing profession, and develop leadership within the ranks of black nurses.

The black physicians' organization, the National Medical Association, was also meeting nearby, and various members lent their support to their nursing colleagues. At the close of the three-day meeting, Franklin was offered the position of president and Thoms was elected treasurer. Three days later, the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) was formed with 26 charter members.

This first meeting of black nurses reflected the activism of the new profession of nursing as a whole. The Nurses' Associated Alumnae of the United States and Canada, known after 1911 as the American Nurses Association (ANA), was organized in 1897.

In 1909, 52 black nurses gathered in Boston for the first annual NACGN meeting. One member was Mary Eliza Mahoney, who had graduated in 1879 and was acclaimed as the first African-American graduate nurse in the United States. The early years of the NACGN continued with annual meetings in different cities at the invitation of local groups or alumnae associations. These early meetings were a testament to the dedication and strength of the membership. These women overcame the expense and physical and mental hardships inherent in forming and sustaining an organization of working black women at this time of Jim Crow laws and widespread racial discrimination. In turn, the organization gave black nurses a stronger professional identity and groomed them in organizational leadership while shielding them from "the excessive racism, hostility, and denigration of their white colleagues."

The meetings involved presentations on such topics as the high incidence of tuberculosis and the high infant mortality among blacks as well as the conditions that spawned them—poor housing and lack of health facilities and employment opportunities. The nurses also discussed the unfair practice of some southern states that barred black nurses from taking the national nursing examination.

The role of the NACGN assumed a new urgency when the ANA restructured in 1916. Membership in the ANA, previously through alumnae associations, now was available only with membership in state nurses' associations. Since 16 southern state associations and the District of Columbia denied membership to black nurses, they were now effectively denied membership in the ANA. The ANA allowed the Alumnae Association of Freedmen's Hospital in Washington DC to retain membership, but future black graduates from these southern states were effectively barred from joining.

The NACGN formed a national nurses' registry in 1918, much the same as the ANA operated, to help its members find work. Membership steadily increased. In 1920, when the NACGN became incorporated in the state of New York, there were about 500 members. In 1926, the NACGN borrowed space for a headquarters office within the offices of the National Health Circle for Colored People, in New York City, and in 1928, the first issue of the NACGN's organ, the *National News Bulletin*, appeared. Yet, as the Great Depression took its toll and strategies to achieve integration with white nurses floundered, membership in the NACGN dropped to just 175 in 1933.

From this low point, the NACGN somehow managed to regroup itself, as the historian Darlene Clark Hines has described, through a combination of

factors. In 1934, the first of a series of regional conferences, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, was held. Attended by black and white nurse leaders, as well as representatives from other disciplines, the discussions included the relationship between the NACGN and the ANA, the NACGN structure, and the status of black nurses. The black nurse leaders Estelle Massey Riddle and Mabel Keaton Staupers became involved with the organization, along with Congresswoman Frances Payne Bolton and the Julius Rosenwald fund administration, while some key white nurse leaders expressed concern with the black nurses' *de facto* exclusion from the ANA.

Estelle Massey Riddle, the first African-American nurse to hold a master's degree, was the NACGN president from 1934 to 1939. Mabel Keaton Staupers was hired as the first executive secretary, a post she held for the next 12 years. Staupers proved a staunch and energetic supporter of the NACGN for many years, eventually serving as the NACGN's last president. Also in 1936, the NACGN moved into its own office, strategically located in the same New York building as the three main white nursing organizations. Over the years, Congresswoman Bolton and the Julius Rosenwald fund continued their support.

The NACGN consistently stood for improved education for blacks, along with improved, nonsegregated educational and work opportunities for black nurses. The thrust for better care for black patients was continued during these years, as the NACGN worked with the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to improve conditions in black hospitals. Additionally, the NACGN co-operated with other nursing organizations on a variety of fronts, including the national Fair Employment Practices Act and the Bolton Bill amendment, which created the Cadet Nurse Corps.

ANA membership for black nurses remained a thorny issue; in 1939, 16 southern state associations still denied membership to black nurses. The two other major nursing organizations, the National League of Nursing Education and the National Organization of Public Health Nurses, both granted individual membership to black nurses when necessary.

Following the war, the ANA's position changed, although this was not immediately reflected by the state associations. The ANA membership voted in 1948 to allow individual membership to black nurses who were barred from their state associations. By 1953, all the states, except Georgia, admitted black nurses. Mabel Staupers wrote in 1984: "The war did a lot towards bringing it about. When people are sick they know no prejudice . . . I also feel that the ANA grew up."

In 1950, with all black nurses now eligible to join the ANA, the NACGN leaders considered that the major charge of its later years was fulfilled—black nurses from every state could now join the ANA. Mabel Staupers was elected president of the NACGN and oversaw its dissolution. The final membership meeting was held in January 1951 at St. Mark's Methodist Church, the site of the NACGN founding over 40 years earlier.

Thus, years before the start of the civil rights movement, a group of black nurses joined together to work for improved health care for black Americans as well as racial equality within nursing. Disturbingly, in 1971, the National Black Nurses' Association was formed following concerns about a lack of black representation in the ANA leadership.

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NATIONAL CHILD LABOR COMMITTEE

The National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) was formed on April 15, 1904, as an organization dedicated to the abolition of child labor and to promoting the well-being and education of children in the United States. The organization focused on raising public

awareness about the employment of children in the industrial, service, and agricultural sectors and on securing the passage of child labor regulations and compulsory education laws.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the United States witnessed an unprecedented period of industrial and urban expansion. With this growth came what many Americans saw as intolerable social problems. From the 1890s through World War I, years commonly known as the Progressive Era, large numbers of middle-class men and women established reform organizations meant to combat the nation's ills. They focused on myriad issues ranging from urban poverty, political corruption, and temperance to woman suffrage, immigration restriction, and industrial regulation. During this time, growing numbers of children in the United States worked in textile factories, coal mines, glasshouses, and food canneries, as well as in fields picking produce, in city tenements manufacturing piece goods, and on the streets as peddlers, newsboys, and messengers. These working children drew the attention of many middle-class social reformers. Shaped by a mix of humanitarian objectives and fears of social degeneracy and decay, a strong child labor reform movement emerged in the United States by the turn of the twentieth century.

In line with other progressives, child labor reformers looked to use the state to bring about change. As early as the 1820s, labor organizations pressed for state laws restricting the employment of children in mills and factories. In 1836, Massachusetts was the first state in the United States to enact such legislation, outlawing the employment of children in manufacturing establishments who were under 15 years old and did not attend school at least three months a year. Massachusetts passed another act in 1842 limiting the workday of children in mills and factories to 10 hours. In the decades that followed, other industrialized states passed similar statutes. By the turn of the century, numerous states in the North and Midwest had child labor laws applicable to a variety of occupations that set minimum ages of hire, established educational requirements, and prohibited night work by children.

Organized labor, as well as groups established by middle-class social reformers, including religious organizations, consumer leagues, and women's clubs, was integral in the passage of these child labor statutes. Yet, the laws and their enforcement were uneven, and as late as 1902, no southern state had a child labor law. Owners of industrial enterprises in the North, especially cotton textile manufacturers, argued that the absence of child labor legislation in the southern states gave unfair advantage to manufacturing enterprises located there. This led some northern

manufacturers to open and operate factories in the South to circumvent regulations in their home states.

This lack of uniformity among state laws highlighted the fact that child labor was not only a pressing social and economic problem, but that it also was national in scope and called for a concerted, coordinated nationwide effort to eradicate it. Leaders of child labor reform groups who worked at the local and state levels, therefore, created the National Child Labor Committee. Edgar Gardner Murphy, chairman of the Alabama Child Labor Committee, and members of the New York Child Labor Committee, especially Felix Adler, who was one of the New York group's founding members, spearheaded the 1904 formation of the NCLC. Edgar Gardner Murphy, a minister from Montgomery, organized the Alabama Child Labor Committee in 1901, and two years later, he and his organization helped secure the passage of a child labor law in Alabama, the first twentieth-century child labor law enacted in the South. Murphy sat on the NCLC's first board of trustees, as did Felix Adler, a Columbia University professor and the committee's first chairperson. The NCLC selected the University of Pennsylvania sociologist Samuel McCune Lindsay as its first general secretary and the southerner Alexander McKelway and the northerner Owen Lovejoy, both ministers and longtime child labor reform advocates, as assistant secretaries. Headquartered in New York City, about one third of the NCLC's first members were from the South, with the remaining two thirds hailing from northern states. The organization counted among its founding members some of the foremost social reformers in the United States, including the settlement house pioneers Jane Addams and Lillian Wald, and the general secretary of the National Consumers' League, Florence Kelley, as well as academicians, journalists, labor and religious leaders, and progressive politicians and businessmen.

The NCLC focused much of its early twentieth-century activities on collecting information about the employment of children and disseminating it to the public, with the intention of arousing widespread sentiment against child labor and support for legislative restrictions of it. The organization first sent investigators into textile mills, factories, and coal mines, where some of the most flagrant abuses of child labor occurred, and then focused on children who did industrial homework, worked in the street trades, and labored as itinerant farmworkers. The reports of these investigations often included graphic accounts of the realities, effects, and hazards of child labor and statistics documenting appallingly low education rates and literacy standards among the nation's child workers. The NCLC published these findings in its

quarterly publication, *The Child Labor Bulletin*, in the weekly social reform magazine, *The Survey*, as well as in book and pamphlet form, and in academic journals. It used the editorial pages of newspapers, leaflets, and mass mailings to reach an even wider audience.

It was the photographs of children working in a variety of industrial and agricultural settings, especially those taken by the NCLC investigator Lewis Hine, that had the most profound and lasting impact on public opinion. In 1909, Hine published the first of his photographic exposés documenting children at work, “Day Laborers before Their Time” and “Child Labor in the Carolinas.” Two years later, he began an extensive investigation and compiled a far-reaching photographic record of children at work, traveling throughout the eastern United States, from cranberry bogs in New England to oyster canneries along the Gulf Coast. The photojournalism of Lewis Hine, as did the written reports of NCLC investigations, thrust the issue of child labor into the national spotlight and political discourse.

In spite of advances made by state child labor committees and the NCLC in the passage of child labor laws at the state level, disparities continued to exist, and the NCLC increasingly focused on the enactment of federal child labor legislation that would apply to all states evenly. In 1906, Senator Alfred Beveridge of Indiana introduced into Congress a bill that would make illegal the interstate transportation and sale of goods produced by companies employing children under the age of 14 years. A heated debate ensued among the members of the NCLC’s board over whether the organization should endorse the Beveridge bill, and divided the NCLC between a faction preferring to continue lobbying for regulatory laws at the state level and another seeing federal intervention as the most expeditious, albeit constitutionally controversial, route to the eradication of child labor. The NCLC ultimately voted to endorse the Beveridge bill, a decision that led to the resignation of Edgar Gardner Murphy and other leading southern members from the organization.

The movement for federal child labor legislation faced staunch opposition from a number of fronts, including not only employers but also parents of working children who needed their income to keep the family economy afloat. Despite support from the NCLC and other social reform groups, the Beveridge bill failed to pass. It did, however, garner enough attention and interest to facilitate the creation of the U.S. Children’s Bureau in 1912. The Beveridge bill was also the basis of the Keating-Owen Child Labor bill, which NCLC endorsed and for which it actively lobbied. The Keating-Owen Act became law on September 1, 1916.

Although the U.S. Supreme Court declared the Keating-Owen Act unconstitutional in 1918, the NCLC continued to push for federal child labor regulations. In 1919, the NCLC supported the enactment of the Child Labor Tax Act, which levied a 10% excise tax on goods produced by children, and, after the Supreme Court deemed it unconstitutional in 1922, worked aggressively to secure a constitutional amendment that would give Congress explicit constitutional authority to regulate child labor. Though approved by Congress in 1924, the states failed to ratify the amendment. In 1938, the NCLC finally saw its goal of the enactment of a permanent federal child labor law realized with the inclusion of minimum age provisions within the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The National Child Labor Committee continued to work for improvements in federal child labor legislation, especially to extend the protections afforded by the Fair Labor Standards Act to children working as agricultural laborers, and in education requirements and standards. The NCLC continues to be a leading advocacy group for youth in the United States and is a clearinghouse for information relating to child labor law compliance and enforcement, education, and youth employment. The NCLC celebrated the centennial anniversary of the organization in 2004.

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See also Child Labor; Fair Labor Standards Act; Family Wage; Keating-Owen Child Labor Act (1916); Law and Labor; National Consumers League; rogressive Era

NATIONAL CIVIC FEDERATION

The National Civic Federation (NCF) emerged out of the era of “Great Upheaval” in labor relations between the mid-1870s and mid-1890s. It reflected the heightened anxiety of businessmen and the middle-class public over the growing polarization between labor and capital and the increasing power of unprecedentedly large corporations in manufacturing, transportation, and finance. Through a novel tripartite structure, some of the largest corporations crafted what they hoped would be an institutional forum for cultivating “responsible” labor and some measure of business accommodation to legitimate grievances of labor, while policing the competitive marketplace to reduce excessive and destructive competition. They recruited allies among civic leaders and the national officers of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). In so doing, they also incurred the wrath of left-wing labor leaders and what they termed “anarchists” among businessmen, their archrivals in the National Association of Manufacturers and its avowedly “open shop” movement.

The origins of the NCF lay in the depression of 1893 and the Pullman strike and boycott. Shortly after the closing of the Columbian World’s Exposition in Chicago, a coalition of civic and business leaders prompted by Rev. William T. Stead, the author of *If Christ Came to Chicago*, called a public meeting at which the assembled reformers, including Jane Addams, Henry Demarest Lloyd, the banker Lyman Gage, and others called for the formation of a “civic federation” to pursue the goals of social amelioration and class reconciliation. Months later, early in the strike of Pullman car shop employees, a delegation from the Chicago Civic Federation (CCF) tried unsuccessfully to persuade George M. Pullman to meet with his striking employees. In November 1894, following the collapse of the massive Pullman boycott itself, the CCF convened a Congress on Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration to re-affirm the goals of industrial mediation. Through the appointment of a National Commission, the CCF hoped to influence states and the federal government to pass new legislation establishing boards of arbitration and support a new national legislative initiative to resolve future railroad labor disputes. That initiative eventually took the form of the Erdman Act of 1898. In the context of the return of prosperity in 1897 and an accelerating pace of corporate consolidation in what came to be called the “great merger movement,” the CCF sponsored high-profile national conferences on foreign policy (1898) and the “trust problem” (1899).

During the CCF’s early years, a one-time Kansas City journalist and conservative civic promoter,

Ralph Easley, served as its secretary and chief organizer. Indeed, it was Easley’s vision of an influential national organization committed to industrial conciliation that precipitated the formation of an organizing committee for such a body at the National Conference on Trusts. Despite some opposition from within the CCF, Easley managed to call another National Conference on Trade Agreements in 1900, out of which a tripartite board was appointed for a National Civic Federation that, in its early years, would be committed to industrial conciliation. Included as members were Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor, and John Mitchell, the president of the United Mine Workers of America, whose organizations both experienced considerable growth and national prominence in that period.

Also recruited to the NCF in its first year were the Republican boss and former industrialist Mark Hanna and the corporate titans Charles Francis Adams, Andrew Carnegie, and key figures in the J. P. Morgan investment firm, including George W. Perkins. As the NCF’s organizational structure expanded into a series of functioning departments—Trade Agreements, Welfare, Immigration, Commission on Public Ownership of Utilities—its membership also reached deeper into the corporate and labor worlds. Other key members included, for business, Elbert Gary, Samuel Insull, Cyrus McCormick, and August Belmont and for labor, besides Gompers and Mitchell, William Mahon (Streetcar Employees) and Frank Sargent (Locomotive Firemen), along with public representatives, Easley, Seth Low, and John R. Commons. As the focus of the NCF shifted, so too did its membership, though Easley provided continuity as the perpetual hub of the organization.

In its earliest years, the NCF’s chief pre-occupation lay in labor conciliation. Although frequently operating behind the scenes, the NCF helped diffuse conflict or produce trade agreements that brought potentially disabling strikes to a conclusion. Most notable among these were the Steel Strike of 1901, the Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902, and the Machinists’ Strikes of 1901 and 1904. Emblematic of these efforts was the behind-the-scenes work of the NCF (notably Easley, Mitchell, and Morgan) to craft first a temporary agreement in the 1901 Anthracite coal dispute and then a resolution of the bitter five-month strike in 1902, through a presidentially appointed commission that left the miners without formal recognition but in possession of a trade agreement granting wage concessions and creating a board of arbitration that would hear future grievances. The NCF hailed the agreement as a model for future labor-management conciliation.

Officially committed to fostering labor-management peace through negotiation, the NCF approach did not in fact reflect the day-to-day practice of many of its most influential corporate members. This is perhaps most notably true in the case of the U.S. Steel Corporation and its president, Judge Elbert Gary, who like many of his colleagues, maintained a determined anti-union posture throughout the period of the NCF's greatest influence.

Almost from the outset, the NCF positioned itself as an alternative to the more aggressively anti-union National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), which after 1902 spearheaded an "open shop" campaign that sought to roll back trade union gains in cities across the country through locally organized Citizens' Industrial Associations (CIA). Its leaders, David Parry and James Van Cleave, also supported high-profile prosecutions in the famous Danbury Hatters' and Buck's Stove and Range cases of union officials, including NCF member Samuel Gompers, for backing trade union boycott activity. Quietly, some key corporate members of the NCF assisted in Gompers's legal defense.

Socialists and industrial union opponents of the AFL leadership consistently attacked Gompers, John Mitchell, and William D. Mahon for their participation in the NCF. Gompers saw such participation as the logical outgrowth of the stature the AFL had acquired in the buoyant years 1897 to 1904, and he regarded this position as a crowning personal and organizational achievement. His opponents viewed such participation as nothing short of class collaboration with fundamentally anti-union corporate elites.

After 1905, the NCF's focus shifted somewhat from direct mediation of labor-management disputes to promotion of corporatist measures that might ameliorate class friction in a number of areas: employee welfare, regulation of trusts (through amendment of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act), public utilities regulation, workers' compensation, child labor, and immigration. The NCF, and especially its secretary Ralph Easley and president Seth Low, played major roles in the efforts of corporate reformers allied with both Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson to craft new regulatory legislation that would both limit the effects of unpredictable court decisions under the Sherman Anti-trust Act and move the federal government toward a greater administrative role in the trust-dominated marketplace. These goals came to be embodied to some degree in the Clayton Antitrust and Federal Trade Commission Acts of 1914.

Although its labor members did not always join wholeheartedly in its initiatives, the NCF pioneered some new legislation (such as state-level workers' compensation laws) and promoted new arenas of

corporate innovation (welfare capitalism of the 1920s). Some of these efforts bore fruit well after the NCF itself ceased to be an influential force in public life. During and after World War I, a cadre of "enlightened" businessmen continued to seek ways to secure the position of America's largest corporations against unnecessary competition, while at the same time limiting the growth of more aggressive forms of unionism and independent labor and socialist politics.

Easley and the NCF steadily lost influence in the postwar era. But the seeds of its corporatist vision had been planted and eventually bore fruit in the New Era and New Deal.

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NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE

For over a century, the National Consumers League (NCL) has been a leader in the movement to improve the pay and working conditions of factory laborers. Throughout the twentieth century, it consistently believed that these reforms would ameliorate some of the negative effects of capitalism and lead to an increase in the working classes' economic and political power. Its operations employed a dual strategy, coupling its campaign to use consumers' economic power to persuade factory owners to improve working conditions for laborers with efforts to enact and enforce legislation that established safety standards, minimum wages, and maximum hours. Founded in 1899, the League began by uniting white, middle-class, women reformers with trade unionists to end the sweating system for women and children in cities throughout the United States. By the end of the twentieth century, the NCL employed a similar strategy in

its efforts to improve the working conditions for all laborers in factories throughout the world.

The NCL originated from the Working Women's Society (WWS), established in New York in 1886, and its successor, the Consumers League of New York (CLNY), created in 1890. The WWS was composed of both working-class and middle-class women who sought to improve the working conditions of laboring women. The working-class women attempted to organize workers into unions and advocated for protective legislation while the middle-class members worked to educate female consumers and use their purchasing power to end the sweating system for women laborers. After four years, the Society divided along class lines and dissolved. The middle-class members, led by Josephine Shaw Lowell and Maud Nathan, established the CLNY to enlarge their campaign.

The CLNY inspired the creation of other state consumer leagues and ultimately the formation of a national league. It borrowed the strategy of a similar organization operating in London that created a "white list" of businesses that maintained acceptable working conditions for their employees and did not use home manufacturing or child labor. Local leagues established throughout the North and Midwest each employed this strategy. By 1898, the local leagues sought to co-ordinate their efforts and founded the NCL to create a consumers' "white label," modeled after the union label, that it awarded to manufacturers who met its labor standards. The following year, the socialist and settlement worker Florence Kelley, who had been active in forming a league in Illinois and had proposed the label strategy, became the first secretary of the NCL.

Kelley served the NCL until her death in 1932. Throughout her tenure she attempted to arouse and exploit the moral conscience of women consumers through both economic and ethical arguments. She explained that when employers maintained unsanitary factories and used tenement manufacturing, they were both inhibiting the use and development of technological advances that could lower the cost of goods and were endangering public health through the sale of dirty products. Kelley also emphasized the human costs of hazardous work for long hours and low pay to the workers, their children, and their homes and asked middle-class women, as good citizens, to use their consumer power to help. Kelley used these arguments as the basis for the white label campaign.

The white label campaign required extensive field-work and a publicity operation. The NCL began by investigating and documenting working conditions for urban laborers throughout much of the country. Within five years, it awarded the white label to more

than 60 factories. It publicized its work, in part, through the manufacturers and retailers that complied with its standards. Most prominently, it forged an agreement with the garment manufacturer and department store tycoon John Wanamaker to create window displays that illustrated the contrast in working conditions between sweatshops and model factories and featured Wanamaker's clothes with a white label. For those companies that persisted in using the sweated labor, Kelley led the League in a legislative campaign.

The NCL worked with state leagues and numerous other organizations including trade unions, the National Women's Trade Union League, settlement house workers, and state and federal agencies to pass protective labor laws, establish agencies to oversee their enforcement, and defend them against legal challenges. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the League assisted in the enactment of a number of state laws that limited child labor, established safety standards for factories, and set maximum hours for women workers. It played a critical role in defending the constitutionality of Oregon's labor law in a case that went to the United States Supreme Court. Kelley and her colleague Josephine Goldmark, through Goldmark's brother-in-law Louis Brandeis, submitted a brief to the Court that outlined the League's extensive evidence of the injurious results of sweated labor. When the Court upheld the maximum hours law for women in 1908 in *Muller v. Oregon*, more than 15 states enacted similar laws. In 1909, the NCL drafted a minimum wage law for women modeled after a British law. It was enacted first in 1912 in Massachusetts and subsequently in 14 additional states.

By the 1920s the NCL made its legislative work primary. In 1918, it ended its white label campaign without abandoning its belief in what it called "ethical consumerism." Florence Kelley explained that workers through their unions and collective bargaining were able to secure better working conditions than the standards set by the League at the turn of the century in its label campaign. Focusing on Congress and state legislatures, the NCL expanded its efforts to secure protective labor laws into the southern states, broadened its efforts beyond white women and children to include white men and black men and women, and sought health care for women and children outside of the factory. One of Kelley's greatest legislative efforts was the NCL's advocacy of the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act. Passed in 1921, it provided federal funds to states for maternity and child health programs.

The NCL's legislative campaigns suffered setbacks in the mid-1920s. In 1923, the Supreme Court struck

down the District of Columbia's minimum wage law. In 1926, Congress refused to continue to fund the Sheppard-Towner Act. The NCL also fought against the National Woman's Party's Equal Rights Amendment, believing that the amendment would undermine the protective labor legislation that remained. The NCL persevered and intensified its legislative efforts during the Great Depression, securing some of its most significant reforms during the New Deal era.

During the 1930s, the NCL assisted in the enactment of state and federal labor legislation and in operating the agencies created to oversee regulation enforcement. The NCL led efforts to allow state involvement in labor contract negotiations, worked with the National Recovery Administration during its existence (1933–1935) in setting and enforcing minimum wage and maximum hours codes, and was instrumental in securing wage and hours laws in several southern states. In 1933, President Roosevelt appointed the NCL member Frances Perkins as secretary of labor, and the NCL member Clara Beyer was a regional director for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Most prominently, the NCL lobbied extensively for the Fair Labor Standards Act, which passed in 1938, codifying into federal law its labor reform efforts.

Beginning in the 1940s, the NCL once again faced external opposition. Professional male experts replaced NCL members in governmental positions who oversaw the new labor laws. NCL members were frustrated both because they were marginalized and because the labor legislation and its implementation left the wages and working conditions for countless laborers unreformed. The League struggled to maintain its mission, even temporarily changing its name during World War II to the National Consumers League for Fair Labor Standards, to distinguish itself from emerging groups that championed consumers' rights. During the 1950s, Cold War politics and antilabor forces required some NCL members to defend their activism. For the following 30 years, the NCL's influence significantly diminished.

In the 1980s, the NCL began to regain some public stature when it expanded its original program of using consumer power to improve working conditions for wage laborers beyond United States borders. The NCL was responding to the public exposition of deplorable working conditions in many of the factories in the global apparel industry. After World War II, a number of factors caused a rise in violations of the hard-fought protective labor laws, including a shift of production outside of the United States, a decrease in inspections of factories, rescission of some

labor restrictions in the United States and an absence of regulation in manufacturing sites outside the United States, an increase of poor immigrants in the United States, and a decrease in the power of labor unions. The NCL joined the antisweatshop campaigns led first by the National Labor Committee and then the Department of Labor, in a fight it had championed a century earlier.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the NCL worked with the federal government, trade unionists, and other nongovernmental organizations to set labor standards for the global apparel industry and ensure their enforcement through public and private power. Once again, one of its primary tools to set and enforce a minimum wage, maximum hours, prohibitions on child labor, and health and safety standards was to appeal to consumers and use their economic power to persuade companies to improve their treatment of their workers. In 1995, it worked with Secretary of Labor Robert Reich as he set forth a "white list" of manufacturers that followed the government's labor standards. In 1997, it joined the Apparel Industry Partnership, creating labor codes and awarding "No Sweat" labels to companies that complied. Time will reveal the effect of these efforts, but at the turn of the twenty-first century, the spirit of the NCL persisted.

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NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The National Education Association (NEA) is a teachers' union that evolved from a professional association. Numbering 2.7 million members in 2005, the present organization developed from an 1857 meeting called by Thomas W. Valentine and Daniel B. Hagar, presidents of the New York and Massachusetts State Teachers' Associations, to form a National Teachers' Association (NTA). The meeting attracted about 100 educators who regarded themselves as "practical teachers," in distinction from the state officials, college presidents, and reformers who composed other educational associations. Working together, these founding members hoped to professionalize their occupation. They resented existing lay governance of education and sought to become a self-regulating profession with control over preparation, qualifications, and practices in the field.

Women soon outnumbered men in teaching, but only "gentlemen" qualified as full members according to the NTA Constitution. At the 1857 meeting, two women signed the Constitution; however, women were not accepted as full members until 1866, when the Association replaced the word "gentlemen" with "persons." Several women served as officers of the Association and addressed annual meetings in

subsequent years. Nevertheless, women's participation in the Association did not nearly match their proportions in teaching in the late nineteenth century.

The founders identified themselves as "practical teachers," but their annual meetings reflected their swift ascent to administration as men profited from the nineteenth-century bureaucratization of schools and moved into these newly created, better-paying positions. In 1870, the NTA changed its name to the National Education Association, after merging with the American Normal School Association, the National Association of School Superintendents, and the Central College Association, all organizations that brought more administrators into the membership. To re-inforce the national scope of their ambitions, leaders selected a different city to host the annual meeting each year. Addresses typically concerned developments in educational theory and federal aid to education. Annual meetings were also the venue for elections and important committee appointments, such as those to recommend curricular reform for secondary and elementary education.

Membership grew, but it did not keep pace with the soaring numbers employed in U.S. schools. Between the Civil War and 1900, the number of teachers tripled, but less than 1% joined the NEA. Focused on influencing educational policy and raising professional



Secretary, National Education Association (NEA), displays emblem to John W. Studebaker, U.S. Commissioner of Education. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USE6-D-005523-a].

prestige, the leadership showed little interest in the problems facing ordinary classroom teachers, whose meager salaries did not permit regular annual meeting attendance. The NEA passed occasional resolutions in favor of better pay, but for the most part, leaders expressed faith that professionalism would secure better salaries.

Seeking an infusion of members and activity, the NEA recruited as president Thomas W. Bicknell, editor of the *Journal of Education* and the former president of the American Institute of Instruction. A tireless promoter, Bicknell billed the 1884 meeting as “the greatest educational show on earth,” drawing attendance of nearly 5,000. Not only the NEA’s most successful, the program was also the NEA’s most inclusive to date, with two African-American men and five white women addressing the general assembly. The organization’s effort to appeal to women teachers and reformers succeeded; 54% of those attending were women.

Bicknell popularized attendance at the annual meeting, but he was also instrumental in creating an elite circle within the NEA, the National Council of Education. Formed in 1881, the Council consisted of 51 members appointed by NEA leaders to deliberate and hand down important decisions on educational questions. It soon became a lightning rod for concerns about centralized authority in education. Responding to members’ demands for more open discussion, the Council more than tripled in size during its 60-year history, while its mandate grew outmoded. The Council was created to deliver expert opinions; but the NEA Research Division, created in 1922, provided the data and expert analysis on which the Association came to rely.

Criticism of the NEA and the Council’s elitist orientation mounted as women classroom teachers struggled for representation. Women’s attendance at annual meetings grew in the 1890s, but their numbers did not translate to influence. Women teachers controlled their own urban associations, like the Chicago Teachers’ Federation, and local successes raised their expectations for a national organization that would pursue their priorities. Facing new demands from classroom teachers, established NEA leaders guarded their power. At the 1903 annual meeting, the NEA president, Nicholas Murray Butler, proposed narrowing the electoral process. Instead of the affiliated state associations selecting the members of the nominating committee, Butler suggested the president should appoint them. Infuriated by Butler’s grab for power, the Chicago Teachers’ Federation activist Margaret Haley turned the vote against him. She argued that his proposal would create an

undemocratic “self-perpetuating machine,” designed to block women from positions of authority.

Demanding that teachers share in the wealth they helped to create, Haley explicitly connected classroom teachers’ and workers’ rights. She galvanized a following at the 1904 annual meeting with her speech, “Why Teachers Should Organize,” in which she contended that schools were becoming too much like factories and urged the importance of teacher welfare and independence to the protection of the nation’s democratic ideals. The NEA leadership charged Aaron Gove, the Denver superintendent of schools, with responding to Haley’s address. Gove agreed that teachers deserved better terms and conditions of work, but he warned that organizing would lead to class division within the profession and harm the schools. Gove argued the efficiency of centralized authority, insisting that “despotism can be wielded with a gloved hand.” These and similar expressions of patronizing paternalism motivated classroom teachers to embrace Haley’s call to organize for better conditions of employment. The first known strike by NEA-affiliated teachers took place that same year in Saline County, Illinois, where teachers refused to sign contracts until the school board met their salary demands. Though strikes remained rare, issues such as salaries, pensions, and tenure began to show up on the NEA agenda.

Conflicts of Gender and Rank

When administrators dominated the NEA in the nineteenth century, organizational priorities emphasized educational policy and building a profession. As classroom teachers made their opinions known at annual meetings, teachers’ rights and welfare attracted new attention. They exposed how the NEA, boasting about 2,300 members in 1900, did not represent the tens of thousands of teachers in the nation. NEA leaders continued to consider professionalization their primary objective, but they no longer dismissed classroom teachers’ concerns.

Pressure from teachers produced significant changes in NEA activities and personnel. In 1903, the NEA undertook its first investigation of salaries, tenure, and pensions, steered by a committee which included Catharine Goggin, a Chicago Teachers’ Federation activist. The women teachers of Chicago and New York proved their growing power when they joined forces in 1910 to elect Ella Flagg Young, the superintendent of Chicago public schools, as the NEA’s first female president. Young instigated the

creation of the Department of Classroom Teachers, establishing a place in the administrator-dominated organizational structure for teachers, and she secured funding for further study of teachers' salaries. As a consequence of her leadership, the NEA endorsed women's suffrage, teachers' councils, and equal pay for equal work. It also adopted the practice of alternating the presidency between the sexes.

Attempting to blend administrators' priority on improving education with teachers' priority on improving the terms and conditions of employment, the NEA embarked on a massive re-organization in 1917. Leaders recognized that organizational growth depended on women teachers, but power in the organization remained concentrated among two groups of male administrators, superintendents and normal school principals. As the historian Wayne J. Urban has observed, neither group sought to make the NEA a teacher-driven organization, but normal school principals advocated greater consideration of classroom teachers' concerns. One of the most contentious aspects of the re-organization was the replacement of open-floor voting, by all members attending the annual meeting, with a new Representative Assembly, the representatives chosen by the state associations. As membership approached 10,000, leaders insisted that a Representative Assembly would make the organization more democratic. Teachers objected, having learned to mobilize their local associations for important votes at annual meetings. They anticipated correctly that the Representative Assembly would privilege administrator-dominated state associations and reduce the power of their own local associations.

Several other factors diminished teachers' influence within the NEA in the 1920s. The creation of the labor-affiliated American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in 1916, with its strong base of local associations, siphoned away some militant teachers' dissent. Electing women as NEA presidents in alternate years gave teachers representation at higher levels, but some of the power that had been vested in the presidency shifted to the new full-time executive secretary, J. W. Crabtree, hired to direct the re-organization in 1917. Most significant, however, was the impact of World War I. The war effort attached a sense of urgency to improving public schools, most evidently in the NEA's successful Commission on the Emergency in Education. After the war, the NEA capitalized on anti-union sentiment by advocating teacher councils as an alternative to teacher unions like the AFT. Teacher councils were simply advisory groups with no power to act, but with the postwar red scare and backlash against organized labor, the NEA's approach won widespread support. The administrator-dominated

NEA leadership overcame the AFT's challenge and formed an alliance with the veterans of the American Legion, cosponsoring patriotic publications and school events. Friend to the NEA, the Legion became a vocal critic of the AFT. In the 1920s, membership in the AFT declined while the NEA surged to over 220,000 by 1932.

Revenue from membership enabled the NEA to expand its Washington, DC, headquarters with the Research and Legislative Services divisions, bolstering the organization's ambitions for building the profession. In 1917, the entire staff consisted of the executive secretary and a few clerks; by the early 1930s, operations grew to occupy a staff of 140. The Research Division gathered information on education, mostly concerning salaries and school finances. Its publications supplemented the information collected by the small federal Bureau of Education. The Legislative Services Division lobbied Congress; its main focus was the creation of a federal Department of Education, an effort that continued until 1979, when President Jimmy Carter made Education a cabinet position. In the intervening years, Legislative Services built broad-based support for NEA initiatives, especially among state governors, women's clubs, and organized labor.

The Depression quelled lingering conflicts between administrators and teachers. Faced with salary cuts and job losses, both groups put a priority on preserving school funding. Nearly 25% of NEA members lost their jobs by early 1933, and the organization lost a similar percentage of members by 1936. NEA leaders staved off the decline in membership with attention to teacher welfare issues, advocating for gender equity through a single salary scale and better salaries for rural teachers. It also made new efforts to protect the rights of married women teachers. Conscious of Depression-era rises in AFT membership, the much larger NEA still maintained its commitment to educator professionalism, promoting its initiatives to benefit teachers as initiatives that in turn benefited children, schools, and American society.

With the coming of World War II, the NEA pushed toward becoming a significant voice in Washington. It created the Commission on the Defense of Democracy in Education, seeking to launch an offensive against ideological and financial attacks on public education and replicate its WWI public relations success linking organizational and military objectives. The NEA also strengthened its relationship to government by lending educational assistance to the reconstruction of Germany and Japan. After the Soviet Union launched the Sputnik satellite, Congress passed the 1958 National Defense Education

Act, providing federal funding to education. Though it might have represented a victory, the legislation disappointed NEA leaders because it did not give education professionals discretion in the way the funds were used. Decades of NEA lobbying finally paid off when President Lyndon Johnson, a former schoolteacher, signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, providing \$1 billion in federal subsidies annually.

On issues of teacher welfare and rights, however, the NEA took a conservative turn. A series of strikes erupted immediately after the war, but the NEA essentially ignored teachers' complaints about rising inflation and stagnant pay. NEA calls for gender equity also faded away. By the 1950s, most large school districts had adopted a single salary scale for men and women teachers, but NEA leaders did not promote this accomplishment. Instead, they celebrated the abolition of "the celibacy rule," noting that married women now outnumbered single women in teaching. Yet the message was not about winning greater freedoms; rather it re-assured members that work in schools did not make them less feminine.

In retreat on gender equity, the NEA also proved reluctant to confront racial discrimination. Segregated state and local associations existed across the South and in many border states. Despite having all-black affiliates, the NEA made little effort to serve those members, aside from cooperating with the all-black American Teachers' Association (ATA) to obtain the same accreditation for black high schools that white schools had. When the Supreme Court issued its 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the NEA responded cautiously. Southern politicians threatened to close the public schools, intimidating supporters of desegregation with a movement of "massive resistance," which put children out of classrooms and teachers out of work in several southern counties. While northern, western, and urban contingents of the NEA supported *Brown*, southern state associations opposed it, worried about alienating whites. Unlike AFT leaders, who were quick to advocate compliance with *Brown*, NEA leaders preferred the risks of stalling to those of acting.

Becoming a Teacher-Driven Organization

Conservative professionalism helped make the NEA the largest educator association in the nation, but competition with the labor-affiliated AFT was a persisting threat. Membership reached nearly 700,000 during the 1957 centennial year, though the goal had been one million. The NEA developed a strong base

among women and rural teachers, but leaders recognized their weakness lay among teachers in large cities, especially a new cohort of high school teachers whose numbers nearly doubled between 1954 and 1964. An NEA study titled "Angry Young Men in Teaching" identified these teachers as the primary source of growing militancy. Several teacher strikes in New York City culminated in a resounding AFT victory in 1962, prompting the NEA to reconsider its relations with city teachers and local organizations.

The NEA began to re-invent itself as a union in the 1960s, though its history as a professional association shaped the kind of representation it offered teachers. The NEA advocated "professional negotiations" as an alternative to collective bargaining, and in place of strikes, the organization placed "sanctions" on school districts, warning members not to accept positions in them. Though the national leadership was uneasy with language of unionism, the contracts that NEA locals negotiated did not differ substantially from AFT agreements. Yet NEA discomfort with unionism produced serious repercussions when the state association in Florida called a statewide walkout, following the lead of several city locals. Committed to its no-strike policy, the NEA encouraged Florida teachers to resign rather than strike. This strategy, as the historian Marjorie Murphy noted, asked teachers to break their legal contract of employment rather than the Association's policy of professionalism. The mass resignation prompted legislators to pass the desired education funding, but the problem of negotiating thousands of teachers' return to work, after they resigned, compelled the NEA to rethink the practical wisdom of its no-strike policy. The NEA soon joined the Coalition of American Public Employees, operating outside the umbrella of organized labor, but as a union nonetheless.

As the NEA blended its move to unionism with its long commitment to professionalism, the organization reached a more progressive position on race in public education. In 1964, the Representative Assembly voted to mandate desegregation within its affiliates and merge with the ATA. Concerns that black teachers would have little influence in the NEA stalled the merger temporarily, while efforts to desegregate state associations in Mississippi and Louisiana continued until the 1970s. In the meantime, however, the NEA went on record in support of desegregation, mandatory busing, and protecting black teachers' rights. Having taken strong positions in favor of racial justice, the NEA was able to rise above the highly publicized Ocean Hill-Brownsville conflict in 1968 between AFT locals and urban black communities regarding the community's prerogative to

force teacher transfers. While the AFT defended predominately white teachers' seniority rights, Elizabeth Koontz, the NEA's first African-American female president, invoked the NEA's ethos of professionalism, affirming the organization's commitment to building partnerships between teachers and communities of color.

Unionization and desegregation altered the distribution of power within the NEA structure. Administrator-dominated state associations, once the seat of organizational power, took a back seat to the more progressive locals and the national. As teacher support and services emerged as new priorities, locals assumed responsibility for negotiating contracts while the national organization concentrated on building political influence for teachers in Washington and creating the NEA's first Political Action Committee. Recognizing that women remain its largest constituency, the national resumed its advocacy of gender equity in the 1970s, endorsing the Equal Rights Amendment. With the organization focused on serving teachers, the organization revised its Constitution in 1973, substantively reducing the authority of the executive secretary and state associations and placing more power in the hands of teachers.

Immersed in collective bargaining and considerably more teacher-driven, the NEA at the turn of the twenty-first century shared much in common with the AFT. Both groups considered several proposals to merge the two organizations, none of them successful. In 2000, they entered into the NEA FT partnership, which facilitates collaboration between them. Though no longer dominated by administrators, NEA members, still largely women, continue to show some discomfort with the adversarial aspects of unionism. Today, the NEA prides itself on responding to teacher's concerns and makes the case that improved terms and conditions of work for teachers will reap broader social and educational benefits. This "New Unionism" represents a partial return to the NEA of the early and mid-twentieth century, when co-operation characterized the main thrust of organizational activities, while continuing to pursue goals adopted in the 1960s and 1970s to work toward improving teachers' welfare and securing their rights.

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See also **American Federation of Teachers; Teaching**

NATIONAL FARM LABOR UNION

See **Southern Tenant Farmers' Union**

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

When the American Federation of Labor (AFL) chartered the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) in 1917, it took the unusual step of creating an early version of industrial unionization. Open to federal government workers in all agencies and in all occupations, it became the first general federal service union that was not organized around craft or government department. Prior to its creation, the most active unions with exclusively federal employees had been postal workers, and in 1904, the International Association of Machinists had established District 44 exclusively for civilian workers employed by the military.

NFFE emerged at a time when groups of government employees, including postal workers, were fighting for the right to lobby Congress on issues such as pay. The Lloyd-La Follette Act of 1912 recognized the right of postal employees to join unions without penalty and for all federal employees to petition on their own behalf, thus setting the stage for union organization outside the postal service. Several years later, the Borland Rider to an appropriation bill attempted to lengthen the workday for federal employees, encouraging the establishment of a number of small unions, including one in 1916 representing mostly women in the Treasury Department's Bureau of Engraving and Printing. A group of these government unions then organized into the Federal Employees Union. When the Borland Rider appeared, the Stenographers and Typists Union asked Samuel Gompers and the AFL to join them in opposing the law. AFL leaders did so, successfully defeating the



Group of federal employees waiting for treatment at the Public Health Service Dispensary #32, which has recently been opened for the exclusive benefit of government workers. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-108282].

measure while also seizing the opportunity to organize further federal workers. Using the Federal Employees Union as a core, the AFL formally chartered a new union, NFFE, at their September 1917 convention. Immediately flexing its muscle, NFFE helped defeat Democratic Representative William P. Borland in Missouri's 1918 primary race.

Open to all civilian employees of the United States government or the District of Columbia, NFFE started with over 60 locals and 10,000 members. Local 2 represented most Washington, DC, agencies with some exceptions. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing union, for instance, formed Local 105, and its president, Gertrude McNally, went on to become the secretary-treasurer of NFFE in 1925. She served in this post until 1953. Luther Steward became president in 1917, and remained in this office for 37 years. Together, they therefore had significant influence on the union's tone and direction.

Objectives and Tactics

Adamantly opposed to use of the strike, NFFE instead saw itself as a lobbying organization or pressure

group. Consequently, its strategies included petitioning Congress, generating positive publicity for its aims, and using union members to work with agency administrators to further a mutually beneficial agenda. Hence, it eschewed militant tactics in favor of parades and mass meetings to promote its cause. Its mission was "to advance the social and economic welfare and education of employees of the United States and to aid in the perfection of systems that will make for greater efficiency in the various services of the United States." Committed to raising salaries, it sought to eliminate inconsistencies in pay; support the reclassification of occupations, in order to provide uniformity within and across agencies; extend the merit system, thus eliminating patronage positions; and establish annual and sick leave, a Saturday half holiday, and retirement plans.

NFFE's efforts to extend the classification system to the field service (a reference to the federal workforce outside of Washington, DC) set the stage for its break with the AFL. From its inception, NFFE put much of its energy behind classification of government jobs, believing that greater uniformity in describing and classifying occupations would standardize pay across the federal service. Congress passed the Classification Act in 1923, but it excluded field service

and craft workers. The Welsh Act of 1928 called for a reconsideration of classification of these two groups of workers, an effort that NFFE leadership vigorously supported. A legislative measure considered in 1931 would have established a Personnel Classification Board to determine classifications and wage rates for all government positions, including crafts. The AFL's executive council, however, objected to this plan, perceiving it as an effort to undermine existing craft control over occupations and pay standards. Most craft workers had their pay set by wage boards, which used prevailing private-sector wages to set pay rates. Although the legislation would not have abolished wage boards, it would have made them subservient to the proposed Personnel Classification Board. AFL leaders sided with craft workers in rejecting the legislation. The NFFE president, Luther Steward, angered by the AFL's opposition to this classification measure, called for a vote on whether NFFE should disengage from the AFL and become an independent union. When the vote was held in December 1931, NFFE members narrowly voted to leave the AFL. Once NFFE became independent, the AFL took the unusual step of immediately establishing a competing federal government union, the American Federation of Government Employees, which siphoned off approximately one third of NFFE's members. In June 1932, NFFE was left with some 64,000 members. By 1937, the union had recovered some of its losses, with over 600 locals and 75,000 members in more than 35 federal agencies. NFFE remained independent until 1999. Faced with stiff competition from other unions in the 1980s and 1990s, it began to look for a partner that would help strengthen its finances and membership. A search committee recommended a partnership with the AFL-CIO's International Association of Machinists and Aerospace workers, which went into effect in 1999. Consequently, after a 67-year absence, NFFE returned to the AFL.

NFFE devoted most of its resources to bread-and-butter issues, including lobbying for overtime pay, revisions to the efficiency rating system, and of course, extension of the merit system. In 1937, NFFE formally affiliated with the primary pressure group for merit reform, the National Civil Service Reform League, with President Steward and Secretary-Treasurer McNally sitting on the League's council. Union leaders also continued to support vigorously the creation of a civil service court of appeals.

They remained adamantly opposed to striking and to any hint of collective bargaining, frequently criticizing the more left-leaning United Federal Workers of America, affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), for supporting collective

bargaining rights and for their more aggressive tactics in pursuing goals. Steward, for instance, played a key role in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision to issue a statement defining public employee union rights. NFFE's president had asked Roosevelt to speak at the union's Twentieth Jubilee Convention in 1937, but the President declined. Instead, Roosevelt drafted a letter to be read at the convention in which he clarified the differences between private- and public-sector unionization. Arguing that "collective bargaining, as usually understood, cannot be transplanted into the public service," Roosevelt noted that in the case of public employees, "the employer is the whole people, who speak by means of laws enacted by their representatives in Congress." He went on to emphasize that "militant tactics have no place in the functions of any organization of Government employees." Steward strongly supported Roosevelt's statement. In keeping with its desire to use collective weight to influence Congress, NFFE became a charter member of the National Legislative Council of Federal Employee Organizations, designed to coordinate lobbying activities of the general government unions.

NFFE's identity as a lobbying organization devoted to upholding the merit system was much in evidence when President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 10988 in 1962 granting limited bargaining rights to federal employees. His order established informal, formal, and exclusive bargaining rights for employees based upon the percentage of union employees in any given unit. NFFE's president, Vaux Owen, vigorously objected to the order's private-sector terminology, stipulating that collective bargaining did not belong in the public sector. He also opposed establishment of exclusive recognition for unions representing a majority of employees in a unit, arguing that it would curtail an employee's right to choose any union. Finally, he voiced opposition to the order's "conflict-of-interest" clause, which held that managers or supervisors could not hold office in a union. Owen complained that this provision created class distinctions and adversarial relationships in an environment otherwise free of these conflicts. Further, he noted that a number of NFFE members, who were supervisors, would be in violation of the order. To combat the order, NFFE initiated an unsuccessful lawsuit claiming that the executive order was unconstitutional because federal employees had been exempted explicitly from the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), and yet Executive Order 10988 applied NLRA models to these employees. In 1965, the Washington, DC, District Court ruled that the dispute over the order should be settled within the

executive branch. After the ruling, NFFE's executive council, led by a new president, Nathan T. Wolkomir, voted to drop the suit. Eventually, the union came to embrace collective bargaining and saw its membership rise as a consequence of employees' expanded rights.

Yet even in the 1970s, NFFE hesitated to support reforms it perceived as threatening to the merit system. President Jimmy Carter's Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 abolished the Civil Service Commission, replacing it with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to handle personnel programs; the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) to manage the merit system and protect federal whistleblowers from retribution; and the Federal Labor Relations Authority to oversee labor-management relations. The law also created a Senior Executive Service (SES), which enabled high-ranking supervisors to transfer from agency to agency without losing their rank. Finally, to make the bureaucracy more flexible, the measure loosened personnel rules, making it easier for agencies to hire, fire, promote, and discipline employees, and weakened veterans' preference. NFFE perceived the law as a presidential attempt to politicize the bureaucracy, calling the SES a haven for political appointees, the MSPB a tool of agency management, and the OPM an agency controlled by the White House. This concern with patronage and political influence was also clear in NFFE's opposition to efforts in the early 1970s to liberalize the Hatch Act of 1939, which had severely limited the political activities of federal employees. Not until 1977 did NFFE leadership, under pressure from members, favor some revisions to the law, including the ability of employees to run for local political offices. Nevertheless, the organization remained staunchly in favor of the Hatch Act's prohibition against partisan activity in federal offices and pushed for stronger penalties for those violating the law. While it favored further revisions to the law in the late 1980s, it continued to advocate for a civil service free of partisanship.

Membership

NFFE's conservatism may partially have been a reflection of its diverse membership, which included blue- and white-collar workers in occupations ranging from janitor to chemist. Among white-collar employees, the union had large numbers of clerical workers as well as mid-level administrators, and it tended to be stronger in old-line agencies, probably in part because

it was the first general public service union. For instance, among its members was Dr. Howard Edson, the president of Local 2 in 1937, and a scientist in the Department of Agriculture who had taken an active role in classification during the 1920s. Harrison E. Meyer served as the president of the Civil Service Commission branch of Local 2. He began his government career as a page, working his way into clerical positions, and eventually into mid-level administration. Meyer's upward movement reflected the experience of many NFFE members, and the union therefore remained a strong proponent of promotion from within. In its early years, members did not tend to be strong supporters of the private-sector organized labor movement, and into the 1970s, the union's constitution continued to bar communists from joining. Like many federal worker unions, NFFE had many female members and a strong advocate in longtime Secretary-Treasurer McNally. It did not, however, encourage black membership until after the civil rights movement.

As the first general union for federal government workers, NFFE broke new ground in organizing across occupations, pay grades, and gender. It represented an early version of industry-based organizing, and as such, its membership focused on improving pay and working conditions in federal agencies, largely through collective pressure on Congress and agency administrators.

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See also **American Federation of Government Employees; American Federation of Labor; United Government Employees; United Public Workers of America/ United Federal Workers of America**

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

The National Football League Players Association (NFLPA) was formed in 1956 during a meeting at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York City. Such notables as Don Shula and Frank Gifford were in attendance. The demands of the players upon the National Football League (NFL) owners were initially very basic: a minimum salary of \$5,000 per year, equipment and uniform allowances, and injury pay. The owners, however, rejected these demands. This early defeat of the NFLPA would illustrate the conflict between the owners of NFL franchises and the players. Over the next 50 years, issues such as free agency, salary caps, the college draft, and two major players' strikes would grab headlines and lead to the cancellation of both games and television contracts.

The players were resolute in their demands, despite their early snubbing by the NFL owners. The next step for the NFLPA was litigation. In the first of a series of court cases related to playing conditions and pay in the NFL, the Supreme Court ruled in 1957 (*Radovich vs. NFL*) that the NFL was subject to antitrust laws. Shortly after this decision, the owners gave in to the demands that the NFLPA had articulated in 1956. Once these demands were met, the NFLPA demanded even more from the owners. These new demands were related to pay for preseason games and medical and retirement benefits. The owners met some of the players' demands, but only modestly (the mandatory retirement age remained 65).

The players, looking to capitalize on their court victory, tried to join the AFL-CIO, but they were refused admission. After this, the players briefly considered joining the Teamsters, but the NFLPA did not join the union and thus remained an association and not a union. The next challenge to the NFLPA was competition from the American Football League (AFL). The players in the newer and smaller AFL had their own association. The NFL owners therefore could play one association off the other. This in effect was the case, even after the two leagues merged. These same dynamics would be repeated in the 1980s with the short-lived United States Football League (USFL). In 1968, the NFLPA threatened a strike, but the owners locked them out. A landmark collective bargaining agreement followed, with the players getting a lot less than what they originally demanded. Finally, the two players' associations merged, with John Mackey to head the new group. Shortly after this, the NFLPA was certified by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Recognition by the NLRB meant that the NFLPA was now a union, although an extremely weak one

with respect to the NFL team owners. In July 1970, there was another strike during training camp by the players. The agreement that ended the strike gave certain concessions to the NFLPA, including an increase in minimum salaries, pension and dental benefits, as well as agents being allowed for players. Despite these gains, many union reps were cut by teams. Another tactic used by owners was the "Rozelle rule," which prevented players from moving to other teams once their contracts were up. So, despite modest gains, the NFLPA realized it needed more clout and savvy if it was to beat the owners in the complex field of labor relations.

Toward these goals, the NFLPA moved its headquarters to Washington, DC, and began a program to educate players as to their rights with respect to the owners. The players' union then voted to file suit against the NFL again over the Rozelle rule in a case that came to be known as *Mackey vs. NFL*. In 1974, the NFLPA declared "No Freedom, No Football," and the players went on strike again. This time around, the demands on the owners were more ambitious: arbitration over contracts and an end to the college draft. Despite the fact that this new round of demands was unmet, the players ended the strike and played for the next several seasons with their disputes still unresolved. In 1976, the owners were found guilty of violating antitrust laws, and a new round of collective bargaining ensued between them and the NFLPA. Emboldened by its victory in court, the NFLPA made even more demands, which concerned free agency and a share of the revenues from TV rights and ticket sales. The irony in all of this was that union membership went down for the players' union despite league expansion during this time.

In 1982, the players struck again over the issues of modified free agency and the issue of revenue sharing with the owners. The NFL owners had a unique advantage in professional sports in that they shared the TV revenues and gate receipts among themselves. Therefore, they usually presented a united front with respect to the players. The NFLPA made a modest proposal that would allow the more talented players to get paid more, but the owners rejected this for two reasons. First, they did not want to give up their lucrative TV and attendance money. Second, because a new league was forming (that is, the USFL), the owners realized that the NFLPA would now be in an inferior bargaining position. Finally, a compromise was reached, and the regular season was resumed, with a modified nine-game season and a larger playoff format. The owners did agree to a percentage of their gross team revenues going to the players as a good faith gesture. As in the 1974 strike, the players were

still at a disadvantage, though. The NFLPA realized that it represented people in a very dangerous game that had short careers, so any future decision to strike would have to be weighed carefully. The owners, for their part, stuck together and rode out the competition from the rival USFL for the next few years. They could always raise the price of tickets or add more amenities to their stadiums such as skyboxes.

The leader of the 1982 players strike now became the executive president of the NFLPA. Gene Upshaw wanted to pride himself on truly representing the interests of the players and not the lawyers. The collective bargaining agreement after the 1982 season expired before the 1987 season and left many issues unresolved. The players voted to strike, and this time the owners meant business. They hired replacement players for three games. This promptly ended the strike, as the NFLPA “punted” because it realized that its bargaining position had deteriorated. Despite this, the owners refused to allow the players to return immediately, and the NLRB would later cite them for this. In the meantime, the NFLPA returned to court to fight on a more level playing field. In a case in Minnesota federal court, the NFL owners’ “Plan B” free agency was determined to be unfair. The owners appealed this decision and won. Despite this, the NFLPA did win back pay for the players who were not allowed to return immediately at the end of the 1987 strike. In 1989, the players met and agreed to end their status as a union.

A series of court cases, the first involving Freeman McNeil of the Jets, ended in a defeat for the owners—and again stated that “Plan B” free agency was struck down. Other settlements in the *Brown vs. NFL* and *White vs. NFL* cases resulted in clear victories for the players involved. These new court victories resulted in the players voting to make the NFLPA a union again in 1993. A new agreement after this with the NFL owners allowed a share of the teams’ revenues to go to the players. After many court battles, strikes, reversals, and broken promises by the owners, the NFLPA had finally won respectability for its players and had solid material results to prove it. Like the game of football itself, with its seesaw battles for mere yards, the struggle between the NFLPA and the NFL owners had been a hard-fought fight. In the end, the NFLPA definitely finished in the win column for the interests of the players.

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NATIONAL HOCKEY PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

For nearly 40 years, the National Hockey League Players Association (NHLPA) has been the sole employee bargaining unit with the National Hockey League (NHL). Its creation came at a time of increasing awareness of the unequal power distribution between employers and employees in the professional sports industry. According to many critics, however, the NHLPA, until the 1990s, was no more than a company union that protected the interests of the employers rather than those of the union membership.

Early in the history of professional hockey, skilled players had many options that enhanced their bargaining power. Multiple professional leagues appeared in the early 1910s. Of importance were the National Hockey Association (NHA), created in 1909, and the Pacific Coast Hockey Association (PCHA), founded in 1911. Contracts were negotiated between individual players and management, often the owner of the club. Although professional in name, professional hockey seasons rarely lasted more than four months of the year. Thus, all players had other careers beyond and, sometimes, during the season. Unlike professional baseball, which had established a national commission by 1903 to oversee the industry, the NHA and PCHA in particular raided each other’s players for much of the 1910s. Highly skilled players also could choose to remain in the amateur leagues, where some top-level clubs provided players with jobs and/or under-the-table payment. These options gave highly skilled players leverage when professional clubs came calling and partly explained why players did not see the need to organize themselves.

Organizing a player union also had to overcome the culture of professional team sports. Ideas of team unity and loyalty were drummed into the players’ consciousness early on. For a team sport that had a great potential for violence amongst the participants, team members learned quickly to stick up for one another, especially during fights. Often a siege mentality existed within a team and, in turn, re-inforced and magnified the us-against-them mentality. It was not unusual for players to carry their animosities toward other teams’ players beyond the games. Management also cultivated a form of loyalty based on paternalism. Players were trained to follow orders of the coach and, by implication, management. The idea of loyalty, team unity, and submission to authority

made organizing on a leaguewide basis difficult. Indeed, the first organized effort to challenge management's prerogative did not come until after the NHL replaced the NHA as the major league in eastern Canada. Disputing the length of the season in their contracts, Hamilton Tigers players refused to participate in the 1925 playoffs unless they were paid an extra \$200 per person. In turn, the NHL president, Frank Calder, suspended the players and fined each \$200. The Hamilton owners then sold the entire roster to the new entry into the NHL, the New York Americans, for the following season.

The Hamilton players challenge, however, came at a period of major NHL expansion after its creation in 1917. Between 1924 and 1926, the league membership increased from four to 10 teams. Despite increased job opportunities with the expansion, the only other major league, the Western Hockey League, which had six franchises, went out of business in 1926, giving the NHL a monopoly in the industry. Furthermore, the Great Depression soon made jobs scarce when some NHL franchises faltered. By the end of the Second World War, the league had only six franchises left.

The first leaguewide effort to organize players did not result in a union. In 1946, a Detroit insurance agent, C. Jean Casper, convinced a group of players to form a pension society. The players then approached the owners for an additional contribution. Although the Detroit club had contributed into the plan, other owners, led by Toronto's Conn Smythe, disliked this act of independence and headed off the players' effort by establishing a pension society administered by the league, the National Hockey League Pension Society. Owners began contributing to the plan using portions of the revenues from the all-star and playoff games in 1957. Revenues from international exhibition games involving the NHL were added to the fund when the league began organizing these tournaments in the 1970s.

Whereas the NHL began to enjoy a period of stability and prosperity after the Second World War, player discontent surfaced. With the assistance of a New York attorney, Milton Mound, Ted Lindsey, a Detroit player, began secretly signing up players in the league and on February 12, 1957, announced the formation of the NHLPA. If the owners could not stomach a player-controlled pension society, the league had no wish to recognize this first player union. Owners and managers intimidated players by ridding those involved in the union. Under tremendous pressure, players from the Detroit Red Wings decided to leave the NHLPA on November 13, 1957, thus squashing the union.

The next effort to form a union came in 1967. On June 6, a group of players announced the new NHLPA, under the leadership of the Toronto attorney and player agent R. Alan Eagleson. Unlike the 1957 version, it was accepted by the owners, in part because of the league's concern that the Teamsters Union was considering organizing professional sports. Despite management's recognition of the NHLPA as a bargaining unit, the NHLPA did not initiate negotiation for a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) until 1975. Between 1967 and 1991, when Eagleson was the executive director, the NHL and the NHLPA concluded only four (1976, 1981, 1984, and 1988).

For a large part of the NHLPA history, Alan Eagleson was the lightning rod around whom praises and criticisms revolved. Despite improvements to the players' salaries and benefits and the elimination of the reserve clause, some players and player agents soon doubted Eagleson's effectiveness as a union executive director. They complained about conflicts of interests in Eagleson's multiple roles as union executive director, player agent, practicing lawyer, and, later, a director of Hockey Canada. They argued that Eagleson was often unresponsive to their queries on union business and that he seemed to favor those represented by his own player agency. Some retired players, led by Carl Brewer, also charged that Eagleson often sided with management in issues such as pension funds and disability insurance. Observers noted that the NHL players' gains lagged far behind those in the other professional sports, despite favorable bargaining positions—an investigation was conducted by the U. S. Justice Department on possible violation of antitrust laws in 1971 and the appearance of a rival league, the World Hockey Association (WHA), in 1972. Interestingly, Eagleson brokered the merger between the WHA and the NHL in 1979, eliminating jobs and the bidding war for players. A movement to oust Eagleson emerged around the 1980s and led to his resignation in 1991 when the FBI began investigating his affairs. In 1998, Eagleson pled guilty to charges brought by both the Canadian and American governments.

Between 1992 and 2005, Robert W. Goodenow, a Detroit lawyer and player agent, succeeded Eagleson as the executive director of the NHLPA. Goodenow's terms of employment demanded that he relinquish his other careers. Unlike Eagleson, Goodenow was much more militant. Indeed, the first player strike occurred a mere four months after Goodenow took office. Both sides reached a new CBA 10 days after the strike began. Negotiations for a new CBA broke down again before the start of the 1994–1995 season, and this time, the owners locked out the players.

On January 20, 1995, a new agreement was signed by both sides, and the league operated a shortened schedule. The 1995 agreement was extended to 2004, when the NHL owners insisted on and the union strenuously objected to a salary cap. United by a resolve to control salaries, the NHL owners locked out the players for the entire 2004–2005 season. In July 2005, a new CBA with a salary cap was agreed upon by both sides. Amid criticisms by a few players on how he handled the negotiations, Goodenow resigned as executive director on July 28 and was replaced by the NHLPA senior director of business affairs and licensing, Ted Saskin. The latest CBA was scheduled to expire after the 2010–2011 season, with an option for the NHLPA to re-open negotiation for a new agreement after the 2008–2009 season. Saskin is only the third executive director of the NHLPA. Whereas Eagleson was deemed too friendly to management and Goodenow the opposite, it will be interesting to see how Saskin guides the union after a substantial defeat in the last agreement.

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NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT

The National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) was the Roosevelt administration's signature economic revitalization act of the First New Deal. The bill passed during the first "Hundred Days" as a part of the crash legislation session passing laws designed to stem the tide of the Great Depression and restore prosperity and employment to the nation. The Act set up a complicated new bureaucracy, the National Recovery Administration (NRA), headed by the retired general Hugh Johnson. Most significant for labor organizations in the country, Section 7a of the Act provided the first federal recognition of the rights of employees to form unions.

The National Recovery Administration was charged with setting codes for major industries throughout the nation. The codes were to be agreed upon in council between government, industry, and to a lesser extent, labor representation. Economic advisers in the Roosevelt administration saw excessive competition as destructive to the economy and as one of the prime causes of the Great Depression. The administration hoped to use the NRA as a means of managing and reducing competition. In practice, however, the NRA was less than successful. Many businesses resented government interference of any sort in their affairs and refused to cooperate. Henry Ford, for instance, tried to steer the Ford Motor Company clear of any involvement whatsoever in the NRA. The NRA tended to benefit big business at the expense of small businesses; many small businesspersons and progressive-minded legislators saw the NRA as furthering monopolistic behavior on the part of big firms at the expense of consumers and small producers. The NRA did, in fact, encourage oligopolies in industry, as the committees writing codes were able to set quotas for production, prices, and wages.

The codes written by the NIRA brought stability to a few industries that had been decimated by cut-throat competition, but many of the codes proved unworkable. The NIRA did score one major achievement, writing a code for the textile industry that virtually eliminated child labor. Some of the codes established minimum wages in industries, and many unskilled workers saw real wage increases after their industries adopted NRA codes. Skilled workers, however, frequently saw their wages decrease. Overall, the NRA failed in its goals of increasing employment and purchasing power. After a temporary increase, real wages overall actually began to decline under the NRA.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT

The NRA also had a difficult time selling its plans to the public and to local businesses. To counter this, the NRA devised a Blue Eagle emblem, with the slogan, “We do our part!” The NRA used the emblem along with several publicity stunts to try to build public support for the program. The Blue Eagle also served as one of the few real enforcement mechanisms of the program—businesses that refused to abide by their industry codes would have the Blue Eagle logo denied to them. Thousands of posters with the NRA eagle were distributed around the country to be hung in shop windows. After an initial period of public support, enthusiasm faded, and for most of its brief existence, American support for the program was tepid at best. When the U.S. Supreme Court declared the NIRA unconstitutional in 1935, most Americans were indifferent.

Business had always been lukewarm toward the NIRA. Some business leaders had seen government intervention in the economy as inevitable and urged the business community to act decisively in shaping that intervention, but many were unconvinced. Yet in the context of the Great Depression, the NRA seemed to be a reasonable compromise. In exchange for the ability to act collusively to fix prices and production schedules, businesses had to accept some sort of government oversight and involvement in the marketplace. The single provision of the Act that most angered business was Section 7A, which provided for collective bargaining for employees in industries covered by the Act.

Section 7a of the NIRA read, in part, “employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing.” Section 7a also prevented yellow-dog contracts and gave the executive branch authority through the NRA’s system of codes to set minimum wages and maximum hours by industry. The passage of the NIRA set off a furious organizing spree amongst the nation’s workers. Much of the organizing occurred at the grassroots level, as workers, frustrated by the grim economic conditions of the Depression, the legacy of 1920s union busting, and union ineffectiveness, began demanding organization into unions. Section 7a of the NIRA seemed to give not only government sanction for unionism, but for many workers, implied Roosevelt administration approval of their unionization efforts as a tool for economic recovery.

Yet the organizing efforts of 1933–1935 were only of limited effectiveness. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) proved largely incapable of accommodating the influx of workers, many of whom were unskilled or semiskilled. William Green, the president of the AFL, responded by trying to organize workers into a new system of federal unions, to keep the

traditional affiliates of the AFL skilled and free of unskilled immigrant labor. Industry signed on to the NIRA politically but balked at giving in to the new wave of organization. Employers held that the NIRA did not provide any structure for dealing with employee organizations. Specifically, they would claim that the law did not require an employer to recognize a union as the sole bargaining agent for all employees merely because a majority of workers supported it. This contention led to a resurgence of company unionism as employers attempted to thwart the wave of organization by bargaining with company-organized and financed unions that clearly represented a minority of employees. Many of the codes that the NIRA established in industries allowed employees to be arbitrarily dismissed; many union activists felt that this provided a method for employers to dismiss union sympathizers. Employers also resorted to cruder methods, employing labor spies, guards, and other methods of dubious legality to thwart the employee offensive. This led to a rash of strikes in 1934. Thousands of strikes brought out over 1.5 million workers in the year. Whereas workers had struck in past years over issues such as hours, wages, and working conditions, union recognition drove the strike wave of 1934.

The NIRA lacked any effective enforcement mechanisms to deal with the labor unrest of 1934. The Act provided for a National Labor Board (later the National Labor Relations Board, NLRB) to oversee the implementation of Section 7a. Robert Wagner, a senator from New York, chaired the board. From the outset, Wagner saw both the National Labor Board and Section 7a as insufficient to protect the interests of American workers. His experiences on the National Labor Board led him to begin considering new legislation to guarantee the right of American workers to organize. This legislation would emerge later as the National Labor Relations Act (or Wagner Act).

The experiences of the AFL during the regime of the NIRA brought major changes. The inadequacy of the AFL’s federal union strategy in organizing unskilled and semiskilled workers was apparent to insurgents like John L. Lewis within the union movement. Lewis led the UMW to massive organizing gains during the NIRA. Lewis used the increased pull that his successes granted him to force the creation within the AFL of the Committee for Industrial Organizing, which would later splinter into the independent Congress of Industrial Organizations. The AFL, too, would eventually be forced to back away from its strictly craft method of organization and adapt to the new regime of mass organization in large industry. Finally, the creation of the National Labor Board and

the federal guarantee of the right to organize unions convinced many in the labor movement of the need to turn to the federal state for progress in labor relations.

The U.S. Supreme Court declared the NIRA unconstitutional in 1935. In *Schechter v. United States* (or as it came to be known, the sick chickens case), a unanimous Court ruled that the Act had overstepped the bounds of the commerce clause of the Constitution. The Court also ruled that the NRA's system of codes was unconstitutional in that it usurped the legislature's power to create law. The Schechter Poultry Corporation had been convicted for violating the poultry codes of the NIRA, specifically for violating wage and hour provisions of the code and for selling diseased chickens. The invalidation of the law brought to an end the Roosevelt administration's most ambitious plans to reform the American economy. The ruling, coupled with the Supreme Court's invalidation of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), also seemed to threaten much of the New Deal.

The National Industrial Recovery Act left a mixed legacy. While the NRA largely failed to raise wages and therefore purchasing power of the working class in the United States, it did help to set in motion the 1930s union movement that would achieve a vastly increased standard of living for many American workers. As the centerpiece program of the Roosevelt administration's effort to end the Great Depression, it surely was a disappointment. But as with much of the New Deal, it did achieve some small successes in economic reform, even as it failed to fix the American economy overall.

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NATIONAL LABOR REFORM PARTY

The National Labor Reform Party (NLRP) was the political organization of the National Labor Union (NLU). Officially established in 1870, the NLRP entered candidates in the 1872 elections.

The NLU represented a coalition of local trade unions, trade assemblies or citywide federations, and

a handful of national trade unions and Eight-Hour Leagues that emerged in the New England and mid-Atlantic states. Between 1866, when it was founded, through 1872, the NLU advanced a program that stressed the eight-hour day, producer co-operatives, the abolition of contract and convict labor, and currency reform. From its very conception, the NLU was politically orientated. At its founding congress, following a long and heated debate, the NLU endorsed the formation of an independent labor party "as soon as possible."

The NLU began to make headway following the election of William Sylvis from the Iron Molders Union as its president. He and Richard Trevellick, the president of the International Union of Ship Carpenters and Caulkers, devoted their energies to propagate the NLU's program at local meetings in 1868. By the end of the decade, there were more than 120 new affiliates, including 14 national unions.

Effectively, the NLU was a forum for the labor movement through which strategic objectives were identified, priorities established, and specific measures for action developed. For example, a centerpiece of the NLU's program was currency reform. Inspired by the theories of Edward Kellogg, who in *Labor and Other Capital* proposed that the government issue greenbacks (paper currency) at 1% interest, the NLU adopted the "interconvertibility plan."

This plan called for the abolition of the national banking system, the recognition of the federal government's exclusive authority to fix interest rates, and the reduction of interest on government bonds to 3% and their convertibility into greenbacks. In the eyes of William Sylvis and Andrew Cameron, the editor of the Chicago-based labor newspaper the *Workingmen's Advocate* and a founder of the NLU, implementation of this plan would foster the growth of producer co-operatives since they would have access to low-cost credit and enable small business to expand and thereby provide more employment.

Rarely did the NLU directly sponsor a campaign or provide leadership in implementing its program. In the movement for the eight-hour day, spokesmen such as William Sylvis exhorted local unions and state Eight-Hour Leagues to wage campaigns, but without any guidance, let alone co-ordination, from the NLU itself. Nevertheless, the CLU showed a capacity to engage in practical activity. In 1867, it successfully lobbied Congress to repeal the contract labor law, enacted during the Civil War, and matched this success in 1868 when Congress passed legislation introducing an eight-hour day for manual workers employed by the federal government.

The endorsement of currency reform and the eight-hour day led the NLU to place greater emphasis on

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political action. At the 1870 congress, the NLU, in the face of opposition from most national unions, split into two branches—one “political” and the other “industrial,” and established an executive committee of the National Labor Reform Party. In 1872, the NLU’s political branch officially changed its name and modified its program to include exclusion of Chinese immigrant laborers and reduction of the tariff.

Preparation for independent political action received a boost from the experience of labor politics in Massachusetts. Here the Knights of St. Crispin spearheaded the formation of the Independent Party in 1869, which gained more than 13,000 votes and elected one state senator and 22 assemblymen under its banner. Although the following year the newly named Labor Reform Party lost most of its seats in the state legislature, a vigorous campaign led by Wendell Phillips, who ran for governor, helped to secure the establishment of a state Bureau of Labor Statistics, one the party’s key proposals.

The NLRP’s campaign in the 1872 elections was ill fated from the start. Among much disquiet from labor leaders, Judge David Davis from Illinois, with no ties to the labor movement, became the party’s presidential candidate. Then within weeks, he withdrew his candidacy after dissidents within the Republican Party launched the Liberal Republican Party and made Horace Greeley its standard-bearer. The NLRP lost all credibility following the last-minute selection of Charles O’Connor, a former Tammany Hall Democrat from New York, to run for president. Consequently, the NLU collapsed, as only seven delegates turned up to its “industrial convention” that year.

Historians’ judgment of the NLRP and concomitantly the NLU has been mixed. At one extreme, the NLU and NLRP were deemed as misguided and ineffective, “led by labor leaders without organizations and politicians without parties” (Ware). Less severe was the verdict that the NLU and NLRP were inevitably enfeebled by an inability to reconcile two conflicting “philosophies”—one based on political and social reform and the other predicated on “pure and simple” trade unionism (Rayback). Another assessment stressed the bona fide commitment to equal pay for women workers and its fraternity with African-American trade unionists as well as its promotion of independent labor politics, although it criticized its muddled programmatic orientation (Foner).

Notwithstanding these different interpretations, the NLU and NLRP were significant in the development of the labor movement during the Gilded Age. Their leaders underscored the importance of establishing a national body by which organized labor

could articulate objectives and formulate strategies. At a time when wage labor became more embedded and economic inequality more manifest, they recognized that workers would need to organize politically *and* industrially. These lessons drawn from the short-lived existence of the NLU and NLRP would guide the next generation of labor activists.

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NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT

See **Dunlop Commission**; *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones-Laughlin Steel Corporation* (1937)

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

On July 5, 1935, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), or Wagner Act, which created the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), an independent federal agency charged with protecting workers’ rights to organize and bargain collectively with their employers through representatives of their own choosing, or to refrain from such activities. The Wagner Act replaced the National Labor Board (NLB) (August 1933 to June 1934) and the original National Labor Relations Board (June 1934 to July 1935), which consisted of representatives from organized labor, industry, and the federal government and sought to mediate labor disputes to voluntary resolutions. Senator Robert Wagner of New York worked closely with the ineffective NLB and “old” NLRB, and in the 1935, legislation crafted a new NLRB to enforce rights rather than mediate disputes. The new NLRB’s responsibilities were to hold union elections and to prevent or remedy unfair labor practices (ULPs). Legal challenges to the NLRB began immediately after its creation and consumed most of the board’s energy until the Supreme Court affirmed its constitutionality in 1937. In the

decades after that ruling, legal struggles persisted, the NLRB grew increasingly unpopular, and Congress made the board friendlier to business interests through amendments to the NLRA in the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act and the 1959 Landrum-Griffin Act.

The NLRB consists of a central board in Washington, DC, and field offices (51 as of 2006) that handle approximately 90% of the election petitions and ULP complaints. The president appoints, with the consent of the Senate, five board members for five-year terms and one general counsel for a four-year term. The NLRB's field offices investigate and seek voluntary resolutions to ULP complaints. If the parties are unwilling to settle at that point, the case goes before an NLRB administrative law judge, who decides whether the case will go to the five-member board. The parties may appeal the board's decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals, and then to the Supreme Court. In order to separate the board's prosecutorial and judicial functions, Taft-Hartley made the general counsel independent from the five-member board. Subsequently, the general counsel investigated and prosecuted ULP complaints and oversaw the field offices, while the five-member board acted as an appellate court for cases decided by administrative law judges. In order to hold an election for union representation, or for decertification of an existing union, a union, individual, or employer must file a petition with the NLRB. The petition must have the support of at least 30% of the employees. If all criteria are met, the government-sponsored election is held within 50 days of filing the petition. The NLRB's jurisdiction extends to employers involved in interstate commerce, with the exception of airlines, railroads, agriculture, and public employees.

The board's structure insulates the vast majority of NLRB cases from direct influences in Washington, DC, while subjecting the highest levels of the board to partisan politics. The president holds the power of appointment and Congress influences the NLRB through Senate confirmation of appointees, appropriations, and oversight and investigation. Between 1935 and 1937, partisan disputes focused on constitutional challenges to the NLRB. Once the Supreme Court sanctioned the board in 1937, the NLRB's zealous legal staffers tackled a flood of new election petitions and ULP complaints. This period of aggressive enforcement ended in late 1939, when the House of Representatives' "Smith Committee," named for the committee chair, Harold Smith (R-VA), held special hearings on the NLRB. The Smith Committee focused on alleged communist influence on the board and the board's ostensible bias toward bargaining units defined by industry rather than craft, a charge that grew out of the rivalry between the American

Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The hearings turned popular opinion against the NLRB and began a movement for amendments to the Wagner Act that ultimately led to Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin. From the early 1960s to the late 1970s, the board enjoyed relatively high esteem for its role in maintaining "industrial peace," but beginning in the early 1980s, persistent conservative attacks cut the board's budget and made Senate confirmation proceedings highly contentious. Partisan wrangling has often left the board without its full complement of five members. Labor relations policy changed most dramatically when parties brought NLRB cases to the Supreme Court or when Congress amended the NLRB's powers.

Through the NLRB, the federal government shaped four main areas of employer-employee relations. First, the Court has reshaped employers' traditional rights to hire and fire workers. In *NLRB v. Mackay Radio* (1938), for example, the Court decided that strikers maintained their status as employees, but employers were allowed to hire permanent replacements during a strike. In addition, in *Phelps Dodge v. NLRB* (1941), the Court found that workers could not be dismissed for union affiliation and that they had the right to be re-instated and to collect back pay. Second, in *Textile Workers v. Darlington Co.* (1965), the Court significantly limited an employer's right to close one operation of a multipart business if the closure meant to discourage unionization. Third, from 1935 to 1947, the NLRB considered virtually any employer's speech against labor unions or unionization campaigns to constitute a ULP. In reaction against this "totality of conduct doctrine," Taft-Hartley included a free speech amendment, Section 8 (c), which states that no written or oral statement regarding a union or unionization campaign "shall constitute or be evidence of an unfair labor practice . . . if such expression contains no threat of reprisal or force or promise of benefit." Finally, Congress has passed multiple measures limiting union activities. Picketing per se was never a central issue for the NLRB because the 1932 Norris-LaGuardia Act legalized peaceful picketing in labor disputes. However, Taft-Hartley charged the NLRB with enforcing its prohibitions against the closed shop, wildcat strikes, jurisdictional strikes (picketing against a rival union), and secondary boycotts (boycotting a company doing business with a struck company). Landrum-Griffin re-enforced these proscriptions on union practices and extended the NLRB's control over union financial practices.

Over time, employers and unions grew more sophisticated in their approach to the NLRB process. Employers have successfully used the NLRB to delay

organizing campaigns until worker fatigue set in and the campaign folded. Unions increasingly avoided the long NLRB election process, turning instead to “card check” agreements with employers, meaning that an employer recognizes and bargains with a union when a majority of employees have signed union cards. Unions have also taken advantage of the Supreme Court’s decision in *NLRB v. Town & Country Electric* (1995), which upheld the constitutionality of “salt-ing.” Especially popular in the building trades, “salts” are union workers who covertly or overtly apply for jobs at nonunion worksites in order to pressure nonunion employees to accept union workers or to drive nonunion contractors out of business.

Even as unions avoided the NLRB and the unionization of the private workforce has declined, the NLRB has maintained its relevance by ruling that workers employed by temporary agencies can join unions and that nonunion employees have a right to representation during disciplinary hearings.

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See also **Landrum-Griffin Act (1959); Law and Labor; Norris-LaGuardia Federal Anti Injunction Act; Taft-Hartley Act**

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD v. FANSTEEL METALLURGICAL CORP.

See *Fansteel v. United States*

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD v. JONES-LAUGHLIN STEEL CORPORATION (1937)

In April 1937, the U.S. Supreme Court found in the *Jones-Laughlin* decision that the Wagner Act (or the National Labor Relations Act) of 1935 was constitutional. At issue was the reach of the commerce clause of the United States Constitution. The first attempt of the federal government to guarantee the right of workers to engage in collective bargaining, Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933, had been invalidated by the Supreme Court in 1935. In *Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States* (or the “sick chicken” case), the Supreme Court invalidated the NIRA, finding that Congress had overstepped its powers granted to it by the commerce clause. *Jones-Laughlin* established that the federal government could legitimately act to protect the rights of workers to unionize through the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Opponents of the Wagner Act argued that the United States government and the National Labor

Relations Board had no power to regulate collective bargaining in industries that were not directly engaged in interstate commerce. Specifically, they argued that manufacturing was an industry of production, and not of commerce, so that the law should not apply to manufacturing industries. Further, they argued that the Wagner Act violated the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution by giving a regulatory agency arbitrary power over a private corporation. Finally, opponents of the Wagner Act complained that the bill delineated unfair bargaining practices for employers, and not for unions. Proponents of the Act argued that the government was acting within its legitimate constitutional authority to regulate and promote interstate commerce by ensuring stable labor relations. Proponents also argued that because corporations could redress their grievances to a court, the Wagner Act did not violate the due process rights of businesses. In a 5–4 decision, the court held that the Wagner Act was constitutional and could be broadly applied to private workplaces, manufacturing included, around the country. The Court also found that the Act did not violate the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment. The Court left the issue of unfair bargaining practices open, seeing it as a question of policy, not constitutionality. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 delineated unfair bargaining practices for unions as well.

In the short time between the passage of the Wagner Act and the *Jones-Laughlin* decision, many employers had chosen to defy the NLRB. The decision freed the NLRB from dealing with voluminous legal challenges to its authority and allowed the Board to effectively oversee union certification and collective bargaining disputes. The decision also impacted trade unions. In the wake of *Jones-Laughlin*, legal disputes over union recognition declined. Unions increasingly turned their attention to issues of working conditions, wages, and hours.

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NATIONAL LABOR UNION

The Civil War, with its labor shortages, price inflation, and productivity increases, revived a trade union movement that had languished since the industrial depression of the 1850s. At the very peak of the war, new labor organizations formed at all levels, from new locals, citywide trades assemblies, and abortive national organizations such as the International Industrial Assembly of North America to international bodies such as the International Workingmen's Association, founded in 1864. However, it was not until after the war that a serious attempt at national organization, bringing representatives of the leading trade unions together, was successful.

The need for nationwide labor organization was the outcome of the increasing interconnectedness of markets both for goods and labor. Many trade union leaders realized that they could no longer rely on strong local organizations to protect their working conditions, and their dreams of winning greater victories, such as the eight-hour day, rested on the marshaling of labor's forces throughout the country. As early as 1860, the National Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths proposed establishing a national federation of all trades, though no action was taken as the war crisis engulfed the country. The Molders union revived the idea in early 1864, and the Bricklayers along with the Coachmakers endorsed it in 1866.

Originally, the concrete plan for a conference to organize a national union federation centered on the trades unions that had first proposed it. But after the call for both local and national trades unions to convene in Baltimore was published, objections by labor associations that were not organized on a trade basis, led by the New York City Workingmen's Union, pushed the Baltimore conference organizers to broaden their invitation to include all labor organizations, including those, such as the Eight-Hour Leagues, that did not specifically represent groups of workers.

In August 1866, 77 delegates met in Baltimore and founded the National Labor Union (NLU). It was, like the Industrial Congresses of the 1850s and the National Trades Unions of the 1830s, a cross-class organization with good representation of both social theorists and reformers and trade unionists, but unlike the older attempts at national union, it actually developed the beginnings of a permanent institutional structure of local corresponding secretaries, annual meetings, and a standing executive committee. Largely the doing of the Molders union president, William Sylvis, the NLU convened without him when he fell ill just days before the opening session.

Delegates readily agreed upon their goals of winning the eight-hour day, abolishing the wage system

through producer cooperatives and land reform, and increasing the power of trade unions, but they divided on the means of achieving their aims. Some conceived of the NLU as becoming a centralized union, others as a loose federation, and still others as a political party. In the end, those who believed the best way to achieve the eight-hour day was through legislative action carried the day, and the NLU resolved to take the form of a political reform organization rather than a strictly trade union federation.

Steady promotion of the NLU by the labor publisher Jonathon Fincher and the cajoling of William Sylvis succeeded in attracting delegates from a majority of existing national trade unions to a second convention of the NLU held in Chicago in 1867. This time, the able and popular Sylvis chaired the proceedings, but the convention was marked by the increasing strength of a vocal group of greenbackers who were determined to steer the NLU into the swamp of partisan politics. A few spokespersons, such as the German socialists, continued to champion the idea of making the NLU into a centralized national union, but they were thwarted by trade union leaders jealous of their own power and independence.

The majority, led by the greenback pamphleteer Alexander Campbell, and including two of the most influential delegates, the founder William Sylvis and the labor editor Andrew Cameron, supported currency reform because they were attracted to its promise of empowering workers, unifying workers and farmers (the conference began in this year to refer more to "industrial classes" than "workingmen"), and creating the basis for market prosperity for all Americans, all without substantially re-ordering or centralizing the American state. Following the teachings of Edward Kellogg first published two decades before, these delegates held that the "money power" used the gold standard and high interest rates to rob workers of the fruits of their labor. The remedy was to adopt paper or "greenback" currency and for the government to keep interest rates low through a complicated "interconvertible bond" scheme that would also finance the independent enterprises, farms, and cooperative ventures of "producers" throughout the nation.

Given the racially charged context of the times in which it operated, it was inevitable that the NLU would be forced to address the question of inclusion or exclusion of racial minorities in the ranks of organized labor. Like most trade unionists of his day, the NLU committee charged with drafting a statement of principles stressed the importance of facing the fact that slavery had ended, "unpalatable as the truth may be to many, it is needless to disguise the fact that they [African-Americans] are destined to

occupy a different position in the future, to what they have in the past," and that interracial cooperation was a policy about which they had little choice. The question, the committee concluded, was "shall we make them our friends, or shall capital be allowed to turn them as an engine against us?" Or as William Sylvis put it at the 1867 convention, "The negro will take possession of the shops, if we do not take possession of the negro."

However, when the principle of interracial organizing and cooperation was put to the next annual conference in 1867, the question exposed a deep split between the labor reformers, who largely came out of an abolitionist tradition, and the trade union leadership, whose organizations practiced racial exclusion. In the end, the question was deemed too problematic and was deferred as too difficult to resolve by two consecutive conferences. It was, finally, the standing executive committee that forced the NLU to confront the issue by inviting African-American delegates to its 1869 conference. Nine attended, including the eloquent Isaac Myers of the Colored Caulkers' Trade Union Society, who was made chair of the committee on cooperation. Under pressure from the labor reformers, the NLU then resolved that it knew "neither color nor sex, on the question of the rights of labor" and urged "colored fellow members to form organizations in all legitimate ways." Thus, the NLU endorsed the principle of racial equality without challenging the exclusionary practices of trade unions but rather urged that black workers be aided in forming their own unions that would be "invited to cooperate with us in the general labor undertaking."

Race was an issue underlying many of the NLU's concerns and one that further divided trade unionists and broad-minded labor reformers. In an early compromise that would come to characterize the general attitude of the American trade union movement, the convention denounced the American Emigrant Aid Society and the federal law of 1864 that established an enforcement mechanism for immigrant labor contracts, but studiously avoided condemning immigration itself. Such a posture of condemning "importation" but welcoming immigration conformed to prevalent economic thinking about wages and distanced the labor movement from the vicious nativism of an earlier day. A year later, after Congress repealed the 1864 contract labor law, the NLU turned its attention to what it perceived as a new and greater threat looming over the American worker—the importation of Chinese "coolies." This carefully drawn distinction between "importation" and immigration, meant to paper over the differences between labor reformers and union regulars, broke down by 1870, when the NLU declared that "the presence in our country of

Chinese laborers” was an “evil” and demanded its prevention by legislation.

The tensions between trade union interests and labor reformers took a more public form at the next NLU convention held in New York in 1868 with the appearance of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who claimed admittance on the basis of her membership in the Woman Suffrage Association. Trade union delegates threatened to walk out until Sylvis, a strong advocate of women’s rights, worked out a compromise whereby Stanton took her seat, with the body voting to neither endorse nor condemn women’s suffrage. However, the following year, a similar attempt on the part of Susan B. Anthony for credentials was denied after the vigorous protest of New York’s Mike Walsh, who accused her of representing a scab union. However, none of this altered the NLU’s statement of principles, which included a demand for equal pay for equal work for women, a measure trade unionists endorsed both as a matter of justice and out of the hope that this would retard the expansion of female labor.

In spite of its impoverished finances and still shakily organized state, the NLU claimed some significant successes in 1868 and 1869. In June, after lobbying by NLU representatives, Congress voted to establish the eight-hour day for federal employees. One year after the NLU demanded the establishment of a federal Department of Labor, Massachusetts became the first state to establish a Labor Bureau. And in 1869, Andrew C. Cameron, the editor of the *Workingmen’s Advocate*, was sent as the official delegate of the NLU to the International Workingmen’s Association conference at Basle, Switzerland—the first time an American labor federation attempted to affiliate with an international body.

The NLU continued even after the death of its founder, William Sylvis, in 1869 under a new president, Richard Trevellick, to whom credit was given for winning passage of the federal eight-hour law and who was most closely allied with the labor reform rather than the trade union wings of the NLU. However, by this time, the decline of the organization was evident, as only half as many delegates attended the 1870 convention in Cincinnati as had met in Philadelphia the year before. Interest in the NLU flagged most among the leaders of national trade unions, who looked skeptically upon the political drift of the organization and desired to create a federation of trade unions separate from the labor reform elements that played such a prominent part in the NLU. As a means of addressing these concerns while at the same time moving forward with its political strategy, the NLU resolved to split itself into two organizations, one a political party to nominate candidates for office

and the other a conference to deal strictly with “industrial” issues.

As promising as this strategy sounded in theory, its realization was thwarted by the deep political intrigues it invited. The political wing of the NLU met in convention in Columbus, Ohio, in February 1872 (ironically where the strictly industrial American Federation of Labor would be founded in 1886), calling itself the National Labor and Reform Party, and nominated Judge David Davis, Abraham Lincoln’s former campaign manager and Supreme Court justice, for president. Judge Davis thanked the party for the honor but did not clearly indicate if he accepted or declined until months later after the Democratic and Republican conventions, when it was too late for the labor reformers to select someone else, thus derailing the labor party movement before it even began. The partisan taint of this affair further tarred the reputation of the NLU as an impractical debating society, and the “industrial” congress of the NLU that met in Cleveland that year attracted only seven delegates, and all recognized the need to make a fresh start under a new name and organizational scheme. The following year, the same national union leaders who had once been a part of the NLU began meeting under the new banner of the Industrial Congress.

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See also **Civil War and Reconstruction**

NATIONAL MINERS UNION

The National Miners Union (NMU) had its origins in domestic and international developments of the 1920s, including a disastrous 1927 coal strike and the expulsion of virtually all radicals from the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The desire of radical miners to form a union outside the UMWA co-incided with the Comintern’s declaration of the Third Period in the summer of 1928, which called for the organization of independent communist unions within the United States. Organized in Pittsburgh in early September 1928 from the remnants of



Striking miners drawing rations, West Virginia. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Theodor Horydczak Collection [LC-H823-1308-004-x].

the UMWA's "Save the Union Movement," the NMU affiliated itself with William Z. Foster's Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), which was re-organized into the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL) in late summer 1929. The program of the NMU advocated the six-hour day and five-day week (designed to distribute work among more miners), organization of the unorganized, the creation of a national labor party, nationalization of the mines, support of the Soviet Union, the release of all workers arrested for strike-related activities, the organization of women and children, and racial and gender equality.

National and regional NMU leaders were members of the Communist Party (CP). John Watt, William Boyce (an African-American), Patrick Toohy, Freeman Thompson, Thomas Meyerscough, and Frank Borich occupied the top national offices within the NMU; a number of important CP officials, including William Z. Foster, Jack Johnstone, and William Dunne, were closely involved in NMU actions. Although the union was officially charged with the building of the Party, rank-and-file miners viewed the CP as separate from the NMU and were far more likely to join the NMU than the CP, despite the fact that the NMU required its members to attend Party meetings.

Between 1929 and 1933, the NMU led strikes in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Utah, and New Mexico. In the fall of 1929, the NMU conducted a strike in the central and southern

coalfields of Illinois. Although approximately 10,000 miners responded to the union's strike call, the UMWA issued a barrage of red-baiting propaganda, while the state police cordoned the area and arrested the strike's leaders, ending the strike after a week and establishing a pattern of opposition from the UMWA and state officials that plagued NMU organizing efforts.

In May 1931, the NMU launched a strike against wage reductions that spread rapidly through western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, and West Virginia, eventually involving 40,000 miners. Lasting 12 weeks, the ill-fated strike was marked by red baiting from the UMWA, police violence, a shortage of union organizers, and internal conflict over strike goals. In January 1932, the NMU entered the strike-ridden Harlan County, Kentucky, taking up a strike abandoned by the UMWA. The NMU was quickly met with extraordinary violence from armed vigilantes, who killed several miners and a young communist organizer. As relief workers were blocked from entering the county and miners were discharged and blacklisted, the strike collapsed. Although the strike failed to win union recognition, it brought national attention to the plight of the region's coal miners and produced a wealth of music, including Florence Reece's frequently adapted labor anthem, "Which Side Are You On?"

Following the defeats in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky, the NMU turned west, first waging an unsuccessful strike in Carbon

County, Utah, and finally turning to Gallup, New Mexico, in August 1933. In New Mexico, the governor declared martial law. The National Guard arrested NMU leaders and held them in a military stockade. Despite UMWA propaganda that divided white and Spanish-speaking miners, the NMU was able to thwart company attempts to force all miners into the UMWA by arguing that NRA Section 7a provided workers with the right to choose their union. Although technically a success, as the strike ended, the NMU was unable to prevent massive blacklisting and eviction of Spanish-speaking strike leaders. The NMU abandoned organizing after the Gallup strike and was officially decertified by the CP in early 1935, as the Comintern moved away from dual unionism toward a united front against fascism.

During its brief existence, the NMU was thwarted by a number of persistent problems. First, there were struggles over goals and tactics. The disparity in numbers recruited for the NMU as opposed to those joining the CP makes it clear that miners were vastly more interested in solving wage and workplace grievances than in building a revolutionary movement. The NMU also suffered from a persistent shortage of trained organizers and a lack of funding for relief and legal expenses, especially after 1931. Although most of the miners recruited by the NMU had been previously abandoned by the UMWA, the strikes led by the NMU raised fears of communist infiltration into the coalfields and had the ironic result of breathing new life into the UMWA. As Irving Bernstein wrote in *The Lean Years*, companies preferred UMW chickenpox to NMU smallpox.

Despite its organizing failures, the NMU did spotlight the plight of the nation's coal miners. In both Pennsylvania (1931) and Kentucky (1932), William Z. Foster called on Theodore Dreiser to generate positive publicity outside the coal region and provide relief through the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners. The "Dreiser Committee," which included Malcolm Cowley, Edmund Wilson, John Dos Passos, Anna Rochester, and other left-wing writers, investigated conditions and held open hearings in both regions. Their interviews with miners in Kentucky were published as *Harlan Miners Speak*. The publicity generated relief donations and prompted a congressional investigation but did little to alter conditions or influence the outcome of the strikes.

The NMU also advanced the cause of racial and gender equality within the labor movement. Unlike the UMWA, the NMU insisted on equality for African-Americans, Spanish-speaking Americans, and resident aliens. The NMU also stressed the importance of women, employing them as organizers and looking to local women for strike leadership. NMU strikes

produced a number of remarkable women, including Florence Reece, Aunt Molly Jackson and her half-sister Sarah Ogan Gunning from West Virginia, and Dominica Hernandez from New Mexico.

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See also **Foster, William Z.; Lewis, John L.; Trade Union Unity League; United Mine Workers of America**

NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS

In February 1936, over 750 delegates from 28 states registered their names at the Eighth Regiment Armory in South Chicago for the first conclave of the National Negro Congress (NNC). During the conference sessions, black intellectuals, labor leaders, artists, and clerics debated issues relating to trade unions, youth, women, churches, businesses, fascism, and interracial relations. The NNC hoped this cross-section of African-Americans would ignite a nationwide movement of New Deal activism that would expand democracy to include African-American workers. Over the next five years, the NNC became one of the most prominent black organizations to fight for racial equality. Its members organized thousands into unions, opened new sectors of employment to black workers, demonstrated against extralegal violence, and resurrected a proud African-American culture based upon the history of the Reconstruction Era.

A younger group of black leaders laid the groundwork for the NNC during the previous decade. In the early Depression years, economic hardship leveled race-based institutions in northern city neighborhoods, leaving a void in professional leadership. Black nationalists (splinter groups from Marcus Garvey's 1920s movement), Communists, Socialists, and others

filled some of this space by orating on street corners, forming unemployment councils, and marching against the immediate crises of hunger and homelessness. Before the first NNC conference, John P. Davis, a Bates College and Harvard-trained intellectual, formed the Joint Committee on National Recovery (JCNR) to testify in Washington on behalf of black labor at the National Recovery Act wage hearings. Davis pointed out that New Deal legislation omitted the largest sections of black labor and allowed for race-based differences in wages, giving African-Americans a “raw deal” rather than a New Deal. At a spring 1935 Howard University conference of black leaders, Davis, the socialist and union leader A. Philip Randolph, the liberal sociologist Ralph Bunche, and the Communist leader James W. Ford charted new ways to address racial discrimination. This meeting corresponded with the Communist Party’s shift away from a revolutionary strategy to one of a Popular Front alliance with liberals to fight fascism. In addition, a few maverick unions within the American Federation of Labor (AFL) had stormed out of the Federation’s 1935 annual meeting when the Federation voted against organizing industrial workers. These larger circumstances weighed heavily on the minds of the black leaders gathered at Howard; they concurred that black America needed to focus more on its working class through a united coalition that they bequeathed the National Negro Congress.

In its nascence, the NNC formed local councils in northern and western cities and fostered a vital partnership with the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). John P. Davis convinced national CIO leaders to hire several NNC organizers, who worked to persuade black workers to join these new unions. In the Great Lakes region, NNC leaders helped organize thousands of black steel workers, while NNC mass meetings and publicity on the West Coast brought co-operation between white and black workers during the 1936 maritime strike. In the South, black tobacco workers organized in advance of a CIO campaign. Over five hundred delegates traveled to Richmond in February 1937 to inaugurate the Southern Negro Youth Conference (SNYC), an offshoot of the NNC’s youth council. Three months later, black tobacco stemmers, soon to be joined by the SNYC organizers James Jackson and Chris Alston, went on strike there. Between 1937 and 1940, young SNYC activists in the South and NNC organizers in the North formed alliances with African-American industrial workers, organized them into unions, waged several successful strikes, and re-oriented many black middle-class community leaders to endorse these actions as respectable means of protest. Moreover, the NNC surmised that the

organization of millions of black industrial workers would leave the conservative American Federation of Labor no choice but to reverse its discriminatory practices. The NNC’s local councils threw their support behind the Randolph Resolution, named after its president, to provide equal access in all AFL locals or risk expulsion. While the AFL nonetheless evaded the resolution, Randolph’s own union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, secured a charter from the AFL and company recognition by 1937.

Meanwhile, the NNC combined this momentum in unions with local antiracist actions. The council in Washington, DC, for example, fought against police brutality, while the NNC’s national leaders agitated for federal antilynching legislation. In Detroit, the local council rallied against white supremacists to minimize racial tensions between the city’s automobile workers. Other actions taken by the Congress included campaigning for jobs on public utilities, creating tenant councils to improve housing conditions and eliminate restrictive covenants, organizing domestic workers, and supporting international antifascist campaigns in Ethiopia and Spain. Seeking to elect sympathetic government representatives, NNC leaders allied with Labor’s Non-Partisan League in 1938 to promote progressive candidates. While the NNC aided certain local candidates to win elections, they encountered a tougher road within the Democratic Party. White supremacist representatives blocked antiracist legislation, revealing the Janus-faced nature of the Democratic Party’s “New Deal.”

During the late 1930s, the NNC proved very effective in allying liberal and left organizations (both in black communities and interracial Popular Front networks) in pursuit of progressive goals, but by 1940, international political developments split this unity. The NNC increasingly cast its lot with two larger forces: the CIO and the Communist Party. The CIO (with NNC assistance) ushered hundreds of thousands of African-Americans into unions for the first time in American history. As members of these unions, NNC activists hope to push them to endorse antidiscrimination within their own ranks, with their employers, and in local and national political matters. The Communist Party (CP) also became an important source of militancy for the NNC. Some key Negro Congress members had ties to the CP, but as the NAACP and other liberal groups affirmed, the CP did not control the NNC. During this first Popular Front period (1936–1939), mid-level Communists in the NNC ranks had a remarkable degree of freedom to act without national CP leaders interfering, and dedication to the black freedom struggle made them vital members of local NNC councils. In the summer of 1939, however, after Josef Stalin signed a

nonaggression pact with Adolph Hitler, tensions that had been manageable exploded into controversy. Top Communists now made demands upon local NNC leaders to switch from antifascism to an antiwar stance (calling it imperialism) in foreign policy. This switch meant that Communists in the NNC suddenly took a defiant stance against President Roosevelt and others who increasingly supported armed intervention against the Nazis. Conservative forces within government and labor circles, especially the congressional committee chaired by Martin Dies of Texas, attempted to use this political turmoil to derail the CIO by exposing Communists and fellow travelers within its ranks. Meanwhile, John L. Lewis, though not a Communist, also opposed intervention in the Second World War because he believed it would sacrifice working-class men at the behest of elites. Thus, the two most effective NNC allies demanded a drastic shift in foreign policy matters that affected domestic ones. The conflict enervated local NNC councils, and by its 1940 convention in Washington, the organization suffered a national split when A. Philip Randolph resigned his post as president.

This break hampered the NNC's membership as a mass-based organization, but it did not destroy it. After leaving the NNC, Randolph and his allies began the March on Washington Movement that resulted in President Roosevelt issuing Executive Order 8802 in June 1941 that established the first federal Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC). That same month, the unpalatable alliance between Hitler and Stalin ended abruptly when the Nazi army invaded the Soviet Union. Now, the NNC became the leading critic of antiwar leaders like John L. Lewis, who had already been discredited by supporting the Republican candidate, Wendell Willkie, in the presidential election of 1940 and had resigned his post as leader of the CIO.

During the Second World War, a remarkable group of young women assumed leadership roles at the NNC's new headquarters in New York and SNYC's in Birmingham. With most men in the armed services, Thelma Dale Perkins, a Howard graduate student and Washington Youth Federation and SNYC leader, became acting executive secretary of the NNC. Alongside Max Yergan, the NNC's new president, Dale and other female leaders pressured the FEPC to act against discriminatory employers and secured jobs for blacks in war industries jobs (like the Glen L. Martin aircraft plants) as well as in public utilities employment. While the NNC and SNYC honored the no-strike pledge of the CIO and prioritized winning the war (echoing the Communist Party's policy), they also embraced the "Double V" campaign to eliminate fascism abroad alongside racism at home. SNYC

leaders like Augusta Jackson (Strong) and Esther Cooper (Jackson) put women at the center of an Abolish the Poll Tax week (in May 1941) as well as protests against military inequality and police brutality. Both the NNC and SNYC began to publish monthly magazines (the NNC's *Congress View* and the SNYC's *Cavalcade*) that featured a creative mix of politics, poetry, and black history. Through these publications, their editors evoked a black oppositional culture that highlighted slave rebels of the past, compared the Second World War to the Civil War as a new emancipation, and deemed the postwar reconversion as a second Black Reconstruction for American democracy.

At the end of the war, the NNC and SNYC took on new life. Re-organized local councils thrived in states like New York, Michigan, California, and South Carolina. The NNC, now led by Revels Cayton, a black Communist who had ties to the maritime unions on the West Coast, re-oriented the NNC's leadership by forming a black labor council to recruit thousands of black CIO members and returning veterans as their troops to fight Jim Crow. As its Detroit Council pronounced in 1946, the NNC would seek to remove the barriers of second-class citizenship in America by enforcing Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms." Freedom from fear meant freedom from lynching; freedom from want meant freedom to work and join unions at all skill levels. To enact this vision, NNC members helped organize veterans into the United Negro and Allied Veterans of America, while the SNYC established special veterans councils and became less youth-oriented. In the fall of 1946, they helped bring two thousand delegates to Washington for the American Crusade to End Lynching. This coalition sought to shame leaders in the nation's capital into punishing those responsible for lynching blacks (often returning veterans), enacting a federal law against lynching, and ending the disfranchisement that allowed southern white supremacists to remain in office and filibuster such legislation. Thereafter, the NNC sponsored a tour of Paul Robeson, while the SNYC invited the historian Herbert Aptheker to speak to local councils, black colleges, and labor unions about their agenda for postwar reconversion. Through these tours, they hoped to inspire local councils by promoting militant versions of black history and culture that they compared to their contemporary local struggles.

The postwar NNC and SNYC refused to believe the United States had to return to its laissez-faire approach to white supremacy or that the United States and Soviet Union had to devolve into Cold War hostility. Due to what the NNC considered U.S. government hypocrisy in speaking of freedom

without supporting civil rights, it petitioned the United Nations in June 1946 on “behalf of the 13 million oppressed Negro citizens of the United States” to expose the housing, health, education, civil liberties, and violence that violated the U.N.’s charter. By 1947, these African-American activists threw their support and energies behind former Vice President Henry Wallace, whose Progressive Party featured a strong antiracist platform and neutrality with the Soviet Union. Antagonism by both the United States and the Soviet Union, however, offered little room for middle ground. Wallace’s integrated tour of the South turned violent and Wallace garnered fewer votes in the 1948 presidential election than NNC and SNYC leaders expected.

More than any other measure, the passage of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act (over Truman’s veto) destroyed any hope the NNC and SNYC had in generating an immediate and militant working-class movement among African-Americans. The Act forced national CIO leaders to choose between government protection and keeping Communist and other left forces within their ranks. Much to the dismay of NNC leaders, the CIO chose the latter option. Beginning in late 1946, the CIO harassed and eventually purged NNC and SNYC allies from their positions, and the attorney general listed both organizations as “subversive.” In this new Cold War atmosphere, the NNC merged into the newfound Civil Rights Congress in 1947, and the SNYC regrettably folded two years later.

While their members did not succeed in enacting their postwar motto, “Death Blow to Jim Crow,” the NNC and SNYC generated much more than a seedbed for the civil rights movement that followed it in the 1950s and 1960s. The NNC and SNYC cultivated black working-class leadership and focused upon economic issues as the principal means for racial advancement. As the organizations struggled against Jim Crow policies, their alliance with leftist CIO unions and the Communist Party became their most important sources of power but also increasingly compromised their ability to lead a mass movement. The NNC cultivated an oppositional black culture and fostered militant antiracist campaigns that forced American institutions to enact racial and labor reforms for the first time since Reconstruction. During the Cold War, however, these leaders would be relegated to the background of mass movements of southern students and church members. The demise of the NNC and SNYC decoupled collaboration between labor and antiracist activists that had flourished during the late 1930s and 1940s. The legacy of this uncoupling became visible again in the late 1960s, when, after black activism dismantled Jim Crow

barriers in the South, black workers still lacked access to unions and skilled employment.

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NATIONAL NEGRO LABOR COUNCIL

In 1950, African-American workers, determined to resist discrimination in the workplace and defend their civil rights within the larger community, prepared the way for the formation of the National Negro Labor Council (NNLC). More than 900 delegates met in Chicago in June not only to discuss the status of black workers since World War II but to create an entity to fill a void. At the time, there was no national organization dedicated to securing rights for African-American laborers. The Chicago gathering established a permanent organization, and on October 27, 1951, more than one thousand black workers, representing tens of thousands more, met at the first convention of the NNLC in Cincinnati, Ohio. Although the delegates were largely black, whites were welcomed and present at the founding convention. One third of the delegates were women. The NNLC was primarily concerned with realizing full citizenship rights within the workplace. To that end, the NNLC pledged to fight for full economic opportunity and to end discrimination in the workplace and in the unions. The centerpiece of the NNLC’s political platform was its resolve to incorporate a Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) clause in every union contract. Within a year, 23 Negro Labor Councils had been established in major industrial areas. The NNLC, branded by mainstream labor organizations as a tool of the Soviet Union and a creation of the Communist Party, was a victim of the anti-Communist crusades of the early 1950s and dissolved in 1956. Nevertheless, the organization presented

a significant challenge to the institutional racism embedded within organized labor and provided a model for labor activists who carried the legacy of the NNLC forward into the 1960s.

The predominately black labor activists who attended the National Labor Conference for Negro Rights in June 1950 in Chicago mobilized around the issue of the backsliding that had occurred since the end of World War II in terms of equal economic opportunity for black workers. Black workers who had made substantial gains within industry during World War II blamed both management and union officials for lack of progress in terms of job opportunities for African-Americans less than a decade after the end of the war. Nevertheless, delegates to the Cincinnati convention pledged to remain within their respective unions even as they built local councils of the NNLC, which functioned as independent black caucuses within established unions. Mainstream labor officials tried to dismiss NNLC councils by charging the organizers with fostering dual unionism. The NNLC challenged dependence on white control both within the workplace as well as the community; indeed, black autonomy was a hallmark of the organization.

The most active local—the Detroit Negro Labor Council—included several key black activists from United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 600, the largest local in the world, with the largest black membership in the union, representing thousands of black workers at the River Rouge Plant of Ford Motor Company. Two leaders from Local 600, who had locked horns with Walter Reuther, the president of the UAW, on several occasions, helped lead and shape the NNLC. William R. Hood, the president of the NNLC, was the recording secretary of Local 600, and Coleman A. Young, a militant UAW organizer and the former director of the Wayne County (Detroit) CIO Council, was elected executive secretary. Hood etched the theme of autonomy on the NNLC convention by drawing from a speech written by Vicki Garvin, the executive secretary of the NNLC in New York City, which sent a message to white America—white trade union leaders and other white leaders—declaring they should no longer assume that they can tell African-Americans what they should do to attain their rights and how they should do it. White leaders were on notice that henceforth, while black Americans would like the cooperation of whites, they no longer felt the need to ask for permission from liberal whites before proceeding in their struggle.

With that as a preface, the UAW officials clashed with the Detroit chapter of the NNLC over several issues. The NNLC structure was criticized for weakening the union and its leaders were portrayed

as Communists. Reuther directed autoworkers who had signed a petition brought forth by the Detroit NNLC for a local FEPC ordinance to withdraw their names. Although the petition campaign was not successful, the 40,000 signatures showed there was a reason for union officials to take the NNLC seriously.

The NNLC's agenda included a fight for 100,000 new jobs for African-Americans, a focus on securing the right of black women to equal job opportunities, a commitment to securing an FEPC clause in every union contract, and a pledge to work for civil and human rights of African-Americans. The NNLC lobbied for and secured positions that had been denied black workers. One campaign targeted clerical and administrative positions in the Sears-Roebuck chain, another concentrated on discrimination in hiring and promotion within the hotel industry, and yet another focused on breaking down exclusion of black pilots and stewardesses from the airline industry. The NNLC also had a southern strategy, designed to open up factory production jobs to African-American men and women throughout the South even as it challenged the AFL and the CIO to unionize unorganized southern black and white workers. Initiating its southern campaign in Louisville under the banner, "Let Freedom Crash the Gateway to the South," the NNLC made a few inroads at the General Electric, Westinghouse, and Ford Motor Company plants. The NNLC never was able to replicate its limited success in Louisville in other areas of the South for lack of resources.

The NNLC's struggle was against union politics as much as it was against industrial management. The strength of its largest chapter in Detroit depended on the members from Local 600. Tensions between the militant activists and Reuther, which predated the formation of the NNLC, continued to plague the young organization. Reuther played the red card with abandon. His charges were re-inforced when the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) accused the NNLC of Communist domination. The NNLC won a few battles against the HUAC, but the politics of the McCarthy era won the day by putting the NNLC on the defensive. The organization finally disbanded when faced with the enormous costs connected with its defense in 1956.

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See also **League of Revolutionary Black Workers**

NATIONAL RIGHT TO WORK COMMITTEE

Dedicated to weakening federal and state labor law, the National Right to Work Committee (NRWC) coordinated legislative campaigns and court challenges to dismantle the legal protections unions won in the New Deal. Initially formed to lobby for state “right-to-work” laws, in the 1980s the Committee expanded its purview to include attacks on public-sector unionism, union political activity, and “card check” agreements. The Committee achieved only moderate success in winning state right-to-work laws but established itself as a brain trust and institutional center for conservative antiunion strategy.

Fred A. Hartley, a retired New Jersey congressman and cosponsor of the Taft-Hartley Act, founded the NRWC in 1955 with financial backing from business interests. Eighteen states already had right-to-work laws, and the NRWC aimed to increase that number by helping co-ordinate state-level campaigns. In its first big push, the NRWC got right-to-work measures on the ballot in six states; labor’s superior political power prevailed in five states. Backed by business groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers as well as dues paid primarily by small businesses, the NRWC shrugged off the defeats with new referenda in 1961 and 1966. The NRWC ran sophisticated and well-financed campaigns, many featuring disgruntled current or former union members decrying corruption in their own unions. *And Women Must Weep*, a 1963 NRWC film depicting picket-line violence, became a staple of employer antiunion campaigns. Nevertheless, 50 years of concerted effort resulted in victories in only four states. By 2005, 22 states had right-to-work laws. The NRWC’s signal victory in this era was defensive: in 1966, the NRWC helped beat back a federal amendment to Taft-Hartley that would have outlawed state right-to-work laws.

This victory exposed the NRWC to attack, however; unions and congressional allies demanded an IRS review of the NRWC’s tax-exempt status, arguing that its lobbying activities should invalidate the privilege. In 1968, the NRWC was obliged to create a separate advocacy foundation and restyle itself as a lobbying organization. While the NRWC continued to push for state right-to-work laws (winning in Oklahoma as late as 2001), the NRWC and its

foundation devoted increasing resources to related but distinct campaigns. The NRWC took up legislation and court cases focused on the boundary between the rights of individual union members and the autonomy and authority of their unions. In this realm, the NRWC registered real gains.

A signal victory concerned unions’ use of dues revenues for political lobbying. Beginning in the 1950s, the NRWC brought lawsuits on behalf of union members who argued that their First Amendment rights to free speech were violated when their unions lobbied for political causes to which they were opposed, using dues collected under closed-shop contracts. These arguments made little headway until the 1970s. In a series of cases culminating in the 1988 ruling *Communications Workers v. Beck*, the Supreme Court prohibited both public- and private-sector unions from using dues for purposes other than union representation and collective bargaining without the permission of each union member. The NRWC vigorously enforced the new rule by soliciting and representing plaintiffs alleging union breaches of the law. The ruling burdened unions with added reporting requirements but did not seriously hamper lobbying, as most members neither knew about nor exercised their right to retrospective dues rebates. Still, the NRWC and its allies used the principle for new state referenda in California, in 1988 and 2005, requiring unions to obtain prospective permission from members before spending dues on lobbying. Labor defeated both, at great expense.

In the late 1990s, the NRWC began challenging neutrality and card check agreements. Unions frustrated with the byzantine bureaucracy of the National Labor Relations Board turned to negotiating private agreements that obliged employers not to fight workers’ organizing attempts and to recognize the union based on a majority of signed union cards. (Employers agreed to these terms only under duress, usually from pressure at the bargaining table or from a sustained pressure campaign by the union.) Workers represented by the NRWC argued that these agreements constituted an improper collaboration between employer and union, and only a secret ballot election supervised by the NLRB could ensure workers’ freedom to choose or reject unionization. As of late 2005, the Supreme Court had not ruled on these cases.

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See also **Taft-Hartley Act**

NATIONAL UNION OF MARINE COOKS AND STEWARDS

An excellent historical example of the melding of workers into a functional union is the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards (NUMCS). At first glance, it seems logical that cooks and stewards would be in the same union. After all, cooks make the meals and stewards serve them. Since the word “marine” is in the title, this implies the workers are on ships. But the formation of this particular union was both long and arduous. It is also a symbol of how far unionization has come, and changed, since the 1930s.

Historically, some of the strongest American unions have been located on the waterfront. This is partially because the area where the work is to be performed is so confined. Longshoremen, teamsters, and stevedores work on the waterfront, a strip of land dockside where everyone knows which ships are coming in, how much cargo they are carrying, what outbound containers have to be loaded, and when the ship is leaving.

Because of the tight fabric of union cooperation on the waterfront, management forces have found it very difficult to break the hold of the unions on the docks. One of the largest strikes that affected the waterfront came in 1934, when the Teamsters precipitated a nationwide strike that drew more than 100,000 workers off their jobs nationwide. It was in this melee that the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards—originally the Marine Cooks’ and Stewards’ Association of the Pacific—was formed.

What made the NUMCS different was that its members were primarily black. Prior to 1934, blacks were considered second-class citizens, particularly on the docks. This was partially because in the early days of unionization there were so few of them that could work on the docks. The NUMCS had a number of other distinctions that set it apart from other unions. Because the socialist movement had made inroads into the black community, many assumed that the union was “red” as well as black. Additionally, since the NUMCS readily admitted gays, it was referred to as the “Red, Black, and Gay” union.

The General Strike of 1934 was a turning point in American union labor race relations. The West Coast ILA (International Longshoremen’s Association) president was Harry Bridges, an Australian-born activist. Bridges understood that the ILA needed black workers for both solidarity and membership. So he opened the doors of the ILA on the West Coast to black members. It was a risky move, as many union members did not trust the blacks because they had not participated in previous strikes—and many blacks

did not trust that their union brothers and sisters not to be racist.

What tipped the balance was the ILA demand of what is now known as the “hiring hall” system. Before 1934, almost all union labor on the waterfront was done on the basis of who the employer wanted to hire. The unions were looked upon as providers of labor in the generic. Then the employers would hire the specific laborers they wanted. This, naturally, led to a situation where certain union members got the lion’s share of the work and the others got what was left. Being black had meant that you were not hired at all, the reason there were few blacks in the unions at that time.

The “hiring hall” system was a significant change in the way members were hired. Instead of having the employer choose which specific person it wanted—and to keep the union hierarchy from doing the choosing—union members were hired on the basis of which member had the most seniority who was in the union hall at the moment the job was available. Blacks viewed this as the best possible mechanism to parcel out work, as it had nothing to do with race.

When the strike was over, the hiring hall system was implemented. Overnight, blacks flooded into the union. The system was color blind, so blacks believed they had an equal chance of getting jobs and moving up in seniority. Another result was the formation of the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards. With the implementation of the hiring hall system, there was finally a mechanism to ensure fairness in hiring.

Created at the dawn of the hiring hall system, the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards was instrumental in spreading the concept to other coastal communities. This is significant because the ILA strike that had created the new system only affected West Coast cities. But the establishment of the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards necessarily meant that the hiring hall system had to be implemented nationwide for that union. It did not take long for other coastal cities to see the merit of the new system. The result is a national union database that uses the hiring hall system.

But the history of the NUMCS has not been without controversy. It was a very vocal, Communist-led union until the 1950s, when it came under scrutiny during the witch hunts of the McCarthy era. The subsequent investigations almost destroyed the union. By 1952, many of its leaders were imprisoned or blacklisted. The CIO, seeking to put as much distance as possible between itself and the radicals of any union, purged itself of the NUMCS and eight other unions. It was not until the death of Joseph McCarthy

in 1957 and the end of the Red Scare that the NUMCS was welcomed back into the CIO, which by then had merged with the American Federation of Labor (1955) to create the AFL-CIO.

In the final analysis, the national significance of the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards is not so much what the members do as what the union did. By recognizing the importance of the hiring hall system, it formed and was one of the first—if not the first—union to use the concept nationwide. Its pioneering effort has proved a benefit to all unions. Very few unions can make that claim.

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NATIONAL UNION OF TEXTILE WORKERS

The National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW) was formed in 1890 as the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) primary vehicle for organizing textile workers. Initially, membership in the NUTW was limited mainly to skilled workers in northern textile mills. But the NUTW ran into immediate difficulties because there were already separate unions for most of the textile industry's skilled positions, including loom fixers and weavers. The NUTW also contended with the ongoing migration of textile production from the North to the South. Therefore, the union's long-term prospects depended on making inroads among southern textile workers.

The AFL had shown no previous interest in organizing southern mill hands. The Knights of Labor had paid some attention to the growing number of cotton-mill workers, but the Knights had a much broader focus and did not target any specific industry. The Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party (Populists) of the late nineteenth century both recognized the necessity of forging connections with industrial workers, but these organizations were concerned mainly with the issues bedeviling agriculture. Ironically, many Alliance members and Populists saw cotton mills as examples of society's decline, even as many farmers fled their fields for work in the fast-growing industry.

The NUTW's attempt to organize textile workers, particularly in the South, was motivated in part by a struggle between the AFL and Socialists for

leadership of the American labor movement. The AFL emphasized its relatively moderate agenda of organizing skilled workers to improve their wages and working conditions, contrasting these goals with the inflammatory anticapitalist rhetoric of the Socialists. Socialists, however, had gained notoriety and no small measure of support through their high-profile leadership in particular labor conflicts, particularly that of Eugene Debs in the Pullman Strike of 1894. Daniel De Leon's Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance (STLA) challenged the AFL in key northern industries, including textiles, and the deep depression of the mid-1890s enhanced the appeal of more radical unionism. Since textiles continued to be a major industry in the Northeast, the NUTW and the STLA locked horns in that region. Both organizations, however, also had an eye on the South.

Moving South

In 1895, the AFL head, Samuel Gompers, toured the South and reported on the rapid growth of cotton mills, which seemed immune to the national depression. Despite the southern textile industry's relative good fortune, there was evidence as well of widespread discontent among its workers, who disliked their long hours and low pay but had few options given the state of agriculture. From the perspective of northern labor leaders, whether moderate or radical, the race was on to see which union would reap the harvest of discontented southern mill hands. Ironically, southern unionizing efforts gained some vocal support as well from northern textile industrialists, who hoped that the organization of southern workers would diminish the regional wage differential that gave the South a competitive advantage.

The realities of southern organizing, however, quickly complicated these northern dreams. The NUTW's first campaign started in 1896 at the Eagle and Phoenix Manufacturing Company in Columbus, Georgia, a booming textile town. The union gained popularity when Eagle and Phoenix management ordered a 10% wage reduction. In response, over 1,700 workers, skilled and unskilled alike, went on strike and formed the NUTW's first southern local. While a boon for the fledgling union, this influx of new members also revealed what would be one of the organization's persistent weaknesses. The NUTW had meager financial resources and could offer little assistance to striking workers. When the company held out and refused to bargain, workers had no way to replace their paychecks. Eventually, many striking employees along with a number of outside strikebreakers

returned to work, production resumed, and the strike crumbled. Eagle and Phoenix magnanimously offered to rescind the wage cut when, in management's opinion, conditions allowed.

Failure in Columbus sparked further conflict in the South between the NUTW and the Socialists, complicated by a temporary fusion of the unions when the NUTW's general secretary, a Socialist, created a new labor organization. Gompers, however, cracked down and purged the NUTW of any outward Socialist influences. In the North, this resulted in the defection of many locals from the NUTW to the STLA. The South still seemed, at least on the surface, to be up for grabs. But no matter what the outcome of the inter-union squabbling in the South, the Eagle and Phoenix strike suggested that southern mill owners wanted no meaningful unionization, whether conservative or radical.

Focusing on urban areas, the NUTW found ambiguously advantageous circumstances in Atlanta in 1897. Black men had been allowed to work in southern cotton mills only as menial laborers, and few black women had ever been hired, despite large numbers of white women mill hands. But the huge Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills broke the color line by hiring 20 black women. White workers protested by walking off the job and joining the NUTW. Once again, however, lack of money undercut the local union. The strike fizzled as workers struggled without their paycheck and union leaders were fired. Without power or influence and committed to a segregated workforce, the NUTW local clung to existence.

Persistence and Futility

Despite these setbacks, the NUTW persevered. Between 1898 and 1900, organizers claimed to have chartered 54 locals in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Alabama, and Georgia. Yet it was unclear how a "local" was defined. It could be a few sympathetic workers in a Piedmont mill, or a few hundred in Atlanta. In any event, it seemed clear that these new locals were not generating much in the way of dues, which limited the power of each of them. Although in 1900 the NUTW claimed 5,000 dues-paying members, mostly in the South, the union never generated a significant strike fund, yet found it impossible to function without one.

Management bodies responded to NUTW campaigns by claiming that organizers were foreign-influenced "outsiders" who favored race mixing and that disgruntled employees showed ingratitude. The union's national leaders lent credence to the

race-mixing charge, offending many white members, by opposing grandfather clauses that prevented blacks from voting. Top NUTW leadership also supported child labor legislation, which management saw as an infringement on its rights and which many workers, who appreciated their children working beside them, also viewed with skepticism.

Lack of finances, however, continued to be the NUTW's main liability. In an effort to conserve money, the union offered strike relief only to locals that had been chartered for six months. However, most workers appealed to the NUTW for recognition and support only in the midst of strikes. Rejection of requests for strike assistance discouraged union membership, but so did unfulfilled promises of relief. Mill owners tightened the screws with selective firings, lockouts, evictions from company housing, and blacklisting. The NUTW did win some specific demands, usually small wage increases for specific workers in various mills. But most of the union's efforts in dozens of textile communities ended in disaster, fueling cynicism among mill hands about the value of organization.

In 1900, the NUTW appealed to southern mill workers by promoting the 10-hour day. This campaign was hotly contested by mill managements, in part because the market for southern textiles had been undercut by the Boxer Rebellion in China, the destination for much southern production. In the summer of 1900, there were nearly 30 strikes and lockouts in North Carolina alone. The biggest, involving over 1,000 workers, arose from the arbitrary dismissal of an employee at the Haw River Mills in Alamance County. Management responded by firing anyone who admitted membership in the NUTW, hiring strikebreakers, and holding out against initially unsympathetic local public opinion. Once again, however, strikers had minimal resources, could not hold out, and were blacklisted when seeking employment elsewhere. The NUTW offered little financial relief, and the workers ultimately conceded. Some version of this story was repeated in nearly every case. For example, for a major strike in Danville, Virginia, the NUTW had a strike fund of \$2,700 to support some 2,000 workers. The AFL eventually sent another \$4,000, but this still could not offset even a week's worth of pay.

At its peak in 1900, the NUTW might have claimed 6% of the southern textile labor force as members. A year later, the remaining southern NUTW locals merged with a number of northern locals, ones that had left in the mid-1890s, to form the United Textile Workers of America. The NUTW had few tangible successes, but in its brief existence it did manage to bring into focus many grievances held by southern

mill workers. There was certainly widespread discontent, and mill hands were not reluctant, at least initially, to strike in pursuit of their goals. The lessons learned during those conflicts, however, heightened skepticism about the usefulness of unions and reinforced the high stakes of labor activism. These themes would recur in later textile conflicts. Mill owners, especially those in hundreds of tiny Piedmont communities, ultimately held much more power than did the NUTW.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Debs, Eugene V.; DeLeon, Daniel; Gompers, Samuel; Knights of Labor; Populism/People’s Party; Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance; Textiles; United Textile Workers**

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

The National Urban League (NUL) was founded in 1911 in New York City. The League was the product of the merger of three social work agencies: the National League for the Protection of Colored Women (founded by Frances Kellor in 1905), the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions Among Negroes (1906), and the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (1910). Originally the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (NLUCAN), in 1920, the name was shortened to the National Urban League (NUL). From the outset, the NUL focused on black migrants’ acculturation, jobs, and housing. The League taught lessons in everything

from choosing a vocation and job-search strategies to cooking, cleaning, and personal hygiene. The League also sought to shape policy with empirical research and provided social services such as job placement, education, and health care. Finally, the NUL built training centers and provided fellowships to encourage young African-Americans to enter professional social work.

The League’s programs of “interracial co-operation” originated in the Progressive Era’s emphasis on rational solutions to social problems and top-down reform. The League’s founders included white philanthropists and reformers such as Ruth Standish Baldwin, the wife of railroad magnate William H. Baldwin; L. Hollingsworth Wood, a Quaker involved in the New York Colored Mission; and the Columbia University professor E. R. A. Seligman. The NUL’s African-American founders were members of what W. E. B. DuBois called the “talented tenth.” The Howard University dean Kelly Miller and the physician and civic leader George Cleveland Hall exemplify the League’s roots in higher education and social reform. The League’s first two executive directors, George Edmund Haynes and Eugene Kinckle Jones, were both college-educated black professionals. These leaders built NLUCAN on the model of prominent agencies that worked to assist transnational immigrants to New York City.

The NUL added affiliates in cities across the country. For most of the century, local chapters were relatively autonomous compared, for example, to NAACP chapters and achieved uneven success. Although some white officials in southern cities did attempt to set up NUL chapters, creating organizations based on the principle of interracial co-operation was especially difficult where “social equality” was anathema. The most notable southern affiliate was in Nashville, Tennessee, and was led by the sociologist George Haynes. Haynes met the challenge of interracial work in the South by concentrating on professional social work training at Fisk University. Although Haynes sought to connect the university to the broader community, it was in New York City that the League’s attention to urgent social problems took shape. In the national office, Eugene Kinckle Jones worked with relative autonomy and with the greater resources available in the city to shift the center of the League’s activities away from Haynes’s educational approach.

In addition to the affiliates work, the NUL’s influence spread through its journal *Opportunity*. In 1923, the Fisk University sociologist Charles S. Johnson founded the League’s alternative to *The Crisis*, the organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Together, they provided widely read platforms for black poets,

novelists, and intellectuals. The League's magazine did not match the distribution of *The Crisis*, but *Opportunity* provided an outlet for the League's substantial research and drew a larger white audience.

The NUL included an executive director, a board of directors, field organizers, and professional staff. A president, largely a figurehead, ran the interracial board, which was generally the most conservative element of the organization. For the most part, the League's executive directors shaped the organization's programs. George Haynes led the League from Nashville during its first eight years. His partner in New York City, Eugene Kinckle Jones, was the NUL's executive secretary from 1919 to 1941. Jones's tenure coincided with the Great Migration, Harlem Renaissance, Great Depression, and the onset of World War II. It was an achievement just to keep the League alive, especially when donations virtually dried up in the 1930s. The longtime League organizer Lester B. Granger led the League from 1941 until his retirement in 1961. Granger struggled to raise money for the League, but under his leadership, the NUL did expand its Vocational Opportunity Campaigns. Whitney Young replaced Granger and served until he drowned while on a trip to Lagos, Nigeria, in 1971. In an era of increasing conservatism, Vernon E. Jordan (1972–1981), John Jacob (1982–1994), Hugh Price (1994–2003), and Marc Morial (2003–) have attempted to sustain the League's dramatic revitalization under Young.

Controversial History

The NUL sits at the center of controversies over the character and effectiveness of liberal reform in African-American history. Some students of the Progressive Era's legacy for African-American reform movements argue that the NUL was a regressive institution of social control. Others insist that the League has been a necessary supplement to organizations with different approaches. Finally, historians point out the mediating role the NUL has played between revolutionaries, liberals, and conservatives.

The NUL and the NAACP provide a convenient point of comparison for this debate. The NAACP, founded by W. E. B. DuBois and others in the Niagara Movement just two years before NLUCAN, also developed programs based on Progressive Era liberalism. For many years, historians argued that the NUL and NAACP exemplified a split between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois. Those who equated Washington's industrial education and the League's vocational guidance argued that the NUL

represented an urban version of Washington's accommodationist self-help ideology. The NAACP, on the other hand, was said to reflect DuBois's more confrontational politics. This comparison ignores a number of key points. Washington played little role in the League's founding and later was only peripherally connected to the NUL's work. In addition, the NUL's vocational guidance programs trained African-Americans for industrial and white-collar work. DuBois did have a central part in the NAACP's origins and probably did more to shape the NAACP's public image than any other individual through his *Crisis* articles. However, DuBois never held unchallenged control over the NAACP's programs. Most important, historians have pointed to the overlaps and ambiguities in the two organizations' ideologies and programs, concluding that the NUL and the NAACP often enjoyed a complementary and supplementary relationship. Leaders in both organizations believed in the power of public education, but neither was originally a mass-based civil rights organization. During their first two decades, the major difference between the NUL and the NAACP was that while the NUL focused on social work and vocational guidance, the NAACP concentrated on reform via pressure on government institutions and legal strategies to fight discrimination.

Still, the NUL's history raises debates over the strengths and weaknesses of the NUL's cooperation with the white power structure. Numerous scholars argue that the NUL's reliance on funding from white philanthropists such as Ruth S. Baldwin, John D. Rockefeller, and Julius Rosenwald of Sears, Roebuck, and Co. prevented the League from pursuing fundamental social or economic change. From this point of view, the NUL has been at best a paternalistic, reformist organization.

The historiographical debate over the League's effectiveness has been most pointed in biographies of Whitney M. Young, the NUL executive director from 1961 to 1971. In 1970, the *New York Times* columnist Tom Buckley voiced the popular critique of the NUL as an organization of lackeys to the white power structure in his article "Whitney Young: Black Leader or 'Oreo Cookie'?" Nancy Weiss's 1989 biography rehabilitated Young's image by highlighting achievements. Young turned the League into a premier civil rights organization and secured funds from corporations, foundations, and the federal government. In 1998, Dennis C. Dickerson revised Weiss's portrayal, adding that Young's work with white business and political leaders was grounded in activism in working- and middle-class black circles. In these biographies, Young's attempts to mediate between civil rights activists and elite whites represent the NUL's

dilemma more generally, especially the difficult middle ground the agency attempts to hold between antagonistic groups of different races and classes.

Another controversial aspect of the League's history is its relationship to trade unions and strikebreaking during its first two decades. During the Great Migration, the NUL's job placement services engendered criticism from both white employers and trade unions. The NUL responded to African-Americans' employment demands and during World War I assisted the United States Employment Service (USES) in recruiting African-American workers. Many employers (some of whom relied on black labor when it was convenient) saw the NUL-backed USES as an incursion into their right to choose workers based on race. For their part, white trade unions perceived NUL job placement, and black workers in general, as real threats to their jobs and unions. Worst of all, black workers carried the stigma of strikebreakers. During the massive 1919 steel and packinghouse strikes, the League jumped into the middle of this controversy. At a Detroit conference that year, the NUL declared its position on unionization: black workers should join unions and bargain collectively when unions did not discriminate. However, if excluded, black workers should form their own collective and negotiate with white employers and unions. At the same time, the NUL actively pursued job placements throughout the 1919 strikes. According to the historian James Grossman, in 1919, in Chicago alone, 14,000 blacks found jobs through the League. By straddling the middle of the strikes and continuing to place thousands of black workers in jobs, the NUL exacerbated tension with trade unions. However, historians point out that for African-American laborers, who were last hired and first fired, accepting a strikebreaking job was a pragmatic choice in a hostile economic environment.

A New Context

In 1961, the League's new executive director, Whitney M. Young, reshuffled the League's national office and began a fund-raising campaign that ultimately created the League's most dynamic period. As the historian Nancy Weiss points out, between 1961 and 1970, the League's budget increased significantly, from \$340,000 to \$14,279,000; the number of affiliates increased from 63 to 98, and its professional staff expanded from 300 to more than 1,200. Although some League affiliates had already taken on projects for civil and legal rights, the NUL remained committed to social service, education, and research

activities. This began to change during Young's tenure. Young reformed the League's popular image by working closely with groups such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Young used his charisma to forge lucrative connections with corporations, gain access to the highest levels of the federal government, and make the Urban League one of the primary civil rights organizations. According to his biographers, Young played important intermediary roles throughout the decade—between leaders of the 1963 March on Washington, between corporate and government officials and the other major civil right leaders, and between black and white liberals and the increasingly radical youth-based movements of the late 1960s.

Young was not alone in his desire to revise the League's programs. The general political climate of the 1960s included greater federal and private resources for fighting racial discrimination. In addition, after 1966, the Black Power Movement brought a newly energized commitment to black nationalism, self-determination, and in some cases, racial separatism. This rapidly changing political context caused many inside the League to move away from its traditional emphasis on interracial co-operation and appeasement of the white power structure.

For Young and the NUL, the resurgent popular emphasis on self-determination and racial pride did not translate into racial separatism. Instead, Young and his allies in the NUL moved toward racial pluralism while constructing innovative programs targeting social problems in the ghettos. The NUL created a National Skills Bank that connected black workers with jobs that fit their skill levels; on-the-job training programs in concert with the Department of Labor; a Broadcast Skills Bank to direct African-Americans into radio and television; and a Secretarial Training Project. These new programs dramatically increased the number of people who received job training and placement from the NUL. No longer was progress measured in terms of "pilot placements," jobs secured by an individual black candidate for the first time, which had been the Industrial Department's standard for so many years. In addition, as part of the "New Thrust" mass organizing in ghettos that began in 1968, many League affiliates moved their offices from central business sections of their cities to the center of black majority neighborhoods. The League created voter education and registration, labor education, and youth development programs. Clearly, though the NUL now focused its attention on centers of black life rather than interracial co-operation, the organization remained committed to the transformative power

of jobs, education, and the democratic process. The League's persistent faith in reform paid off in grants from philanthropic groups such as the Ford Foundation and the federal government.

After Young's death, League leaders remained committed to providing social services and funding research projects in majority black communities. The NUL has maintained its nonpartisan, interracial social work. In addition to its traditional employment and education services, the League assists black veterans, fights for open housing and consumers' rights, and helps find adoptive houses and tutors for inner-city children. Since the mid-1970s the League has also produced an annual report, *The State of Black America*, carrying on its tradition of using scientific social research to influence public policy.

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See also Civil Rights; Du Bois, W. E. B.; Great Migration; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Progressive Era; Strike Wave (1919); Strikebreaking

NATIONAL WAR LABOR BOARD (WWI)

Created by presidential proclamation in 1918, the National War Labor Board (NWLB) served as the primary U.S. government agency for resolving labor disputes during World War I. The 12-member body

was cochaired by Frank Walsh, a prolabor Kansas City attorney who had gained fame as chair of the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations, and William Howard Taft, a former Republican president of the United States. By the time it ceased operations in August 1919, the Board had handed down nearly 500 rulings in disputes over pay, hours, and employee representation.

The origins of the NWLB are rooted in the strike wave that swept the country once the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917. In the first six months of the war, more than 280,000 workers engaged in over 1,100 strikes, substantially impairing the U.S. war effort. Initial government efforts to achieve labor peace relied on a patchwork of industry-specific boards in army barracks construction, shipbuilding, coal, and railroads. In January 1918, President Wilson assigned Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson to establish a unified labor policy. The resulting War Labor Conference Board (WLCB), with five members for labor, five for management, and Walsh and Taft representing the public, reported to the president in late March 1918. On April 8, Wilson created the NWLB, with a nearly identical membership.

Representing labor on the new Board were Frank Hayes (the president of the United Mine Workers of America), William L. Hutcheson (the president of the United Carpenters), Thomas Savage (a member of the Executive Council of the International Association of Machinists), Victor Olander (the secretary-treasurer of the Illinois Federation of Labor and the top official of the International Seamen's Union), and Thomas A. Rickert (the president of the United Garment Workers). The employer representatives were L. F. Loree (the president of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad), C. Edwin Michael (the former vice president of the National Association of Manufacturers and an iron manufacturer), Loyall A. Osborne (the vice president of Westinghouse), W. H. Van Dervoort, (an East Moline, IL manufacturer), and B. L. Worden (the head of the Submarine Boat Corporation and the Lackawanna Bridge Co). Members also had seconds, who served in their absence.

The mission of the Board was to keep war industry workers on the job. Its guiding principles aimed at balancing the needs of business and the demands of workers. Workers had the right to organize unions without management interference as long as they did not use "coercive" tactics. "Existing conditions," whether union or open shop, were to be maintained. Women and men were to receive equal pay for equal work, though women were not to be assigned work "disproportionate" to their strength. The right to the

eight-hour day would be upheld where it was legally required by state law. Workers and managers would co-operate to avoid production delays and to provide information about available skilled workers to the government. Wage levels should be based on prevailing local standards. And finally, for their part in the Great War, workers were entitled to a living wage.

Each case that came before the NWLB was assigned to a "section" of the Board consisting of one management and one labor member. The pair relied on information provided by impartial staff investigators sent into the field. The section could also choose to dispatch a pair of partisan investigators. If the section could not agree on the case, the full Board would decide it. In the event that the full Board could not reach unanimity, the case went to one of 10 presidentially appointed umpires who alone issued a decision. Umpires included prominent politicians and business leaders, such as Henry Ford, Walter Clark, the chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, and the U.S. Housing Corporation president, Otto Eidlitz.

Since the Board did not result from an act of Congress, its rulings did not have legal sanction, unless both employer and employees had jointly submitted the case. In its very first case, members of the Commercial Telegraphers Union of America (CTUA) working at Western Union asked the NWLB to intervene when the company president, Newcomb Carlton, fired workers for joining the union. When Carlton refused to comply with a Board compromise proposal, thus exposing the Board's weakness, President Wilson convinced Congress to nationalize the telegraph and telephone lines and appointed Albert Burleson as administrator. The strongly antilabor Burleson stalled on implementing the NWLB's subsequent award of a wage increase to Western Union workers, but Wilson's action gave the NWLB some teeth.

Though the Board was split evenly between labor and employer representatives, the pressures of labor unrest, the need for uninterrupted production, Wilson's strong stand in the Western Union case, plus the moderating influence of Taft on the employer side resulted in a series of prolabor rulings. In a case brought by striking foundry workers in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, the Board raised the minimum laborers' hourly wage from 22 cents to 40 cents, which became a precedent for further rulings. After labor and employer members of the Board deadlocked on eight-hour cases from Wheeling, West Virginia, and Bridgeport, Connecticut, a major munitions production center, umpires Ford, Clark, and Eidlitz awarded the eight-hour day to workers. Women employees, including Schenectady electrical workers,

were also awarded wage increases, though the Board accepted lower minimums for women than for men. Low-paid black laborers in New Orleans and elsewhere made wage gains; similarly, though, when black Birmingham steelworkers encountered vigilante racist violence in the course of an organizing campaign, the Board failed to intervene.

In its attempt to maintain "existing standards," the Board dealt with the sticky issue of employee representation by recommending, in a majority of collective bargaining cases, that shop committees be established in plants throughout the country. While the committees were meant to postpone the issue of unionism, in Bridgeport, radical leaders of District 55 of the International Association of Machinists led a strike against an inadequate Board ruling and then swept the shop committee elections. Union activists at General Electric employed NWLB hearings to win new members and then used shop committees to organize the Electrical Manufacturing Industry Labor Federation, uniting electrical workers from Pennsylvania to New York to Massachusetts. After the Armistice, however, as the leverage of Board labor representatives evaporated, employers such as Eugene Grace of Bethlehem Steel successfully flouted Board authority and used NWLB-recommended shop committees as a barrier to unionization. Considering that these committees became a primary vehicle for companies to avoid unions in the subsequent decade, historians have differed on whether Board policy should be seen positively as providing the basis for later prolabor New Deal reforms or viewed as a kind of Trojan horse for the open shop.

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NATIONAL WAR LABOR BOARD (WWII)

As the United States edged closer to involvement in and then entered World War II in December 1941, organized labor, management, and the government each maneuvered to protect their interests. Labor hoped to consolidate the membership gains and legal legitimacy secured by the New Deal and to extend its collective bargaining victories into nonunion shops and industries, particularly those that benefited from defense production. For its part, big business wanted to hold the line against further union advances. Government, interested foremost in uninterrupted defense production, sought to create mediation mechanisms that would settle any labor disputes to both parties' satisfaction with a minimum of disruption. All looked to the state-mandated industrial relations pioneered during the First World War, characterized by a tripartite mediation War Labor Board, for guidance.

When defense production for the Allies increased in 1940 and 1941, Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions tried to win concessions from recalcitrant employers with large government contracts, most notably Ford Motor Company, Bethlehem Steel, and Allis-Chalmers. Organized labor's representatives on the National Defense Advisory Commission failed to get the government to deny defense contracts to corporations that violated the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), and the resulting strikes began to retard defense production by the spring of 1941. That March, President Roosevelt established the National Defense Mediation Board (NDMB) to help resolve these defense industry labor disputes. The 11-member NDMB had a mandate to "exert every possible effort to assure that all work necessary for national defense shall proceed without interruption and with all possible speed" but was handicapped by its inability to compel arbitration that would be binding on both labor and management.

The NDMB collapsed in November 1941, when its two CIO members resigned over the Board's refusal to grant a closed shop to the United Mine Workers in its ongoing dispute with U.S. Steel. Only a month later, however, with U.S. entry into the war, President Roosevelt issued an executive order reconstituting the Board as the National War Labor Board (NWLB).

Like the NDMB before it, the NWLB's 12 members were drawn evenly from representatives of labor, business, and the "public" (in reality, seen as representing the interests of government). Labor members included Philip Murray, the president of the CIO, Thomas Kennedy of the United Mine Workers, and two representatives from the rival American Federation of Labor (AFL). Business sent representatives of large

corporations accustomed to negotiating with unions, such as U.S. Rubber's Cyrus Ching, who had long advocated co-operation with organized labor. William H. Davis, the one-time head of the New York state mediation service, chaired both the NWLB and its predecessor. Davis was joined by men with extensive experience in mediating labor disputes and balancing competing interests in public life, including Wayne Morse, who had arbitrated the fierce West Coast longshore strikes during the 1930s, and Frank Porter Graham, the liberal president of the University of North Carolina. No women sat on the Board, though the NWLB did issue rulings that enforced equal pay for equal work done by men and women in war production. Graham, in particular, also helped the Board lend a sympathetic ear to black workers who demanded equal treatment in the wartime workplace, and sought to abolish racial inequities in wage structures.

Unlike the National Defense Mediation Board or its World War I predecessor, the NWLB had the power to decide disputes in a legally binding manner and to bring sanctions to bear against both unions and businesses that refused to abide by its decisions, including plant seizures. The major tasks of the NWLB, in the words of its final report, consisted of "the settlement of labor disputes which endangered the war effort and the stabilization of wages as an integral part of the over-all program to prevent inflation." Between 1942 and 1945, the NWLB decided over 17,000 disputes involving over 12 million employees, which impacted a majority of unionized workers in the United States. In only 40 cases did the NWLB call on the government to seize defense plants to compel adherence to its rulings. The NWLB's strongest sanctions against organized labor came in its power to revoke union security provisions, fringe benefits, or collective bargaining contracts that it had helped unions secure. Thus, more often than not, the Board proved able to enlist union leaders in heading off unauthorized disputes or quelling wildcat strikes.

If the NWLB carried out its mediation function effectively and protected workers' right to organize and bargain collectively, its efforts to stabilize wages proved far less satisfactory to labor. In an effort to restrain rapidly advancing wartime inflation, the NWLB laid down a policy in July 1942 that capped wage increases at about 3%, a figure the Board claimed matched the gap between the increase in cost of living and wage gains over the past 18 months. This so-called Little Steel Formula of wage stabilization placed the burden of inflationary restraint on wage earners and proved immensely unpopular with rank-and-file workers, who regarded it as a wage freeze. Nevertheless, increased overtime and more

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elaborate fringe benefits compensated in part for the artificial ceiling on the pay packet.

The mandated wage restraint notwithstanding, of the many wartime administrative agencies designed to oversee war production, the NWLB was the only one in which organized labor proved able to wield some influence. Despite grumbling by workers about limited wage increases, restrictions on labor mobility, and the no-strike pledge, the NWLB placated labor leaders by granting “maintenance of membership” to the unions. Under these agreements, all newly hired workers in a union shop would be automatically enrolled in the union after a 15-day waiting period. The union security thus gained proved instrumental in encouraging the growth of organized labor during the war. For unions, this proved an essential component of the wartime industrial relations regime because of the enormous influx of unorganized workers into the defense industries; for big business, “maintenance of membership” represented a major capitulation to labor’s historic quest for the universal closed shop. As the NWLB noted in its final report, “no issue presented to the War Labor Board precipitated more furious debate than union security.”

Some scholars argue that the NWLB, despite its brief existence, had a long-lasting effect on the shape of American labor law. The basic structure of collective bargaining agreements as overseen by the state, the means of arbitration and mediation of disputes, and a sharply delineated arena of managerial prerogatives, as well as the requirement that trade unions police the behavior of their members, can all be seen as significant legacies of the Board’s decisions.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; United Mine Workers of America; World War II**

NATIVE AMERICANS

American Indians worked for wages since their earliest encounters with the developing capitalist economy. They cleaned homes and minded children for colonial officials, picked crops and herded cattle

for frontier farmers and ranchers, and scouted out their enemies for the U.S. military during the nineteenth-century Indian wars. When the transcontinental railroad brought industrial development to the western landscape, American Indians found work in industries that drew other migrants to the region from across the globe: in mining, lumber, railroads and large-scale commercial agriculture.

While they labored alongside Asian, Latino, and Euro-American migrants, their specific experience under U.S. control set American Indians apart from other workers. U.S. policy and treaties dictated the terms of American Indian existence to the most intimate detail. Federal bureaucrats in what would become the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) would attempt to control every aspect of their daily lives, including where Indians would live, how they would make a living, what they learned in school, and how they would engage their spiritual worlds. Non-Indian workers faced similar types of federal intervention and assimilationist programs, including initiatives that transformed the slave labor system in the South and legislation that regulated working conditions and restricted immigration. But the history of treaty making between American Indians and the U.S. government established the precedent of indigenous people asserting their rights to sovereignty, not simply the civil rights of fully enfranchised citizens demanded by other racialized minority groups.

During the course of the nineteenth century, when other American workers faced problems of mechanization and industrialization, and fought for control over the workplace and the eight-hour day, American Indians were engaged in a life-or-death struggle to hold on to their homelands. This history of armed conflict, colonial control, and dispossession would profoundly determine how American Indians would be incorporated into the capitalist market as well as what types of individual and collective strategies they would develop to survive and persevere.

Indian land was pivotal to American expansion and the pursuit of “Manifest Destiny” in the nineteenth century and made possible the development of intercontinental railroads and extractive industries that formed the backbone of the U.S. West’s economy until World War II. By the beginning of the twentieth century, American Indians lost most of their land in a series of wars, treaties, and congressional actions. By 1887, American Indians held approximately 136 million acres of land, 6.8% of what they occupied prior to European contact. The 1887 General Allotment Act (the Dawes Act) further reduced their holdings by two thirds, carving up tribally held territory into individual homesteads and opening up the remaining land to white settlement.

Reformers saw the Dawes Act as the best solution for the “Indian Problem.” By “killing the Indian to save the man,” it was supposed to transform Indians into yeoman farmers and help them achieve a level of civilization (as defined by federal lawmakers) necessary for incorporation into American society. Some took advantage of this mandate and became successful farmers and ranchers. But for the most part, the Dawes Act dealt a decisive blow to their subsistence cultures, rendering many American Indians landless and homeless.

Boarding Schools and the “Making” of Indian Workers

For reformers, civilizing the Indians required more than assigning them allotments of land. Assimilation required American Indians to abandon their cultures, languages, and tribal affiliations. With these goals in mind, Richard Henry Pratt founded the Carlisle Indian School in 1879, a boarding school for Indians that emphasized a vocational rather than an academic curriculum. Far from home and forbidden to speak their native languages, American Indian students learned the social expectations of industrial society. They marched in military formation, donned Victorian-era clothing, and marked their time according to the bells of a clock. Mostly, they learned about wage work from the “outing system,” an apprenticeship program at the heart of assimilationist curriculum. Students performed a variety of jobs in this program, but they primarily found themselves doing unskilled, agricultural labor or domestic work for western employers. According to Lewis Meriam, the author of a major exposé on Indian Policy in 1928, these schools were not preparing students to land lucrative, skilled jobs. They were simply supplying the schools and surrounding employers with a source of cheap labor. As a result, according to the anthropologist Alice Littlefield in *Native Americans and Wage Labor*, such an education “was not so much assimilation as proletarianization.” Even with useful vocational training, Indians would find little access to well-paying jobs once they left the boarding school environment. Racism that barred other workers of color from access to the skilled trades applied to Indians as well.

The Indian New Deal

During the New Deal era, American Indians experienced a brief reprieve from the draconian

assimilationist programs of the previous 50 years. Under John Collier, the commissioner of Indian affairs, American Indians saw an end to allotment, the development of day schools, and increasing support for tribal identity. For Collier, Indian culture was something to be preserved, not extinguished. The 1934 Wheeler-Howard Act, the hallmark of his administration, authorized tribes to set up their own governments and created programs that encouraged craft production and other forms of cultural expression.

Commonly known as the “Indian New Deal,” the legislation also extended Depression-era work and relief programs to American Indian communities. Ironically, while many American workers were losing their jobs as the economy crumbled in the 1930s, many American Indians were experiencing wage work for the first time. They found jobs in the growing BIA bureaucracies and in the Indian Civilian Conservation Corps clearing trails, building campgrounds, and working on reservation land conservation projects. And in one short-lived experiment, Indian women were put to work in small, reservation-based mattress factories.

But for the Navajos, meager wages did not make up for the New Deal’s unwitting assault on their cultural economy. According to conservation specialists, Navajos’ sheep, goats, and cattle were overgrazing their rangelands, and the resulting erosion threatened the economic viability of their livestock industry. The BIA’s answer for repairing and preserving those rangelands included reducing Navajo livestock holdings by more than 50%. It was a harsh measure—a long-term solution that threatened the short-term survival of their pastoral culture. It firmly embittered a generation of Navajos, many of whom would subsequently vote against the ratification of the Indian Reorganization Act. After livestock reduction, many had to abandon their families and herds to look for other ways to earn a living, including railroad maintenance, agricultural labor, and assorted domestic jobs in reservation boarding towns. As the Navajo example suggests, Collier’s policies, while anti-assimilationist, may have done as much to pull American Indians into the capitalist marketplace as boarding schools and allotment had accomplished in the generation before.

World War II halted the New Dealer’s efforts, redirecting people and resources away from Indian conservation and labor programs. Like other Americans, native people joined the war effort, enlisting in the military and finding work in defense-related industries. According to the historian Allison Bernstein, 44,000 American Indians served in the armed forces, and many more worked in weapons depots,

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mining, and other heavy industries. American Indian women joined up as nurses and members of the Women's Army Corps. Soldiers and workers sent a substantial percentage of their paychecks home to their loved ones on the reservation, supplying those communities with a new and significant source of income. When the war ended, these veterans would return to their homes with cash in their pockets and heightened expectations about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. They would be part of a new generation of American Indian leaders who would begin to establish new tribal governments and test the boundaries of sovereignty promised by New Deal-era reforms.

Termination and Relocation

After the war, the mood in Congress shifted once again toward a more assimilationist Indian policy. In 1953, legislators were determined to "get out of the Indian business" once and for all, and passed a series of laws, including Concurrent Resolution 108 and Public Law 208, that enabled states to extend their jurisdictions over Indian land, thus terminating their federal reservation status. Not all states exercised this option, nor did all tribes find their reservation status terminated. This was a devastating blow to nascent tribal governments, such as the Menominee in Wisconsin, who had been somewhat successful in developing a relatively small, yet viable, lumber industry. Still, without federal support they could not compete with large-scale corporate operations. For many tribes, termination meant further loss of their land base as well as a direct attack on their political and economic sovereignty.

Like other federal policies, termination did not turn out as legislators expected. Coupled with this legislation was a voluntary federal program that offered to relocate reservation residents to urban areas such as Denver, Albuquerque, San Francisco, and Phoenix as well as Midwestern cities such as Minneapolis and Chicago. Many American Indians took advantage of this project, hoping to find a way out of the poverty they faced at home on the reservations. But migration did not mean that American Indians would completely abandon their reservation communities, as policy makers had hoped. Since at least the late nineteenth century, native people ventured beyond their reservation's boundaries to find work; but they would also come back, contributing their earnings and labor to the survival of their families. Picking carrots for commercial growers in Phoenix, repairing railroad tracks near Kansas City, or packing produce

in Oakland did not necessarily mean that American Indian workers would completely assimilate the values and culture of the dominant society. Nor did it mean that they would lose their connections with their kin at home. The result was not necessarily assimilation, but what the historian Eric Meeks terms "resistant adaptation." American Indians did not choose between their cultures and their jobs. Instead, they developed strategies that enabled them to make a living in ways that resonated with their own cultural practices and responsibilities.

In the 1950s and 1960s, sizable urban Indian communities emerged in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Phoenix, and other western cities. But many native people returned to the reservation or created broader urban/reservation migration streams of relatives and friends who might come and go as needed. New social movements grew from these urban enclaves that would demand significant reform in U.S. Indian policy, including the repeal of termination and legislation that afforded greater respect for cultural, political, and economic sovereignty.

Native Americans and Labor Unions

The history of Native Americans and organized labor in the United States reflects considerable tension and ambiguities, mirroring the experience of other workers of color. Like Mexican-Americans and African-Americans, they confronted racial discrimination at work and in the union hall, where white union members denied them access to the building trades and other highly skilled jobs. In fact, labor unions that traditionally organized workers in Arizona and New Mexico mining districts, in towns that bordered reservations, have been at best ambivalent toward American Indians. At worst, unions were outright hostile, viewing Native American workers as potential strike-breakers who depressed wages and working conditions for the rest of the membership. In mining towns such as Ajo and Bisbee, Arizona, or even Gallup, New Mexico, American Indians were not even afforded conventional company housing. Instead, they lived in segregated areas on the margins of those communities called "Indian villages" and performed jobs that were designated "Indian work." Union members would do little to challenge such discrimination until the 1970s, when they found themselves competing with Indians for jobs in large-scale, extractive industries and other corporate operations on reservation land. After that, Indian workers would demand access to those jobs, not as a civil right, but as a right to tribal sovereignty.

Since 1958, when workers at the Texas Zinc uranium processing mill tried to organize a union on the Navajo Reservation, the status of unions on reservation land has been in question. With the development of Indian gaming, this issue remains a difficult problem between trade union activists who assert their rights under federal labor law and tribal authorities who insist on their sovereign jurisdiction. In some cases, native labor activists have successfully bridged this divide by demanding that their tribal governments enact guidelines to promote safer working conditions and cooperate with unions to develop apprenticeship programs for young American Indian workers. In 1977, Native Americans throughout the United States developed the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance, an initiative independent of other federal programs that gives hiring preference to Native American workers in non-tribally operated companies on reservation lands.

Other workers of color, Mexican-Americans and African-Americans in particular, transformed their unions into social movements that advocated broad, civil rights agendas. Many American Indians eventually joined unions such as the United Farm Workers, United Mine Workers, and Laborers' International and significantly improved their wages and working conditions as a result. But unions themselves did not serve as vehicles for social justice, as they had under César Chávez and A. Philip Randolph. American Indian working-class history is complicated by a long-fought struggle over land and sovereignty, treaties, and armed resistance. A civil rights agenda, one that ensured equal rights for all American citizens, did not adequately address the demands of indigenous communities that also wanted power over their own lands, cultures, and economies. Labor demands might translate well into civil rights, but not into treaty obligations.

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NESTOR, AGNES (JUNE 24, 1880–1948) Progressive Era Trade Unionist

Agnes Nestor, a self-described pioneer woman trade unionist, was a groundbreaking labor leader and political activist during the Progressive Era. Nestor dedicated her life to the promotion of workingwomen's needs. To this end, she advocated for women's unionization, protective legislation, and woman suffrage. Her successes make Nestor one of the most influential and significant female labor leaders of the early twentieth century.

Agnes Nestor was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on June 24, 1880. Her mother, Anna McEwan, suffered a lifetime of health problems after working in the cotton mills of upstate New York as a child. Agnes's father, Thomas Nestor, was a machinist by trade and active in machinists' unions and the Knights of Labor. In Grand Rapids, he managed a grocery store and served several terms in the city government. In 1896, an economic depression drove Thomas to seek work in Chicago. His family followed several months later in 1897.

Agnes began working for wages when she moved to Chicago with her family. She found a job as a glove maker at Eisendrath's Glove Factory, where she stayed for the next nine years. Almost immediately,

Nestor realized the disadvantages of the piecework system. She shared grievances with the women in her department, such as having to purchase their own needles and oil for the sewing machines, having their pay docked for the cost of power to run their machines, and dealing with disrespectful foremen. When the male glove cutters at Eisendrath's went on strike in the spring of 1898, Nestor and the glove makers followed suit in order to make their own demands on management. Nestor quickly assumed a leadership role amongst the women workers, and with the support of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), the strikers won. As a result of her experiences organizing on the picket line, Nestor became convinced that women required separate all-women's locals in order to see their interests properly served. She went on to organize the Glove Makers' Local 2 at Eisendrath's in 1902 (Local 1 was all men). During this time, Nestor also published the first of her many written pieces, "A Day's Work Making Gloves." Nestor's early commitment to workingwomen's self-organization shaped her political approach and activity in the labor movement.

As Nestor agitated for workingwomen's needs, she encountered an extremely supportive environment, both from her family and the labor movement. The experiences and pro-union stance of her parents supported Nestor's ideology from the days of her first strike. Her father, in particular, applauded his daughter's unionism, and he instructed her from his own experiences in the labor movement. The strike at Eisendrath's allowed Nestor to work with the Chicago Federation of Labor Organization Committee. Sophie Becker, the only woman on the CFL Organization Committee, particularly inspired Nestor. In addition, Nestor regarded John Fitzpatrick, the head of the CFL Organization Committee at this time, as a great mentor and friend. Over the next few years, she often sought his advice and received his support. This network shaped Nestor as she rose to become a great labor leader.

As the first president of her Glove Makers' local, Nestor served as a delegate to a 1902 American Federation of Labor conference in Washington, DC, to organize the International Glove Workers Union of America (IGWUA). Nestor acted as an officer of the IGWUA from 1903 until her death in 1948. At the second IGWUA convention, held in Gloversville, New York, in 1903, Nestor made her first public speech and was elected vice president on the executive board of the union.

The summer of 1904 brought a great strike in the Chicago Stockyards, including some three thousand women workers. The Chicago branch of the National Women's Trade Union League (WTUL), formed in

1903, actively supported the strikers. The WTUL interested Nestor because it was the only organization of its time that sought to unionize women as a mechanism for social reform. As president of her local, Nestor attended a meeting of the Chicago WTUL at Hull-House, where she met Mary McDowell, Jane Addams, and Ellen Gates Starr. Nestor joined forces with the Chicago branch of the WTUL in 1904. She served on the national executive board in 1906 and also held the office of president of the Chicago branch from 1913 until her death in 1948.

In 1906, Nestor became the secretary-treasurer of the IGWUA, a full-time, paid position. This appointment marked Nestor's transition to full-time labor organizing. She continued to lead and organize women workers in various industries, including involvement in Chicago's first large strike for garment workers in 1911.

In addition to promoting women's self-organization, Nestor sought to support women workers through legislation. Beginning in 1909, Nestor and the WTUL lobbied every session of the state legislature for an eight-hour day for women until the bill finally passed in 1937. Nestor believed that protective laws would ensure greater security for workers than unions alone could provide. She stood against the National Woman's Party (NWP), which argued that protection for women would jeopardize the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. In opposition, Nestor wrote a scathing critique of the NWP platform in her 1926 report of the Women's Industrial Conference.

Throughout her career, Nestor supported women's suffrage. Her experiences as a worker and organizer led Nestor to see suffrage as a key to better working conditions for women and children. She pointed out that the ballot ensured women's vote for worker safety and the appointment of female inspectors in the factories. In addition, women voters would have a voice in the appointment of police and court positions, two institutions that often turned against strikers. In 1910, Nestor outlined her position in her published piece "The Working Girl's Need for Suffrage."

Nestor's influence reached both the local and national levels. In 1914, President Wilson appointed Nestor to the Vocational Educational Commission, out of which came the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act, which offered federal aid to vocational education. Nestor ensured that women would properly benefit from this act, advocating that women needed support for technical training in addition to domestic science. Additionally, Nestor served on several wartime labor commissions and played a crucial role in the 1920 creation of the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau.

Nestor died on December 28, 1948. Eulogized as the workingwoman's best friend, Agnes Nestor helped to shape the role of women in the labor movement. Her commitment to workingwomen's needs informed her political approach and strategy for reform. As an early twentieth-century woman's trade unionist, Agnes Nestor stands out as a pioneering and prominent labor leader.

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See also **Chicago Federation of Labor; Women's Trade Union League**

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF FARMERS, MECHANICS, AND OTHER WORKING MEN

On February 16, 1832, more than 80 men gathered at the Marlborough Hotel on Washington Street in Boston's central commercial district to form the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Working Men (NEA). The NEA did indeed encompass farmers, mechanics, and other workingmen from the across the region, but the Association's leaders also included men who earned their living from "mental labor." Charles Douglas, the first president and editor of the organization's newspaper (*New England Artisan*), was a physician, and Jacob Frieze, the founding secretary, was a Universalist minister.

The NEA was distinct from—though certainly cognizant of—the trade unions and workingmen's political parties also active in the early 1830s. The Association addressed issues of immediate import to

workers such as the demand for a 10-hour workday and broader topics such as the morality of child labor and the need for wider access to public education. The organization reached deliberately across occupational categories and class lines to build a coalition to improve working conditions and elevate workers' status. The NEA saw political action as an essential component of this struggle for labor rights but tried to avoid plunging into the hurly-burly of parties, campaigns, and electioneering.

The NEA's constitution, ratified at its first convention, included a public pledge that all its members work a 10-hour day—or risk expulsion from the organization. Moreover, the assembly set March 20 as the date to put the 10-hour workday into effect. No one mentioned the word "strike"; nevertheless, on March 20, 1832, ship caulkers, carpenters, painters, masons, and other tradesmen in Boston walked off their jobs and demanded the 10-hour day. Employer associations quickly countered with denunciations and lockouts; soon each strike collapsed. Though the NEA did not play a prominent role in leading these protests, the organization never denied that its call to action helped to inspire the work stoppages.

The Association also issued a report on education that focused on children in textile mills, their long hours of labor, and their lost opportunities for schooling. The report offered a disturbing account of young workers being exploited and kept in ignorance; of children growing up with stunted bodies and minds unprepared to assume the duties incumbent upon citizens in a republic. The authors recommended that "a committee of vigilance be appointed in each State" to publicize abuses at the workplace and petition legislatures for the 10-hour day and mandatory education for all children employed in factories. Thus, the NEA was one of the first labor reform organizations to insist that government had the right and the duty to regulate the conditions of labor, especially by legally limiting the length of the workday for those who could not secure such protections for themselves through negotiations or contracts. Here again, the Association never pursued this political petition drive with much consistency or vigor, but labor reform groups in the 1840s picked up on this campaign and often made legislation for the 10-hour day a centerpiece of their public pronouncements.

The NEA continued to press for a 10-hour workday and the education of factory children at its next convention in the Representatives' Chamber of the Massachusetts State House on September 6, 1832. Those assembled re-elected Charles Douglas as president; and taking note of the recent wave of failed strikes in Boston, the delegates retracted any plans

to expel members or local affiliates who were compelled to work more than 10 hours a day. The Association learned quickly that public declarations had limited effect on recalcitrant employers and that workers should not be punished further for losing a courageous battle to limit working hours.

The Association returned to the Marlborough Hotel for its annual meeting on October 2, 1833. The organization's new president—William Thompson, a farmer from the western Massachusetts town of Northampton—was urged to appoint traveling lecturers who could help distribute copies of newspapers and convention proceedings across the region. At this same meeting, delegates from New Haven, Connecticut, noted the absence of representatives from factory towns and villages—despite the Association's sympathetic reports on the plight of industrial operatives. Thus, the NEA's ranks were missing an essential component of the emerging antebellum working class: textile operatives and urban women workers such as seamstresses and domestics.

This failure to bring women into the fold may have been a key reason why the Association disintegrated after one final lackluster meeting in the fall of 1834 in Northampton. By this time, the NEA was pursuing a strategy to recruit more members from rural areas. The organization published an address that never mentioned the 10-hour workday but focused instead on financial problems plaguing farmers. The Association demanded the repeal of what it proclaimed were unjust laws regulating mortgages, debt, banks, public education, and criminal courts and urged all its members to go to the ballot box to gain redress. The new emphasis on agrarian politics, despite the organization's insistence that it was still distinct from any political party, further marginalized factory operatives and other wage-earning women and made the NEA a close adjunct of the Massachusetts Workingmen's Party. The descent into the electoral maelstrom of Jacksonian Era politics may well have sealed the Association's fate—after the 1834 campaign season concluded, the NEA was never heard from again.

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NEW ENGLAND LABOR REFORM LEAGUE

The New England Labor Reform League (NELRL) held its first convention on January 27–29, 1869, in the Melodeon Theatre on Washington Street in Boston's central commercial district. The league was essentially the brainchild of Ezra Heywood, a 40-year-old Congregational minister turned Garrisonian abolitionist, pacifist, philosophical anarchist, and advocate of both "free love" and his own version of labor reform. Heywood's abiding commitment to the NELRL—calling meetings, renting halls, writing resolutions, and publishing pronouncements—kept the organization going for nearly two decades. However, his idiosyncratic definition of labor reform also triggered irrevocable splits with other activists and advocates and relegated this organization to the sidelines in the broader movement for justice at the workplace.

When Heywood wrote his call for the League's founding convention, he had the support of local Boston labor newspapers, such as the *American Workman* and the *Daily Evening Voice*; unions, such as the Knights of St. Crispin (shoe workers); and activists, such as Ira Steward and George McNeill. He believed that this new organization would embody his vision of a truly classless movement, dissolving differences between working-class activists and middle-class reformers and restructuring relations between labor and capital. To realize this bold ideal, Heywood insisted on opening the speaker's rostrum to a range of nostrums on taxes, tariffs, and currency, as well as discussions of working hours and wages. He placed great emphasis on debate and public edification, and not on specific plans for collective action. If Heywood showed any preferences among the cacophony of competing schemes, he opted for a broad individualistic, antimonopolistic, philosophically anarchistic critique rooted in currency reform.

Once Heywood let his preferences be known, activists such as Steward and McNeill—outspoken proponents of the emerging postwar eight-hour movement—quickly sought to extricate themselves from any alliances with the mercurial ex-minister. By the end of the League's second convention, in May 1869, hopes for a stable coalition between eight-hour advocates and Heywood's supporters were dashed in a series of bitter floor debates. Steward's camp insisted that labor reform had to be both pragmatic and programmatic—workers could not waste their time debating monopoly power in the abstract; they had to restrain corporate power at the point of production by first limiting the hours of labor. Heywood clung to his definition of the League as a forum where

many visions of labor reform could be discussed (including his own preference for currency reform). Yet, even as he insisted that the meeting was open to all opinions, Heywood tried to control the agenda through prewritten resolutions. Many workers left the conclave bitterly resentful of what they saw as Heywood's high-handed and hypocritical tactics.

Steward and McNeill's departure meant that Heywood no longer had to deal with organized opposition to his leadership of the League or to his policy of free-ranging (some would say unfocused) debate. The few workers who turned out for the League's fall 1869 meeting left before adjournment, grumbling about the gathering's antilabor tone and the constant chatter concerning party politics. Thus, within less than a year of its inception, the League lost most of its initial support from working-class men and women in Boston. Despite its name, many workers concluded that this organization simply had no idea what labor reform meant to people on the shop floor. The League's resolutions continually subordinated basic workplace demands to vague schemes for financial transformations that were supposed to cure all social ills. In reality, however, such ideas often benefited only those with far more money than the workers whom the League professed so much sympathy for. Workers insisted that labor reform was not an abstract set of propositions to be bandied about; social change had to be rooted in a clearly defined course of collective action to secure specific improvements in working conditions. The growing rift between Heywood's remaining supporters in the League and the broader labor reform community in Boston revolved around two competing maps of social change—one started with theories about financial reform and their dissemination through public debate; the other began with improving conditions on the job as a way of liberating workers to become agents for broader economic and political transformations. The fight in this League was seen by many participants as a contest for the ideological soul of labor reform itself.

Whatever the NELRL's faults and fault lines, the treasurer's report at the January 1870 convention revealed that this league was financially robust compared with most other reform groups of the early postwar period. The organization collected nearly five thousand dollars in its first year from book sales, membership dues, and donations. Most of the funds were expended to distribute 30,000 books and pamphlets, sponsor lectures, and rent halls for meetings. Clearly, the League was spending a substantial amount of time and money to promote its brand of labor reform, but the group's strategy remained rooted in conventions, resolutions, and publications. The organization continued to frown on actively

organizing workers or working to rebuild its tattered alliances with other labor reform groups. In fact, the more that eight-hour associations and trade unions dismissed the league as irrelevant to their campaigns for workers' rights, the more the NELRL rejected these groups as narrow-minded special interests that underestimated their own constituents' intelligence.

To their credit, Heywood and his wife, Angela, frequently criticized the exploitation of women in the urban economy, especially those working in the garment trade and in domestic service. The Heywoods shared a conviction that equitable pay for workingwomen was part of a much larger crusade to gain full economic, social, political, and sexual equality for all women. They also believed that equal rights should be extended to all people regardless of race, nationality, or religion and that universal equity lay at the heart of a truly reformed society. Yet, here again, the Heywoods stopped at grand pronouncements and rarely offered any concrete strategies for achieving social equality.

By the mid-1870s, Heywood's antimonopoly rhetoric became so pronounced that his convention resolutions lacked even a veneer of sympathy for basic workplace reforms. He publicly condemned the entire movement for a shorter workday because he saw it as inextricably linked with party politics and a corrupt state. Furthermore, he proclaimed that employers deserved the League's "full sympathy in resisting legislative or trade-union interference." Heywood's aggressively individualistic, antistatist, and now avowedly anti-union pronouncements signaled his and the League's nearly complete break with every other labor reform organization. The League became a hollow shell with few if any working-class members, content to preach its own negative version of labor reform to a rapidly diminishing circle of adherents. Yet the group continued to meet, at least on an annual basis, well into the 1880s. It even pointed to its own longevity as proof that its antagonistic definition of labor reform was actually the most accurate assessment of social conditions in Gilded Age America, though few others cared to listen to such claims.

For most of its nearly two-decade existence, the New England Labor Reform League sought to liberate all individuals from what the organization defined as unnatural legal, political, economic, and social constraints. Many workers embraced antimonopoly arguments—especially those criticisms directed at manufacturing corporations and financial institutions. But Heywood insisted that his philosophy of individual freedom also compelled him to condemn trade unions, producer co-operatives, and legislative limits on the workday—the very institutions and ideas that many other labor reformers considered essential

building blocks for workers' emancipation. Heywood often spoke with conviction and sympathy about the injustices heaped on American workers and the need for equity and fairness in American society. But the organization he led became a labor reform group opposed to virtually all popular ideas for labor reform. Thus, the NELRL doomed itself to irrelevance within the campaign it claimed to be championing.

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See also **Knights of St. Crispin and the Daughters of St. Crispin; McNeil, George Edwin; Steward, Ira**

NEW ENGLAND WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Organized labor in New England all but disappeared following the Panic of 1837, but as the economy began to revive in the early 1840s, so too did labor agitation. New England workers experienced industrial life in ways that varied by industry, sex, and skill. But widespread complaints of low wages, long hours, weak control over apprenticeship, and intensified labor conditions brought on by the speedup, stretch-out, and premium system reflected rising discontent. In Fall River, Lowell, Manchester, Dover, Milford, Woonsocket, and throughout New England during the early 1840s, workers responded by waging petition campaigns and organizing community-based associations to improve labor conditions. In June 1844, one such organization, the newly organized Fall River Mechanics' Association, issued a call to New England workers to assemble in convention. The "prevailing system of labor," they charged, was "at war with the . . . physical, intellectual, social, moral and religious" well-being of labor. A convention, they suggested, would bring together "the united wisdom and judgment of various Mechanics' Associations," creating a force of "incalculable benefit." On October 16, 1844, delegates convened at Boston's Fanueil Hall to create the New England Workingmen's Association (NEWA).

Hoping to maximize participation by the region's workers and their supporters, NEWA delegates set an inclusive course for the organization. After a heated

debate about participation, delegates ruled to open their doors to "all those interested in the elevation of the Producing Classes, and Industrial Reform, and the extinction of Slavery and Servitude in all their forms." Thomas Almy, the editor of *The Mechanic*, the Fall River newspaper that issued the call, observed that perspectives on reform were "as dissimilar as are the conditions of society." Women did not attend the founding convention, though a "ladies association" from Fall River provided a banner proclaiming "Union is Strength." Despite their initial absence, women played a vital role in NEWA, marking a radical departure from previous labor organizations.

Opening itself to widespread participation also meant dealing with competing visions of labor's interests. Mechanics made up the majority of the 207 delegates present, but the large numbers of reformers in attendance aggressively pushed their own reform agendas. Representatives from Brook Farm, such as George Ripley, Parke Goodwin, and L. W. Rychman, used the convention to convince delegates of the virtues of Fourierism, while George Henry Evans, Thomas Devyr, and Alvan E. Bovay tried to win converts to their ideas on land reform. Working-class delegates objected to both of these grand utopian undertakings, though not vigorously enough to derail them. Many workers were interested in the idea of establishing producers' cooperatives, in which labor, not capital, would be rewarded with the fruits of its own labor. Working-class delegates expressed universal support for the 10-hour workday.

Advocacy for a 10-hour workday had deep roots in the region, though the movement in the 1840s took a new and decidedly political direction. In the 1830s, the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen had tried unsuccessfully to secure such ends by organizing regional strikes. But NEWA eschewed strikes in favor of petitioning. The political emphasis of NEWA was no doubt influenced by President Martin Van Buren's executive order of March 31, 1840, establishing a 10-hour workday for all federal employees. Unable to secure protection under this federal legislation, New England workers stressed the need for state legislatures to take up the 10-hour challenge. The political emphasis of the movement for the 10-hour workday limited female participation in some respects, most notably at the ballot box, but the commitment to petitioning state legislatures centered on tactics and skills familiar to female members, particularly those engaged in raising abolitionist petitions. Women in Lowell, Manchester, Dover, and elsewhere organized Female Labor Reform Associations (FLRA) that operated under the

umbrella of NEWA, providing energy, organization, and moral authority to the movement.

One of the most effective organizing tools for NEWA was the newspaper *The Voice of Industry*, initially published in Fitchburg by William F. Young. In April 1845, *The Mechanic* ceased publication, but by October, NEWA made *The Voice* its official organ, moved the paper to Lowell, and appointed Sarah Bagley, the president of the Lowell FLRA, to its three-person publishing committee. Huldah J. Stone, the secretary of the Lowell FLRA, served as a correspondent to the paper. In early 1846, the Lowell FLRA purchased the paper's press and type and, over the next couple of years, held numerous fund-raising activities to pay for it.

Throughout its brief existence, groups vied for influence over NEWA. NEWA held its second convention in Lowell in March 1845. Horace Greeley, Robert Owen, Albert Brisbane, and other Associationists spoke, dominating the meeting, leading the president, W. H. Channing, to note: "Much complaint was made by the members about the want of interest felt by the workingmen for the cause of reform." At the third convention in Boston, May 1845, Associationists again dominated the convention with extended discussion of Fourierism. Associationists and land reformers were largely absent from the fourth convention in Fall River, September 1846, leaving working-class members to re-assert more immediate and practical labor reforms, such as the 10-hour day. Members of NEWA assembled in convention in Lynn in January 1846, Manchester in March 1846, and in Nashua September 1846. At the Nashua convention, the New England Workingmen's Association renamed itself the Labor Reform League of New England.

The League met in Boston in January 1847 and remained under the influence of the Associationists until the organization's disappearance. In July, however, 10-hour advocates scored a victory when the New Hampshire legislature, under the weight of a statewide petition drive, passed the first state law limiting the workday to 10 hours. It was a hollow victory. The law contained a clause limiting the workday to 10 hours, "unless otherwise agreed by the parties." Many manufacturers merely issued their employees new contracts containing the clause, with a simple command: sign or be blacklisted. Workingmen and workingwomen gradually lost interest in NEWA. Members who had earlier advocated cooperative stores became involved in the New England Protective Union movement, while other elements became involved in the Industrial Congresses of the 1850s. By 1849, the entire Association disappeared.

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See also Brisbane, Albert; Evans, George Henry; Fourierism; Luther, Seth; New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen; New England Labor Reform League

NEW LEFT

The New Left was a movement of white, college-educated youth that stood for radical democracy in the United States and around the world. The American New Left existed from around 1960 into the early 1970s. The idea of a "New Left" originated in Great Britain in the 1950s. This term was associated there with young Marxists unhappy with existing left-wing politics. The radical American sociologist C. Wright Mills, author of *The Power Elite* (1956), brought the term "New Left" to the U.S. scene, penning a "Letter to the New Left" in 1960, published in *New Left Review*, the journal of the British New Left, and then republished in the United States. Besides straddling the Atlantic, Mills offered a connection to an earlier era in American radicalism, having published political writings since the 1940s, a time when the labor movement stood at the center of the American left.

The relationship between labor and the New Left was far weaker, although not nonexistent. The young American radicals' thinking echoed the argument Mills had made in his first book, *The New Men of Power* (1948), that union leaders had become absorbed into the "power elite." The young leftists, like many liberals, were persuaded that the United

States in the 1950s had become, as John Kenneth Galbraith put it in the title of his 1958 book, *The Affluent Society*. Economic inequality persisted, as the continued presence of the poor attested. But the industrial working class, most young radicals feared, had become comfortable enough that they were “part of the system,” no longer natural rebels. Members of the New Left saw a need for a challenge to this system if its flaws were to be rectified, but they expected that, with perhaps a small number of exceptions, that challenge would not come from labor. Instead, they looked to African-Americans, who were rising up against the Jim Crow system of white supremacy in the South, to youth in general, and to the poor. From the beginning, the New Left’s strategic thinking about change in America was tied to a hope for insurgencies and a determination to support, and perhaps to help guide, such insurgencies.

Post-Scarcity Radicalism

The New Left had several sources and inspirations, in addition to Mills’s writings. These included the civil rights movement, especially its youth wing, as embodied in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (established in 1960); the pacifist radicalism of the 1950s, as encountered in the pages of *Liberation* magazine (founded in 1956); the journal *Studies on the Left*, published in Madison, Wisconsin, starting in 1959 under the influence of the historian William Appleman Williams, which indicted American liberals for their collusion with capitalism and imperialism; and even critical religious thought such as that encountered in university YMCAs and YWCAs (Young Men’s/Women’s Christian Associations) across the country. Marxism and other traditional economically oriented leftist perspectives were present in this mix of influences, but other moral and analytical perspectives predominated.

The young radicals began by thinking that university-educated people like them would pioneer new ideas that would make life worth living in the America of the future, even as they would fight rearguard battles against the remaining vestiges of unfairness and authoritarianism, which they saw epitomized in southern segregationism and the power that its representatives wielded in the U.S. Congress. All of this they promoted under the slogan “participatory democracy.” They pictured organized labor as a potential partner in pursuing this agenda, but not as moral leaders of a New Left alliance. New Left activists formed their main organization in 1960 when they changed the name of the Student League for Industrial Democracy

(SLID), a small union-funded group, to Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The name change indicated a shift away from economic issues to a less class-oriented focus on issues of power. Yet the young activists hoped to retain their ties to sympathetic labor unions. Their 1962 manifesto, the “Port Huron Statement,” in which they advanced an agenda focused on the imbalances of power that they discerned in the U.S. political system—imbalances that, at that date, they connected only obliquely to economic power relations and inequalities—was adopted at a Michigan retreat owned by the United Auto Workers (UAW). SDS sought to point the way toward a newly meaningful life in a society whose material wealth held the capacity to provide the essentials of physical existence to all. New Left thought reflected a belief that the United States had entered a “post-scarcity” age, when the basic struggle for survival need not dominate people’s lives. Ever fewer person-hours were required to produce the economic value needed to sustain the country’s population. While labor leaders in the 1960s tended to worry over the prospects of increased unemployment that this trend augured, New Left radicals, as well as many liberals, thought that the coming challenge was to find ways of making increasing amounts of leisure time meaningful, to enhance one’s “quality of life” rather than merely piling up ever greater quantities of goods. The New Left did not grapple seriously with the question of how to ensure a sufficiently broad dispersal of the country’s growing wealth so as to make this “leisure problem” the salient one for all Americans.

In keeping with its theme of honoring and promoting democracy, the New Left took a “plague on both your houses” attitude toward the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. The young radicals saw neither superpower promoting democracy around the world; instead, both sides simply pursued power and sought to make pawns of peoples in the Third World. Moreover, members of SDS felt that the intellectual and political battles over communism had wasted the energies of the previous generation in America and that the harsh anticommunism that had dominated political life in the 1950s had done much damage to the cause of democratic progress by stifling dissent and promoting conservatism. The New Left’s announcement that it intended to stay on the sidelines of the Cold War was controversial and earned them accusations of naïveté about communism, or worse, from the start. The young radicals, while they had no use for the Soviets, sympathized with Third World revolutionaries, thinking that such forces might represent a middle way between the dogmas and corruptions of the United States and the USSR. They took an admiring view of the Cuban revolution

in particular, even viewing the youthful cadres of nationalist movements of Africa and Latin America as models they might emulate in the United States. Still, early SDS activists sometimes indicated they wished to moot international issues, to place them on the back burner so that they could focus on the issues of power and authenticity within the United States. The escalation of the Vietnam War in the 1960s would make that impossible.

A Host of Challenges

The environment in which the New Left operated changed drastically in the second half of the 1960s, and the movement was transformed in turn. Soon the slogans changed from “protest” to “resistance” and on to “revolution.” Several factors converged to create a maelstrom of political change.

First, the New Left could not help but oppose the U.S. effort to vanquish the Vietnamese revolution. In the early 1960s, the young radicals already had developed a critical view of U.S. actions in the Cold War. Their anti-imperialism made the war, after it was expanded dramatically in 1965, come to seem like their most urgent business. It also fed the New Left’s galloping estrangement from the U.S. social and political system, in its mind’s eye changing the insurgencies it always had wished to sponsor from levers for social reform into battering rams that might bring down a violent system. The structures of that system closest at hand for the young radicals were the universities themselves. The radicals became increasingly knowledgeable about the involvement of U.S. universities in doing war-related research, and this prodded the New Left to view universities in a new light: as agents of social repression, hostile to social change, and logical targets of leftist agitation. The New Left’s absorption in the war issue spurred the development of a set of critical perspectives on the U.S. role in the world that had a strong and unprecedented influence upon U.S. intellectual life.

Second, the African-American movement turned away from the doctrines of nonviolence and interracialism that had characterized its early years, and its increased militancy affected the New Left, just as the black movement had inspired the New Left in earlier years. White leftists no longer could entertain notions of enlisting the black or the poor as the shock troops, figuratively speaking, in New Left scenarios of social change. Some white radicals envisioned the relationship working the other way around, with them in a supporting role. In part, the message of the new “black power” movement among African-Americans

was that white radicals should organize among whites to advance the cause of social transformation and should cease involving themselves in the affairs of people of color.

Third, the counterculture of white middle-class youth, associated with the use of hallucinogenic drugs, the loosening of customary sexual mores, communal living, and a rejection of acquisitive consumerism, gained a legion of followers across the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The New Left felt it had to respond to this movement, for it was a momentous development among the only constituency the New Left had—white college-educated youth. Many young leftists became deeply involved in the counterculture, both out of such strategic considerations and because they were moved by the same yearning for a more authentic life that moved their nonpolitical peers. Leftists involved in the “hippie” counterculture hoped that such an alternative culture could have a profound political impact. By winning ever more members of the educated young away from loyalty to the dominant social system, a politically conscious counterculture might provide the key to a bloodless revolution.

A fourth development of the post-1965 years was the rise of a new feminist movement, which spread from its initial reform constituency to young firebrands, most of them in the New Left or the black movement, who promoted more total change in social practices. This emergence of “radical feminism” had a profound impact on the New Left. Many of the men in the left derided it as unimportant, but resisted it fiercely, thus betraying the centrality of its concerns to the youth culture in which the New Left was deeply implicated. But feminism’s disintegrative impact on the New Left arrived only after the radicalizing effect of the three developments mentioned above had taken hold. The trajectory of the New Left in its second phase—changing from a reform movement with some daring ideas to a revolutionary movement experimenting with different strategies for promoting a political upheaval—resulted from these other developments, not from the rise of feminism. The rift between men and women in the movement over gender issues shaped the final years of the New Left, after 1968.

The New Working Class

The post-1965 phase of the New Left’s existence featured one important intellectual development that bears special relevance to the question of the New Left’s relations with the labor movement. That is the development of what was dubbed “new working-class

theory.” Since the New Left’s membership was college-educated and largely “raised in at least modest comfort,” as the “Port Huron Statement” put it, it is widely and correctly viewed as a middle-class movement. Yet education and standard of living are not the only ways to define one’s class location. Some New Left radicals, starting in 1966, asserted that college-educated young people formed a new working class, one whose future occupations might be salaried and would require bachelor’s degrees, but an exploited set of employees nonetheless. This emphasis on one’s relation to the means of production basically expressed an updated Marxist analysis.

The appeal of this analysis to New Left radicals stemmed from the dawning realization within the movement that its only base of support lay in the college-educated white youth that populated this new working class, a realization that the black movement drove home with its assertion that radicals within each major social group in U.S. society should organize among their peers alone. New working-class theory was a way of understanding and justifying the simple fact that white middle-class youth were basically on their own in the New Left. This theory said that this relatively privileged youth was not a parasitic social class, living off the surplus created by truly exploited people and out of touch with the experience of oppression. It said that New Left radicals and their peers were, instead, central to the unfolding drama of social as well as cultural change in the United States and morally justified in trying to bring down a system that oppressed not only others but them, too. Morally it did not matter that the New Left had weak and conflicted relations with the labor movement, if the New Left actually spoke on behalf of a new segment of labor, one unrepresented by the trade-union movement.

The vogue of new working-class theory passed by the end of the 1960s, as the war and the worsening racial conflict in the United States commanded immediate attention from the New Left. It became harder to assert that the New Left should content itself with tending its own fields. Many New Left radicals after 1968 departed into desperate, if usually feckless, efforts to support the struggles of African-American militants and Vietnamese revolutionaries. Yet, at the same time, many others in the New Left immersed themselves further in counterculture and feminist activities, announcing in deeds if not in words that they would continue to work for the development of a dissident consciousness within the white middle class/new working class of which they were members. These two different emphases, which sometimes overlapped in the lives of individual activists who maintained multiple commitments, were the lasting legacies of

the New Left. New Left radicals sided with domestic and foreign insurgencies by palpably subordinate peoples against the U.S. power structure, and they sided with themselves, nurturing seeds of dissidence among the white college-educated population. Because the New Left in general did not view organized labor as representatives of an oppressed minority poised for insurgency, because the early leaders of SDS, who had at least hoped to maintain an alliance with liberal union leaders, had been eclipsed by younger radicals with less interest in labor, and because initially sympathetic labor officials had been estranged by the New Left’s increasing radicalism, the traditional labor movement never attained a central role in New Left thought.

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NEW ORLEANS GENERAL STRIKE (1892)

This strike came two months after the Homestead Strike in Pennsylvania and two years before the great Pullman Strike of 1894. As Roger Shugg wrote in a 1938 article in *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, it was “the first general strike in American history to enlist both skilled and unskilled labor, black and white, and to paralyze the life of a great city.” The strike involved at least 20,000 workers in 49 AFL unions. Two delegates from each union orchestrated

the strike in a Workingman's Amalgamated Council that represented black and white alike. Their demands included union recognition, the 10-hour day, and a preferential closed shop. Workers from every trade and skill level participated in the strike, including the organized hatters, shoe clerks, and musicians, but the powerful waterfront unions did not play an active role.

The strike began because the employers refused to grant union recognition. On November 5, 1892, all of the Council's member unions—including the streetcar drivers, the electric, light, and gas workers, and the marine and stationary firemen—responded to the general strike call. The mass walkouts happened at a peak time in seasonal business and shut down the city for three days. No violence was associated with the strike, even though the pickets left the city in darkness for three nights. Mayor John Fitzpatrick, a former longshoreman, supported the workers and resisted sending out the police against them, but Governor Murphy J. Foster backed the business interests. His threat to call out the state militia and impose martial law broke the strike. In poststrike arbitration, the workers won the 10-hour day and overtime pay, but the united employers refused to grant union recognition. After the strike, a lawsuit filed in Federal District Court charged 44 union leaders with conspiracy to restrain trade, but the Federal Circuit Court postponed indefinitely this first effort to invoke the Sherman Anti-Trust Act against labor.

In *Origins of the New South*, C. Vann Woodward argued that the New Orleans general strike of 1892 challenged the “Old South labor philosophy of the New South doctrinaires.” Two years after a state law pioneered Jim Crow on Louisiana railcars, the Workingman's Amalgamated Council certainly demonstrated that the many races of workers could join to resist the exploitation of organized labor. Both the Council and the strike represented the peak of a remarkable era. Since at least the 1870s, strong black unions and the structure of segregation had forced the organized workers to find terms to accommodate all. The results were profound. Eric Arnesen noted that by 1886, most New Orleanians in the trades commanded the same wage scale for the same work, regardless of race. In the next four years, the craft unions outpaced the Knights of Labor throughout the state. Between 1891 and 1892, more new AFL unions were chartered in Louisiana than elsewhere in the South, a handful fewer than Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The general strike was a product of that momentum, but it also marked the end of the era.

Scholars estimate that half the population of the city supported the Council, but the allied business interests presented an even more formidable front.

The united employers were represented by the Board of Trade and commanded support from most newspapers in the city, the commodity exchanges, the railway lines, and the governor of the State of Louisiana. When state power decided the strike, the employers learned an important lesson. Partly as a result, they determined they must develop an alliance with the leaders of the Choctaw Club, a new political machine on the rise in the late 1890s. Meanwhile, labor's biracial alliance collapsed. After a devastating 1894 strike, competition for work and white-on-black violence destroyed the structure of co-operation, and organized labor did not recover for almost a decade.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Gilded Age; Industrial Workers of the World; Injunctions

NEW SOUTH

In the wake of the Civil War, an emerging cohort of business entrepreneurs and newspaper editors advocated the building of a “New South” based on the growth of southern industry, the diversification of agriculture, and the attraction of northern investment. It was time to “put business before politics,” proclaimed the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* and New South booster Henry Grady, in a famous 1886 speech urging sectional reconciliation and southern economic development. “The Old South rested everything on slavery and agriculture,” he continued. “The New South presents a perfect democracy...and a diversified industry that meets the complex needs of this complex age.”

The “New South” did experience economic growth and attract outside capital. Between 1869 and 1899,

the region's manufacturing output and value of products multiplied six times, and capital investment increased 10-fold. Nevertheless, the South continued to lag behind the rapidly expanding manufacturing base of the northern states; with nearly a third of the nation's population in 1900, the region was responsible for only 10% of national nonagricultural income. Much of the South's economic development rested on extractive industries like timber, naval stores, and mining or low-wage manufacturing based on agricultural products, like tobacco and cotton textiles. Indeed, in the latter case, low wages and a manufacturing environment with little threat of labor organization or state regulation represented the region's primary competitive advantage over the North, establishing a pattern that would attract capital and bedevil labor reformers and organizers for decades to come.

Meanwhile, despite the calls for diversification, the agricultural sector stagnated. The price of cotton, the South's main commodity crop, failed to increase sufficiently in this period to permit investment and modernization of southern agriculture. Low prices and steep mortgages drove many small landholders into the ranks of tenants and sharecroppers; by 1900, two thirds of all southern cotton producers worked land owned by someone else. With limited urbanization, a weak home market for foodstuffs made agricultural diversification difficult. In the words of the historian James C. Cobb, in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, "southern agriculture and southern industry remained locked in a mutually dependent relationship in which the weaknesses of one reinforced the weaknesses of the other."

The persistent gap between optimistic rhetoric and economic reality that characterized the New South proved perilous to the region's working class. For rural workers, African-Americans in particular, the system of sharecropping meant dependence on landlords, little income, and no possibility of upward mobility. Others fell into debt peonage and found they had to work out a debt to a landlord or turpentine camp operator in perpetuity or be sent to a chain gang or convict camp. Coal miners competed against the forced labor of convicts, leased by southern states to mine owners for a pittance. The South's most impressive industrial success, the rapid expansion across the Piedmont of textile manufacturing from 10,000 employees in 1870 to 100,000 30 years later, drew on the cheap and unskilled labor of displaced white tenant farmer families and almost entirely excluded blacks. Nearly a quarter of southern textile workers in the 1880s and 1890s were children, and over 40% were women. Textile workers, scorned as

lazy and uncouth, lived and labored in mill towns completely dominated by the textile owners.

Both black and white southern workers attempted to better their condition during this period, sometimes in concert with one another. The interracial United Mine Workers successfully organized the coalfields of Alabama and Tennessee, the Knights of Labor made inroads in Richmond and other cities, and dockworkers in New Orleans built a successful union, to name but three examples. However, the New South's largest industry, textiles, remained impervious to organization. Despite these occasional successes, however, most southerners continued to labor long hours, under difficult conditions, for low wages or, in the case of sharecroppers, peons, and convicts, no wages at all. If some blacks joined unions to improve their conditions, other African-American leaders, most notably Booker T. Washington, urged black workers to accept their degraded place in the labor market and make their peace with the economy of the New South in lieu of pursuing political or civil rights.

Historians continue to debate the nature of the New South's political economy, a discussion that mirrors ongoing debates about globalization and the developing world in the twenty-first century. Some argue that the South followed the best path of economic modernization possible under the circumstances, making the most of limited resources and an economy devastated by the Civil War. Others maintain that deeply engrained patterns of economic dependency, labor exploitation, employer control, and racial domination set the New South on a peculiar path of growth that continued to deny the fruits of the region's wealth to its working people well into the twentieth century.

ALEX LICHTENSTEIN

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See also **Convict Labor in the New South; Peonage; Sharecropping and Tenancy; Tennessee Convict Uprising (1891–1892); Textiles; United Mine Workers of America; Washington, Booker T.**

NEW YORK CITY FISCAL CRISIS (1970s)

The 1970s New York City fiscal crisis began in the spring of 1975, when the city lost its ability to borrow money in the private market and teetered on the edge of bankruptcy. It was a key turning point in the city's history. The fiscal crisis led to a rapid dismantling of the city's liberal political and social order, which had originated during the New Deal period of the 1930s and 1940s, and had developed even further during Mayor John Lindsay's two terms (1966–1972), and its replacement with a new political order based on fiscal austerity. New York's 1970s fiscal crisis had national significance given the importance of the city, how its fiscal crisis was seen as an example of the failures of liberal social and economic policies, and how the solution to the crisis (the imposition of fiscal austerity and demands for givebacks from its unions) would soon be replicated in other U.S. cities and in the nation's private sector.

The fiscal crisis was a particularly significant moment for New York's working class because of the central role played by the city's municipal unions during the crisis and the impact of the fiscal crisis on all working-class New Yorkers. The municipal unions were a central political actor during the fiscal crisis and played a central role in keeping the city out of bankruptcy by investing close to \$3 billion of their members' pension fund assets in city securities. At the same time, they were forced to accept wage freezes and the firing of thousands of their members. Also, it was the city's working class and middle class that bore the brunt of the cuts in social services and layoffs that the city imposed during the fiscal crisis.

The city's fiscal crisis had several causes. One was the loss of tens of thousands of city jobs (particularly in the manufacturing sector) during the 1960s and early 1970s. During the same period, the city went through a significant demographic shift, as over 300,000 New Yorkers, many of whom were middle class, left the city to move to the suburbs or other areas of the country and were replaced with a massive influx of poor African-Americans and Puerto Ricans. The onset of the worldwide recession of 1973 further weakened the city's economy.

While New York City was hemorrhaging jobs and its tax base was declining, the city's municipal expenditures increased significantly. During Mayor John Lindsay's two terms (1966–1972), spending on welfare, higher education (particularly after the creation of an open admissions policy at the City University of New York), and health care skyrocketed. One cause for the increase in city expenditures was rapidly growing labor costs as the city's municipal workforce grew in large numbers and these workers won significant wage increases and better pensions. Between 1961 and 1975, the city's labor costs quadrupled. These increases in labor costs were not out of line with increases in most of the nation's other major cities. These gains were won by militant municipal unions. Led by such men as Victor Gotbaum of District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Al Shanker of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), the city's municipal unions went on a series of strikes during the second half of the 1960s that gained national attention.

In order to pay for these increased expenditures, the city needed more revenue, but only rarely did the city raise taxes to pay for these increases (one of the few exceptions was a commuter tax enacted in 1966) because of growing opposition to any tax increases by the state legislature and the city's City Council and its Board of Estimate, which were increasingly influenced by middle-class homeowners in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, who opposed any tax increases. Instead, the city chose to issue increasingly large amounts of short-term debt to raise needed revenue. By 1974, the city, under Mayor Abe Beame (1973–1977), was issuing over \$7 billion in short-term debt a year. Considering that the city's operating expenses in 1974 were only a little over \$10 billion, the city had reached a point at which it was covering over 70% of its operating expenses with short-term debt.

During the 1960s and early 1970s, the nation's large investment banks, which functioned as both underwriters and major purchasers of this city debt, were quite happy to go along with this policy, since they made significant profits from it. However, by late 1974, banks such as Chase Manhattan and Citibank began to reconsider their role in the city's financing. Many were reeling from significant losses from domestic and international investments and were increasingly worried about the city's ability to honor its debt and the Beame administration's willingness to rein in city spending. Therefore, they quietly began to sell their own city notes and bonds, and in March 1975, they informed the city that they would no longer underwrite the sale of New York City securities. This decision by the banks cut the city off from

private capital; without this money, the city moved quickly in the direction of defaulting on its loans and having to declare bankruptcy.

The city managed to avoid bankruptcy, but only after a series of actions were taken that significantly limited the elected city officials' control over the city's finances and budget, and the city was forced to make large cuts in its budget and lay off tens of thousands of municipal workers. Perhaps the most significant step was taken by Governor Hugh Carey and the state legislature during the summer and fall of 1975, when they created the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) and the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB), which were given enormous power over the city's finances, budget, and collective bargaining power.

Blamed for being one of the main causes of the fiscal crisis by the banks, the Ford administration, and the city's newspapers, New York's municipal unions faced their worst crisis since the Great Depression. Despite their insistence that their members' wages and benefits were not out of line with municipal workers in other cities (which was accurate), the city fired approximately 25,000 municipal employees and reduced its municipal workforce by an additional 40,000 through attrition by 1980. Also, the municipal unions were forced to make a series of major concessions, such as agreeing to the deferment of an already-negotiated wage increase won in 1974, a wage freeze for the duration of the fiscal crisis, and less generous pension benefits for new members.

Faced with this crisis, as well as wildcat strikes by members of several unions in protests over the layoffs, Gotbaum of District Council 37 and the majority of other municipal union leaders developed an overall strategy in the summer of 1975 that would determine, to a great extent, what they would do for the duration of the crisis. Having concluded that striking was futile and determined to maintain their institutional power, they chose a strategy based on not directly opposing fiscal austerity, but on using their political power and their control of their members' pension fund assets to maintain some degree of institutional power and to protect their members as best as they could within the context of fiscal austerity.

To a certain extent, this strategy was successful. Using their control over the assets of their members' pension funds, which the city desperately needed access to in order to stave off bankruptcy, and the threat that they would go on strike if too many givebacks were demanded, the municipal unions remained an important player within the new political environment created by the fiscal crisis. Also, there were no more significant layoffs after 1975. Moreover, in

1977, in what was most likely a reward for their agreement to accept significant concessions, to keep strikes to a minimum, and to not directly oppose policies of fiscal austerity, the state legislature granted the city's municipal unions the right to an agency shop. Agency shop, which had been one of the municipal unions' main legislative goals since the mid-1960s, allowed the unions to automatically collect union dues or an amount equivalent to union dues directly from the paychecks of all workers covered by the union contract regardless of whether the worker was a union member. It is important to note that the state legislature chose not to make agency shop permanent. Instead, it granted the unions agency shop only for two years and made it clear that it might not be renewed for unions that went out on strike.

However, their membership did suffer significant layoffs, wage freezes in a period of galloping inflation, and significant givebacks concerning pension plans and work rules. Also, the municipal unions' acceptance of fiscal austerity put considerable limits on their power and their actions during the fiscal crisis and made them less inclined to work with, in any significant way, other groups in the city that were attempting to contest the imposition of a new political regime based on fiscal austerity. For example, despite their intense dislike of Mayor Edward Koch because of his actions during the 1980 transit strike and at the bargaining table, the municipal unions chose not to oppose his re-election by joining a broad coalition made up of most of the city's labor movement, liberal Democrats, and activists within the city's African-American community that supported State Assemblyman Frank Barbaro during the 1981 mayoral campaign.

However, it is not clear that the municipal union leadership had other viable alternatives under the circumstances. The 1970s were a remarkably difficult time for municipal unions in most of the nation's cities. A combination of fiscal crises at all levels of government, a conservative taxpayer revolt, and high inflation led elected city officials to turn against municipal unions that had emerged in the 1960s as a major political force. In cities across the country, elected city officials began to lay off municipal workers and demand significant wages cuts. Municipal unions found that striking, which many had used to great success in the 1960s, was no longer an option as much of the public had now turned against them and city officials proved willing to take strikes and, in some cases, permanently replace striking workers.

The city's working and middle classes bore the brunt of cuts in spending and government programs that were imposed during the 1970s fiscal crisis, given that it was these groups that most relied upon city

services. From the layoff of municipal workers to the imposition of tuition at the previously free City University, to a subway fare increase and increases in class sizes in the already troubled public school system, the city's working and middle class made tremendous sacrifices and confronted deteriorating city services.

While New York's 1970s fiscal crisis ended in the early 1980s, its legacy continues to this day. Wages, work conditions, and fringe benefits for the city's municipal employees have never totally recovered from the hit they took during the 1970s fiscal crisis. New York City's municipal unions have continued to pursue a relatively conservative and narrow interest-group strategy into the post-fiscal crisis period, as their endorsement of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani in his 1997 re-election campaign demonstrated. New York's once robust liberal political culture, which rested on a strong labor movement, has never totally recovered from the blow it suffered during the 1970s fiscal crisis.

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NEW YORK CITY HOSPITAL STRIKE (1959)

The seven-week strike by maintenance and service workers at six New York City nonprofit hospitals, which began on May 8, 1959, proved a signal breakthrough for hospital worker unionism in the United States. Organized by Retail Drug Employees and Hospital Workers Union Local 1199—a maverick outfit with roots in the Communist-led fringe of 1930s-era CIO industrial unionism—the “battle of ‘59,” as it would later be known by insiders, was one of the first northern conflicts effectively to draw on the emergent energy of the civil rights movement,

even as it also relied on the peculiar labor politics of New York City for victory.

On the heels of a collective bargaining settlement at Montefiore Hospital the previous year, Local 1199 demanded union recognition from 40 voluntary, nonprofit institutions represented by the staunchly anti-union Greater New York Hospital Association. Strategically selecting six Jewish-endowed hospitals where the union, itself led by the Jewish pharmacists Leon Davis and Elliott Godoff, had amassed its strongest cadre, the union struck in defiance of both the law (nonprofit-sector workers were not included in national or state labor laws) and the convention of selfless service on the part of health-care employees. President Davis himself was forced to hide out from process servers during much of the strike.

The prolonged conflict challenged the political values and loyalties of a city and public accustomed to think of itself as a relatively “liberal” oasis. In the workplace, the union tapped pent-up demands for dignity and self-respect within a low-wage, largely black and Latino labor force that had shared neither in the postwar boom nor in the city's otherwise powerful labor movement. By organizing themselves, the nearly 3,000 workers who walked picket lines in 1959 added a new and increasingly powerful voice to the city's public face. In particular, two African-American strike activists—Lenox Hill diet clerk Doris Turner and Mt. Sinai orderly Henry Nicholas—would attain future prominence (and some notoriety) within the union.

Outside the workplace, Local 1199's public relations director, Moe Foner, assembled an impressive political coalition behind the strikers. In addition to donations from 175 local unions and critical support from the city Central Labor Council chieftain Harry Van Arsdale, Foner enlisted the black socialist and civil rights activist Bayard Rustin to coordinate community support for the strikers. Soon, Eleanor Roosevelt, Congressmen Adam Clayton Powell and Emanuel Celler, and other liberals had joined forces on a Committee for a Just Settlement cochaired by A. Philip Randolph and the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr.

With union pressure unavailing on hospital trustees, the strike ended in a compromise settlement arranged by Mayor Wagner and the veteran mediator William H. Davis. Instead of direct union recognition and an official presence in the hospitals, the workers formally gained only a Permanent Administrative Committee (PAC) of hospital and “public” representatives who would themselves try to resolve future labor grievances. Formally, neither the union nor the strikers had achieved their goals; on the ground, however, the militant self-organization of hospital

NEW YORK CITY HOSPITAL STRIKE (1959)

workers had forever changed social relations in the affected institutions. Within a year of the creation of the PAC, some 3,000 workers were enrolled in collective bargaining agreements at seven New York City hospitals, and in 1963—thanks to another massive political campaign and a sympathetic response by Governor Nelson Rockefeller—city hospital workers were officially given the right to organize. Henry Nicholas could thus justifiably look back on the 1959 strike as “a defeat, but the greatest defeat the union ever encountered.”

Despite several years of internal turmoil, by the late 1980s, Local 1199 had grown into a national presence of some 200,000 workers; in 1989, it formally joined the Service Employees International Union, where it continued to function as an aggressive, grass-roots-oriented force within the labor movement.

LEON FINK

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See also **Foner, Moe; Randolph, A. Philip; Rustin, Bayard; Service Employees' International Union**

NEWMAN, PAULINE M. (1890–1986)

Pauline M. Newman (1890–1986) was a labor pioneer and a die-hard union loyalist. In 1909, when she was not yet out of her teens, she became the first woman appointed general organizer by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). That labor union was so heavily influenced by Jewish immigrant socialists that Newman referred to it as “the Jewish movement”—and saw it as both a cultural and political foundation for Jewish progressivism in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. Despite ongoing battles with the men who ran the ILGWU, Newman worked for that union for more than 70 years—as an organizer, labor journalist, health educator, and liaison between the labor movement and elected officials in Albany, New York, and in Washington, DC. A leader and inspirational figure in the early twentieth-century tenant, labor, socialist, and suffrage movements, Newman's influence on labor politics and the emerging welfare state was deep and lasting.

A tough Lithuanian Jewish immigrant with an acerbic tongue and a penchant for tweeds and slicked-back hair, Newman was described by male colleagues in the labor movement as “capable of

smoking a cigar with the best of them.” In an era when the idea of unionism was synonymous with notions of brotherhood and masculine bonding, Newman questioned accepted norms of gender for both men and women in the trade union movement. She bonded with hard-boiled male unionists, who accepted her as one of their own, even as she helped to create and sustain a woman-centered trade union federation through the New York and National Women's Trade Union Leagues (NYWTUL and WTUL). Throughout her 80 years in the labor movement, she pursued a difficult balancing act—negotiating with male unionists, middle- and upper-class women reformers, and government officials to improve the lives of working women. She left a lasting imprint on each of these very different worlds.

Newman was born into a world in transition, that of poverty-stricken but deeply religious Jews in Kovno, Lithuania, around 1890. (The exact date of her birth was lost with the family bible when she emigrated.) The youngest of four children, three girls and a boy, Newman was launched on her activist career at a tender age when she demanded to know why girls did not receive the same religious education as Jewish boys. Her father, a Talmud teacher, accommodated her desire to learn, teaching her to read Hebrew and Yiddish. (She taught herself Russian and, later, English.) Newman would later claim that her childhood resentment at the privileges accorded men and boys in Jewish education and worship sparked a lifelong commitment to fight sex discrimination wherever she found it.

When her father died in 1901, Newman, her sisters, and her mother left Kovno for New York, where her brother had settled a few years earlier. There Newman began work at a hairbrush factory and moved soon to the infamous “kindergarten” at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in Greenwich Village. She found herself powerfully drawn to the labor socialism espoused by older workers in her shop and by the Yiddish language *Jewish Daily Forward*—the most popular Jewish immigrant newspaper of her day. Ever hungry for education, Newman organized reading groups for the teenage girls among whom she worked. Teaching themselves English by reading Dickens, Thomas Hood, and other literary exposés of nineteenth-century English industry, Newman and her friends soon felt “ready to rise up” against the long hours, low pay, and miserable conditions in which they lived and worked. These young immigrant girls sparked a series of strikes and walkouts. Then, in 1907, they planned and organized a rent strike on Manhattan's Lower East Side that involved more than 10,000 families. It was the largest rent strike

New York had yet seen and began decades of tenant activism in the city.

Hailed by newspapers as the Lower East Side Joan of Arc, the young Newman came to the attention of the Socialist Party, which nominated her for New York secretary of state. She campaigned along the leader of American Socialists, Eugene Victor Debs, and used the election season as a time to proselytize for woman suffrage. At the same time, she was organizing young women garment workers, paving the way for the 1909 general strike that came to be known as the "Uprising of the 20,000." During the long, cold months of the strike, Newman played two important roles. Through inspiring speeches at street corner rallies and in the union halls of Lower Manhattan, she kept up the spirits of the strikers. She also fund-raised among New York's wealthiest women, drawing upon her readings of English literature to win their support for the strike. Newman was even able to draw some of these women out onto picket lines, hoping by their presence to diminish police brutality against the strikers. These "mink brigades" won the strike its first positive press in the city's mainstream newspapers.

In recognition for all she had done, the ILGWU appointed the 18-year-old as its first female general organizer. She spent the next four years traveling the country, organizing garment strikes in Philadelphia, Cleveland, Boston, and Kalamazoo, Michigan. By decade's end, these strikes would bring upwards of 40% of all women garment workers into trade unions, a remarkable percentage for workers in any trade and a clear refutation of union leaders' oft-repeated assertions that women could not be organized.

Still, the years on the road were lonely for Newman as one of the only women in a male world of labor organizers, and deeply frustrating since she felt that the male union leadership undermined and undervalued her work. Seeking other avenues for her activism, she also stumped for the Socialist Party in the bleak, freezing coal-mining camps of southern Illinois. And everywhere she went, she preached the gospel of woman suffrage, for she saw women's right to vote as an essential part of the working-class struggle.

Newman nearly collapsed under the weight of her grief when the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory burned on March 25, 1911, in which 146 young workers lost their lives, most of them Jewish and Italian women, and many of them friends Newman had come to cherish in her years at Triangle. Desperate to do whatever she could to prevent such disasters in the future, Newman accepted a post in 1913 inspecting industrial shops for the Joint Board of Sanitary Control—established by New York State in the aftermath

of the fire to improve factory safety. At the same time, Newman worked as a lobbyist for the New York Women's Trade Union League, pushing for passage of wage, hour, and safety legislation for women workers. Through this work, she met Frances Perkins, then an activist for the Consumers League, later to become Franklin Roosevelt's secretary of labor. She also met the future New York governor, Al Smith, and the future senator, Robert Wagner. These friendships convinced Newman that working through government was as important to the future of working women as grassroots organizing. She never abandoned union work, but she now divided her energies between organizing, education, and lobbying.

In 1917, the Women's Trade Union League dispatched Newman to Philadelphia, to build a new branch of the League. There she met a young Bryn Mawr economics instructor named Frieda Miller, who enthusiastically left academia to join Newman in "the movement." The two were soon living together. It was the beginning of a turbulent relationship that would last until Miller's death in 1974. In 1923, the two women moved to New York's Greenwich Village where, as part of a community of politically active female couples, they raised Miller's daughter, Elisabeth. Happy to take a job that would allow her to stay close to New York after more than a decade of traveling, Newman became educational director for the ILGWU Union Health Center, the first comprehensive medical program created by a union for its members. Newman would retain that position for the next six decades, using it to promote worker health care, adult education, and greater visibility for the concerns and needs of women workers.

Newman continued to organize into the 1930s, reaching out to African-American and Afro-Caribbean women through NYWTUL campaigns to unionize laundry, hotel, and domestic workers. She also continued her government work, consulting for New York State on minimum wage and safety standards and serving as a member of the U.S. Women's Bureau Labor Advisory Board, the United Nations Subcommittee on the Status of Women, and the International Labor Organization Subcommittee on the Status of Domestic Workers.

Through the WTUL, Newman was part of a community of women that sustained her, providing essential support for a working-class immigrant who had chosen to forgo the traditional protections of marriage and family. Theirs was a multi-ethnic and cross-class circle. It included the Irish-Catholic labor activists Maud Swartz and Leonora O'Reilly; the Jewish immigrant garment organizer Rose Schneiderman; and affluent native-born Protestant reformers,

among them Eleanor Roosevelt and Newman's partner of 56 years, Miller. (Miller served in the 1930s as industrial commissioner for New York State and in the 1940s as director of the U.S. Women's Bureau.)

These women were regular guests at Val-Kill, the home that Franklin Roosevelt built for Eleanor near the family mansion at Hyde Park. And during the Roosevelt presidency, Newman visited the White House with some regularity, making national headlines in 1936 when she accompanied a delegation of young garment and textile workers invited by the First Lady for a weeklong stay. After World War II, Newman and Miller were called on by President Truman to investigate postwar factory conditions in Europe. Newman also addressed the White House Conference on the Child and consulted regularly on labor safety issues for the U.S. Public Health Service. During the early decades of the twentieth century, Newman and her WTUL circle had played a vital role in sparking and sustaining women's labor uprisings across the country. During the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, they shaped new government agencies and labor laws that guaranteed a minimum wage and minimum standards of safety for all American workers.

Newman continued to work for the ILGWU into the 1980s, writing, lecturing, and advising younger women trade unionists. In the 1970s, Newman was hailed by the feminist labor federation, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, as a foremother of the women's liberation movement. Newman spoke regularly through the 1970s and 1980s, to historians, reporters, and groups of young women workers.

Newman also left an important legacy through her writings as one of the few working-class women of her generation to chronicle the political activism of immigrant and native-born workingwomen. Labor journalist, essayist, and poet, Newman contributed to the *New York Call*, *Progressive Woman*, the WTUL magazine *Life and Labor*, the *Ladies Garment Worker*, and the ILGWU newspaper, *Justice*.

Newman died in 1986, at approximately 96 years of age.

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See also **Debs, Eugene V.; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995); Jews; Perkins, Frances; Schneiderman, Rose; Women's Trade Union League**

NIXON, EDGAR DANIEL (1899–1987) African-American Labor Organizer

Edgar Daniel Nixon, a civil rights activist, was born in Robinson Springs, Alabama, near Montgomery. His father was a tenant farmer and Primitive Baptist preacher. His mother died when Nixon was nine, and he was brought up in Montgomery by a paternal aunt. With little formal education, Nixon possessed an inquiring mind and a strong personality. After leaving school at the age of 13, he took a variety of menial jobs and then became a baggage handler at the Montgomery railroad station. In 1923, he became a Pullman porter, making regular trips outside the South. These journeys widened Nixon's horizons and stimulated his developing class and race consciousness. Although Pullman porters were considered as the elite of the African-American working class, Nixon resented the degrading treatment they received from the Pullman Company and white passengers. Impressed by the oratory and social vision of A. Philip Randolph, the organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), Nixon joined the union, became president of the Montgomery chapter in 1938, and served until 1964. When the union finally secured a contract with the Pullman Company in 1937, Nixon memorized every section of the personnel rules and used them to advantage. Active involvement in the BSCP increased Nixon's standing in the city's black (and white) communities.

Nixon first became engaged in community action in 1925. When two black children drowned while swimming in a drainage ditch, he organized an unsuccessful petition to build a swimming pool for Montgomery's black residents. In 1934, he founded the Montgomery Welfare League, which attempted to secure access for African-Americans to assistance from the federal government. During the 1930s, Nixon worked with Myles Horton of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee to organize Alabama's cucumber pickers. During World War II, Nixon supported A. P. Randolph's March on Washington Movement (MOWM), a threatened mass march on the nation's capital by 100,000 African-Americans

that forced President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue an executive order banning discrimination based on color, creed, or national origin in the federal government and defense industries. Following a meeting with Eleanor Roosevelt while she was a passenger on his train, Nixon secured the construction of a United Services Organizations Club (USO) for black military personnel stationed near Montgomery. Always sensitive to the practices of racial discrimination, during the 1950s, Nixon went for three years without a telephone in Montgomery rather than accept one on a four-party “all colored” line.

Nixon also became prominent in the Montgomery chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was elected its president in 1945 and 1946. In 1947, he became president of the state organization and successfully protested against segregated admission to the “Freedom Train”—a touring exhibition of such notable historical documents as the Declaration of Independence and the original manuscript of the “Star Spangled Banner”—when it visited Montgomery. The national leadership of the NAACP, embarrassed by Nixon’s radicalism and bluntness, engineered his re-election defeat in 1949. In 1950, he also lost the presidency of the Montgomery chapter.

During the 1940s, Nixon also headed voter registration and school desegregation campaigns in Montgomery and pursued many cases involving the rape of African-American women, police brutality, murders, and lynchings. He organized the Montgomery Voters League in 1940, and in June 1944, he led 750 African-Americans to the board of registrars, demanding to be registered to vote. At this time fewer than 50 Montgomery blacks were on the electoral rolls. Nixon himself had paid the \$36 poll tax in Montgomery and tried to register to vote for 10 years. Only after filing one lawsuit and threatening another was he finally registered in 1945. Nixon became the first African-American candidate to seek public office in Alabama since Reconstruction, when he ran (unsuccessfully) in 1954 for election to the Montgomery County Democratic Party Executive Committee.

A leading figure and tactician in several protests against Montgomery’s segregated public transportation system, Nixon, through his friendships with Rosa Parks, the liberal white attorney Clifford Durr, and Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, an English professor at Alabama State College and a leading activist in the Women’s Political Council (WPC), was instrumental in planning and sustaining the 381-day Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–1956). This grassroots protest against segregation on the city’s buses was sparked off by Mrs. Parks’s refusal to relinquish her seat to a

white passenger. Nixon secured her bail and urged Parks to use her arrest as a test case for the city’s segregation laws. It was Nixon who forcefully persuaded the city’s African-American ministers to lend their support to the protest after it was decided to extend the one-day bus boycott indefinitely. He also acted as the treasurer of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). Through his contacts with organized labor, Nixon disseminated the MIA’s objectives at union meetings and conventions across the country and raised thousands of dollars for the protest—notably from southern branches of the BSCP. According to his own account, Nixon quickly perceived the worth and potential of a young African-American Baptist minister newly arrived in Montgomery, who was to assume leadership of the MIA: Martin Luther King Jr.

A lifelong spokesman for the working class, Nixon criticized the influence and conservatism of Montgomery’s African-American, college-educated elite. He also resented their failure to accord him proper recognition for his role in the boycott and the subsequent inflation of King’s leadership role. Following his resignation as MIA treasurer in 1957, an embittered Nixon remained active in the Alabama Democratic Party and worked for better facilities for Montgomery’s African-American children and the elderly. An uncompromising advocate of racial integration, Nixon rejected the separatism of the Black Power ideology of the 1960s. To the end of his life, Nixon asserted that the BSCP, under the leadership of A. P. Randolph, had not only empowered black workers but also inspired his own resolve to remain in the South and challenge the degradations and lunacies of racial discrimination and segregation.

In 1986, the Alabama Historical Commission—with the endorsement of Governor George Wallace, no longer a symbol of southern white resistance to desegregation—registered Nixon’s modest home on Clinton Street as “a significant landmark.”

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NORRIS-LAGUARDIA FEDERAL ANTI-INJUNCTION ACT

The Norris LaGuardia Act, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1932, represented the culmination of a decades-long struggle by American labor organizations to prevent federal courts from issuing injunctions against strikes, boycotts, and other labor actions. In the late 1870s, federal equity courts began the practice of issuing injunctions against unions engaging in strikes and boycotts against railroads in federal receivership. Federal judges then used the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, conceived as a means of controlling predatory business monopolies, instead as a means to issue injunctions against striking labor unions, whom judges found to be restraining commerce by monopolizing the supply of labor, deemed to be a commodity.

The Norris-LaGuardia Act was conceived as a replacement for the Clayton Act of 1914. The Clayton Act, which Samuel Gompers had proclaimed to be labor's "Magna Carta," was the first attempt by the U.S. Congress to prevent federal courts from issuing injunctions in labor disputes. But federal courts themselves largely gutted the law. The U.S. Supreme Court, in the 1921 *American Steel Foundries* case, held that courts could lawfully limit labor unions to one picket per plant entrance during a strike, effectively making picketing useless. The court also ruled in the *Truax* case in 1921 that a strike could be enjoined if it interfered with the ability of an owner to operate a business at a profit. Essentially, the courts ruled that the judiciary had the power to enjoin strikes, as owners were deemed to be deprived of their property rights; owners were deemed to have a property right in the labor of their employees. The Court's decision gave federal courts broad powers to enjoin strikes, which they did with alarming regularity in the 1920s.

The judicial destruction of the Clayton Act outraged the labor movement, and labor leaders once again threw themselves into organizing political power to write a new law that would prevent the courts from intervening in strikes. By 1932, the cause had gained significant support from others as well, including many reformers, who had come to believe that the system of labor injunctions clearly turned the federal courts into an ally of management during strikes and had actually contributed to increased labor unrest. The spectacle of the Great Depression also convinced many lawmakers that reform was needed in the nation's economy and that a revitalized labor movement might be a necessary stimulus for recovery. Thus, George Norris of Nebraska and Fiorello LaGuardia of New York introduced a bill, authored by Felix Frankfurter and Donald Richberg, reforming the

federal judiciary's role in labor disputes. The Norris-LaGuardia Act received bipartisan support, passed a Republican legislature by a massive majority, and Herbert Hoover approved the Act.

Norris-LaGuardia accomplished several tasks that were critical to the success of labor unions in the United States. First, it was the first act that stated that collective bargaining was necessary in a modern industrial economy. The Act stated that freedom of contract was meaningless to an individual worker in a modern corporate economy and that collective bargaining was a way for workers to achieve a real parity in bargaining with an employer. This did not amount to a federal guarantee of the right to unionize—this would not be suggested until Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act and not firmly established until the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act). The most important part of Norris-LaGuardia decreed that federal courts could not issue injunctions in labor disputes. The only exception allowed by the law was if a strike could be determined to promote violence or property damage. Even in these circumstances, the law limited courts to issuing a temporary restraining order. The law also granted unions the right to employ picketing as a means of publicizing a strike, as well as to convince workers to join a strike or not cross a picket line. Picketing also could be used to encourage consumers to boycott a business. Norris-LaGuardia also put an end to baseless conspiracy charges against unions, establishing that workers could not be charged for doing in combination things that would be legal for a single worker to do. Minor rights granted to unions by the legislation included the right to a jury trial for workers charged with violating an injunction, a guarantee that unions could provide strike benefits to workers, and the right of workers to pool resources to defend members of the union charged with a crime during a strike. Finally, Norris-LaGuardia prevented the federal judiciary from enforcing yellow-dog contracts—a critical section, since employers had used the yellow-dog contract as one of the most effective anti-union measures of the 1920s.

Norris-LaGuardia gave the labor movement its first impetus to the massive organizing successes that it achieved in the 1930s. Free of the labor injunction, unions and workers undertook a massive grassroots organizing campaign throughout the 1930s and 1940s. The U.S. Supreme Court, after the Roosevelt administration had appointed several new liberal members, upheld Norris-LaGuardia in 1938.

The Taft-Hartley Act, passed in 1947, restored some limited injunction powers to federal courts. Taft-Hartley allowed that the president could order

a 60-day halt to a strike if it were determined that the strike constituted a threat to national security or well-being. The new law also allowed the National Labor Relations Board to order a cooling-off period for both sides of a dispute. But Taft-Hartley fell far short of overturning Norris-LaGuardia; Taft-Hartley allowed the issuance of an injunction only in a narrow range of circumstances, and employers could not individually petition courts.

Norris-LaGuardia remains more or less intact today. Because Norris-LaGuardia removed the power of the federal judiciary to break strikes and boycotts by fiat, it allowed unions to operate for the first time without fear of legal retribution. This, as much as later laws that established a federal presence in collective bargaining, made possible the development of the modern labor movement in the 1930s. In this regard, Norris-LaGuardia can arguably be called the most important piece of labor legislation in United States history.

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NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The political battle over the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which entered into effect on January 1, 1994, brought U.S. organized labor from the political drift of the Reagan-Bush years (1980–1992) to the center of a nationwide debate about the U.S. role in the global economy. On June 11, 1990, the opening of negotiations for a Mexican-U.S. free trade agreement was announced by the U.S. president, George Bush, and the Mexican president, Carlos Salinas Gotari, and joined by Canada in February 1991. After a contested May 23, 1991, congressional vote on “Fast Track” negotiating authority, NAFTA emerged as a defining issue in the 1992 presidential election between the Republican George Bush, the critical but supportive Democratic

candidate Bill Clinton, and a strongly anti-NAFTA third-party candidate, H. Ross Perot. Despite the addition of side accords on labor and the environment under Clinton, NAFTA’s fate was uncertain until the eve of the November 17, 1993, vote in the House of Representatives, where Clinton prevailed by 34 votes, with 132 GOP representatives in favor to 43 opposed, while losing the vote of his party by 156 to 102.

NAFTA’s near defeat required an unusual degree of unity among the member unions of the AFL-CIO, a weak confederative apparatus. Not only did the AFL-CIO successfully focus the energies of diverse organizations of workers on NAFTA, but its anti-NAFTA campaign did not remain solely at the level of paper resolutions and backroom arm-twisting by professional labor lobbyists in Washington, DC. Instead, leaders of national unions mobilized the lower ranks of their organizations, including many members, while reaching out to potential allies. At local and regional levels, this popular mobilization found an outlet in innovative forms of grassroots activism that opened outward toward allies on the left that, less than a decade earlier, would have been suspect to the long-standing Cold War leadership of the AFL-CIO president, Lane Kirkland.

As its opponents were quick to point out, the 2,000-page NAFTA treaty was far from being a “free trade agreement,” since trade barriers between the three countries had already been largely dropped—through the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement of 1989 and by Mexico unilaterally. As much an investment as a trading agreement, NAFTA codified a common set of rules, especially in Mexico and Canada, that liberalized access for foreign financial, service, agricultural, and industrial investors and producers—primarily to the benefit of U.S.-based capital. NAFTA sought to achieve a *de jure* and not just a *de facto* integration of North American markets, but only for trade and investment since it accelerated capital mobility while leaving the free movement of labor untouched. In the end, the inclusion of labor and environmental side accords, however inadequate, did symbolically point toward a different future path in an increasingly globalized world.

Labor’s Anti-NAFTA Strategy: “NAFTA Math” and “Job Body Counts”

The fate of a proposed bilateral and eventually continental free trade agreement depended upon the extension of Fast Track negotiating authority by the U.S. Congress, which was scheduled to expire in June

1991. Fast Track allowed the U.S. president to submit implementing legislation, such as a trade pact or treaty, leaving Congress 90 days to vote it up or down with no possibility of amendments. In January 1991, the AFL-CIO formally demanded "Full Debate: No Fast Track: Fair Trade," although even the House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt, one of labor's most articulate congressional supporters, in the end sided with the Bush administration. Although 170 Democrats broke with their leadership, the final vote in favor of Fast Track on May 23, 1991, was 231 to 192.

With Fast Track approved, organized labor's job became clear: defeat NAFTA. At its November 1991 convention, NAFTA was denounced as "an agreement based solely on exploitation," and the AFL-CIO declared "that a new trade agreement with Mexico, unless carefully structured, will only encourage greater capital outflows from the United States, bring about an increase in imports from Mexico, and reduce domestic employment as the United States remains mired in a recession. . . . A bad trade agreement for the United States would result in less job creation, less productivity increases, and regression in environmental and other social standards. For Mexico, it could well reduce that country's comparative advantage to simply cheap labor, turning Mexico's economy into one large export platform, sacrificing balanced and equitable economic development" (AFL-CIO, "North American Free Trade Agreement," *Proceedings of the 1991 Convention*, Detroit: AFL-CIO, 1991, p. 145).

The touchstone of the unfolding NAFTA controversy was potential job losses to Mexico, the single most potent political obstacle to congressional approval. With even President Bush's Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin conceding 150,000 U.S. jobs would likely be eliminated, pro-NAFTA analysts and policy makers sought to diffuse the issue by aggressively trumpeting statistical studies that claimed that U.S. exports to Mexico post-NAFTA would produce a net gain of 175,000 to 200,000 U.S. jobs. Speaking at the 1992 Republican National Convention, the U.S. special trade representative, Carla Hills, would hail NAFTA as above all else a jobs agreement. Moreover, the creation of better-paying jobs in Mexico, it was said, would reduce the number of Mexicans illegally seeking jobs in the United States. "Create jobs there," it was said, "so they won't come here," a claim echoed by the Mexican president, Carlos Salinas, who told a U.S. newsweekly, "we want to export goods and not people" ("Mexico according to Carlos Salinas," *U.S. News & World Report*, July 8, 1991, p. 41). If this "NAFTA

math," as it was dubbed by the U.S. senator Carl Levin, simply did not add up, due to the arbitrary nature of the modeling exercises, this did not diminish the ubiquitous circulation of such claims, especially once the Business Roundtable had launched an active and well-financed lobbying campaign through USA*-NAFTA.

With NAFTA supporters on the defensive, U.S. organized labor sensibly placed the intensely emotional issue of job "losses" at the center of its anti-NAFTA campaign. In doing so, it successfully moved the insecurity of the U.S. worker to the forefront of domestic political debate. In touching a nerve in mass public opinion, jobs gave substance and resonance to the anti-NAFTA campaign by pointing effectively toward the suffering, uncertainty, and anxiety of U.S. working people over the previous two decades. While pro-NAFTA forces had difficulty crafting convincing images of U.S. workers who, were it not for exports to Mexico, would otherwise have been unemployed, there was no shortage of workers who could personally relate the negative impact of plant flight to Mexico. Interviewed by the *Wall Street Journal*, Bernie Leonka explained that the workforce at his General Electric plant had shrunk to 450. "We've lost 1,200 jobs," the union official said, because "they're going to Mexico for cheap labor." With unionized workers making an average \$12.67 an hour, "at 50 cents and 60 cents an hour down there, we can't compete." (Jackie Calmes, *Wall Street Journal*, May 22, 1991, p. A16).

For workers, residents, and local politicians from traditional manufacturing regions, now dubbed the "rust belt," the most potent anti-NAFTA image was the shuttered factory, the "runaway shop" of labor and community lore. The emphasis on jobs also rallied some who were unsympathetic to organized labor, while blunting the charge that a privileged minority, the unionized 11% of the private-sector workforce, was seeking to protect itself from a salutary global competition that would reduce consumer prices for all. The contrasting anti-NAFTA image was one of trade unionists who stood up to defend their families and communities from harm, in the form of imports and capital mobility, and thus championed the very living standards that made mass consumption for all possible in the United States.

The jobs argument advanced by the AFL-CIO operated on several interconnected levels that paralleled the tactics of pro-NAFTA forces. It argued that liberalized trade, foreign imports, and the lack of controls over capital investment had already produced a significant loss of U.S. jobs. It also used academic and legislative analyses that attempted

to predict, in quantitative terms, the heightened negative impact that NAFTA would have on gross and net U.S. employment. In disputing the job gains trumpeted by NAFTA supporters, the AFL-CIO cited studies that projected 130,000 to 550,000 in net job losses (AFL-CIO Task Force on Trade, "North American Free Trade Negotiations, The Jobs Debate: Fiction and Reality," no. 21, 1992; "North American Free Trade Agreement, The Jobs Debate: Part II," no. 22, 1993). Others invoked the dramatically higher estimate of 5.9 million U.S. manufacturing jobs at risk of being moved to Mexico as a consequence of NAFTA. Drawn from a study conducted by the Manufacturing Policy Project, this figure was based on tallying all U.S. manufacturers in the low- to mid-technology range with a labor content equivalent to 20% to 30% of sales (Pat Choate, "Jobs at Risk: Vulnerable U.S. Industries and Jobs under NAFTA," Amherst: The Manufacturing Policy Project, April 1993).

The economic frustration that fed the revitalization of labor's public role was equally conducive to other NAFTA opponents, including the billionaire Republican H. Ross Perot, who made NAFTA the defining issue of his 1992 third-party presidential campaign. Author of *Save Your Job, Save Our Country: Why NAFTA Must Be Stopped Now* (New York: Hyperion, 1993), Perot was also responsible for the single most memorable NAFTA sound bite, "Let's go to the center of the bull's eye—the core problem," he said during the third presidential debate. "And believe me, everybody on the factory floor all over the country knows this. You implement that NAFTA—the Mexican trade agreement where they pay people \$1 an hour, have no health care, no retirement, no pollution controls, etc., etc., etc.—and you are going to hear a giant sucking sound of jobs being pulled out of this country" (Frederick Mayer, *Interpreting NAFTA: The Science and Art of Political Analysis*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, p. 229).

In opposing NAFTA, Perot was joined by a minority of other conservatives, including the Republican Pat Buchanan, who combined an anti-NAFTA stance with a heightened defense of national sovereignty, which they identified with restrictions upon immigration, especially the "illegal alien" problem posed by undocumented Mexicans in the United States. Yet, such anti-immigrant and anti-Mexican arguments were rejected by labor and its allies in the Afro-North American community, a powerfully anti-NAFTA constituency of the Democratic Party (Latinos were more divided). In his testimony before Congress, the prominent civil rights leader Jesse Jackson observed

that "right now many Americans are screaming that Mexicans are taking our jobs, which is not true. And the more they say it, the more racist it sounds. Racist. Mexicans are not taking jobs from us. United States corporations are taking jobs to Mexico to exploit them and undercut our own workers. . . . We have a point of view different than Mr. Perot's point of view, different than Pat Buchanan's point of view. And ours is not narrowly nationalistic. It is not building a wall. It is not racist. It is not protectionist. . . . That is why, when people start talking . . . some narrow nationalism, about America first and isolation, we are not talking about the same thing" (Jesse Jackson, testimony transcribed in *NAFTA: A Negative Impact on Blue Collar, Minority, and Female Employment?* Hearing before the Employment, Housing, and Aviation Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations, U.S. House of Representatives, 103rd Congress, First Session, November 10, 1993, Washington, DC: GPO, 1994, pp. 61, 64).

In deploying its own NAFTA math in leaflets, articles, speeches, and testimony, the labor movement faced certain fundamental difficulties. The "job loss" argument was fundamentally defensive in nature and operated on the unfavorable terrain defined by its pro-employer opponents. The anti-NAFTA jobs argument was not, after all, about creating needed new jobs, but about preserving those that still existed. Moreover, the "jobs body count" approach had difficulty grappling effectively with the overwhelming global trend toward international capital mobility and further reduction of barriers to trade, both of which negatively impacted the bargaining power of nation-specific labor relative to transnational capital. As pro-NAFTA analysts were quick to point out, the hypothetical jobs "lost" or "gained" through NAFTA were insignificant given total U.S. employment, with its enormous fluctuations given the weakness of job security guarantees. "With almost 120 million people currently employed" in the United States, noted the Congressional Budget Office, the expected contributions of NAFTA to total employment either way was "negligible," and the *New York Times* noted that an estimated 20 million U.S. workers would suffer future displacement, for various reasons, even without NAFTA (Congress of the United States Congressional Budget Office, *A Budgetary and Economic Analysis of the North American Free Trade Agreement*, Washington: July 1993, p. 84; "Demythologizing the Trade Pact," *New York Times*, July 25, 1993). Finally, voting down NAFTA would not, in and of itself, prevent a single "runaway shop," restore a single job, or raise the wages of a single worker in the United States.

Electoral Politics, Bill Clinton, and NAFTA's Environmental and Labor Side Accords

The groundswell of debate about NAFTA showed deep concerns within the U.S. public about the place of their country in the global economy. "To those who believe that average Americans don't know their own interests, or fail to appreciate the benefits of free trade theory, you are wrong," declared the House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt in September 1992. "The American people get it, this issue resonates with them, and the NAFTA agreement is rapidly becoming, substantively and symbolically, representative of everything that is wrong in their lives economically" ("North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA]: Update on Recent Developments," SourceMex, September 16, 1992). Given these political realities, congressional Democrats inclined to vote in favor of NAFTA believed that the only way they could explain a "yes" vote to their troubled constituents would be if the "Bush NAFTA" was reshaped to include labor and environmental concerns.

The Democratic presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, who backed Fast Track in 1991, delayed taking a clear position on NAFTA until a month before the November 1992 elections. Speaking in Raleigh, North Carolina, Clinton declared NAFTA to be beneficial for all three countries, but pledged *not* to sign it "until we have reached additional agreements to protect America's vital interests." While disclaiming any intention to renegotiate the basic agreement, Clinton said we must "reaffirm our right to insist that the Mexicans follow their own labor standards, now frequently violated, and that they do not aggravate the wage differentials which already exist." We need an agreement, he said, "that permits citizens of each country to bring suit in their own courts when they believe their domestic environmental protections and worker standards aren't being enforced."

In publicly backing the highly controversial NAFTA, Clinton broke ranks with many of his fellow Democrats, as well as important Democratic constituencies such as labor, the African-American community, and the environmentalists (who would later split on the final vote in 1993). To mollify criticism from these groups, which were campaigning vigorously for him, the candidate had pledged that, if elected, NAFTA would go into effect only if accompanied by strong side agreements to protect labor rights and environmental standards. In doing so, he also suggested that the unfettered "free market" was not enough to protect workers and the environment from potential abuses or to equitably distribute the fruits of North American trade.

Bill Clinton's strategy for converting NAFTA into a politically palatable trade policy led organized labor to hold back from overt anti-NAFTA mobilization in early 1993. Although facing some internal dissent, the decision by the AFL-CIO leadership reflected its strong ties to the Democratic Party, as well as the belief that its access to the White House might secure strong enough side agreements and other changes in the basic pact as to be opposed by Canada, Mexico, or the congressional Republicans. While labor called for a side accord "with teeth," the Clinton administration had opted by March 1993 for the weakest of three policy options: national enforcement of national laws, exclusion of important labor rights from effective coverage, and weak oversight and enforcement mechanisms. Finalized on August 13, 1993, and released one month later, the "North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation" did little to assuage the opposition to NAFTA. The AFL-CIO judgment was emphatic: "Because our trade negotiators have produced labor and environmental standards that are just political window-dressing on a bad agreement, we will vigorously oppose NAFTA before Congress," the AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland pronounced ("AFL-CIO News: AFL-CIO Finds NAFTA Terms Unacceptable," August 13, 1993). Labor's negative reaction was re-assuring to NAFTA's vigorous and mobilized business supporters, who were opposed, in principle, to legitimizing any linkage between workers' rights and trade.

Seeds of the New

Labor's response to the changed circumstances of the United States—as they came to be symbolized by NAFTA—was necessarily multiform and heterogeneous. "Old" approaches and mind-sets were changing, but slowly and unevenly, within the mental universe of U.S. trade unionists. If anything, the U.S. labor movement was less monolithic in the early 1990s than it has been at any point since the AFL-CIO was created in 1955. Even the right and center-right forces that controlled the AFL-CIO apparatus had moved, if only grudgingly, somewhat to the left. There was also much that was "new" within the ranks of U.S. labor, although its contours were still foggy, as generational shifts and the harsh attacks of the 1980s created a groundswell of change that began to blossom in the freer ideological atmosphere of the post-Cold War era. The fight against NAFTA from 1990 to 1993 united both old and new, traditionalists and reformists, the more conservative and the more radical. The fight against NAFTA proved a period of

rich experimentation and learning as the U.S. labor movement and its allies grappled with how to confront the problem of transnational capital. It also marked the beginning of a new era of grassroots mobilization and cross-border coalition building with a transnational flavor. Direct forms of labor transnationalism, such as transnational coalition building, cross-border solidarity actions, and grassroots union linkages grew in number and frequency. Among the more exciting were cross-border tours of Mexican *maquiladoras* sponsored by unions whose companies had plants in the border zone. These forms of grassroots mobilization stimulated new reflection on the differences and similarities across the divide between NAFTA North (the United States and Canada) and NAFTA South (Mexico). These bold and exciting initiatives inspired activists as they worked to build a common terrain beyond the narrowly restrictive conceptual space of national identity and interests. Most significant, work was begun on carefully constructing transnational arguments against NAFTA, all of which went beyond U.S. protectionist paradigms and inherited nationalist reactions to the encroaching global economy.

While seeking allies across borders was symbolically important, the search for domestic alliances was an equally significant dimension of the anti-NAFTA fight. Significant segments of U.S. organized labor reached out toward other nonlabor coalitions, such as the Alliance for Responsible Trade (ART, formerly MODTLE), the Citizens' Trade Campaign, and the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (CJM). These groups brought together religious organizations, environmental groups, consumer advocates, and policy research organizations to develop sophisticated critiques of and alternatives to NAFTA and, in the case of CJM, to perform important community work and watchdog functions directly at the U.S.-Mexican border. Organized labor's role in these groups—with the exception of the CJM, which received official support from the AFL-CIO—was largely limited to a small number of committed individual union leaders, staff, and activists, but it represented a step forward.

The 1995 election of the “New Directions” leadership of Sweeney was one legacy of the fight against NAFTA, as was organized labor's presence in the tens of thousands at the 1999 protests against the ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization in Seattle. The subsequent years of economic globalization have also weakened the illusions of labor leaders, still vibrant in 1993, about a golden age of capital, labor, and government cooperation. And the existence of the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation, although deeply flawed, left

an institutional space through which to denounce violations of labor rights, however fruitlessly. By injecting the issue of labor rights into a trade agreement, the NAFTA labor side accord embodies a hope for future progress in the fight for a meaningful social dimension for an increasingly integrated global economy.

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NO-STRIKE PLEDGE

Few moments reveal the gap between union leadership and rank-and-file workers more than national mobilization for war. Historically, wartime has brought enhanced bargaining power for labor as both production and labor demand increased; yet it also has brought patriotic appeals for organized labor and workers to set aside their narrow interests on behalf of the nation. During U.S. involvement in World War I and World War II, union leaders agreed to suspend all strike activity in exchange for basic concessions by employers, guaranteed by the enhanced power of the wartime state.

This no-strike pledge, however, did not always prove popular with rank-and-file workers, who feared they had abandoned the one tool they had to win concessions from employers. During both wars, the result was turmoil on the shop floor and unauthorized wildcat strikes. Organized labor itself often had to step in to discipline rank-and-file workers when they violated the no-strike pledge, exacerbating tensions between union leadership and members.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the labor committee of the Council on National Defense, chaired by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) president, Samuel Gompers, proclaimed that "neither employers nor employees shall endeavor to take advantage of the country's necessity to change existing standards." Met by a deluge of complaints from workers about this apparent binding of the AFL by a no-strike pledge, Gompers insisted that unions could still continue to use strikes as a last resort. Nevertheless, World War I proved a strike-prone era, with over 1,100 breaking out in the first five months of the conflict alone. Not only did AFL unions like the International Association of Machinists engage in strike action, but of course Socialist and Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) unionists had no interest in setting aside labor militancy on behalf of a war they opposed. Individual organizations, however, like the Stockyards Labor Council in Chicago, agreed to suspend strike action during the war in exchange for government mediation that would help labor win some major concessions on hours and wages from

employers. Finally, in March 1918, a year after American entry into the war, the War Labor Conference Board (the predecessor to the War Labor Board) secured an agreement from the AFL leadership that "there should be no strikes or lockouts during the war" in exchange for the right to collective bargaining, protection of existing union shops, the eight-hour day, and a "living wage."

Twenty-five years later, World War II brought an even more forthcoming, if just as weakly honored, no-strike pledge on the part of organized labor, which now represented many more workers than it had in 1918. One week after U.S. entry into the war in December 1941, the AFL president, William Green, promised that, for the duration, "labor will produce, and produce without interruption." The AFL executive board immediately embraced a no-strike pledge, as did its counterparts in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Although these decisions reflected widespread patriotic sentiment among workers, they also represented a pre-emptive effort to forestall any restrictive legislation and a desire to secure beneficial arbitration on issues of wages and union security from the National War Labor Board (NWLB).

Since the no-strike pledge was a "pledge" rather than a formally binding agreement, the NWLB devised nonjudicial sanctions with which to enforce adherence to it. By threatening to withdraw the benefits it had granted in arbitrated union contracts, such as protection of the closed shop, the NWLB effectively recruited unions to police the widespread wildcat strikes of their own members. In the last two years of the war, union leaders proved especially anxious to enforce the no-strike pledge to defend against growing antilabor sentiment embodied in the Smith-Connally Act of 1943 and the danger that Roosevelt would enact a national service program, or "labor draft," to discipline unruly workers and shore up a chaotic labor market. The necessity of disciplining wildcat strikers enhanced bureaucratic tendencies in large industrial unions, strengthening the hands of centralized leadership at the expense of a less tractable rank and file. By 1944, the CIO president, Philip Murray, complained that a large portion of his union's treasury was "being used to enforce the WLB directives...which in the first instance we do not believe in."

Historians disagree about the relative gains and losses of wartime no-strike pledges. In both conflicts, organized labor made significant organizational and contractual gains by agreeing to suspend strike activity in exchange for increased federal intervention in labor-management relations. Patriotic allegiance to national war aims gained legitimacy for the trade

unions that supported the war effort, and destroyed those, like the IWW, that did not. At the same time, the no-strike pledge relinquished the one coercive mechanism available to unions, made workers' organizations dependent on the government, and put labor leaders in the uncomfortable position of having to quash, on behalf of the state, their members' grievances and strike actions.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Congress of Industrial Organizations; Gompers, Samuel; Industrial Workers of the World; International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; National War Labor Board (WWI); National War Labor Board (WWII); Smith-Connally Act; World War I; World War II

NOVELS, POETRY, DRAMA

From the days of America's rural, agricultural economy to the current postindustrial period of service-sector work, American writers have chronicled the struggles of the nation's workforce with varying success. Much of a considerable body of novels, poetry, and drama plays that focused on work and labor struggles failed to attract a wide audience and fell into neglect. Still, several works successfully integrate the conditions of workers and strikes, providing important literary contributions and bringing inspiration to the American labor movement.

Novels

The novel emerged as a venue for working-class themes very slowly in the United States. Before the Civil War, most novelists had genteel backgrounds and produced texts with a middle-class readership in mind. Most plots featured characters struggling with questions surrounding property, inheritance, and Puritan virtues. If writers described the working class, they emphasized the nation's rural, small-town society and depicted workers as self-employed

craftsmen, shopkeepers, professionals, or farmers. In the 1840s, however, more novelists began using the city as a background for their narratives, calling attention to urban poverty and offering hints of the world of work as they described the streets of the city. By the next decade, some novels included more detailed descriptions of workers on the job. For example, Day Kellogg Lee's *The Master Builder; or Life at a Trade* (1853) features a protagonist who works as a sawmill operator. His next novel, *Merrimack; or Life at the Loom* (1854), depicts young women laboring in the textile mills of Lowell, Massachusetts.

The dramatic rise of industrialization in the middle of the nineteenth century coincided with the literary shift to realism. As writers strove for greater verisimilitude, it was inevitable that works would begin to include more specific information about the difficult workplace conditions faced by many workers. Rebecca Harding Davis produced what many consider the first full-scale industrial narrative when her *Life in the Iron Mills* appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1861. The novella focuses on a young immigrant ironworker, Hugh Wolfe, and the dangerous working conditions he faces as he stirs molten iron inside the choking atmosphere of the plant. More and more writers in the Gilded Age would follow this precedent and offer more detailed treatments of the American working class. Eventually, the rising labor movement and its struggles would work its way into fiction.

One of the earliest depictions of a strike in American fiction appeared in 1871 in Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *The Silent Partner*. Significantly, the heroine of the novel is not a worker but a "silent partner" in the New England textile mill she inherited. Similarly, labor struggles play a significant role in the plot of the most influential novel of the period, Edward Bellamy's utopian novel *Looking Backward, 2000–1887* (1888). The novel's protagonist, the Bostonian Julian West, is frustrated that strikes have delayed the construction of his new home. In the utopian society of the year 2000, however, the elimination of classes has made strikes and labor unions obsolete. *Looking Backward* influenced subsequent generations of writers as it introduced the theme of socialism into American fiction. But as the nineteenth century drew to a close, it remained clear that the novelists addressing working-class life wrote from a middle-class perspective and drew a great deal of their information from secondhand sources. For the most part, industrialists were depicted admirably, the trade union organizer was the subject of suspicion, and foreign-born workers were the source of most problems.

The industrial scene and union activity were eventually drawn with greater insight as the Gilded Age

waned and the nation moved deeper into the Progressive Era. Many writers, either through their own work experiences or their investigations of labor struggles as journalists, developed deeper insight and understanding of the workers' perspective. For example, Upton Sinclair's investigation of conditions in the Chicago stockyards and events during the Chicago Stockyard Strike of 1904 led to his landmark novel of industrialization, *The Jungle* (1906). The Russian immigrant Theresa Serber Malkiel toiled in New York City's garment industry when she first arrived in the United States. She later became a labor activist, and the New York Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909–1910 inspired Theresa Serber Malkiel to produce a highly detailed fictional treatment of the labor struggle, *The Diary of a Shirtwaist Striker* (1910). The gains made by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the Socialist Party also inspired many writers. The novelist Ernest Poole, for example, personally witnessed the IWW in action during the Lawrence Textile Strike of 1912 and the Paterson Silk Strike of 1913 and was moved to fictionalize the labor struggles in what would become one of the most popular books of 1915, *The Harbor*. The novel is notable for the insight it provides into the gains made by the Socialist Party and the IWW prior to World War I.

In the 1920s, the seeds of the proletarian novel and "strike" novel were sown as more writers attacked the idea of economic mobility and voiced a general repugnance for the state of American life. More novels featured worker-protagonists. In Elias Tobenkin's *The Road* (1922), the heroine works in the New York garment industry to support herself and her illegitimate son. She later becomes an effective trade union organizer. Occasionally, novels question the impact of the American business ethic on immigrants. *Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl* (1923) by Samuel Ornitz depicts an immigrant garment worker who eventually becomes an attorney for the textile industry. He abandons his family, friends, and fellow workers as he becomes more affluent and is lonely and unhappy by the close of the novel.

As the nation moved deeper into the Great Depression, the worker-writer began to emerge. Many workers in factories, mines, and farms were moved to record their experiences during their time away from their jobs. Firsthand experience led to highly detailed descriptions of the workplace and union operations. Because many of these writers participated in strikes, labor struggles in the novels are often developed through the eyes of the workers. The strike is also used symbolically to represent the struggles and the victories of the working class. Key proletarian and strike novels of the 1930s include Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited* (1933), Mary Heaton Vorse's *Strike!*

(1930), Thomas Tippet's *Horse Shoe Bottoms* (1935), and John Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle* (1936). Fictional treatments of the struggles of African-American workers and their experiences during the Great Migration were also developed at around this time in such works as William Attaway's *Blood on the Forge* (1941) and Alden Bland's *Behold a Cry* (1947).

In the last decades of the twentieth century, plant-closing recessions, the loss of millions of manufacturing jobs, a steady decline in union membership, and an economy increasingly dependent on service-sector work led to a resurgence in working-class themes in literature. Writers with worker roots such as Raymond Carver, Joyce Carol Oates, Tillie Olsen, James Dickey, and Carolyn Chute often depict the problems, apathy, and discontent of workers, both working-class and blue-collar. The closing decades of the twentieth century also led to a resurgence in the theme of ethnicity, race, and working-class oppression. Chicano labor is fictionalized in works such as Raymond Barrio's *The Plum Plum Pickers* (1972) and Ernesto Galarza's *Barrio Boy* (1971). Similarly, the work situations faced by African-American women are addressed in works such as Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place* (1988), Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters* (1980), and Ramona Lofton's *Push* (1997).

Poetry

Working-class life has been a very significant subject for American poets, and many poetic texts provide important inspiration to the labor movement. Poets in the Early Republic often emphasized the American work ethic and the nation's rural, small-town society. For example, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in poems such as "The Village Blacksmith" (1841), presented the workingman as industrious, skillful, sober, and independent:

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands

In the age of Manifest Destiny, workers were celebrated as the builders of the expanding nation in poems such as Walt Whitman's "A Song for Occupations" (1855). Later, the Yiddish poet Morris Rosenfeld developed a reputation as the "poet laureate of labor" as his experiences as a presser and baster in New York's Lower East sweatshops inspired him to put pen to paper. Poems such as "In the Factory"

were noted for their realistic description of sweatshop life:

Oh, here in the shop the machines roar so wildly
That oft, unaware that I am, or have been.
I sink and am lost in the terrible tumult
And void is my soul . . . I am but a machine!

In many cases, many of labor's successes, defeats, or tragedies prompted poets to express their emotions. Rosenfeld, for example, wrote a requiem for the victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire of March 25, 1911. Due to blocked exits and faulty fire escapes in the factory, a total of 146 workers, mostly young immigrant women, perished in the flames or jumped 10 stories to their deaths. Rosenfeld's poem, written four days after the fire and published in the *Jewish Daily Forward*, mixes fury and sorrow over the tragedy:

And Mammon devours our sons and daughters
Wrapt in scarlet flames, they drop to death from this
 maw
And death receives them all.
Sisters mine, oh my sisters; brethren
Hear my sorrow:
See where the dead are hidden in dark corners,
Where life is choked from those who labor.
Oh, woe is me, and woe to the world.

As unionization increased, more labor journals and newspapers were founded and became outlets for aspiring poets. Journals such as Edward Bellamy's *The New Nation*, Horace Traubel's *Conservator*, the *International Socialist Review*, *II Proletario*, the *Masses*, and the *Liberator* published verse. Noteworthy poets during this period who protested the struggles of the exploited laborer in the United States include Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Rose Pastor Stokes, Edwin Markham, Arturo Giovannitti, and the author considered the most active of the socialist poets, Carl Sandburg. In many of his poems, Sandburg expressed admiration for the toughness of the working class, as these lines from "Chicago" indicate:

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with
 white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young
 man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has
 never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse,
and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!

Most poetry dealing with working-class themes has been sung, and as labor organizations grew, the song continued to be a popular form for rallying workers. The genre of the union song probably reached its height in the early twentieth century under the

organization described as the "singest union"—the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The IWW's leading troubadours were Joe Hill (1879–1915) and another IWW poet and artist, Ralph H. Chaplin (1887–1961). The union's songbook, *IWW Songs: To Fan the Flames of Discontent* (also known as the *Little Red Songbook*), was distributed, along with a membership card, to all who joined the organization. The songs could be heard at union meetings, on picket lines, and in jails, and they often parodied the popular songs and hymns of the period. Hill's "Pie in the Sky" is a cutting parody of the hymn "Sweet By-and-By":

Long-haired preachers come out every night,
Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right;
But when asked how 'bout something to eat
They will answer with voices so sweet:

CHORUS:

You will eat, bye and bye,
In that glorious land above the sky;
Work and pray, live on hay,
You'll get pie in the sky when you die.

With government crackdown on communist and socialist activities at the close of the Progressive Era and nationalistic sentiment on the rise as America entered World War I, the Wobblies and their music were largely silenced by repression. Persistent low wages and poor working conditions in the 1920s, however, continued to spur unionization and strikes. As the problems facing the working class intensified with the onset of the Great Depression, it once again became clear that songs were an effective tool for calling workers back into the labor movement. Labor militancy rose in the 1930s thanks to musicians such as Woody Guthrie, Huddie Leadbetter (Leadbelly), and Aunt Molly Jackson. In the 1940s, groups such as the Almanac Singers and the People's Songs formed in support of CIO organizing campaigns. "Talking Union," by the Almanac Singers, provides instructions about how to form a union local:

Now, you know you're underpaid, but the boss
says you ain't;

He speeds up the work till you're about to faint.
You may be down and out, but you're not beaten
You can pass out a leaflet and call a meetin'
Talk it over—speak your mind—
Decide to do something about it.

Folk groups produced a virtual library of protest songs that stressed unity and mutual assistance among the working class. In the 1950s, groups such as the Weavers, who continued to perform despite political pressure to disband, kept the tradition alive. Later, the popularization of folk groups led to music

styles that played a significant role in the Civil Rights Movement and the protest against the Vietnam War. Artists who successfully bridged the gap between folk music and popular taste include Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, the Byrds, and Peter, Paul, and Mary.

Contemporary poets explore the need for satisfying work and attempts to avoid dead-end jobs and alienating labor. For example, works such as Barbara Smith's "The Bowl" and Marge Piercy's "To Be of Use" give insight into the joy that can be found in physical labor. Social class, most notably immigrant labor, is the focus of poems such as Benjamin Aliere Saenz's "Journeys" and Jimmy Santiago Baca's "So Mexicans Are Taking Jobs from Americans." Some entire books of poetry are focused on workers in particular industries. For example, the poet Jim Daniels' book *Punching Out* focuses on the activities of workers on the assembly line of a Detroit auto manufacturer.

Drama

Theater for working-class audiences has a long history, and several productions have an important place in labor culture. Even in the formative years of the labor movement in the antebellum period, plays appealed to the spreading discontent among workers. In the 1830s and 1840s, some productions were blamed for the spreading of mob violence in major cities. *The Carpenter of Rouen* played in New York City's Bowery Theatre and dramatized the successful revolt against autocratic repression in the French Revolution. Eventually, as the shift from an agricultural to an industrial society continued, working-class culture grew and the local theater played an important place in meeting the entertainment needs of laborers who had free time on Saturday afternoons. Regional subjects and working-class themes were popular, and playwrights worked to adapt well-known dramatic formulas to local tastes. As more immigrants arrived in the United States in search of work in the mines, mills, and factories, ethnic characterizations also enjoyed tremendous appeal. A significant example of drama aimed at local audiences is found among the ironworkers and glass craftsmen in Pittsburgh in 1878 when a play, *The Lower Million*, proved to be extremely successful. The lavish production dramatized the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and carried an increasingly popular theme: the skilled craftsman is the hero of the industrial system.

In the late nineteenth century, workers became more involved in theater productions. A key example is the development of workers' theater by German socialists in the 1880s. Socialists often wrote their

own festival plays to celebrate events significant to the working class. A leading figure in German-American socialist workers' theater was the anarchist Johann Most (1846–1906), who acted and produced successful versions of Gerhard Hauptman's naturalistic drama, *Die Weber (The Weavers)* in San Francisco, New York, and Chicago. At about the same time, there was an increase in the number of plays produced for immigrant, working-class audiences. Classical and foreign language plays were revised to fit into the urban, industrial setting of the Gilded Age. In New York's Lower East Side, for example, popular commercial productions used garment factories and sweatshops as settings.

In the opening decades of the twentieth century, radical organizations saw an opportunity in dramatizing labor struggles. The most significant example occurred during the Paterson Silk Strike of 1913. Strike organizers and the IWW hoped to rally workers and raise much-needed strike funds. Approximately 1,000 striking workers were part of the cast in the dramatization of the labor struggle. The production was mainly orchestrated by John Reed, the writer for the *Masses*, who experienced the strike firsthand and was jailed with the immigrant laborers. "The Pageant of the Paterson Strike" was divided into six major episodes from the strike. The mass actions by strikers were re-enacted, accompanied by excerpts from the stirring speeches made by strike leaders during the labor struggle. The cast also sang songs such as "The Marseillaise" and "The International." Prepared in only three weeks, the play was performed on June 7, 1913, before an audience of approximately 15,000 at New York's Madison Square Garden. The play won critical praise and by several accounts moved the audience deeply; it failed, however, to generate the desperately needed strike funds.

During the Progressive Era and into the late 1920s, companies expanded the use of theater as a venue to indoctrinate their workers with company ideology. Large corporations financed company auditoriums and subsidized company drama clubs and vaudeville acts. The productions not only entertained the workers but also limited outside influences such as saloons and dance halls. Company shows often involved workers and their families. Examples include the Goodyear Greater Minstrels and the *Hawthorne Follies* held at the Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works in Chicago. Entertainers glorified hard work, exemplified the idea of positive relations among employees, or showed proper methods for selling merchandise.

Workers' education leaders and labor colleges also recognized theater's ability to instruct and inspire. Due to the unemployment, evictions, speedups,

and wage cuts brought on by the Great Depression, amateur workers' theater grew into a full movement as hundreds of troupes and tens of thousands of workers wrote, directed, and performed theatrical pieces. Notable examples include participation of members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in the play *Pins and Needles*. Similarly, Local 65 of the United Wholesale and Warehouse Employees produced shows such as *Sing While You Fight*. In this play, the two main characters—Jean and Bill—find meaningful activities once they become union members. Jean enjoys duties with the union newspaper. Bill participates in union athletic teams. Ultimately, the two characters find each other at a Saturday night social sponsored by the union. They also find romantic bliss.

The 1930s produced very powerful protest dramas, due in large measure to the agitational performances produced by the Workers' Laboratory Theater (WLT) of New York. The most successful "agitprop" play of the period was the one-act *Waiting for Lefty*, which was written in three days by one of the left's most successful playwrights, Clifford Odets (1906–1963). The play was inspired by the New York taxi strike of 1934 and is set in a union hall where members of the taxicab drivers' union are waiting for the arrival of the popular committeeman, Lefty Costello. The progress of the drivers' union meeting is alternated with flashbacks of the frustrated lives of various workers and their financial difficulties. At the close of the play, a messenger arrives to report the news to the labor leader Agate Keller that Lefty has been murdered:

Man: They found Lefty . . .
 Agate: Where?
 Man: Behind the car barns with a bullet in his head!
 Agate (crying): Hear it boys, hear it? Hell, listen to me!
 Coast to coast! HELLO AMERICA! WE'RE THE
 STORMBIRDS OF THE WORKING-CLASS.
 WORKERS OF THE WORLD . . . OUR BONES AND
 BLOOD . . . [To audience] Well, what's the answer?
 All: Strike!
 Agate: Louder!
 All: Strike!
 Agate and others on stage: AGAIN!
 All: Strike! Strike! Strike!!!

Waiting for Lefty was widely performed by theater groups and amateur performers in union locals. The short play won Odets tremendous acclaim and is considered one of the most powerful protest dramas of the 1930s.

The counterculture movement beginning in the 1960s brought new theatrical forms that were suitable for outdoor demonstrations. Theater companies such

as the Bread and Puppet Theatre, San Francisco Mime Troupe, and Pageant Players in New York performed on city street corners, parks, parking lots, and inside businesses to rally opposition to the Vietnam War, the nuclear arms race, and homelessness. Labor organizations worked for support through theater productions. Unstable Coffeehouse Productions in Detroit, for example, presented an original play, *Sitdown '37*, to an audience of United Auto Workers members as part of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the major labor struggle that helped unionize General Motors. In addition, the San Francisco General Strike of 1934 inspired the playwright Jack Rasmus to write "1934: The Musical." The major non-English theater of the 1960s was El Teatro Campesino (Farm Workers' Theater). The group's productions aimed at recruiting farmworkers and promoting union activities.

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NURSING AND HEALTH CARE

In the mid-nineteenth century, women reformers took a long-accepted female duty, nursing the sick, and fashioned it into paid women's work. One impetus for this came from England's indignation at the treatment of its wounded soldiers in the Crimea. The public outcry resulted in a group of religious sisters and lay women, led by Florence Nightingale, being sent to organize nursing care for these men. After the war, Nightingale led the incipient drive for formal nursing education. Whereas care for family members was an accepted province for women, institutionalized care in the battlefield and in hospitals was considered suitable only for the meanest levels of society. Progressive Era reformers, such as Nightingale and her U.S. counterparts, sought to impose order and moral discipline in hospital wards through their innovation of trained nurses. Indeed, with increasingly complex care following the introduction of anesthesia in the 1840s and the emerging scientific base of medicine, skilled nursing was essential.

Yet there were inherent barriers to instituting an educated nursing workforce, and these barriers have persisted to this day. Care by educated nurses is expensive and constitutes a more protracted expense for patients than physicians' isolated charges. In addition, society typically undervalues and under-rewards caring. Nursing care ranges from relatively unskilled domestic work to complex and specialized interventions, yet a clear line of differentiation is impossible to draw. Furthermore, nursing was initiated as a women's field—indeed, Nightingale introduced her 1860 *Notes on Nursing* with “Nursing is women's work.” Women were considered subordinate to men, and their occupations carried less esteem. Female nurses worked alongside male physicians within the paternalistic hospital environment, where physicians were positioned to demand medical authority over nursing practice, which was professionally inhibited because of its very femaleness. Addressing these difficult issues resulted in compromises in nursing education, conflicts among nurses, and conflicts between nursing leaders and physicians.

This essay opens with a description of hospital-based nursing training and the characteristics of the worker-students from the 1870s through to the post-WWII decline in the number of hospital training schools. The graduates of these schools, who initially worked as independent contractors for individual patients and later as hospital employees, will then be described. The education and work opportunities for nurses over the following decades of the twentieth century will be followed by a discussion of

the American Nurses Association's (ANA) involvement in shaping working conditions for nurses.

Setting the Stage

Florence Nightingale asserted that prior to trained nursing, hospital nurses were generally “those who were too old, too weak, too drunken, too stolid, or too bad to do anything else.” Her disparagement merits discussion. Hospitals were charitable institutions for the very poor, the dregs of Victorian society, who presented with noxious diseases and intimate needs. Their nurses were from similarly unfortunate backgrounds, often former patients themselves, who needed steady employment and a place to live. There is much evidence to show that many of these women and men were hardworking and caring of their charges.

With Nightingale's example from overseas, the first U.S. educational programs to train nurses and reform hospital nursing were opened in the early 1870s. These schools, like the hundreds that followed, sought to engender moral training as well as nursing techniques. The nurse historian Carol Helmstadter notes that moral discipline was the overarching concern of the Victorian age, particularly in relation to women. Additionally, the growth of women's wage labor threatened traditional patriarchal authority among all classes. Nurses were to express the Victorian concept of ideal womanhood—moral, submissive, and obedient. Student nurses were subjected to strict discipline within a hierarchical system that oversaw every aspect of their lives for their two or three years of training. Unquestioning obedience and deference were demanded. Helmstadter claims that the new trained nurse was subservient, dependent, and exploited.

Nurses' Training: 1880–1950

After the first handful of prestigious nursing schools opened, modeled after Nightingale's and with their own governing boards, the benefits that this hardworking, disciplined corps of young women could bring to hospitals became readily apparent. Scores of schools opened that were operated and controlled by hospitals. Hospital administrators appreciated that their own nursing schools could provide essentially free nursing care. To hospital management, it



Nurse preparing arm of prisoner, possibly for blood donation to aid the armed forces during World War II, San Quentin prison, California. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-97127].

constituted an astoundingly fortunate development, and they began to develop business strategies and court both patients and physicians to their facilities, based on provision of free nursing labor. Schools were essentially organized as nursing service departments within the hospitals and were governed by the hospital administration. Predictably, the number of nurse training schools mushroomed; in 1880, 15 were in operation, and in 1910, there were 1,129. The number of hospitals likewise increased rapidly along with the number of nurse training schools. In 1873, there were 178 hospitals in the United States; 50 years later, there were 6,830 and every fourth one had a nursing school. Most were small community hospitals, open to paying patients, usually admitted for a surgical procedure, who expected efficient and competent nursing care. Some of these hospitals were specialized, and their student nurses were exposed only to that specialty, while others were small with highly limited experiences for their students. Yet they still maintained their profitable schools. Instruction in many of these schools, particularly the smaller ones, was certainly poor. In 1932, 23% of schools did not have even one full-time instructor, while only 25% had two or more. In the mid-1930s, about 30% of the instructors had not themselves finished high school, while only 20% had as much as one year of college.

Yet it may be argued that this arrangement was not totally unfair to the student nurses. In return for two or three years of physical work, which was usually supported with a stipend and always included room

and board, graduating nurses received a diploma that offered, at minimum, the prospect of a career.

The lives of nursing students from the 1880s through to the 1940s and beyond were ones of unrelenting control and discipline. Every aspect of work, study, and recreation was subject to the authority of the nursing school. Nursing superintendents and hospital managers demanded total loyalty and obedience from the nurses and tolerated no infractions of their rules. Some students rebelled and left while many others found fulfillment in the total relinquishment of independent thinking and the boarding school-like environment that was demonstrated in their yearbooks and alumnae association activities. Inexpensive rewards for length of service, such as different-colored belts and stripes on caps, were coveted and worn proudly. Some writers have commented that students entered training as women and left as girls, while others discuss the subjugation of independent thinking and inquiry to the unquestioning obedience demanded.

Trained nurses were expected to belong to a superior social class, although the hard work and menial connotations associated with nursing made this type of applicant elusive. Most students came from farms or small towns. Those who were from socially higher families were targeted to become directors of training schools or hospital administrators—opportunities open to few women in the late nineteenth century. However, all students in the early public hospitals were expected to be of a higher social class than

their patients and were also counted upon to be pleasing to look at and to have appropriate social skills. By the 1920s, however, admission standards were lower. Concerns were raised about the inferior women entering nursing in the report of a major study of nurses commissioned by the American Nurses Association. Writing in 1928, the author (Burgess) voiced concern over the undereducated women entering nursing, who were of “inadequate social and academic background” and should really be kept out of the profession.

Nursing training has been likened to an apprenticeship system, since students essentially worked with patients for three years, gaining experience through work. However, the historian Barbara Melosh has argued that a true apprenticeship requires the presence of experts—in this case, graduate nurses—who were lacking in the hospital schools of this period. Student nurses in the 1890s were predominantly responsible for domestic chores as well as rapidly becoming totally responsible for the care of very ill patients, particularly when on night duty. There were few graduate nurses, and those were in a supervisory role. Students swept, dusted, and cleaned the lavatories, made the beds, and cleaned the bedpans. Yet they also assisted with dressing wounds and dispensed medications. In 1896, a survey of three hundred nurse training schools revealed that students typically worked 60 to 105 hours a week, with typical workdays or nights of eight to 15 hours. Many days after work, students were obliged to listen to lectures from physicians or nursing supervisors. At most hospital training schools, students were also sent out on private duty, to nurse patients in their homes. Students might stay on the case for days or weeks. The patients’ fees were pocketed by the hospital and were regarded as a major part of the income for many of the smaller schools. Students in 1934 worked more than 48 hours a week, working every day with two half days off a week. Yet this work could not be called an apprenticeship. In 1932, two thirds of the schools did not have even one graduate nurse employed for bedside work. In most schools, students received a small monthly allowance, although the more prestigious schools did not do this—wanting to maintain the image that their nurses were students rather than workers.

Training lasted three years in most schools, and a standardization of the curriculum was attempted through the first edition of the *Standard Curriculum* published in 1917. There were successful efforts throughout the country to mandate state registration of nurses, and nurses’ living conditions and hours of work eased considerably compared with earlier years. The quality of nursing education was also changing.

Ninety-nine percent of all nurse training schools required graduation from high school by 1935, and in 1937, the *Curriculum Guide for Schools of Nursing* recommended an increase in nurses’ theoretical education. The number of schools giving a university degree in addition to a nursing diploma was also growing; in 1935, there were over 70 such programs. These combined two or three years in the hospital with two years of college courses. There were also three nursing programs within universities, with school or department status.

This type of practical education rendered nursing students, and not graduate nurses, a valuable commodity. At graduation, following presentation of the school’s pin and laudatory speeches, the newly minted nurses were dismissed from the hospital and a new crop of students took their place. Most of these young women tried to find work as private-duty nurses, either in private homes or working for individual patients in hospitals.

Nurses’ Work: 1880–1950

Nursing rapidly became the second largest female-dominated profession, after teaching. In 1920, there were 635,000 school teachers and 144,000 nurses. Most nurses worked in private duty during the early decades of the century and typically connected with prospective private patients through registries—often operated by their hospital or its alumnae association. Registering on the hospital list sometimes meant competing with the hospital’s current nursing students for positions, and certainly placements were at the whim of the hospital’s nursing supervisors. By 1896, approximately 40 alumnae associations existed, and several of them operated registries. During the early years of the twentieth century, commercial employment agencies and some medical organizations operated nurses’ registries. For physicians, medical registries generated a convenient method of contacting nurses for their patients. Nurses paid a registration fee to be placed on a list of available nurses. A typical large agency, Chicago’s Nurses’ Professional Registry, was formed in 1913 by several local alumnae associations. By 1923, the Chicago registry was well established with around 950 members and annually received more than 11,000 requests for private-duty nurses.

Even with registries, private-duty nursing was an insecure means of earning a living. Private-duty nurses were isolated and unorganized and vulnerable to the idiosyncrasies of their patients and the market. Additionally, by the 1920s, there was not nearly

enough work for the numbers of nurses being produced by the nurse training schools. The private-duty fees barely generated enough to cover periods of unemployment, while saving for retirement was next to impossible. Unlike hospital nurses, who lived rent free in nurses' "homes," private-duty nurses needed their own place to live as well as a telephone for the registry to contact them. Following a period of employment, most registries ruled that nurses who had worked three or more days would move to the end of the list. The work, too, could generate different stressors from hospital nursing, as private-duty nurses worked in a social limbo, not at one with their patient's family or the servants. The hours of private-duty nurses were longer than for any other group of nurses; some nurses worked 24-hour shifts even as late as 1937. Also, the close and unremitting patient contact was difficult. Patients' illnesses also affected nurses' earning ability. If they nursed patients suffering from contagious diseases—including cancer, which for many years was considered contagious—they were barred from taking surgical or maternity cases for the following several weeks.

By the mid-1920s, the already limited market for private-duty nursing was saturated. When the Great Depression effectively crushed most opportunities for such nursing, nurses had been teetering on the brink of severe unemployment for years. In addition to diminishing work prospects, the number of nurses produced continued to increase. Nurse training schools had increased from 1,775 in 1920 to 2,286 just eight years later, and the number of nurses had doubled from 104,000 in 1920 to 214,000 in 1930. In 1920, the percentage of nurses who entered private-duty nursing was 80% but declined to about 55% in 1930. At the end of 1930, the registries reported that 25% to 40% of graduate nurses were unemployed.

This unemployment for private-duty nurses sparked a transition from private-duty to hospital nursing for the nation's trained nurses. This transition also significantly impacted nursing education. Hospitals, in desperate financial straits, capitalized on the nurses' unemployment and financial distress by hiring them for far lower wages than the usual rates or even paying them for merely room and board. By the late 1920s, most private-duty nurses worked as bedside—or staff—nurses in acute-care hospitals rather than for private patients. Restrictions on graduate nurses working in hospitals imitated the restrictions of student life. Hospitals routinely required graduate nurses to live in the nurses' dormitory, and they were subject to the same discipline and regimentation that had characterized their student life. They were hired for general ward work and dismissed or re-appointed based upon patient occupancy.

The rationale for operating schools of nursing faded in the face of this newly available and inexpensive corps of graduate nurses generated by the Depression, and many schools closed. This school closure was supported by the state nurses' associations and the American Nurses Association. Some members even donated one month's free nursing service to compensate the schools for the loss of student work. In 1936, there were 1,381 schools, compared with 2,296 just eight years earlier. The number of graduate nurses employed by hospitals rose dramatically from about 4,000 in 1929 to over 100,000 in 1941, about 46% of all practicing nurses. Graduate nurses became accepted as hospital nurses during this decade, and the importance of student nurses as primary caregivers receded. Although many schools of nursing closed during this period, the enrollment of those that remained went up, resulting in a net increase in the number of students and thus graduates. Yearly salaries were \$1,000 plus room and board for institutional work.

Nurses' work in hospitals in the 1930s was labor intensive. Nurses were involved extensively with caring for patients confined to bed and with preparing diets and pharmaceutical solutions. There were dozens of solutions to be prepared as well as different prescriptions for baby formula. Medications too were sometimes prepared by nurses, weighing drugs such as quinine and salicylates and making them into capsules. Complex diets were prepared, such as diets low in ions or high in alkalinity, diets low in bulk or high in fat. Remedies using applications of heat or cold, with their inherent danger of tissue damage, were frequently ordered although the temperatures were only vaguely prescribed. For example, vaginal douches to stop bleeding were ordered "as hot as the patient can stand," while stupes, poultices, and electric light baths all relied on indeterminate amounts of heat to generate the desired effect. Nurses were trusted with procedures that had previously been in the domain of physicians, such as blood pressure measurement. Enemas and laxatives stand out as frequent nursing activities of this period—cleansing enemas; carminative (gas-reducing) enemas; sedative and stimulating enemas; oil and nutrient, antihelminthic (antiworm), antiseptic, astringent, and saline enemas. In one public hospital, enemas were part of the standard care for patients with pneumonia.

Although most nurses found work as private-duty and then as hospital bedside nurses, there were other less common career opportunities. Nurses working in the community, known as public health nurses, experienced more autonomy and prestige than individual patient or hospital-based nurses. The first quarter of the twentieth century saw increasing numbers of nurses enter this field. In 1926, at the height of public

health nursing, nearly a fifth of all nurses were in public health. The maternity and child health programs of the 1921 Sheppard-Towner Act supported an increased role for these nurses.

Wars and other disasters provided more scope for the varied work of nurses and proved appealing for many with an adventurous, patriotic, and/or charitable bent. Twenty-four thousand nurses served in the First World War, 25% of all graduate nurses in the United States, and nearly three hundred nurses died. This effort severely taxed civilian nursing, which was exacerbated by the 1918 and 1919 flu pandemic. The nursing shortage prompted an Army School of Nursing, which was opened in May 1918. The Second World War saw about 74,000 nurses join the military services. Following the oversupply of the 1920s and 1930s, the 1940s was a time of nursing shortage. The return of peace enabled nurses to leave work for marriage and families, and younger women had an array of work options not available to the previous generation.

Nursing Education and Work after Mid-Century

Nursing education slowly shifted away from hospital training schools during the second half of the twentieth century, largely due to the use of trained nurses rather than students at the hospital bedside. The 1948 Brown Report, *Nursing for the Future*, also served as a catalyst for change.

Esther Lucile Brown, a researcher with the Russell Sage Foundation, had been charged with studying nursing education and nurses' work in the face of the critical postwar nursing shortage. The essence of her influential report was that nurses' training should move away from the confines of individual hospitals and into mainstream higher education. States and communities, Brown reasoned, supported the education of other professional occupations, while a non-educational entity—hospitals—provided for nursing training. Brown's report was derided by hospital administrators and the American Medical Association (AMA), both groups being apprehensive about loss of control over nursing education. The AMA had long held a paternalistic interest in nursing education. Many members were anxious that nurses' knowledge be strictly contained and not usurp any medical prerogative.

The ANA, however, fully supported Brown's findings, and some insurance companies and hospitals were also concerned with the inappropriateness of

patients' hospital fees also supporting charges for nurses' education. In the late 1940s, federal aid for nursing programs, through the Emergency Professional Health Training Act, was proposed but was defeated partially through the efforts of the AMA as well as a newly formed association, the National Organization of Hospital Schools of Nursing. A few years later, in 1956, the Health Amendment Act, which supported further education for graduate nurses, was signed into law. In 1964, the landmark Nurse Training Act was passed. This bill provided federal aid for nursing education through school construction grants and student loans and scholarships.

The few baccalaureate programs that were in existence at mid-century did not offer a typical degree but were essentially a regular diploma program coupled with additional college courses. These programs typically lasted five years. In contrast, associate degree nursing programs, which first appeared in 1952, took just two years. These programs rapidly expanded in number. The associate degree program was seen as a way to relieve the critical nursing shortage as well as moving nursing education into the mainstream. The programs were highly successful. There were 16 community colleges offering associate degrees in nursing in 1955, and by 1964, there were 130. Graduates from all types of nursing programs, diploma, associate degree, and baccalaureate, sat for the same nurse licensure examination. In 1965, the ANA produced a position paper on nursing education that mandated a baccalaureate degree for nursing practice, but this apparently did not impact nursing education. The following decades witnessed the number of associate degree programs increase with a commensurate decline in hospital diploma programs, but the number of baccalaureate programs remained modest.

The postwar years saw tremendous growth in the hospital industry, which exacerbated the nursing shortage. Hospital building was largely financed by the Hospital Survey and Reconstruction (known as the Hill-Burton) Act of 1946. In the first six years following the Act, about 88,000 new hospital beds were created. Meanwhile, technological and scientific medical innovations generated increased patient demand, and private insurance plans supported more patient business. Employer-provided insurance plans were in place for about 75% of the civilian population by 1960, up from 33% in 1946. As the nurse historian Victoria Grando notes, care of acute illness, surgery, the baby boom, a growing elderly population, and care of the war-injured all increased the demand for hospital nursing care. Hospital admissions rose by 25% between 1946 and 1952. The loss of nurses to industry and public health exacerbated the shortage.

The critical postwar nursing shortage continued. Nursing continued to struggle for students while competing with other employment opportunities. There were several reasons for this. Nurses returning from the autonomy of war service braced at the authoritarian restrictions prevailing in civilian hospital nursing. In addition, the 48-hour workweeks, the assignment of split shifts—where nurses worked the busy morning and evening hours with their time off during the slow afternoons—and mandatory unpaid “on call” hours were unappealing. Additionally, most nurses did not receive medical care or insurance benefits. The persistence of low pay, compared with other female professionals and office and industrial workers, coupled with more and more responsibility as the science of health care rapidly developed, all combined to keep women and men out of nursing. At the same time, many women who had nursed during the war years now left nursing for marriage and raising a family.

The low pay was in part due to hospital administrators and the public continuing to see hospitals as charitable institutions rather than businesses and nurses as having a vocation rather than needing to work for a wage. The need to adequately compensate nurses could be conveniently disregarded because of this excuse. More pragmatically, hospitals were hard pressed to internally justify paying nurses comparably with other female workers when for years they had enjoyed the benefits of cheap student labor. To the chagrin of nursing leadership, buildings and technologies were afforded but not attractive nursing salaries.

The nurse shortage created a unique situation for female workers in the immediate postwar years. Married and older nurses were asked to stay at work in nursing although they were not tempted with increased salaries, in contrast to other women who were encouraged to leave their jobs for the returning men. The nurse shortage was partially addressed through hiring untrained aides or lesser-trained “practical nurses.” Thus, the cheap nursing care formerly provided by students was now carried on by a second tier of lesser-educated nurses who were directed by licensed registered nurses. These nursing teams cared for groups of 15 to 20 patients. The nurse historians Joan Lynaugh and Barbara Brush have argued that nurses were unable to define their unique work, which led to the situation of low pay and substitution of lesser-prepared nurses.

In the 1960s and 1970s, sicker patients were admitted for shorter hospital stays. With Medicare and Medicaid legislation of 1965, there were increased pressures placed on hospitals and nursing services.

Nursing practice became more complex and diverse. To use nurses most effectively, the sickest patients were grouped together, under nurses experienced in their special needs—evolving into early intensive and coronary care units.

Nursing Organizations

Nursing leaders established four national organizations within a few decades of the inception of trained nursing in the 1870s. The first of these, the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses, was created in the wake of Chicago’s 1893 World Fair. The new society was seen by its founders as a vehicle to organize and professionalize nursing. In 1912, the name was changed to the National League of Nursing Education. In 1896, this group founded a second professional organization, the Nurses’ Associated Alumnae Association of the United States and Canada, later the American Nurses Association. The ANA was open to all graduate nurses, regardless of specialty, through their alumnae associations. The other nursing organizations were the National Organization for Public Health Nursing, founded in 1912, and the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, founded in 1908. The latter was instituted when some African-American nurses were essentially denied membership in the ANA because some state associations barred African-American nurses because of race. (See also the entry “National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses.”) This section deals primarily with the ANA as the dominant organization, as well as the group charged with being nursing’s collective bargaining representative at mid-century.

The first state associations of the ANA were formed in 1901 when the national body saw a need for more local organizations to co-ordinate activities within the state. By 1907, 28 state associations had been formed, although alumnae associations remained the primary basis for membership in the national organization. However, over the following years, membership in state associations became the only method of joining the national organization.

The ANA, through its state organizations, was early on involved in obtaining registration for nurses and in the formulation of acts to define nursing practice. Having invested three years in laborious hospital training, nurses were fierce in defending the title of “nurse” and restricting its use to themselves, both for their job security and for the protection of consumers. State registration of nurses was one way of achieving

this. North Carolina was the first state to pass such a bill, although it was weaker than the nurses wanted due to opposition from the state medical society. Later state acts included educational requirements as well as a licensure examination. Another early activity of the ANA was the publication of the first American journal owned by nurses, the *American Journal of Nursing*, which began publication in 1900.

The contact of the hospital nurse with the ANA, whether hospital or private-duty, was greatest through the nurse's alumnae association. Members of alumnae associations held regular meetings, usually in the nurses' residence where they had lived during training. The meetings kept nurses abreast of patient care advances or were of general interest. Care of sick and needy members was another traditional focus of alumnae associations. Many associations funded an endowed hospital bed for their members, which allowed a nurse needing hospital care to use the "alumnae bed" free of charge. Some associations made special arrangements for their members stricken with tuberculosis—an occupational hazard. In Chicago, the First District of the Illinois State Nurses' Association sponsored a six-room cottage for its members with the disease on the grounds of a suburban sanatorium. The ANA also served to identify employment opportunities for nurses through operation of nurses' registries. Probably because membership in the ANA registry was necessary to obtain work as a private-duty nurse, the ANA was the largest professional organization of women in the world in 1930, with 100,000 members.

During the late 1930s, the issue of whether the ANA should serve as nurses' collective bargaining agent was discussed. Economic conditions for nurses continued to be poor in the postwar years. In 1941, the California Nurses' Association successfully represented its members before the War Labor Board. Its success prompted the ANA to adopt a more extensive national program for nurses. In 1946, the ANA adopted an economic security program, which allowed state nursing associations to act as representatives for their members in employment concerns and as their collective bargaining agents. The ANA wanted a 40-hour workweek with no decrease in salary. Yet the ANA's efforts became moot for many nurses when the Taft-Hartley Act was passed in 1947. The bill exempted nonprofit hospitals from the 1935 Labor Relations Act, which obligated employers to bargain collectively with their employees. The ANA immediately worked to get this Act repealed, but was not successful. In 1974, an amendment was finally signed into law permitting nurses in nonprofit hospitals to engage in collective bargaining.

Leadership in the ANA came from a group of women who wanted nursing to be recognized as a profession, with professional education and professional commitment to practice. This was frequently at odds with the nurses, who were frequently lesser-educated private-duty nurses whose livelihood would be affected by nursing leadership's professional aspirations. Many activities of the ANA at this time were concerned with nursing issues at the national and legislative level, sometimes leading to professional status at the price of longer hours and lower pay.

In 1950, the ANA and the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses began a process of merger, while the National League of Nursing Education, the National Organization of Public Health Nurses, and the more recently formed Association of Collegiate Schools of Nursing formed the National League for Nursing.

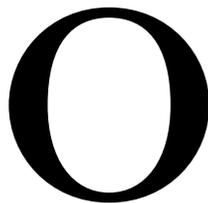
Nursing contributes several unique attributes to an examination of labor history. Nurses' professional aspirations were impacted and hindered by gender and class. Nurses' work ranged from providing comfort measures to instituting life-threatening interventions. Nurses, predominantly women, were not, historically, associated with women's suffrage, yet they represented a significant group of this country's workingwomen. Thus, a study of nursing may inform labor, medical, social, women's, and political historical analysis.

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OAKLAND GENERAL STRIKE (1946)

In December 1946, a strike of predominantly female department store clerks sparked a citywide general strike in Oakland, California. More than 100,000 workers struck for 2.5 days, shutting down factories, shipyards, construction, most retail, and virtually all transportation in the city. Local working-class mobilization carried over into the municipal elections of 1947, when a slate of labor-endorsed candidates won four seats on the city council.

Before World War II, Oakland's business and politics had been dominated by a conservative, downtown, commercial elite, led by *Oakland Tribune* publisher Joseph Knowland. In the 1930s, insurgent Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions emerged in factories and along the waterfront, but much of the local economy remained concentrated in skilled craft production, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) remained the larger and stronger union federation.

The war however brought thousands of new migrants to work in the defense industries, especially shipbuilding, while the number of employed women in Oakland nearly doubled. By 1945, the city population had increased by almost a third, and the African-American population more than tripled. Many of these workers, previously excluded by race, gender, or skill, suddenly became members of unions that often received them poorly or resisted them altogether. But by the mid-1940s, a more progressive leadership emerged in the local AFL, and the CIO also reached out to new workers in the community.

With mass layoffs in the postwar period and fears of a new open-shop and wage-cutting drive by employers, union leaders focused on organizing new members, including workers in the historically anti-union downtown retail sector. By the fall of 1946, the AFL Department and Specialty Store Employees' Union, Local 1265, had recruited a majority of workers at Kahn's, a large department store, and at Hastings, a men's store. After management refused to recognize the union, the employees at the stores, the majority of them women, voted to strike. Local Teamsters' Union drivers refused to transport goods to or from the struck stores, which soon ran low on inventory and faced serious losses of business in the Christmas shopping season.

The employers then turned to the local government. Downtown business leaders met with local law enforcement officials, who agreed to provide security to allow the stores to bring in \$500,000 worth of merchandise using an out-of-town, nonunion trucking firm. Union leaders got word of the plan, and on Saturday night, November 30, about 70 special pickets surrounded the stores. By Sunday morning, December 1, some 250 police arrived, equipped with shotguns and tear gas. Strikers and union leaders watched as police cars and motorcycles escorted convoys of strike-breaking trucks delivering goods to the stores.

The response on the streets was immediate: That morning a car men's union officer stopped a passing streetcar and removed its controls, halting traffic through the area. Crowds gathered downtown over

the next 2 days, as local AFL union leaders met and voted almost unanimously for a general strike. On Tuesday morning an estimated 100,000 AFL members from 142 unions walked off their jobs, and CIO members, though not called out, honored AFL picket lines (public utilities, organized by CIO unions, remained in service).

Crowds ranging from 5,000–20,000 people assembled downtown in largely peaceful demonstrations around the stores. Strikers and sympathizers sang and danced to guitars or music played from union loudspeakers in what was described as a carnival-like atmosphere. The unions officially referred to the strike as a holiday, while union picket captains kept order and exhorted people to remain nonviolent. For 2.5 days thousands of working people in Oakland, migrants, women, members of ethnic minorities, and veterans of economic depression and war, all came forward to claim their right to the city.

Meanwhile local AFL union leaders began negotiating with the city manager and the business elite. As the talks went on, the Oakland unions experienced mounting pressure from their international unions to end the general strike. On the second Teamsters' vice-president Dave Beck ordered his members to return to work, and with that the employers broke off negotiations. The unions settled with the city manager that the police would no longer be used to break legal picket lines, and each party issued separate statements. The AFL unions officially ended the strike on Thursday morning, December 5, and a CIO mass meeting, set for that evening to decide whether to join the strike, was never held.

In the general strike, the AFL unions successfully resisted the business elite's attempt to use police force to break their movement. However they were unable to resolve the Kahn's and Hastings' dispute, and the striking women clerks would remain out for several more months. As the limits of the initial settlement became clear, local AFL and CIO unions came together the following spring to endorse a slate of pro-labor candidates in the 1947 city elections. In a record voter turnout, four of the five candidates won election despite a vicious red-baiting campaign led by the *Oakland Tribune*.

Without a majority on the nine-member city council however, the new councilors failed to move much of their agenda. The progressive period in local politics ultimately came to an end on the issue of public housing. In 1949, the city council voted to approve a plan to build 3,000 units of federally subsidized public housing, backed by the AFL and CIO unions and the NAACP. Intense opposition from real estate, landlords, and property-owning interests however led to a

bitterly contested recall election in which only two of the progressive councilors survived. By 1951, the conservative majority on the council had rescinded the program of public housing.

In the immediate postwar period, citywide general strikes broke out in a number of American cities, including Pittsburgh, Houston, Stamford, Connecticut, and Rochester, New York. In Oakland the 1946 general strike represented a peak of popular class solidarity and action, but the union movement had yet to overcome gender and racial divisions or find ways of sustaining mobilization across a wider political arena.

CHRISTOPHER RHOMBERG

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OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA)

Since its creation in 1970, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has significantly improved workplace safety. OSHA has also dramatically altered workplace dynamics by granting workers the right to participate in creating a safe workplace. Yet OSHA has also faced nearly constant attacks from employers and advocates of deregulation.

Workplace Safety before OSHA

Prior to OSHA workplace safety and health were regulated almost entirely at the state level. Factory inspections, workers' compensation, and other safety laws passed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were not only often relatively weak but also varied markedly from state to state. Inspectors could generally enter only after an accident had already taken place, or if a worker had filed a formal complaint, court orders were required to force companies to correct violations, and some state departments of labor refused to inform workers of hazards without

company authorization. Moreover even in 1969, state safety inspectors were outnumbered two to one by fish and game wardens. State safety and compensation laws also did not cover farm and domestic workers—which in effect meant that they did not protect many female workers—nor could they effectively track victims of occupational diseases when they moved, especially in the case of such diseases as silicosis that develop over decades.

The two major federal safety programs were similarly weak. The U.S. Bureau of Mines gained the power to inspect mines in 1941 and the power to set and enforce safety standards only in 1952, after decades of lobbying by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Likewise under the Walsh-Healey Act of 1936, the U.S. secretary of labor could set safety standards for companies that did more than \$10,000 worth of business annually with the federal government; but even as late as 1969, the federal government was inspecting less than 5% of the 75,000 eligible workplaces annually.

Workers themselves had only a limited ability to improve workplace safety before OSHA. Occasionally skilled workers and unionized workers used wildcat strikes to demand safer working conditions, such as extra escape shafts in mines. Coal miners and lumber workers generally stopped working for the day when a fellow worker died in an accident, and miners also routinely left mines when they feared an explosion or a cave-in. But even unionized workers could not force employers to install safer technologies; for instance although hatmakers won rest breaks to limit their exposure to mercury salts, they could not change the work process to remove the salts entirely.

Workplace Safety Becomes a Public Issue

In the late 1960s, several different factors brought public attention to the issue of workplace safety. While union administrations continued to pay little attention to health and safety issues during the 1950s and 1960s, workers themselves became far more active in demanding a safe workplace. Rank-and-file workers in the United Auto Workers, UMWA, and the Teamsters led wildcat strikes over such issues as speedups, unsafe mine conditions, the lack of black lung compensation laws, and participation in contract negotiations. Workers' demands were further strengthened by the Farmington mine explosion of 1968, which killed 78 miners, and by a 29% rise in workplace injuries from 1961–1970. Increasing scientific knowledge about industrial hazards and the

newly formed environmental movement also helped raise public concern about industrial malfeasance and workplace hazards and mobilize support in Congress.

Public concern over workplace safety was strong enough in the 1960s that both Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon saw a federal occupational health and safety law as a key means of solidifying working-class support and introduced bills to Congress. Although the business lobby managed significantly to dilute the final bill signed by Nixon in December 1970 from the Democratic version introduced in 1968, the “safety bill of rights” still covered 56 million workers in 3.5 million workplaces: All workers except for those who are self-employed or work on their family farm, those who work in industries covered by other federal safety laws, or those who work for state or local governments.

OSHA Basics

The OSHA has two main regulatory functions: To set standards and to conduct safety inspections of workplaces. Under OSHA employers must provide workers with access to their medical records, information about exposure to toxic substances, and any necessary personal protective equipment; employers must also explain hazards to workers. Additionally employers with more than 10 employees must keep records of all accidents, treatments, hazardous situations, or other safety-related activities and promptly report to OSHA all fatalities or accidents that result in the hospitalization of four or more employees; OSHA then investigates the workplace for safety violations. During these inspections, OSHA can assess fines for willful violations (such as knowingly and intentionally committing a violation or making no effort to eliminate a known hazard), repeat violations, failure to correct violations, and falsifying reports.

Industry-specific standards have been one of the most effective yet controversial aspects of OSHA's work. Early on OSHA adopted consensus standards created by industry groups; unions unsurprisingly critiqued these standards as too lax. The OSHA also began work on specific hazard standards, such as asbestos, benzene, and byssinosis (a dust disease that afflicts cotton workers), but work on these standards progressed very slowly. Each standard begins with a proposal by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or a petition from outside parties, such as unions; OSHA then forms an advisory committee with representatives from labor, business, and the public. After publishing the proposed

regulation, taking comments, holding a public hearing, and accepting legal briefs, OSHA finally issues the new standard. The new standard can be appealed to an independent board or challenged in court, as in the case of the benzene standard, which was vacated by the Supreme Court in 1980 for failing to incorporate economic factors or address a “significant risk” to workers. Large companies, which hold most of the relevant data, have often withheld research from NIOSH and OSHA or successfully weakened the standard through the advisory committee or comment periods. Despite these challenges and frequent critiques from the labor movement, specific standards have greatly improved workers’ safety—for instance virtually ending byssinosis in the United States.

The OSHA’s inspection work has also faced intense criticism over the years. The OSHA has struggled with regulations that do not cover all potential safety violations and a limited force of inspectors—generally less than 2,000—that allows it to inspect only around 2% of workplaces per year. Labor unions have faulted OSHA for generally levying only small fines that do not serve as an effective deterrent and adhering rigidly to safety regulations, while employers have called for OSHA to focus on the most dangerous workplaces. Particularly in OSHA’s first decade, small businesses—which make up the majority of firms covered by the OSH Act and which rarely have the detailed safety programs of large firms—complained that they faced excessive scrutiny from inspectors. Yet the OSH Act has significantly changed the balance of power in the workplace by granting workers the right to complain confidentially to OSHA about workplace conditions, contest the amount of time OSHA allows employers to fix violations, and participate in OSHA inspections, all without the fear of retaliation by employers; employers also started incorporating health and safety provisions into contracts. Furthermore in 1990, Congress raised OSHA’s fines—from \$1,000 to \$7,000 for serious violations and from \$10,000 to \$70,000 for willful and repeat violations—to encourage employers to take safety more seriously.

Through OSHA unions have become much more engaged with health and safety issues. Several unions have written occupational health provisions into contracts—the United Rubber workers won a contract requiring management to help finance university research on benzene and leukemia, while other unions have won the establishment of union-management safety committees. Unions have also played a vocal role in fighting for specific OSHA standards, such as noise, vinyl chloride, coke-oven emissions, and cotton dust.

Attacks on OSHA

By the early 1980s, OSHA faced a storm of criticism from employers; in particular employers complained that OSHA did not focus its inspections on the workplaces where the most accidents occurred. Under pressure from the Reagan administration, Congress, and the Supreme Court, OSHA incorporated non-regulatory and voluntary approaches during the 1980s and 1990s and in particular limited its focus on small businesses and concentrated inspections on the most dangerous workplaces. The Voluntary Protection Program, which started in 1982, exempted firms with exemplary safety records from routine inspections and prioritized them for regulation variances. The Reagan administration also pressured OSHA to establish joint management-labor health and safety committees; some unions supported these committees, since they offered a means of addressing issues not yet covered by OSHA regulations.

During the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, OSHA faced not only budget cuts but also repeated attempts to weaken the agency. In the mid-1990s, some congressional Republicans tried unsuccessfully to force OSHA to incorporate cost-benefit and risk-assessment analysis into existing and new standards, exempt most workplaces from inspection, ban unannounced inspections, and abolish NIOSH. Moreover despite OSHA’s nearly 20 years of research on ergonomics standards, Congress prohibited the agency from issuing either proposed or final standards for several years in the mid-to-late 1990s. After OSHA finally published the ergonomics standards in 2000, which covered more than 100 million workers at 6.1 million worksites and would help prevent 460,000 musculoskeletal disorders per year, George W. Bush signed a congressional repeal of the standards. Moreover although one of OSHA’s major contributions was to include workers in the safety process—an approach that has been very successful in improving worker health—this approach has been greatly weakened. Under the Strategic Partnership Program, OSHA has created over 50 advisory committees that entirely exclude labor unions. The OSHA has also continued to emphasize voluntary and cooperative approaches rather than inspections and enforcement, canceled work on more than 20 incomplete rules, and issued no major new standards since the overturned ergonomics standard in 2000.

The OSHA also faces challenges in protecting workers during the current era of labor-market restructuring and globalization. The decline of unions and the concomitant rise of telecommuting and subcontracting leave workers with less supervision and

training, fewer rights, poorer work conditions, and often little or no health care. Since most OSHA laws have focused on full-time workers in large workplaces, OSHA is somewhat ill-equipped to cope with this changing workplace. Moreover globalization has distributed dangerous work to ill-supervised workplaces in countries that have a weak or absent union movement, few worker rights, and weak safety and health regulations. Despite the profound challenges that OSHA faces, OSHA has undoubtedly greatly improved worker safety: By 2001, workers were 40% less likely to be injured on the job than in 1971, and 60% less likely to die.

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See also **Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act;**
Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act

OCEAN HILL-BROWNSVILLE STRIKES (1968)

On May 9, 1968, a community school board in the predominantly black and Puerto Rican Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn, New York, seeking to test its powers, sent termination letters to 19 white educators, most affiliated with the union that represented the city's public school teachers, the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). The UFT's attempts to obtain their re-instatement would culminate in three racially divisive citywide teachers' strikes in the

OCEAN HILL-BROWNSVILLE STRIKES (1968)

fall of that year that left permanent scars on New York's racial landscape.

Origins of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Controversy

The roots of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville dispute lay in the failure to integrate the New York public education system in the wake of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision. By the mid-1960s, the city's schools were more segregated than they had been at the time of that decision, a result of racialized housing patterns and white resistance. In response black parents began to demand a greater voice in the operation of public schools in their neighborhoods. This movement for community control of education also drew support from Manhattan-based elites, including Mayor John V. Lindsay, and Ford Foundation President McGeorge Bundy. During the summer of 1967, the foundation provided funding for an experiment in community control of schools in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. A local board composed largely of black neighborhood residents was elected, but its powers were defined vaguely.

The local board quickly clashed with the UFT, and its president, Albert Shanker. The union was young, having been in existence only since 1960, and its leaders viewed community control of education as a threat to their hard-won collective bargaining gains. The UFT moreover was over 90% white, giving its disagreements with the local board over control of hiring, termination, and curriculum in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools an uncomfortable racial subtext. The power struggle between the union and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville local board escalated during the 1967–1968 school year. Middle- and working-class whites in the city, many residing outside Manhattan in the outer boroughs of the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, began to voice support for the UFT, interpreting community control as an unwarranted special benefit accorded blacks. By the spring of 1968, the union and the local board were on a collision course.

In early May the local board met to select a group of white educators to be terminated. Many, including Fred Nauman, a UFT chapter chairman, were active in the union and/or critical of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community-control experiment. None had received the notice and hearings that were customary in cases involving termination from positions in the New York City public school system. The letters were delivered to the educators on May 9.

The Ocean Hill-Brownsville Strikes

Shanker and the UFT sought to frame their battle to re-instate the terminated educators as one involving labor rights, and not race. The dispute, Shanker insisted, was solely about due process: Workers were entitled to fair hearings when their job security was threatened. He averred that the UFT would fight to protect the procedural rights of all members regardless of race. Supporters of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville local board in the black community however argued that substance, and not procedure, was at stake. They viewed community control of education as a civil rights issue and the UFT's invocation of due process as a canard. They blamed the terminated educators for undermining an experiment in educational reform that offered hope to disadvantaged minority children. Union bureaucrats, they claimed, were impeding the cause of racial justice.

On August 26, a trial examiner appointed by the New York City Board of Education ordered that the group of terminated educators, now reduced to 10 by voluntary transfers, be reinstated. After the Ocean Hill-Brownsville local board refused to comply and Mayor Lindsay declined to press the issue, the UFT struck all of the city's public schools on September 9, the first in a series of three strikes that would last until mid-November. Twice, on September 10 and 29, the union entered into agreements with Lindsay and the board of education under which the disputed teachers would return to their classrooms. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville local board, which had not been a party to the agreements, sabotaged them. During the summer the local board had hired a group of young, procommunity-control replacement teachers to take the places of the UFT teachers in the event of a strike in the fall. The two groups clashed in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville classrooms after the strike settlements brought them together. In addition community activists harassed the union teachers on their return to Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The settlement agreements broke down, and the strikes resumed.

By October Shanker was demanding not only the reinstatement of his teachers, but also the discontinuation of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community-control experiment in its entirety. This stance inflamed the city's African-American population. Despite his *bona fides* as a supporter of civil rights—Shanker had participated in the 1963 March on Washington and Freedom Summer in 1964, and was a friend and ally of Martin Luther King, Jr.—the UFT president was denounced as a racist in black neighborhoods. For his part Shanker accused the local board of fomenting anti-Semitism when a flyer

defaming Jews was placed in the mailboxes of white Ocean Hill-Brownsville teachers. He had the flyers reprinted and distributed throughout the city in an effort to galvanize support for the UFT. Since most of the disputed teachers were Jewish, the flyers carried special resonance in that community and led to an upsurge in antiblack sentiment there.

The strikes were especially difficult for black unionists in the city, who were caught between the competing imperatives of race and class. The UFT's Black Caucus attempted to chart a middle course, affirming its loyalty to the union while also supporting community control, satisfying neither side. Black members of District Council 37, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Local 1199 of the Drug and Hospital Workers; and District Council 65 of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union, criticized New York Central Labor Council President Harry Van Arsdale for his support of the UFT. On November 13, they staged a sit-in at Van Arsdale's office demanding that he use his influence to save community control in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The protesters announced that they now identified as blacks first and unionists second, a painful reminder of the power of race to transcend even the most institutionalized class loyalties, both in the labor movement and the city at large.

Settlement and Aftermath

The black unionists' sit-in provided the immediate impetus to settle the third and final strike. By November striking white teachers and African-American counterdemonstrators were confronting each other daily in the streets surrounding the city's public schools, racial epithets flying. White middle-class opinion had swung sharply against Mayor Lindsay, who was perceived as an apologist for black militancy. Shanker, whose membership was beginning to feel the effects of almost 2 months without work, and who was facing a growing procommunity-control movement within his union, also had reason to seek a settlement.

The final strike ended with an agreement, reached on November 17, which generally favored the UFT. The disputed teachers were returned to their classrooms, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools placed under the supervision of a state trustee. The settlement also continued the suspension of the local board that had begun during the strikes. By 1970, Shanker and the UFT had succeeded in ending the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community-control experiment.

The Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes left a legacy of racial bitterness in New York that would linger for decades. It shifted the city's political culture rightward, helping to forge a race-based coalition of outer-borough white Catholics and Jews who elected Mayors Edward Koch (1978–1990) and Rudolph Giuliani (1994–2002); both had strained relationships with New York's black community. Outer-borough whites with memories of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville crisis provided the electoral support for municipal budget cuts, social service reductions, and anticrime measures during the Koch and Giuliani administrations that targeted black New Yorkers. These whites also appropriated the rhetoric of community control, which had been employed by African-Americans during the Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes, for their own purposes. They defeated plans for integrated housing in the Forest Hills neighborhood of Queens (1972) and integrated education in Brooklyn's Canarsie section (1972–1973) with local-control arguments borrowed from Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

By the 1980s, the effects of residential, educational, and economic isolation had turned the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community inward. New black leaders like Al Sharpton, who had been a participant in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville dispute as a youth, were emerging to confront white New York across an urban chasm now defined almost entirely by race. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes symbolized the angry intersection of labor and racial politics in New York and the failure of class-based interracialism to take hold in the city.

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See also **Shanker, Albert**

O'CONNOR, JESSIE LLOYD (FEBRUARY 14, 1904–DECEMBER 24, 1988) Labor Journalist and Activist

Born in Chicago, O'Connor grew up in the well-to-do Chicago suburb of Winnetka, heir to a considerable fortune of both money and liberal tradition. Her father, William Bross Lloyd, was known in the early part of the twentieth century as one of the millionaire Socialists. His family owned, among other profitable properties, a portion of the *Chicago Tribune*. Her mother, Lola Maverick Lloyd, was part of the Texas Maverick family, prominent in the cattle industry. She was also a founder of both the Women's Peace Party and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. O'Connor's paternal grandfather was Henry Demarest Lloyd, the nineteenth-century social critic and author of the 1894 classic, *Wealth against Commonwealth*.

In 1925, O'Connor graduated magna cum laude from Smith College with a degree in economics. While in London during the General Strike of 1926, she was greatly disturbed by the conditions under which workers labored and lived as well as by the inaccurate reports of the General Strike in the mainstream press. As she continued to travel around Europe, including several months spent in the Soviet Union, she began publishing articles as a freelancer.

Back in America by 1929, O'Connor signed on as a reporter for the left-wing news bureau, the Federated Press. One of her Federated Press coworkers was the young labor journalist Harvey O'Connor (1897–1987), later the author of several corporate exposes, including *Mellon's Millions* (1933); the two married in 1930 and spent the next 57 years working together for social justice.

As a reporter for the Federated Press, O'Connor covered the 1929 Gastonia, North Carolina, textile workers' strike as well as the 1931 coal miners' strike in Harlan County, Kentucky. The dispatches she sent

back were vivid but never patronizing descriptions of the grinding poverty and exploitative work conditions she saw during both strikes, a model of what was then known as “revolutionary reportage.”

The O'Connors moved to Pittsburgh in 1931, opening a branch office of the Federated Press in that notoriously anti-union city. A year later the couple went to the Soviet Union, spending several months assisting fellow American and radical journalist Anna Louise Strong in establishing a pro-Communist English language paper, the *Moscow Daily News*. They returned to the United States just as the New Deal got under way and turned their journalistic talents to covering the growing demands of organized labor.

In 1935, Jessie Lloyd O'Connor made headlines of her own and caused an uproar when she used her voice as a stockholder to denounce the unfair labor practices of U.S. Steel at the annual stockholders meeting—the same year that her husband Harvey O'Connor published *Steel-Dictator*, a critical examination of the U.S. Steel Corporation. She also became an active member of the American League against War and Fascism (ALAWF). Growing out of the World Congress against War held in Amsterdam in 1932, the ALAWF formed in the United States in 1933, speaking out against fascism as well as in support of labor during the heady days of the Popular Front during the 1930s.

By 1939, the O'Connors were living in the famed settlement Hull-House, which following the 1935 death of founder Jane Addams, was in the process of charting a new course under a series of head residents. During the tenure of the controversial head resident Charlotte Carr from 1937 to 1943, Hull-House activities were increasingly directed toward the concerns of labor.

On both the national and local levels, O'Connor was active in a number of organizations, including the League of Women Shoppers (LWS). Founded in New York City in 1935, the LWS was dedicated to using women's power as consumers on behalf of the interests of labor, a coming together of the middle-class base found in the National Consumers' League and the focus on union-made goods found in the Women's Union Label Leagues. The LWS opened a Chicago branch only a month after the Memorial Day Massacre outside of Republic Steel's Chicago plant in which 10 workers were killed and more than a hundred wounded during a peaceful demonstration in support of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee. Thus when O'Connor joined the LWS and was elected as secretary of the Chicago branch, she was well aware of the limits of the Wagner Act in the face of police

brutality. Inspired by the organization's motto, “Use Your Buying Power for Justice,” the LWS supported a variety of labor actions around the country. To support their activities, they raised funds through rummage sales and in O'Connor's Chicago branch, a mink coat raffle. Secretary O'Connor relied on her journalism experience to churn out press releases, meeting notices, and letters of appeal to various constituencies.

As a resident of Hull-House during World War II, the lifetime pacifist O'Connor was like many torn between her pacifism and the fight against fascism. She increasingly directed her considerable energy and talents toward even more locally defined issues, such as affordable housing and safe streets in her immediate Chicago neighborhood while maintaining her active role in the LWS, serving as vice-president and president of the Chicago League until its demise in 1943. After a 3-year (1945–1948) stint in Texas while Harvey served as publicity director for the Oil Workers' International Union, the O'Connors moved to Little Compton, Rhode Island, where they opened their spacious oceanfront home to a variety of activists, offering respite and financial assistance in particular to several civil rights activists and the many victims of McCarthyism. They, too, felt the effects of the virulent anticommunism of the 1940s and 1950s. The FBI began active surveillance of the O'Connors in 1939, the same year that both denied any connection to the Communist party in official correspondence with the Dies Committee, also known as the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which in the early 1950s revoked the O'Connors' passports for several years. Nonetheless O'Connor continued her activism as part of the National Committee for the Progressive party (1949–1952) and as a cofounder of the National Committee to Abolish HUAC. Until her death in 1988, this tireless crusader for social justice continued actively to protest American corporate growth overseas, antilabor policies at home, and was an early opponent of the Vietnam War. Using her personal wealth and her journalism, O'Connor supported the cause of American labor for six decades.

KATHLEEN BANKS NUTTER

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See also **Gastonia Strike (1929); House Un-American Activities Committee/Dies Committee; Hull-House;**

Labor Press; Lloyd, Henry Demarest; Memorial Day Massacre (1937); National Consumers' League; Popular Front; Union Label

**O'HARE, FRANK P. (APRIL 23, 1877–
JULY 16, 1960)
Socialist and Editor**

Francis Peter O'Hare moved to St. Louis from Iowa as a young boy with his family. He grew to maturity in the rough-and-tumble Irish ghetto of Kerry Patch, taking a job as a water boy during the building of the St. Louis railroad depot during the turbulent year of 1892, his only actual experience in the working class in a long life dedicated to the creation of a cooperative commonwealth. In the late 1890s, he fell under the influence of successive business mentors imbued with the spirit of Progressivism and then became a Socialist after studying popular works grounded in Marxism, the weekly *Appeal to Reason* newspaper, and material from a correspondence course on political economy.

While attending an *Appeal*-sponsored training school for socialist agitators, O'Hare wooed and wed fellow student Kate Richards. The happy couple spent their honeymoon and several years beyond making speeches and organizing locals for the Socialist party of America (SP). Studying the roots of injustice first hand in the American Southwest and Northeast interested them more than Marxist theories, which enabled them to communicate effectively with landless farmers, cotton pickers, miners, and other workers. They became proponents of an Americanized Marxism light on theory and passionate about a peaceful, evolutionary approach to bringing about a socialist millennium. After speaking at an experimental socialist encampment (derived from religious and Populist camp meetings) in Grand Saline, Texas, Frank O'Hare perfected the encampment idea, supervising huge weeklong gatherings between harvest and planting in rural Oklahoma and elsewhere. Such SP-orchestrated activities helped to set down socialist grass roots in the Southwest and recruited thousands of converts to party membership and even greater numbers who voted regularly for SP candidates. Under Frank O'Hare's leadership, Oklahoma became a bastion of socialist strength, with more members per capita than any other state.

In 1911, the O'Hares moved to St. Louis to revive a moribund socialist monthly tabloid, the *National Rip-Saw*. The paper began to feature original muckraking articles on the exploitation of workers, humorous

essays, and columns by the party's leading lights. Frank eschewed public speaking to oversee the *Rip-Saw* and the career of Kate O'Hare, who had become second only to perennial SP standard bearer Eugene Debs as a drawing card on the booming socialist lecture circuit. He sent his wife out on a punishing schedule of speaking engagements paid for by party locals with subscriptions to the tabloid, leaving him in charge of their four children for much of the time. After Debs joined the *Rip-Saw*, Frank O'Hare put the aging working-class hero on a schedule similar to his wife's, thus bringing relations to a boil with the two people he admired most in the movement. O'Hare did not hesitate to wield the editor's blue pencil (even on Debs's copy) to keep the paper neutral on such party controversies as the Barnes sex scandal and the expulsion of members of the Industrial Workers of the World for advocating violence and sabotage (direct action) in strikes. By 1916, the *National Rip-Saw* stood second only to *Appeal to Reason* in circulation among socialist papers.

American participation in World War I created a crisis in the SP with the overwhelming majority of members choosing to resist government mobilization. Frank O'Hare was one of the few party leaders to see that a revolutionary stand by an evolutionary organization in a wartime emergency would bring on a catastrophe. Seeking to spare his family from persecution, he moved them to Florida to participate in a communal scheme, only to have Kate take a high-profile tour of the country. Her principled and outspoken opposition to the war led to arrest and imprisonment after a patently unfair trial. With the SP press shut down by the government, the public came to view Socialists as disloyal. Hoping to counteract the drumbeat of hostility, Frank O'Hare published a newsletter dedicated to publicizing his wife's cause.

Once her sentence had been commuted by President Woodrow Wilson, the O'Hares moved to Girard, Kansas, to restart the *Rip-Saw*, an effort highlighted by a largely successful publicity campaign to embarrass the government into freeing other political prisoners. The Children's Crusade (as they called it) led to the O'Hares' expulsion from the SP because their campaign did not have the advance blessing of party leaders. In the changed atmosphere of the early 1920s, the *Rip-Saw* lost money. To save the tabloid Frank O'Hare renamed it *American Vanguard* and began to publish at New Llano Colony, a socialist commune in Louisiana. He and his wife worked at cross purposes there, with Kate choosing to focus on prison reform and Frank trying to renew his life-long commitment to publicizing socialism. Together they published a series

of articles exposing the scandalous conditions in American prisons and the exploitation of prisoners for private profit through sweatshops behind bars. While the campaign led to changes in prison labor, the colony pulled the plug on the *Vanguard*, and Kate O'Hare sued Frank for divorce.

Frank O'Hare returned to St. Louis in 1925, where he lived in poverty for most of 35 years. He worked for Federated Press in New York during the early 1930s and Oscar Ameringer's *American Guardian* later in the decade, but quarrels with his associates led to his dismissal from both concerns. O'Hare contributed to the book review section and the editorial page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on and off for years. He filled his time corresponding with old comrades and friends from the movement, writing a memoir that went unpublished, and working on fanciful inventions, all of which he failed to patent, since he wished to have nothing to do with the government. A passionate advocate of public housing and transportation, beautification projects, and above all civil rights in the 1950's, O'Hare defied segregation laws in St. Louis, insisting that the monthly civic luncheons he hosted be open to all, including African-Americans, a fitting climax to a lifetime of challenging social and political conventions.

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See also Debs, Eugene V.; Socialist Party of America; World War I

OPERATION DIXIE

Operation Dixie was the name given by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) to the organizing drive that it conducted across 12 southern states from 1947–1953. The CIO made tremendous organizing gains in the 1930s and 1940s, but the South remained an area of low unionization in relation to the industrialized North. Low union density in the South was viewed as a significant problem for unions. Southern workers were generally paid less than their northern counterparts. Unions felt that the continued existence of a low-wage, nonunion region in the United States could lead to the transfer of work from the North to the South. Operation Dixie was conceived to address this issue.

United Mine Workers (UMW) veteran Van Bittner was appointed director of Operation Dixie by CIO president Philip Murray, with Textile Workers' Union of America (TWUA) official George Baldanzi appointed as deputy director. The organizing drive officially lasted until 1953, but it was beset by challenges that in many ways stalled it in its first year of operation. The South was not completely bereft of a union presence, and southern workers had engaged in forms of industrial action prior to Operation Dixie. The 1934 textile strike was an example of such activity. The strike occurred in states outside the South, but it was perhaps more important to the South, since the textile industry was the region's major industry. The strike has been viewed as a failure by various commentators. While hundreds of thousands of southern workers participated in the strike, many of them were blacklisted for strike activity. Indeed many commentators have attributed the reluctance of southern textile workers to unionize during Operation Dixie to memories of what they experienced during the 1934 strike. Southern capitalists were perhaps the most vehemently anti-union employers in the United States, and the pattern of opposition to unions exhibited in the 1934 strike would reoccur during Operation Dixie.

The CIO was run by people from the industrialized northern states, and many of the organizers used in Operation Dixie were from these states. This fact often meant that organizers were unprepared for the social and cultural realities of the South. For example issues of race were perhaps that greatest challenge faced by the CIO organizers. White textile workers showed a willingness to organize but were

often opposed to joining a union with African-American workers. Appeals to white racial identity—or whiteness—were an extremely effective method used by southern employers when challenging CIO organizing efforts. Employers produced misleading propaganda materials that implied that the CIO unions had a problack orientation and the threat that this orientation might pose for white workers. African-American workers in the South proved quite receptive to unionizing and joined unions in the face of considerable intimidation from both white workers and employers.

The South, while beset by racial segregation, was also divided by social class. Textile employers often exerted considerable influence over the lives of their workers beyond the workplace. Workers were expected to show a deferential attitude toward mill owners and others in the community who were in positions of authority. Local sheriffs and clergy helped ensure that textile mill owners were able to maintain a dominant position in their communities. Co-operation between mill owners, local politicians, and community leaders, such as the local clergy, proved effective in blunting the effectiveness of Operation Dixie. Northern union organizers were almost universally viewed as Communists, and joining a CIO union could be associated with godlessness.

The Democratic party was dominant in the South, but it was hardly receptive to the labor movement. Unions in the North had often made both organizing and legal gains with the assistance of Democratic legislators, and the labor movement was a key part of the Democratic party in northern states. In the South the party identified itself as being proworker but not necessarily pro-union. This meant that the CIO unions could not be assured of the assistance of Democratic politicians in the South and that they would indeed encounter some opposition from them. Workers in the South identified with the Democratic party, but their interaction with the party was informed by complex cultural and social norms—such as appeals to whiteness—that were not always well-understood in other parts of the United States.

Operation Dixie was also impacted by a number of difficulties within the labor movement itself. American unions, while often perceived by the public as a monolithic entity, were hardly unified in the immediate post-Second World War years. The CIO had been in existence only since 1935, and while it had made great strides with organizing industrial workers, launching Operation Dixie was a major undertaking for the organization. It hoped to organize 1 million southern workers in the first 12 months of Operation Dixie, which was a highly ambitious figure. The CIO

was not a single, large, industrial union; it was instead a federation of different unions that had their own organizing functions. Despite this the congress chose to use a centralized organizing structure during Operation Dixie.

The different unions that were part of the CIO and Operation Dixie had similarly differing experiences with the South. Of all of the CIO unions, the stakes were particularly high for TWUA. The TWUA had a presence in the South, and it participated in the 1934 textile strike. The union was aware that the low-wage South was a threat to its membership in the North, and the future viability of the union may have been dependent on the success of organizing southern workers. Other CIO unions supported Operation Dixie, but the immediate futures of these unions were not so closely linked to the success or failure of Operation Dixie as was the future of the TWUA.

The CIO was in competition with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The AFL had also organized some textile workers in the South, but the federation did not feel that an industrywide campaign was necessarily the best method of organizing in the South. For the CIO the industrywide pattern of bargaining was the objective. The AFL leadership, including AFL President George Meany, was suspicious of the political leanings of CIO union leaders. It was not unusual for AFL leaders to associate the CIO with communism. American employers were well aware of the conflict between the two labor federations, and this unfortunate division in the crucial immediate postwar years contributed to the failure of Operation Dixie.

The CIO unions also had challenges with the message that they were conveying to southern workers. They emphasized the voice that workers could gain in the workplace through union membership, but they did not always suggest that southern workers would receive wages equal to those received by their counterparts in the North. This was perhaps a curious strategy, since workers were usually receptive to the idea that union membership would bring significant economic gains, and unions often emphasized that such gains could be had through unionization. Arguments in favor of workplace democracy and having a voice at work were consequently insufficient inducements to encourage more southern workers to challenge the obstacles that they faced and opt for membership in a CIO union.

While Operation Dixie officially lasted until 1953, its demise was evident by 1947. In that year Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act. Among its provisions was Section 14b, which enabled individual states to pass right-to-work laws. Florida had passed such a

OPERATION DIXIE

law as early as 1944, but anti-unionism effectively became institutionalized in the South as successive southern states passed right-to-work legislation. The small gains that the TWUA made during the early stages of Operation Dixie were quickly diminished following the passage of Taft-Hartley. The CIO unions increasingly chose to devote organizing resources to states where there was a greater chance of success.

The failure of Operation Dixie had a major, long-term impact on the American labor movement. The South continued to be a low-wage, nonunion region in the years following the end of the organizing drive. Southern states consciously used this low-wage, nonunion status as a method of enticing northern employers to relocate to the South. This process was initially referred to in the South as Balancing Agriculture with Industry (BAWI), and it effectively drew industry to the South. The worst fears of the CIO were confirmed as well-paying, unionized jobs were lost to the southern states. Such unions as the United Auto Workers were ultimately affected by the failure of Operation Dixie, since new auto plants were eventually built in the South as employers, primarily auto manufacturers from other countries, sought to take advantage of the low wages and low union density in southern states.

The fact that the South continued to be a nonunion region meant that the labor movement was effectively constrained to a few states in the north and west. By the end of twentieth century, half of the union members lived in just over half-a-dozen states. The virtual exclusion of the unions from the South meant that they were not really a truly national movement but rather a regionally based movement that claimed a national mandate. This reality can be linked to the failure of Operation Dixie. Operation Dixie, though of relatively short duration, was consequently a moment of high but unrealized ambition for American labor.

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See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations**

ORDER OF RAILWAY CONDUCTORS

See **Railroad Brotherhoods**

ORDER OF UNITED AMERICAN MECHANICS

Founded in Philadelphia on July 8, 1845, the Order of United American Mechanics (OUAM) mixed trade union activism with moral reform and nativist politics. It sought to protect skilled workers' status and living standards by reinforcing mutual bonds between labor and small business and by combating foreign competition. The OUAM's links to evangelical moral reformers and political nativists undermined opportunities for cross-ethnic alliances among workers in the mid-nineteenth century.

The turn to nativism by American workingmen occurred as immigration from Ireland and Germany increased. In the industrializing cities of New England and the mid-Atlantic, immigrants competed for unskilled jobs in hauling and carting and in the sweatshops that cropped up next to traditional craft enterprises. By the mid-1840s, immigrants comprised a significant voting block in major cities. The OUAM fared best in large cities where sweatshops and immigration had visibly undermined the dominance of native-born craftsmen in work and politics.

The founders of the OUAM came from skilled crafts, such as carpentry and printing. They included several men, such as carpenter George F. Turner, who were active in the nativist American Republican party.

The American Republican party originated in 1843 in response to Catholic efforts to dilute Protestant religious instruction in the public schools. In the summer of 1844, Philadelphia experienced two riots against Irish Catholics. The riots grew out of the school controversy but also played on skilled workers' concerns about the role of immigrants in "de-skilling" the textile industry.

American Republicans exploited an anti-Irish backlash to win Philadelphia's 1844 municipal elections. American Republicans, like the later Know Nothing party, wanted to restrict immigrant-voting rights, lengthen the naturalization period, maintain Protestant ascendancy in public education, and otherwise curb the influence of Catholic immigrants in public life. Along with Philadelphia, American Republicans won elections in New York City and Boston, where they allied with the Whig party. American Republicans did best in Philadelphia, where they survived until the late 1840s.

Growing out of this surge in nativism, the OUAM restricted membership to American-born, white males aged 18 and up who belonged to productive trades. Those deemed nonproducers included merchants, bankers, and white-collar professionals. The order rejected foreign-born applicants and encouraged its members to boycott immigrant shops and the products of foreign labor.

Founded at Philadelphia's Jefferson Temperance Hall, the OUAM shared much in common with working-class evangelical reform organizations. Several OUAM founders also belonged to the Washingtonians, a workers' temperance organization that, unlike the more upper-class American Temperance Society, sought to reform hardened drinkers rather than outlaw alcohol entirely. Closely tied to evangelical churches, the Washingtonians and the OUAM tackled workers' insecurity over the decline of skills and living standards by encouraging sober habits and an industrious work ethic. Taking as its motto "honesty, industry, and sobriety," the OUAM penalized members for drinking, Sabbath breaking, patronizing brothels, swearing, and other perceived moral lapses. Members monitored each other's behavior and reported violations. The OUAM included liquor dealers in its category of nonproducers who were barred from membership. It also sponsored lectures and reading rooms for worker education. After the Civil War the OUAM's moral reformism, minus its nativism, found expression in the Knights of Labor.

The OUAM borrowed practices from an earlier nativist secret fraternity, the Society of Red Men, and from the Freemasons, to which several OUAM leaders belonged. The OUAM's initiation ceremony, elaborate rituals, and its sickness and burial plans resembled those of other voluntary societies. In its capacity as a trade union, secrecy helped protect OUAM members from anti-union employers and reinforced the solidarity needed to sustain strikes and boycotts.

Although it occasionally engaged in strikes, the OUAM emphasized the mutual interests between workers and businessmen, especially those uniting the masters of small workshops and skilled mechanics. Rather than conceive of labor as a class arrayed against capital, the OUAM thought of workers as members of a broad producing mass fighting self-seeking parasites who enriched themselves by violating ethical codes in the marketplace and politics. Encouraging members to restrict business to other members, or at the least to native-born businessmen, fit the producerist agenda of securing a fair return for labor and protecting avenues for advancement that

would enable wage earners to become independent proprietors in later life.

In 1845, the OUAM spread from Philadelphia to neighboring New Jersey and Delaware. Two years later it appeared in New York City. By 1850, the OUAM had at least 10,000 members in the Philadelphia area and claimed chapters throughout New England and the mid-Atlantic, with a total membership approaching 60,000.

In 1853, the order launched the Junior OUAM as a vehicle for training future members. Other offshoots included the Daughters of America, founded in 1875, and the Loyal Legion, a uniformed auxiliary, established in 1886.

Although never at the forefront of strikes, the OUAM supported turnouts by skilled workers. Among their most successful efforts was an 1853 strike for higher wages staged by 2,000 Baltimore ironworkers. Strikers affiliated with the OUAM staged rallies and organized pickets at those foundries refusing to increase pay. The OUAM chapters in other cities contributed to a strike fund that helped carry the day for Baltimore's iron molders.

The OUAM involvement came at the price of ethnic solidarity. Baltimore's German ironworkers, approximately one-third of the workforce, acted through a separate ethnic association and occasionally clashed with OUAM members. At the city's 1853 elections, temperance candidates who sympathized with the strikers and who practiced the OUAM's brand of moral reform won an upset victory. The next year the OUAM supported the nativist Know Nothing party as it swept to power in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and most other major American cities.

In the mid-1850s, the Know Nothings absorbed the energy of working-class nativists. Shortly thereafter nativism waned as sectionalism and free soil consumed workers' attention. Although the OUAM declined as an effective labor organization, it survived as an organization and overlapped with post-Civil War nativist societies.

FRANK TOWERS

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See also **Artisans; Know-Nothing Party**

**O'REILLY, LEONORA (FEBRUARY 16,
1870–APRIL 3, 1927)**
**Working Women's Society, Knights of Labor,
and Women's Trade Union League**

Leonora O'Reilly grew up in the last quarter of the nineteenth century on the Lower East Side of New York where she developed an activist spirit, became a member of the Socialist party, and dedicated her life to work for radical industrial reform. When O'Reilly was 1-year-old child, her father died. Her mother went to work in a factory, soon joining the Knights of Labor (KOL). At age 11 O'Reilly began working in a shirtwaist factory. In 1886, at 16 years of age, she also joined the KOL, becoming one of a small group of women who organized the Working Women's Society (WWS).

The WWS comprised both working-class and middle-class women seeking to improve the working conditions of laboring women. The members attempted to bridge their cross-class differences even as they focused their energies in different directions. The primary activity of the middle-class members was to educate female consumers and to influence them to buy goods produced by companies that paid their workers a fair wage. The work of the WWS laid the foundation for the National Consumers' League (founded in 1890). O'Reilly and the other working-class women in the WWS directed their efforts toward organizing workers, advancing protective legislation, and supporting strikes. O'Reilly did however take advantage of the educational and cultural opportunities offered by the middle-class members, including joining the Social Reform Club, a group comprising of upper-middle-class radicals who supported the labor movement. In 1894, several of these members, who were also associated with the Henry Street Settlement, offered O'Reilly the opportunity to stop working in the factory for a year to participate in settlement work.

At Henry Street, O'Reilly initiated a vocational skills program that she hoped would help younger girls avoid factory work. She taught girls in the settlement's model shirtwaist factory how to sew a complete garment and operated a cooperative where they could sell their results. The cooperative failed after a short time, unable to compete with the cheaper factory-produced clothing. O'Reilly completed a domestic arts degree at the Brooklyn Pratt Institute in 1900. For the next decade she taught sewing to garment workers, first at the Brooklyn settlement, Asacog House, and then at the Manhattan Trade School for Girls.

O'Reilly also worked to organize female laborers. In 1897, together with some of the Henry Street settlement reformers, she assisted female garment workers in forming the short-lived United Garment Workers' (UGW) Local 16. In 1903, O'Reilly joined the newly formed and American Federation of Labor (AFL)-affiliated Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) with the hope of continuing her organizing work.

O'Reilly, frustrated by the class tensions that plagued the WTUL throughout its existence, had a tumultuous relationship with the organization. The divisions over goals and strategies between the more conservative middle-class members and the more radical working-class members caused O'Reilly to resign for short periods on several occasions. Her initial dissatisfaction with the organization stemmed from her perception of its middle-class members' patronizing attitude toward female workers. She sought to change this dynamic by recruiting Asacog House reformer Mary Drier and her sister Margaret Drier (Robins) to join the league. Though both women were wealthy, O'Reilly believed they were true supporters of working women and the movement to organize. All three held leadership roles within the WTUL and helped shape its work.

O'Reilly worked earnestly for the WTUL for a dozen years. She served for a time as vice-president of the New York branch under Mary Drier and was one of the league's most dynamic speakers. For a number of years she traveled across the country, speaking for the cause of organized labor almost daily, including a talk at a mass meeting in support of the New York garment workers' strike in December 1909. After 146 workers died in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in 1911, O'Reilly served as chairman of the WTUL committee on fire protection, which conducted a study and made recommendations calling for the enactment and enforcement of laws to improve safety conditions in factories. In 1915, she served as the league's delegate to the International Congress of Women (ICW) meeting in The Hague, where she spoke about the experiences of female laborers. After her trip however, O'Reilly became frustrated with the class tensions within the league and with the male-dominated AFL's lack of support for the WTUL and female suffrage. As a result she reduced her involvement with the league.

O'Reilly had long coupled her work within the labor movement with agitations for female suffrage. As a Socialist she believed that giving workingwomen the vote would help to diminish the disparity of economic and political power in society. In 1907, she joined Harriot Stanton Blatch's newly formed

Equality League of Self-Supporting Women, established to persuade workingwomen to support female suffrage. She served as the league's first vice-president. Four years later in 1911, O'Reilly and WTUL colleague Rose Schneiderman organized the Wage-Earners' League for Women Suffrage (WELWS), creating a short-lived suffrage association that was exclusively comprised of workingwomen. O'Reilly served as its president.

While her health remained strong, O'Reilly was active in a number of social and political reform organizations during the early twentieth century. In 1909, she was one of the founders and first committee members of the National Association of Colored People. In 1914, she helped to establish the Industrial Section of the New York Woman Suffrage party as a cross-class alliance dedicated to female suffrage and trade unionism. O'Reilly served as its chair through 1916. The following year she worked for the Irish revolution. In 1919, she again served as the WTUL delegate to the ICW, this time held in Washington DC. During the congress Eleanor Roosevelt invited O'Reilly and the other U.S. delegates to lunch where they impressed Roosevelt with their views on labor reform. When O'Reilly's health began to fail in 1920, she retired from most public activity, though she did teach a course on the theory of the labor movement at the New School for Social Research in 1925.

O'Reilly died of heart disease at the age of 57.

GWEN HOERR JORDAN

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See also **Knights of Labor; National Consumers League; Schneiderman, Rose; Triangle Shirtwaist Fire; Women's Trade Union League**

ORGANIZED CRIME

The term organized crime refers to groups involved in criminal conspiracies marked by their scale of

complexity and their length of existence. The term is often used to describe the Italian-American mafia, but it also can refer to various other types of groups with a range of different ethnic backgrounds and types of structures, from outlaw motorcycle gangs to neighborhood street gangs. The nature of organized crime shifted dramatically in the 1920s, as a result of Prohibition and as the criminal gangs that emerged in that era began to assert influence over some union officials. The relationships that emerged between some union officials and organized crime figures were complex combinations of exploitation and cooperation. Certain unions operating in particular economic sectors were particularly prone to suffer from this kind of corruption. Finally the ability of organized crime groups to gain influence over some unions gave crime figures a new source of economic power and facilitated a range of profitable criminal activities.

The history of organized crime begins in the cities of the late 1800s and includes the activities of neighborhood-based street gangs, vice entrepreneurs, and political machines. Street gangs were loosely organized groups based on location and ethnicity. They had a fluid membership and a weak leadership structure. Though street gang members engaged in crime, much of it involved nonutilitarian violence, such as turf battles, whose goal was not profit but to demonstrate the toughness of the gang members. Another limitation of these groups stemmed from the fact that street gang members often moved on to other types of activity as they reached adulthood. Because of their nonprofit-centered focus, some have referred to street gangs as cultural gangs. Vice entrepreneurs in contrast engaged in relatively little violence and instead focused on profit-making crimes. They provided goods and services that were illegal but for which there still remained significant demand. Such victimless crimes, also known as moral crimes, have always been a central economic function of organized crime. Vice entrepreneurs ran houses of prostitution, gambling establishments, or provided illegal substances. They might hire individual members of street gangs for various kinds of tasks, such as debt collection or to work as bouncers, but the role of gang members in these enterprises remained limited. For vice entrepreneurs the main threat to their livelihood came from law enforcement, and so they paid protection to the police and by extension to the machine politicians who controlled the police. Thus this early form of organized crime, sometimes referred to as a syndicate of vice, was dominated by the machine politicians who played the dominant role. Essentially the machine politicians and the police levied an unofficial tax on the illegal activity of the vice entrepreneurs, who made payoffs in order to avoid arrest.

ORGANIZED CRIME

Prohibition (1920–1933) changed the dynamics of organized crime. The Eighteenth Amendment ratified in 1919 and enforced through the Volstead Act passed that same year made the production and sale of alcohol illegal. The law created a huge new illicit market in the United States, and liquor providers, known as bootleggers, proliferated. The profits involved in bootlegging also spurred a great deal of violence as groups and individuals struggled to control local markets in a lucrative business that stood outside existing avenues of legal adjudication. Prohibition created a new economic environment for organized crime.

It was the graduates of the street gangs, such men as Alphonse Capone, Arthur Flegenheimer (also known as Dutch Schultz), and Meyer Lansky, who proved most adept at seizing the opportunities offered by Prohibition. In an era of lawlessness and violence, they were specialists in violence, who created a new type of criminal gang. Unlike the street gang or cultural gang, these new criminal groups were profit-centered with a more permanent membership. Sometimes called entrepreneurial gangs, they strictly controlled nonutilitarian violence and maintained a more formal leadership structure. Ethnic divisions were often blurred; for instance Capone's gang included Jews, Italian-Americans, and even a prominent Welshman, Murray Humphreys, in a leadership position. After dominating the illegal alcohol market by driving out less-violent competitors, entrepreneurial gangs also came to demand protection payments from vice entrepreneurs. Before Prohibition vice entrepreneurs had paid politicians and police to avoid arrest; now they paid criminal gang leaders to avoid being killed. This kind of organized crime arrangement, where an entrepreneurial gang plays the pivotal role, is referred to as a syndicate of power. Violence or the threat of violence now gave the gangster the ability to tax illegal activity.

Capone's gang and others of its type established dominance over illegal activity in the territory that they controlled. The process of taxing and monitoring that illegal activity is referred to as licensing. Individuals engaged in illegal activity, from gambling to supplying illegal substances, cannot go to the police for protection, and so they are vulnerable to extortion by groups with a greater access to violence. But licensing also involves a form of extralegal governance. For instance a criminal gang provides a way to resolve disputes for parties who cannot turn to such conventional resources as the courts. These licensing arrangements can also involve protection from law enforcement. Often an entrepreneurial gang has established more effective relations with the civil authorities, perhaps through more consistent and larger payoffs than an individual illegal entrepreneur can

maintain. From the perspective of local law enforcement, it often makes sense to support a kind of long-term working arrangement with a group or an individual who can maintain order among illegal entrepreneurs. Thus someone engaged in illegal activity who seeks to avoid making licensing payments might face legal as well as extralegal punishment.

The Italian-American mafia represents a version of an entrepreneurial gang, and it emerged as a distinctly organized group during this Prohibition Era. The term mafia itself has its origins in Sicily, where it referred in general to a set of values that celebrated manliness and self-reliance. By the mid-1800s, men who were thought to embody those values and who established tightly knit groups of armed followers were known as *mafiosi*. In the lawless environment of Sicily, the *mafiosi* and their followers offered a form of protection and justice to the local population. Out of these groups emerged a secret society organization, the mafia, whose members took an oath of secrecy and pledged loyalty to their leader.

The term mafia began to appear more frequently in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century in Italian-American communities, where immigrants apparently recreated an organization that they had heard about in the old world. This early form of an Italian-American mafia was inward looking and traditionalist in outlook, dominated by conservative, older men, sometimes referred to as "mustache Petes." The opportunities provided by Prohibition helped change the character of this mafia, as a more Americanized generation took leadership positions in the mafia. In New York City for example Charles (Lucky) Luciano assumed control of the mafia after the death of two more traditionalist leaders in what was known as the Castellammarese War (1930–1931). Although born in Sicily, Luciano had come to the United States at the age of 10 and had acculturated to American society far more than previous mafia leaders. He also had strong connections outside the insular world of the Italian immigrant community; one of his closest associates was the Jewish organized crime figure Meyer Lansky.

Luciano changed the structure of the mafia in ways that facilitated profit-making criminal activity. Membership remained restricted to men of Italian descent, but the formal structure he created centered less on a celebration of traditional values and more on the need to avoid disputes and thus increase profits. Each mafia family was divided into several crews, each crew overseen by a *capo* or captain. Individual members of the crew developed a circle of associates and sought out whatever criminal opportunities they could. These members used their mafia status as a way to intimidate potential rivals and victims but also as a source for networks of potential, reliable contacts who could help

arrange more complicated schemes. The mafia's structure provided peaceful ways to adjudicate the inevitable disputes that emerged in such schemes and in this way protected their profit-making potential. In exchange a mafia member gave a share of his earnings to his *capo*, who in turn passed some of that share to the boss of the family.

A loose national structure for the mafia provided a way to facilitate even larger schemes. New York had five independent mafia families that co-existed, but in the rest of the country, there was one family per city. A group known as the Commission in New York helped coordinate endeavors involving different families from Cleveland to the East Coast. The Commission provided a peaceful way to adjudicate disputes that arose between families. The family based in Chicago, known as the Outfit, provided the same service for mafia organizations in the rest of the country. Periodically a national conference attended by mafia leaders from across the country would be held to address important issues. New York State Troopers stumbled on one such conference at Apalachin in 1957, and the publicity surrounding their discovery helped fuel public awareness about the mafia.

The mafia and other entrepreneurial gangs became involved in labor racketeering by the late 1920s. In Chicago, New York, and elsewhere some union officials described efforts by gangsters to gain control of their labor organizations through threats of violence. Vulnerable to kidnapping and assassination, with little hope of effective protection from the police, many union officials faced the choice of giving in to such threats or trying to fight back, and fighting back often involved making some kind of arrangement with a rival criminal gang. In Chicago for instance officials from the Teamsters and other unions facing threats from Capone's gang turned for help to another gang run by Roger Touhy. In New York City's garment district, locals in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union made regular payments to a leading Jewish organized crime figure, Louis "Lepke" Buchalter.

But if some union leaders made deals with criminal gangs out of fear, others made arrangements with organized crime groups for more complex reasons. Testimony at criminal trials in the 1940s and much later highlights the ways in which some union officials turned to organized crime figures for support in organizing efforts and aid against political rivals in their own organizations. Roy Williams, president of the Teamsters from 1981–1983, cited many such benefits from his long relationship with the Kansas City *mafioso* Nick Civella. In such cases fear, ambition, respect, and a kind of friendship all might co-exist in a relationship that could span several decades. Perhaps

the best-known example of a union leader with mafia ties was James R. Hoffa, president of the Teamsters' Union from 1957–1971. An illegal FBI wiretap recorded his Detroit mafia contact, Anthony Giacalone, describing Hoffa less in terms of a victim than of an equal partner. "Listen, they ain't nobody sharp enough for Jimmy Hoffa. In this town or any other town. He's going to use everybody, every SOB in the world."

The influence of these organized crime groups has mostly been limited to particular unions in particular sectors of the economy. Typically organized crime has exercised a role in sectors marked by smaller, entrepreneurial firms, where the ease of entry for new firms had often brought fierce competition among the businesses. In these sectors there usually was a long history of corruption and collusion that predated the entry of organized crime. Unions whose jurisdictions cover such sectors suffered disproportionately from problems with corruption. This includes the four national unions, the Teamsters, the Laborers, the Longshoremens, and the Hotel and Restaurant Workers, which the President's Commission on Organized Crime (1983–1986) described as "substantially influenced and/or controlled by organized crime" (President's Commission, *The Edge*, 1986). However local unions operating in such sectors might be controlled by organized crime even if the national union to which they were affiliated maintained sterling reputations for honest, democratic administrations. For example organized crime groups allegedly controlled Local 102 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in New York's Garment District even though its parent union championed anticorruption efforts in the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Organized crime groups benefited in a number of ways from their ability to control some union leaders. Vincent Cafaro, a member of New York's Genovese Crime Family, explained to a Senate Committee in 1988, "We got our money from gambling, but our real power, our real strength came from the unions" (*Organized Crime 25 Years After Valachi*, 1988). In particular industries, such as construction or the garment trades, mafia control over some of the strategic unions gave organized crime figures an important economic niche. Companies with mafia connections could reap a number of competitive advantages by avoiding certain union restrictions. Or with mafia guidance, the unions could be used to enforce cartel arrangements that reserved the most lucrative business opportunities for certain companies. In New York in the 1980s, for example, a group of contractors with mafia ties monopolized concrete construction work worth \$2 million–\$15 million. Mafia-controlled union leaders ensured that if an outside company tried to take on one of

those jobs, it would suffer a range of crippling labor problems.

In addition organized crime groups found other ways to profit from their ability to control some union leaders. Sometimes union officials were required to pass on a share of their salaries to a mafia leader. In other cases money was drained out of union treasuries through a variety of devices, from no-show union jobs to padded bills and fake expense vouchers. New opportunities emerged with the proliferation of union pension plans and health benefits in the post-World War II Era. The ability to influence the management of those funds gave organized crime groups access both to new sources of revenue and potential investment capital. For instance the Teamsters' Union Central States Pension Fund made loans to individuals with mafia connections, and those individuals in turn gave mafia figures a share of the profits from their businesses. In one example money was skimmed from the daily take of several Las Vegas casinos that were built on the basis of such arrangements with Central States' Pension Fund loans.

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See also **International Brotherhood of Teamsters; McClellan Committee Hearings; Racketeering and RICO**

O'SULLIVAN, MARY KENNEY (1864-1943) Cofounder, Women's Trade Union League

Mary Kenney O' Sullivan, a bookbinder, was the first female organizer for the American Federation of Labor (AFL), cofounder of the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL), and a factory inspector. O'Sullivan was born in Hannibal, Missouri, on January 8, 1864, the daughter of Irish immigrants, Michael Kenney, a railroad machinist, and Mary Kelly. She left school after the fourth grade and went to work as a dressmaker's apprentice. When she was 14, her father died, leaving O'Sullivan responsible for her invalid mother. She found work in a bookbindery, supporting both herself and her mother the next several years as they moved from Hannibal to Keokuk, Iowa, eventually settling in Chicago in the late 1880s.

In her unpublished autobiography, O'Sullivan makes clear her growing frustration with the conditions of labor faced by working women at the end of the nineteenth century. As in many skilled trades, improvements in technology allowed for the increased mechanization of bookbinding, thus increasing the employment of women. But like many women, as O'Sullivan became more skilled at her craft, she chafed at being relegated to the lesser skilled, lower paid jobs reserved for female employees in bookbinderies. Hoping to improve working conditions, O'Sullivan turned to trade unionism. She joined the Women's Federal Labor Union No. 2703, an AFL affiliate and was elected to the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly. But there, too, O'Sullivan was frustrated as she confronted time and time again the ambivalence of many male trade unionists regarding the involvement of female workers in organized labor. Many male labor leaders advocated a family wage, claiming at the same time that women's increased participation in the workforce at lower wages drove down wages for all. But O'Sullivan knew that as the sole support of herself and her mother she was hardly atypical. She increasingly saw trade unionism for women as the remedy, arguing that the benefits of improved working conditions and higher wages for women could only improve conditions and wages for all workers.

However around 1890, when she formed the Women's Book Bindery Union No. 1, O'Sullivan found her greatest support in Chicago's growing social-reform community. A lifelong advocate of temperance, O'Sullivan was dismayed that the only place she could initially find to hold meetings for her fledging union was above a Chicago saloon. Jane Addams, cofounder of Chicago's legendary settlement

Hull-House, offered the young organizer meeting space as well as the money to print the first notices. Soon O'Sullivan and her mother moved into Hull-House, joining other working- and middle-class women in a cooperative housing venture known as the Jane Club. Within this supportive environment, she expanded her organizing efforts to include female garment makers as well as female bookbinders.

She soon came to the attention of AFL President Samuel Gompers, and in 1892 he hired O'Sullivan as the first female organizer for the AFL. After first organizing female collar makers in Troy, New York, she spent several months in Boston, Massachusetts, where she organized women in the shoe and garment industries and in the bookbinding trade. In Boston, as she had in Chicago, O'Sullivan quickly formed alliances with the male-dominated trade union movement, speaking before that city's Central Labor Union. She also found much support within the city's social reform community, particularly at Denison House, part of the College Settlement Association. Despite her commitment to trade unionism for women, O'Sullivan was nonetheless increasingly frustrated in her efforts to organize women. Social constraints of the day that deemed such activity as inappropriate hampered her work as did the continued ambivalence of many male labor leaders, and she was disappointed at the numbers of women she was able to organize. The AFL was disappointed, too, and 6 months after appointing her, decided it was not cost-effective to keep a female organizer in the field. O'Sullivan returned to Hull-House in Chicago and worked with social reformer Florence Kelley to secure passage of the 1893 Illinois Factory Bill that regulated the employment of women and children. Her 1894 marriage to local labor organizer and *Boston Globe* labor editor John O'Sullivan brought her back to Boston. Together the O'Sullivans had four children, one of whom died in infancy, and were active members in the Boston labor scene. O'Sullivan continued to focus on the organization of women and expanded her connections within the city's social-reform community, using both Denison House and the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, founded by middle- and upper-class women in 1878 to assist working women, as her bases of operation. Throughout the 1890s, O'Sullivan organized female shoe workers, garment workers, and weavers. However when her husband died in 1902, O'Sullivan had to support herself and her three young children, and she found work as the manager of a model tenement in Boston and as the director of a girls' summer camp sponsored by Denison House.

Even without the critical support of her husband, O'Sullivan was still determined to organize female workers into viable trade unions. In 1903, she and

several others came together at the annual AFL convention, held that year in Boston, and formed the WTUL, a cross-class alliance of trade unionists and social-reform workers, both men and women. The WTUL's stated mission was to organize female workers into existing trade unions, advocate for protective labor legislation, and provide education for female workers. Soon branches were established in Boston, New York, and Chicago. In its early years, O'Sullivan was secretary and vice-president of the National WTUL as well as a leader in the Boston branch. However this cross-class alliance was fraught with turmoil from the beginning, and O'Sullivan was soon dismayed both by the ever-present class tensions between the middle- and upper-class female allies and the working-class women and by the continued refusal of the AFL officially to recognize the WTUL. O'Sullivan resigned from the WTUL, primarily in response to that organization's refusal to support the 1912 Lawrence textile strike because the AFL had not sanctioned it. Two years later she became one of five female factory inspectors for the newly created Massachusetts Board of Labor and Industries, a post she held until 1934. She died on January 18, 1943 after a lifetime of working to improve the conditions of life and labor for workingwomen such as herself.

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See also Addams, Jane; American Federation of Labor; Gompers, Samuel; Hull-House Settlement; Kelley, Florence; Lawrence Strike (1912); Women's Trade Union League

OWEN, ROBERT DALE (1801–1877) Worker's Rights Activist and Abolitionist

Born in 1801, in Glasgow, Scotland, Robert Dale Owen was the eldest son of noted Welsh textile magnate and social reformer Robert Owen, whose passion and originality regarding the uplift of the emerging industrial working class strongly influenced Robert Dale Owen's life and career. Educated at the New Lanark School his father had founded, as well as by

private tutors, Owen completed his education with 4 years of college-level work at the progressive school of Philipp Emanuel von Fellenberg in Hofwyl, Switzerland. He later credited his educational experiences at New Lanark and in Hofwyl for impressing on him the importance of education to any program of social reform.

Owen spent most of his adult life after 1825 in the United States and involved himself in political, communitarian, abolitionist, and other efforts to bring about reforms to capitalism and to ameliorate the harm it wrought on industrial workers. Owen was a leader of the Working Men's party in New York, an early feminist, a Democratic member of Congress, a diplomat, and an abolitionist. Owen largely retired from public life after the Civil War and died at his summer home in Lake George, New York, a year and 1 day after his second marriage.

Owen immigrated to the United States in 1825 and immediately began his career as an American reformer by helping his father create the Utopian community of New Harmony, Indiana. This communitarian experiment in cooperative production was based on the elder Owen's theories and experiences at New Lanark. New Harmony, only one of literally hundreds of such ventures during the nineteenth century, lasted until 1827, when it failed. At New Harmony Owen once again taught school, edited the *New Harmony Gazette*, and met the reformer and freethinker Frances Wright, with whom he enjoyed a close personal and professional partnership for some 10 years. After New Harmony Owen journeyed to Wright's Nashoba community, a Utopian experiment near Memphis, Tennessee, dedicated to racial equality and the emancipation of slaves. Following a brief return to Europe and a stint in New Harmony, Owen followed Wright to New York City and became the editor of the *Free Enquirer*, an anticlerical, free-thinking journal that he ran from 1828 to 1832. Like his father Owen had long disavowed religion; now, he argued against the institutions of church and marriage and in his book *Moral Physiology* promoted contraception, both as a way to relieve poverty and a means for the emancipation of women. Needless to say Owen became a *bête noire* of the conservative, evangelical establishment of the period.

Along with Wright, Owen soon became an intellectual leader of one faction of the Working Men's party of New York, through which he pressed his "state guardianship" plan for public education. In contrast to party founder Thomas Skidmore, who advocated radical measures to redistribute property, Owen urged the establishment of free boarding schools modeled after Hofwyl, where children of all classes would be educated in an atmosphere of social equality.

In addition to instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, history, and the like, Owen proposed that all students be trained in agriculture and a useful trade. This, Owen believed, would yield in the students an understanding of the dignity of labor and a reduction in class stratification. After the elections of 1829, when the Working Men won several races, Owen joined forces with two former Tammany Hall politicians, Noah Cook and Henry Guyon, to form an alliance that forced Skidmore out of the party. Much to Owen's chagrin, Cook and Guyon soon turned on him and ejected him from the party in 1830. This marked the end of Owen's participation in radical labor politics.

After a short stay in Europe, Owen returned to New Harmony, now a midwestern town rather than a Utopia, married, and began a reformist political career that lasted through the Civil War. Owen served three terms in the Indiana General Assembly, from 1835 to 1838, where he managed to secure increased funding for the state's public schools. After two unsuccessful campaigns, in 1842 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Democrat and served in Congress from 1843 to 1847. While in Washington he drafted the bill for the founding of the Smithsonian Institution, and as a member of its organizing committee, he insisted that the institution engage in public education as well as scientific research. Elected to the Indiana Constitutional Convention in 1850, Owen played a key role in securing property rights for married women and widows and in the adoption of a common public school system. Returned to the Indiana Assembly in 1851, Owen introduced and succeeded in passing a state law liberalizing divorce in Indiana. In 1853, President Franklin Pierce appointed Owen as U.S. *chargé d'affaires* to the Kingdom of Naples.

After leaving that post and returning to the United States in 1858, Owen again took up the cause of working people and became a leading proponent of the abolition of slavery. His September 17, 1862, letter on the subject to Abraham Lincoln was credited by Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase as a key influence on the president's evolving thinking toward emancipation, which came a few days later. In 1863, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton appointed Owen chairman of the American Freedman's Inquiry Commission to investigate and report on the condition and prospects of the newly freed slaves. Owen's book, *The Wrong of Slavery*, was one result of that work. Though an abolitionist, Owen urged only gradual enfranchisement of the freed slaves and a reconstruction effort led by military officers that foreshadowed congressional reconstruction.

Though not himself a member of the working class, Owen's broad sympathies for the poor and exploited

were sincere and deeply felt. His reformist impulses, from advocacy of cooperative production to women's rights and emancipation, were consistently geared toward the amelioration of the living conditions of working people. His ideas regarding public education and feminism were especially prescient, and many of them became mainstream thinking in the decades after his death.

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OXNARD STRIKE (1903)

The Oxnard Strike of 1903 was the first successful agricultural strike in southern California and was organized by the first biracial union in the state, the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association (JMLA). Following the strike the JMLA petitioned the American Federation of Labor (AFL) for a charter. The AFL issued the charter but forbade the union from admitting Asians. Refusing to join the AFL without their Japanese allies, the Mexican branch of the JMLA was denied AFL institutional support and soon disintegrated. Consequently the Oxnard Strike highlights the correlation between race and class in southern California's agricultural production, provides a window into European-Americans' distinct racial attitudes toward Japanese and Mexicans, and demonstrates that racial discrimination could divide workers within the American labor movement.

The town of Oxnard lies within Ventura County and was named after the entrepreneurs who established the American Beet Sugar Company (ABSC)

in 1898 and the Bank of Oxnard (1899), which loaned money to growers producing beets for the ABSC. Drawing first on Chinese and due to the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), numerous Japanese and Mexican laborers, the ABSC refined nearly 200,000 tons of beets in 1903. Paralleling the rise of the beet industry was a class structure in which most racial minorities held undesirable occupations and earned little remuneration. Within Ventura County Euro-Americans owned 95% of the farms and held the highest paying labor positions; they were the only permanent workers within the sugar factory and tended to work as department heads, supervisors, and personal staff. Meanwhile 50% of Japanese and Mexicans and 65% of Chinese worked as farmhands, while another 18%–33% of these minorities worked as unskilled-laborers. Residential patterns further divided the lives of most Euro-Americans from racial minorities. Within Oxnard, Japanese and Mexicans tended to live in ethnic enclaves on the east side of town while German and Irish farmers and Jewish families lived on the west side. However while most minorities worked as laborers, a small but influential number of minorities were middle-class. Some of these minorities worked as labor contractors, obtaining workers for growers. In return for their services, minority contractors received a portion of their workforce's wages and thus profited from minority labor. Yet as a result of ethnoracial affinities, racial discrimination, residential separation, the correlation between contractors' and laborers' wages, and perhaps the influence of the Japanese Socialist Movement, minority contractors often demanded high rates of pay for their workforces.

Responding to these circumstances, the Bank of Oxnard, Bank of A. Levy, and the ABSC, organized the Western Agricultural Contracting Company (WACC) in 1902. Working with growers seeking to undercut minority contractors, by February of 1903, the WACC controlled 90% of the local labor contracts, reduced minority contractors' commissions, prevented contractors from negotiating directly with farmers, and required minority laborers to pay the WACC a contracting fee. In order to manage their diverse workforce, the WACC created a Japanese department under Inosuke Inose, a former contractor who managed a WACC affiliated store and held stock in the ABSC; and a Mexican department under Albert Espinosa, a skilled beet worker.

On February 11, 1903, roughly 500 Japanese and 200 Mexicans convened to form the JMLA. Composed of contractors, laborers, and Japanese students working as temporary laborers, the JMLA represented three segments of the agricultural workforce united against the WACC. Led by President Baba Kozaburo (a former labor contractor ousted

by the WACC); secretary of the Japanese branch, Y. Yamaguchi (a boarding student recruited from San Francisco); and secretary of the Mexican branch, J. M. Lizarras (perhaps a former labor contractor), the JMLA represented its biracial membership through its two branches, attention to linguistic needs (union meetings were multilingual), and creation of solidarity symbols (the union's emblem depicted a rising red sun, a pair of clasped hands, and the initials JMLA). Seeking to unseat the WACC, to bargain with farmers directly, and to raise wages, the JMLA agreed to stop working through the WACC and thus went on strike. By March hundreds of WACC laborers had defected to the JMLA, raising its membership to 1,200, about 90% of the agricultural workforce.

During the third week of March, the WACC facilitated the creation of a competing minority union, the Independent Agricultural Labor Union (IALU), which claimed to seek a congruent relationship between employers and employees. The IALU's board of directors included Inose and other influential Japanese residents who remained aligned with the WACC. Local newspapers, such as the *Daily Democrat*, commended the new union. To the JMLA's disdain, the IALU began recruiting workers on behalf of growers. Tensions erupted on March 23 when a group of JMLA workers attempted to place their union's emblem on an IALU caravan. Immediately after shots were fired from several directions, two Japanese and two Mexicans were hit; one Mexican, Luis Vasquez, was killed. Most local newspapers blamed the shooting on the JMLA. The *Los Angeles Times* suggested that Mexicans were the principal perpetrators of the violence. The JMLA issued a statement to the press claiming they had not been armed during the altercation, that WACC laborers were armed by local hardware stores, that no JMLA member had been arrested, and critiqued the police for failing to arrest the shooters. Only the *Oxnard Courier* and the *Los Angeles Herald* printed the statement; the *Times* refused.

After the shooting a Euro-American ranch owner was arrested for Vasquez's murder, tried, and after 2 days of contradictory testimonies, cleared of any wrongdoing. Incensed the JMLA's strike turned

militant. The JMLA unionists intimidated non-JMLA laborers and aggressively recruited others. By the end of March, the WACC, local growers, and the JMLA agreed to negotiate. Given the strength of the JMLA (their membership stood at 1,300; the WACC's at 60), after only a few days of debate, the JMLA gained control of over 5,000 acres of farmland, secured the right to negotiate with farmers directly, and obtained a minimum wage of \$5.00 per acre of beets (nearly double the WACC wage). On March 30, the strike ended. About 2 months later, Lizarras appealed to the AFL for a charter, inviting the most influential union in the United States to take a position on minority unionists. The AFL President Samuel Gompers granted the charter but stipulated that the union could not admit Asians. On June 8, the Mexican branch of the JMLA rejected the AFL's racist offer, exalted Japanese unionists, and stated they would accept only a racially inclusive charter committed to the abolition of racial discrimination. The Mexican branch never received this charter, and the JMLA later dissolved.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Chinese Exclusion Acts**

P

P-9 STRIKE

The pronounced downward slide of the U.S. labor movement that began with Ronald Reagan's firing of more than 10,000 striking members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) in the summer of 1981 has continued unabated for more than a quarter century. Declining in size, density, and influence, unions have appeared powerless to resist corporate decisions to close factories, outsource work, eliminate jobs, rewrite job descriptions, renege on pension commitments, increase workers' shares of health-care costs, slash wages, and more (or is it less?). Strikes have almost disappeared as an expression of workers' power, while unions' political clout is dismissed by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Alongside the PATCO disaster, for many commentators, the Austin, Minnesota, Hormel strike of 1985–1986 has come to symbolize these developments. In 1991, Barbara Koppel's film *American Dream* won the "Best Documentary" Academy Award, cementing the strike's iconic status. It told the story of how 1,700 workers, employed in a state-of-the-art plant by a profitable corporation untouched by foreign competition, were backed against a wall. Their refusal to knuckle under to their employer's demands for concessions led to a prolonged strike. When Hormel chose to re-open five months into the strike and the governor of Minnesota (a "pro-labor" Democrat) sent in the National Guard to breach the picket lines, the strike was broken. Faithful union members lost their jobs, their cars, their homes, even their families.

While this is all some commentators and filmmakers might see—or want audiences to see and students to learn—there was much more to the P-9 Strike that earns it its place in labor history. In the midst of the management push for concessions, what we can now recognize as the first stage of the corporate neo-liberal agenda, Hormel workers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local P-9 ("P" for "Packinghouse"), their families, and their supporters offered an embodiment of resistance, a living, breathing vision of a democratically controlled union, driven by its members, with a passionate commitment to justice, and a willingness to explore new, creative strategies and tactics. Inspired by their example, more than 3,000 local unions sent aid to P-9 and tens of thousands of activists made pilgrimages to Austin.

After having co-operated with Hormel management's demands for new job descriptions, payment systems, and chain speeds as the price for getting a new plant built in Austin in the late 1970s to early 1980s, P-9 members rediscovered their historical roots as the Independent Union of All Workers of the 1930s and drew their line in the sand when they were asked to accept a 23% pay cut. "If not now, when? If not here, where? If not us, who?" they asked. They reached out to their fellow meatpackers at seven other Hormel plants scattered around the country, they called on workers in other industries to support their campaign to bring labor solidarity and financial pressure (via a strategy developed by Ray Rogers and

his Corporate Campaign, Inc.) to bear on Hormel, and they called on each other to stand firm. Some became traveling speakers (the so-called road warriors), visiting unions, schools, and community organizations from coast to coast. Others made Christmas toys, wrote songs and poems, painted murals, walked miles on picket lines, and joined protests at other factories, in other communities, even in other countries. They found a stunning variety of ways to tell their stories, express their struggle for justice, and seek connection with other workers facing similar challenges.

And through it all, they learned about political economy, labor history, power, and most of all, about themselves.

Inspired by the P-9ers' examples, thousands of workers sent money, visited Austin, and committed to a boycott of Hormel products and the financial institutions that bankrolled the company. In 33 cities, they organized themselves into support committees. At some times, in some places, their networks of support were mobilized to help other workers in addition to the Hormel strikers. And at some times, in some places, encouraged by the Hormel strikers' example and emboldened by their new networks, they stood up to their own employers' demands for concessions and their own unions' insistence that resistance was futile. Rank-and-file militancy spread within many unions, taking a variety of forms—caucuses, election slates for local, even national, offices, new publications, and alliances with workers in other unions.

The United Food and Commercial Workers' national union leadership deepened its opposition to Local P-9 and its struggle. It urged meatpackers around the country to accept the necessity for a "controlled retreat," and as P-9's movement grew, so did the UFCW's determination that it had to nip this movement in the bud. It insisted that workers at other Hormel plants had to continue to work in the face of P-9's requests that they engage in sympathy strikes; they opposed the boycott of Hormel products; they urged unions that wanted to send aid to the strikers to send it to the national union rather than directly to the local or through one of the support committees; they did not organize political pressure on the governor of Minnesota when he began to consider sending in the National Guard. Finally, they put Local P-9 in trusteeship and called the strike off. Most important, they had signaled to Hormel from the outset of the conflict that if it could just outlast the local union, it would get to deal directly with the national union. With the support of other national union bureaucracies that also feared the threats posed by oppositional movements within their own organizations, the UFCW was able to strangle the movement that Local P-9 represented.

The defeat had high costs—the loss of jobs, pensions, homes, cars, and even families. But even in defeat, the P-9 strikers, the more than a thousand who had held firm, and their many supporters had written a chapter in labor history whose importance becomes clearer and clearer the more time passes. They demonstrated that the course of economic neoliberalism, with its skyrocketing inequality, terrifying insecurity, and competitive individualism, did not have to emerge out of Ronald Reagan's America. They showed that rank-and-file workers could run a democratic union; build a movement culture and a network of solidarity; threaten entrenched power in corporate boardrooms, state capitols, and union bureaucracies; educate themselves about the place of workingwomen and workingmen in U.S. history; and transform themselves into human beings for whom the idea that "an injury to one is an injury to all" could become a watchword for everyday life, even in the United States.

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See also **Independent Union of All Workers**

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Work life in the Pacific Northwest in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was shaped by an economy based primarily on the production of a few basic commodities, geographical isolation from distant markets, and an enormous land area inhabited by a comparatively small non-Indian population that tended to concentrate its residence in a handful of urban areas. Even the largest population center, Portland, until surpassed by Seattle in 1910, was exceedingly small in comparison to San Francisco, Saint Louis, or Chicago. In 1880, at the beginning of a chaotic decade that witnessed dramatic expansion of the Pacific Northwest economy and the rising prominence of organized labor, Portland could boast of

8,000 residents (on a good day). That number compared to 149,000 residents for San Francisco, 299,000 for Chicago, and 310,000 for Saint Louis. In fact, the entire Pacific Northwest—Oregon, Washington, and Idaho combined—in 1880 had a population of just 282,000, or fewer people than resided in either Chicago or Saint Louis. It is little wonder that during its formative years, organized labor in the Pacific Northwest often marched to a different beat, one that might appear jarringly out of step with national trends and leadership.

Until completion of a northern transcontinental railroad in 1883 at last made long-distance travel relatively easy, the Pacific Northwest remained physically remote from the East Coast and Midwest and chronologically divergent from the nation's mainstream of history. When the nation's founders signed the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia in July 1776, the Pacific Northwest remained a blank spot on the map of North America. Outsiders knew nothing about its high mountain ranges, dense coastal rain forests, and rolling interior plains. No one living in Europe or along America's East Coast could say whether woolly mammoths might still roam its bunchgrass prairies until the explorers Lewis and Clark entered the region in 1805 after a two-year trip from Saint Louis. Civil War battles had little direct impact on the Pacific Northwest or its sparsely populated landscape, though the region did welcome as new residents numerous refugees fleeing Missouri's own bitter guerrilla warfare.

To reach the Oregon Country during the decades of overland travel by wagon—from the 1840s through the 1860s—required four to six months of hard travel across the prairies and high mountains beyond the Mississippi River. The transcontinental railroad radically redefined the space separating the Pacific Northwest and Chicago or St. Louis to an easy journey of just five or six days, easy at least for affluent passengers easily able to afford a bed in a luxury sleeping car and dinner in the diner.

Driving the Pacific Northwest economy were the products of farm, forest, fishery, and mine. By contrast, local manufacturing, apart from the big-four industries, was of little importance economically. Commodities were god, beginning with the fur trade in the 1780s. Legions of fur traders and trappers revealed some of the treasures that Mother Nature had hidden within the Pacific Northwest, yet their contribution to settlement or economic development of the region was minimal at best. The men who depended wholly on Mother Nature to supply the commodity basic to their economic survival understood clearly that wilderness lands transformed into farms, ranches, and towns doomed any future

commerce in furs by forcing trappers and traders to retreat to an ever-shrinking wild domain. Thus, the fur trade belongs to the premodern regional economy that existed before the 1870s and 1880s and development of regional and transcontinental railroad connections.

From the 1880s until the 1930s, most jobs within the region involved harvesting grain and other products of farm and ranch, catching and canning fish, cutting and milling lumber, and digging and processing coal and various metals. Such jobs invariably placed a big premium on physical prowess and mobility and thus encouraged formation of a regional workforce composed to a large degree of itinerant single males who worked in gangs for a daily or weekly wage. The power of human muscle, rather than hard-won proficiency in a craft, was the attribute employers prized most. Most manual laborers acquired the needed dexterity on the job rather than through any formal program of apprenticeship or education. The number of workers engaged in skilled crafts was small by comparison.

It was not uncommon for an army of seasonal workers to follow the grain harvest across the rolling fields of eastern Oregon and Washington in late summer and then migrate to the busy wharves of Seattle and Portland to help load seagoing ships with grain and other commodities. Many men of muscle had no families and no permanent homes, other than the missions, flophouses, and saloons of the large cities in which they often spent the slack winter season. Hardscrabble mining towns and the meager timber camps located deep in the Northwest forests were often as isolated as the region's numerous sheep and cattle ranches, and a large portion of the population was seasonal and transient. Seattle in 1920 ranked at the top of the nation's list of cities of 25,000 or more with the greatest percentage of male residents. No wonder its shame (or badge of distinction) was a large, thriving, and notorious red-light district.

Child labor was never a serious problem in the Pacific Northwest, and that may have been related in part to the preponderance of adult males in the regional workforce, men who did not hesitate to prove their masculinity in a barroom brawl but feared and loathed the power of employers to reduce their wages by any number of tricks, including hiring child labor. Because the region's first intense phase of industrial development dated only from the 1880s, well after the East Coast and Midwest had begun flexing their bulging industrial muscle, organized workers and their territorial and state legislators were able to anticipate and address perceived mistakes made in the older states—but only to a limited degree and because so much work in the Pacific Northwest required far

more muscle than children possessed. Even with child labor laws and a few other basic labor regulations in place, life on the job in the Pacific Northwest was no better, and in some cases much worse, than in the states that industrialized earlier. Logging and mining, along with railroading, were three of the most dangerous industries anywhere—“more dangerous than war” was the way one scholar described the appalling rate of accidents and death in the Northwest timber industry.

A primary exception to a regional work life dominated by muscular and mobile males was the highly seasonal canning industry. During the summer fruit and vegetable harvest, the numerous canneries of the Willamette, Hood, Walla Walla, Yakima, and Wenatchee river valleys employed large numbers of women—workers prized less for their muscle power than for their manual dexterity and short-term availability. The same pattern defined the seasonal cannery work on the Columbia River, Pacific Coast, and Puget Sound required to process each year’s salmon catch. Again, these jobs required mainly manual dexterity and seasonal availability. The region’s early seafood canneries also employed Chinese males, who, beginning in the 1880s, were systematically excluded from jobs in most other Northwest industries.

The racial and ethnic composition of the Pacific Northwest workforce tended to fluctuate over time. Violent protests by Euro-American workers affiliated with the Knights of Labor in the 1880s dramatically reduced the number of Chinese males employed in Northwest industries. Many left the region to return to China or to seek a more congenial job climate in California, though some remained in domestic service or to grow plots of vegetables for sale to local purchasers. In the 1890s, Japanese workers migrated to the Northwest and found employment as maintenance-of-way workers on railroads, among other industrial jobs. Industrial workers in the twentieth century included immigrants from the Philippines and Mexico. Many of the first African-American workers in the Pacific Northwest were recruited from the East and Midwest as strikebreakers in coal camps that once dotted the foothills of the Cascades east of Seattle and Tacoma. As such, they often had to endure an ugly mix of racial prejudice and economic rage from Euro-American workers they displaced.

Organized labor in the Pacific Northwest tended to mirror the peculiarities and prejudices of the local workforce. Labor unions among locomotive engineers and other skilled workers dated back to the 1860s, but for the next two decades, they remained weak and confined largely to the region’s relatively small number of skilled workers, if they survived at all.

The decade of the 1880s witnessed the first large-scale unionization of workers in the Pacific Northwest. For a time, the Knights of Labor grew powerful and prominent, especially in the cities of Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, and Spokane. The local Knights built their imposing edifice primarily from the rotted timber of anti-Chinese prejudice. In mid-decade, the Knights’ regional leaders (who belonged to a secret West Coast radical organization) carefully orchestrated a campaign of violence that drove nearly a thousand Chinese residents out of Tacoma. It is unlikely that a single person of Chinese ancestry remained behind. The Knights sought, but failed, to do likewise in Seattle and Portland. Apart from their success in Tacoma and some of the outlying coal camps, the local Knights generated mostly bad publicity for themselves.

Out of the wreckage of the Knights of Labor’s debacle in the 1880s derived, nonetheless, some enduring features of the Northwest labor movement. Foremost was long-term bias against Asian workers. Second, and perhaps paradoxically, was a strain of economic and social idealism that influenced Northwest politics for decades—at least through the 1930s. In a related way, some disappointed but yet idealistic labor activists formed various socialist and anarchist utopian colonies on Puget Sound in the 1880s and 1890s. They believed that by example they could transform an ailing industrial society. Finally, the idea of organizing workers by industry at a time when the newly formed American Federation of Labor (AFL) promoted labor organization by craft remained very popular in the Pacific Northwest and led to numerous philosophical debates, if not outright clashes, among local labor activists.

There clearly was a tie between Knights of Labor idealism and activism in the mining region tributary to Spokane, Washington. In newly established metal mining camps east of Spokane and across the border in the rugged mountains of northern Idaho, conflict between mine labor and owners over wage reductions and worsening working conditions flared into open violence in 1892. In these isolated one-industry towns, as in the camps of the timber industry, conditions of life were harsh and employers ruled with iron-fisted autocracy. In such circumstances, workers sought economic security through exclusion of low-wage Asian labor and union membership and its promise of collective action. When violence in 1892 resulted in the jailing of local union leaders, they used their idle time in prison to organize a new regional union called the Western Federation of Miners. Later it became the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, or the Mine-Mill Union. But even after it merged with the United Steelworkers of America in

1967, many of its members never forgot that the Mine-Mill Union had been “born in jail.”

Because the number of craft workers remained low in the Northwest (with its emphasis on commodity production), skilled unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor effectively ignored a large percentage of the region’s workforce. However, various industrial unions emerged from the wreckage of the Knights of Labor to address that need in the early twentieth century. By far, the most famous was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), organized in Chicago in 1905 by members of the Western Federation of Miners and other dissident industrial unions and federations.

Shaped by the rough-and-tumble world of commodity producers in the American West, the Industrial Workers of the World openly embraced radical solutions to the perceived ills of society and did not shy away from seeking to organize “the unorganizable”—the itinerant harvest hands, timber and sawmill workers, and any other vulnerable workers who supported its uncompromising mission to radically transform industrial society.

During the years from 1890s until the aftermath of World War I in the early 1920s, the Pacific Northwest witnessed several outbursts of industrial violence that tainted the way many people perceived organized labor. Twice in the 1890s, the Coeur d’Alene mining district of northern Idaho erupted in violence that resulted in military occupation and indiscriminate jailing of union leaders and their sympathizers. A violent postscript to the 1899 violence occurred in late 1905, when Harry Orchard assassinated the former Idaho governor Frank Steunenberg. When captured a few days later, Orchard claimed that top leaders of the Western Federation of Miners had hired him to retaliate for Steunenberg’s role in suppressing the 1899 violence. In a celebrated trial in Boise, the Idaho capital, the newly elected senator, William E. Borah, battled with the defense attorney Clarence Darrow. It became such a high-profile media event that even President Theodore Roosevelt weighed in with his opinions. In the end, Darrow won acquittal. Two of the defendants, Charles H. Moyer and George Pettibone, soon faded from public consciousness, but the third, William D. Haywood, who once worked as a metal miner in Silver City, Idaho, remained prominent as the leader of the Industrial Workers of the World, or Wobblies.

Industrial violence next erupted on the streets of Spokane in 1909, when Wobbly protesters engaged in illegal public speaking and were imprisoned. Soon, every train entering the city brought a fresh supply of speakers, and thereby the IWW flooded and overwhelmed the city’s jails. They focused their wrath on

the dishonest employment agencies in Spokane that found harvest jobs for itinerant workers but colluded with employers to keep a constant stream of workers churning through the system—all for a fee that enriched the agencies and their accomplices on the region’s farms and ranches.

The Washington legislature passed a law banning such practices, but it proved weak and poorly enforced. During World War I, the author Zane Grey visited the wheat fields of eastern Washington and wrote a potboiler called *The Desert of Wheat* that pits honest farmers against vile and incendiary Wobblies determined to undermine the nation’s fight against Germany and other enemy nations.

Even before Americans joined the fight in April 1917, anti-Wobbly violence boiled out of control in the sawmill town of Everett, Washington, in 1916. Again, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the end of the war, anti-Wobbly violence erupted in Centralia, Washington, in November 1919. Earlier that year, the Seattle General Strike of February 1919 had made the public edgy, and the “Centralia Massacre” further contributed to growing antilabor sentiment in the Pacific Northwest.

As elsewhere, the 1920s were lean years for organized workers in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The big-four industries loomed as large in the regional economy as ever, but something vital had changed when roads began to connect once isolated mine and timber camps to nearby cities and when itinerant harvest hands could purchase cheap used cars and motor to and from work. Apparently, to some workers “automobility” became an acceptable substitute for social mobility. The Wobbly message based on disinheritance seemed less compelling than before as workers were able to develop some semblance of family life where formerly that had been impossible. Throughout the 1920s, Wobblies still published updated versions of their little red songbook, and itinerants traveling by stealing aboard empty boxcars still gathered around hobo campfires to sing familiar refrains, but their numbers were shrinking because of the automobile and increasing miles of all-weather roads.

Because of its dependence on production of commodities sold to distant markets, the economy of the Pacific Northwest appeared to ride a roller coaster of boom and bust, one for which the operator was invisible or located in some faraway place. Maybe there was no operator. It was easy to think that way during the depression that lasted from 1893 to 1897, the worst the nation had ever experienced, or from 1929 to 1941, which was even worse.

During the widespread joblessness of the 1893 depression, workers of the Northwest found no

economic or social safety net in place to sustain them during the hard times. It was “survival of the fittest,” which sometimes meant relocating to the capacious shores of Puget Sound, building a hut of driftwood, and eating clams for free for the taking—for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. As one optimist phrased it, when the tide is out the table is set, though one worker claimed to have eaten so many clams he could feel the tide rise and fall in his stomach.

Other idled workers took a more direct approach and in Seattle, Tacoma, and Portland formed one of the industrial arms that organized around the United States in the spring of 1894. Popularly known as “Coxey’s Army” (for the original organizer in Ohio), the protest had elements of a media craze. But it had a serious side, too: to present a “petition in boots” to Congress on May 1, 1894, to urge members to pass legislation designed to put the jobless to work building good roads—something the nation greatly needed during the heyday of railroad domination of the means of transportation.

Coxey’s original army did march down Pennsylvania Avenue as promised, but police arrested him when he attempted to present his petition to Congress. Most of the armies from the West Coast never did reach the Capitol, though the one from Tacoma gave the nation a momentary scare when its weary members grew tired of walking and stole a train in Montana, racing off toward Capitol Hill with the United States Army in hot pursuit. Rounded up and herded into makeshift prison camps in Helena, the Montana capital, some determined members built rafts and attempted to continue down the Missouri River to achieve their original goal.

Nothing came of the Northwest’s Coxey protest, or did it? In 1944, on the fiftieth anniversary of his original protest, an elderly Jacob Coxey mounted the Capitol steps and finally read the petition he had been barred from presenting to Congress earlier. The document sounded both quaint and thoroughly dated. In the Northwest as elsewhere, the New Deal response to the Great Depression of the 1930s put the jobless to work building roads, beautifying parks, fighting insect infestations of the national forests, painting post office murals, and accomplishing a host of other assignments.

By far, the biggest New Deal projects were the building of the Bonneville and Grand Coulee dams on the Columbia River. These federal projects provided thousands of construction jobs and became showcases for the merits of managing the once wild river. The newly established Bonneville Power Administration hired the labor troubadour Woody Guthrie to compose a series of songs extolling the virtues of the big dams.

Organized labor, which struggled through the 1920s, gained a valuable boost in the 1930s from New Deal legislation that encouraged workers to organize. So many did organize that the House of Labor proved too small to contain both the craft and industrial unions, which had a strong base of support in the Pacific Northwest. A result was the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Labor rivalry and conflict erupted at several locations until the two overarching labor organizations resolved their differences and merged in 1954 as the AFL-CIO.

One of the most powerful leaders of an AFL union during the split was Dave Beck of Seattle, who rose with the trucking industry and the expanding network of good roads that fostered its growth to become the national head of the Teamsters’ Union. Alas, although Beck’s rapid rise gained him widespread fame as a tough and effective AFL union leader, his downfall was equally dramatic. He went to federal prison for income tax evasion in 1962.

At the end of the twentieth century and the start of the twenty-first, the industrial base of the Pacific Northwest looked dramatically different than it had a hundred years earlier: commodity production had been overshadowed by manufacturing, but not the region’s traditional manufacturing of heavy logging equipment and aircraft. Boeing, which rose to prominence as an aircraft manufacturer during the frenzied days of World War II production, continued to produce renowned aircraft, but by the 1990s, the Puget Sound region had become more clearly identified with Microsoft and its software programs than with Boeing’s jetliners. In fact, Boeing relocated its corporate headquarters from Seattle to Chicago in 2001.

This story had a parallel in the region’s once almighty timber industry. At various times during the twentieth century, both Oregon and Washington ranked as the nation’s top timber producers. Production remained high during the 1940s and 1950s, stimulated by World War II and the baby boom and the resulting new home construction afterward. Timber jobs were numerous and paid good wages. But then production leveled out before starting to decline. In a sign of things to come, one of the region’s top timber producers, Georgia-Pacific, relocated its headquarters from Portland to Atlanta in 1982, much as Boeing would do two decades later. Second- and third-growth trees matured faster in the moist, warm climate of the South—not to mention that unions were less powerful in the South than in the Pacific Northwest.

The 1980s were grim for timberworkers. Environmental restrictions made it more difficult and costly to harvest trees, and an economic slump and heightened competition from Canadian timber caused dozens of sawmills to close permanently—taking down with

them many a one-industry town. The mills that remained modernized with high-technology equipment (including lasers and computers) that greatly reduced the number of people needed to turn forest giants into two-by-fours.

It was the same story down on the farm in the 1980s. Where the annual grain harvest had once required two or three dozen itinerant harvest hands to run threshing machines, care for approximately 30 horses needed to pull each reaper, and then sack grain by hand, two or three people could do the job. The combine operator, usually the owner of the ranch, operated an air-conditioned, stereo-equipped machine, while one or two truck drivers (often teenagers eager for a good-paying summer job) drove the golden harvest to the local grain elevator.

In many places the traditional commodity-based economy simply vanished. Not a single fish cannery remained along the Columbia River. Once where dozens of them each year produced millions of cans of salmon to feed working people of Ireland, England, and many other distant places, not even the buildings remained. In some places only a few half-submerged pilings remained to mark the one-time site of busy production. The seafood industry, except for some small-scale shellfish canners, largely disappeared from the Pacific Northwest.

Gone, too, were the Cascade coal towns of Washington after a peak of production in 1919. Most of the once great silver mines of northern Idaho closed in the 1980s, and the former gritty smelter town of Kellogg struggled to re-invent itself as an Alpine ski resort to tap the almighty tourist dollar. With a Superfund site in the neighborhood, that would prove no easy sell.

Organized labor, which had been concentrated in traditional manufacturing industries, along with newer ones like Boeing, had yet to gain a real foothold among high-tech and tourist-industry workers that now accounted for a preponderance of Pacific Northwest jobs. Because organized labor tended to ally with the Democratic Party, the decline of its political clout was particularly dramatic in Idaho, which became perhaps the single most Republican state in the Union. The Democratic Party formerly found a congenial base in the state's once numerous mine and timber towns, but the currents of economic change eroded that base until scarcely a remnant remained.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the Pacific Northwest still possessed two economies, as it had for at least two decades. The traditional commodity-producing and manufacturing economy in which organized labor once was strongest had declined at least since the early 1980s. At the same time, the

high-tech and tourist-based economy grew ever stronger, and here organized labor had yet to make significant inroads. Unless something dramatic changes, the future for organized labor in the Pacific Northwest should look like the immediate gloomy past

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PAINE, THOMAS (1737–1809) Writer, Advocate for Democracy and Reform

Thomas Paine was one of the few leaders of America's founding generation who emerged out of and remained a hero for the Atlantic world's working class. Born in 1737 in Thetford, about 75 miles from London, the young Paine's formal education ended at the age of 12 when he followed his father into the staymaker's trade, making whalebone corsets for middle-class and aristocratic women. Paine briefly established his own shop in 1758, but when that failed, he spent most of the next 10 years working sporadically as a teacher, tax collector, and staymaker until he finally found steady work in 1768 as an excise officer in Lewes. Up until this point in his life, there is little evidence that Paine had engaged in any organized political activity.

That quickly changed when Paine joined the Headstrong Club in Lewes, a town with a tradition of political radicalism that extended back to the English Civil War of the 1640s. In this club, Paine was introduced to a tradition of English Republicanism that advocated sweeping reforms that would make the English government more representative and less corrupt. He became involved with the popular Wilkite movement in the late 1760s and wrote his first political pamphlet in 1772 calling for the rationalization of the system of excise collection. By 1774, however, his career as a budding reformer was cut short when he lost his job and declared bankruptcy. In the fall of 1774, he sought out Benjamin Franklin in London and secured his assistance in starting over again in the New World.

Soon after his arrival in Philadelphia, Paine found work editing the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, and through that employment he came into contact with a

flourishing and diverse community of political radicals. As the crisis with England intensified, a coalition of urban workers, Enlightenment scientists, and progressive-minded professionals took control of Pennsylvania's political system. These people found common cause in their opposition to British tyranny, and together they crafted a political persuasion that Paine would soon masterfully articulate in his first American pamphlet, *Common Sense*. In 1775 and 1776, the Philadelphia militia had been taken over by workingmen who radically democratized that institution. They insisted on electing their officers, and by making the hunting shirt their official uniform, they challenged the class hierarchies that had previously structured the militia's ranks. Paine's *Common Sense* echoed the anti-authoritarian populism of these militia men, sarcastically referring to the king as the "Royal Brute" and arguing that hereditary power often supplied "an ass for a lion." Many of Paine's working-class compatriots also took part in what historians have called "the artisan Enlightenment," a movement of self-educated workers who embraced the radical social implications of Newtonian science. Their study of science had taught them that the world operated according to a set of universal laws that any person, regardless of their social position, could discern through their faculties of reason. Where kings and aristocrats had traditionally claimed unique access to truth, an increasing number of Philadelphia's working people came to believe with Paine that the broad mass of the people, through their use of reason and common sense, could best generate the laws that governed their society. In a language that echoed the populist humor and assertiveness of the radicalized community around him, Paine's *Common Sense* funneled that community's resentments and aspirations into the growing movement for national independence.

Tom Paine's experiences during the War for Independence testify to the complexities of class in the late eighteenth century. Thanks in part to his support of the radically democratic Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776, Paine remained a hero for a patriot rank and file that appreciated his support for political measures that served their interests. And although the Patriot leadership class looked with suspicion upon the growing politicization of ordinary Americans, in the early years of the war, they embraced Paine as an effective spokesperson for their cause. At George Washington's request, for example, Paine wrote a stirring set of essays (*The Crisis Papers*) that strengthened public support for the war during those "times that try men's souls." By the 1780s, however, Paine's ability to bridge the leadership class and the patriot rank and file had dwindled. At the root of his political fall from grace lay an ideological divide between Paine and his

fellow Americans. Paine was unusual in the 1780s in that he endorsed both highly democratic political arrangements and free market economics. Most supporters of the free market were established leaders who resisted political democratization, while most supporters of a more participatory and inclusive political system advocated a "moral economy" that would use price controls and other economic restrictions to protect laborers from the vagaries of the market. Although Paine's 1780s amalgam of democracy and free market capitalism would become mainstream in America by the early nineteenth century, when he boarded a ship bound for England in 1787, he had ceased to be a major public figure.

Paine re-emerged on the world stage in 1790, when he wrote the *Rights of Man* (part 2 appeared in 1792) in defense of the revolution in France and in support of democratization in Britain. These pamphlets were perhaps the most widely read tracts of the 1790s, and the working-class political movements that emerged in Britain at this time embraced Paine as a leading spokesman for their cause. In part 2 of *Rights of Man*, Paine sketched out a plan for a welfare system that would supply pensions for elderly and injured workers as well as their widows. This plan was to be financed by a progressive tax system with a top tax rate of 100%. In 1794, Paine published the *Age of Reason*, a scathing attack on established religion that interpreted it as a way for elites to gain the allegiance and subservience of ordinary people. He followed this deist tract with his most radical piece, *Agrarian Justice*, which argued that commercial society had made poverty an increasingly "hereditary" state. To remedy this systemic inequality, Paine claimed that each person should have their natural right to property restored by the state in the form of monetary payments made to every person, male and female, when they reached the age of 21 and then for every year after they had reached the age of 50. Paine's unprecedented claim that this economic support from the government should be claimed as "a right" and not as a form of charity marked a major departure from his 1780s endorsement of the free market and gained him the admiration of working people throughout the Atlantic world.

Throughout the nineteenth century, various groups of American labor activists, freethinkers, and abolitionists joined together to commemorate his birthday and re-affirm their support for Paine's revolutionary ideas. Such supporters, however, were always a minority. His association with deism and the French Revolution earned him the powerful enmity of established leaders in both Europe and America. When he returned to America in 1802, he was pilloried in the press as the leader of an international conspiracy to

overthrow all religion, abolish private property, and destroy the American government. He was welcomed by a small community of Democrats in New York City, but the Americans who threw stones at his carriage as he rode through New Jersey best exemplified the extent to which the world's first self-proclaimed democracy had turned against the eighteenth century's most effective advocate of democratization.

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PARSONS, ALBERT (1848–1887)

Albert R. Parsons was born in Alabama in 1848 to parents who had moved there from New England. Orphaned as a boy, he moved to Texas to live on his brother's ranch. He apprenticed as a printer and then talked his way into a Confederate cavalry unit after the Civil War started.

When it ended, Parsons returned to east Texas and started his own newspaper in Waco, which he used to advocate for the cause of the freedmen. In 1868, he began a dangerous career as a radical Republican politician and militia colonel until 1872, when Reconstruction effectively ended in Texas. In 1873, Parsons, who had wed a woman of color named Lucy, left Texas to ply his trade in Chicago.

The Texan found work as a printer at the *Chicago Times* and soon became interested in the controversy over unemployment relief; he decided that the city's socialists were valiantly fighting for the poor but were being excoriated by the press just as the Republicans had been condemned for advocating racial justice in Texas. This cause set Parsons on a course that would in the next decade make him an agitator of international renown until he was convicted and executed for being an accessory to the Haymarket bombing of May 4, 1886, an explosion that led to the deaths of seven police officers.

Albert Parsons began to win a hearing from Chicago's workers when he gave a stirring speech in July 23, 1877, a day before the great railroad strike erupted in Chicago.

His speech, calling for those in the "grand army of starvation" to join the "grand army of labor," was so

sensational that the newspapers and police blamed Parsons for the unrest and violence that followed the strike. Despite being fired, blacklisted, red-baited and threatened with lynching, Parsons persisted in his work, becoming the leading campaigner for the Workingmen's Party and the Socialistic Labor Party. Indeed, he believed he would have been elected to the city council as a socialist in 1879 but that he had been cheated out of office by a fraudulent count.

This experience was one of several that turned Parsons away from the electoral path to socialism. In 1881, he helped found the International Working People's Association after he had joined company with German immigrant revolutionaries like his fellow Chicagoan August Spies. In 1884, Parsons began to edit a paper called *Alarm* with his wife, Lucy—a paper that expressed the same call for social revolution and the same need for armed struggle Spies espoused in the German socialist publications he managed.

During the mid-1880s, Albert Parsons became a notorious agitator and orator in Chicago. His fame then spread to other Midwestern cities as well, where he was often asked to speak. By 1885, the Parsonses rejected the electoral path to socialism, embraced a homegrown brand of anarchism, and called for the use of guns and dynamite bombs in the coming struggle with the employers, the police, and the military.

At the same time, Parsons played an active role in the Knights of Labor and in various other movements aimed at organizing workers and gaining the eight-hour day. He viewed shorter hours as a reform the employers would never accept, but he also thought the demand had radical implications because the achievement of eight hours would offer workers the freedom to educate themselves and to conceive of a society based on co-operation instead of competition. Militant unions and a radical labor movement were essential in the process, as Parsons described it. Revolutionary workers' organizations would be the cells that would compose a new communal social organism without oppressive employers, laws, armies, and police forces.

In early 1886, Parsons emerged as a leading figure in the eight-hour strike movement that culminated on May 1 of that year and hit with the greatest force in Chicago. He had just returned to the city on May 4 when he was asked to speak at a rally called by the anarchists to protest the death of four strikers killed by the police the night before. He refused at first and then changed his mind. He delivered a rousing talk condemning the employers and the police and then left the area with his wife and children before the bomb exploded.

After the bombing, comrades persuaded Parsons to flee Chicago, fearing that he would be hunted down

and killed. He left for a two-month exile and then returned to Chicago to stand trial with the seven other anarchists accused of aiding and abetting the bombing. His lawyer, William Black, had convinced Parsons that he would be acquitted because no evidence connected him to the bombing. Black was wrong, however. Parsons was convicted of being an accessory to murder and sentenced to death.

In his final speech to the court, Parsons held forth for more than nine hours over a two-day period, offering a litany of complaints about his trial in particular and injustice in general. His words were published by his wife, Lucy, and circulated by anarchists and socialists around the world in working-class districts from Barcelona to Havana, where the name Albert Parsons became as well known as the names of Abraham Lincoln and John Brown.

While in prison, Parsons became a kind of celebrity, much quoted in the mainstream and labor press. His stature grew even greater when leading men in Illinois, believing Parsons was innocent of murder, urged him to beg the governor for clemency so that his sentence could be commuted to life in prison. But Parsons refused to serve jail time for a crime he had not committed—a stance that seemed heroic to many observers, especially to those active in the labor and radical movements of that time.

Albert Parsons was executed, along with three German comrades, on November 11, 1887, and buried next to them in Waldheim Cemetery outside of Chicago, a site that would become a hallowed one to radical pilgrims for decades afterward.

In the remaining years of her life, Lucy Parsons (who died in 1941) worked tirelessly to keep her husband's memory alive. During the Cold War years, Albert Parsons became a forgotten figure from a chapter in "labor's untold story" until the mid-1980s, when his story was revived and then featured in many historical studies, as well as in three plays and a novel.

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PARSONS, LUCY (1853–1942) Anarchist

Lucy Parsons became the best-known anarchist speaker in the United States in the three decades after her husband, Albert, was executed in Chicago on November 11, 1887, for allegedly conspiring in a bombing plot that killed seven policemen in Chicago's Haymarket Square on May 4, 1886. During her husband's confinement on death row, Lucy Parsons traveled to cities all over the nation and spoke to many sympathetic labor groups; after his death, she traveled to England, where she was received like a celebrity by radical and union groups. In the next two decades, Parsons continued her speaking and publishing activities, reviving the memory of Albert Parsons and the four other anarchists executed for the bombing, men who came to be known as the Haymarket martyrs. In these years, only Emma Goldman rivaled Lucy Parsons's fame as an anarchist agitator and a champion of free speech.

Lucy Parsons said that she was born Lucy Gonzalez in 1853 to a Hispanic mother and a Creek Indian father and that she was raised on her uncle's ranch in Texas. However, neither her birth date nor her parentage can be confirmed, and it seems likely that Lucy was born on a plantation in Hill County, Texas, and that her mother was a slave of African descent.

In any case, it is clear that Parsons was living around Waco, Texas, during the violent years of federal reconstruction in that area and that she knew of atrocities committed against newly freed blacks. This is most likely the setting in which she met Albert Parsons, while he was active as a radical Republican fighting for the rights of emancipated blacks.

Albert Parsons and Lucy were married in Austin, Texas, in 1872. The couple left Texas the following year and settled on the North Side of Chicago, where she worked as a dressmaker.

During the last half of the 1870s, Albert Parsons became a noted labor organizer and socialist campaigner in Chicago, and during the early 1880s, as he moved toward revolutionary socialism and anarchism, Lucy joined him in a highly public career of radical education and agitation.

Soon after the birth of her first child, a boy, in 1879, Lucy plunged into organizing female workers in Chicago as an activist in the Working Women's Union, where she met other talented women organizers like Elizabeth Rodgers and Lizzie Swank. Lucy Parsons increased her involvement after she gave birth to daughter in 1881, the same year the International Working People's Association (IWPA) was formed by her husband and other social revolutionaries.

By 1884, Lucy Parsons was active in the Chicago IWPA's American Group while she wrote articles and helped her husband produce the paper *Alarm*, an ultramilitant publication in which the writers and editors advocated the use of force, including dynamite, as a means of abolishing what they called wage slavery. Indeed, she became an especially passionate advocate of "propaganda by deed"—the use of force by revolutionaries acting on behalf of the oppressed. Lucy Parsons was a prominent speaker at weekly rallies held by the IWPA, whose members called themselves anarchists, and in noisy street demonstrations such as the one on Thanksgiving Day in 1885, Parsons led a "poor people's march" into the neighborhoods of the wealthy shouting denunciations at the rich in the name of the hungry.

When the national movement for the eight-hour day gathered force in April 1886, Lucy Parsons joined the Chicago anarchists in mobilizing unskilled, immigrant workers into the anarchist-led bodies of the city's Central Labor Union. She was especially active in organizing the women workers in the sewing and tailoring shops of the North and West sides. Parsons was attending such a meeting on the night of May 4, 1886, when she and her husband left to go to Haymarket Square, where Albert was asked to address a crowd of workers assembled by the anarchists to protest the killing of four strikers by the police at the McCormick Works the night before. Lucy brought her two young children to the square that night and left together with Albert when he finished his speech and a rainstorm threatened. They were socializing in a nearby saloon when the bomb exploded on Desplaines Street and changed their lives forever.

Lucy Parsons's efforts to commemorate her husband's life and work took many tangible forms, including her publication of *The Life of Albert Parsons* and *Famous Speeches of the Haymarket Anarchists*, both widely disseminated around the world for 30 years after the anarchists' deaths on November 11, 1887, and her solicitation of funds for a monument on the grave site of Albert and his comrades in Waldheim Cemetery near Chicago, a memorial unveiled in 1893.

Parsons remained a militant anarchist until around 1900, at which point she no longer advocated the use

of force and joined other radicals who were attempting to create a revolutionary workers' movement based on nonviolent direct action.

For this reason, Parsons was a prominent speaker at the founding convention of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in 1905. During the next decade, she was a prominent figure in the effort to gain free speech for workers and was arrested many times in her efforts to exercise that right.

During the 1920s, Parsons became active in the Communist Party's International Labor Defense group, taking up the cause of the radicals Sacco and Vanzetti. She lived to speak at the fiftieth anniversary of the anarchist hangings in 1937, when she connected those deaths to those of the 10 strikers killed by the Chicago police in the Memorial Day massacre earlier that year. Though blinded in her old age, Lucy became a revered figure to the radicals, organizing the new unions of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in Chicago during the late 1930s. On May Day, 1941, she waved to bystanders as she rode on a float constructed by the CIO Farm Equipment Workers Union. It would be her last May Day. She died on March 7, 1942, when her home caught fire. Lucy Parsons was buried next to her husband at Waldheim Cemetery.

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See also **Parsons, Albert**

PATERSON (NJ) SILK STRIKE (1913)

The 1913 Paterson, New Jersey, silk strike was the biggest and longest Paterson strike. Led by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and aided by poets and artists from New York City, it demonstrated solidarity and discipline. The strike was a high-water mark of the pre-WWI American left, and its outcome contributed to the decline and breakup of the left.

The 1913 strike was one of a series by Paterson silk workers, stretching back to the 1880s and forward to the 1930s. Silk weavers, who constituted the majority



Bus load of children of Paterson, N.J., strikers (silk workers) in May Day parade - New York City. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-52620].

of the workforce in the silk industry, came from textile centers in Europe to Paterson, because the pay was better than in Europe. They brought pride in their craft with them, and experience in labor struggles and socialist and anarchist ideas.

Before 1913, strikes in Paterson were frequent and short. Typically, weavers in a shop would walk out, usually to protect their wages or working conditions. Sometimes, dyers helpers would shut down their plant, to raise wages. Occasionally, as in a 1894 ribbon weavers strike, a 1902 dyers helpers strike, and a 1912 broad-silk weavers strike, a whole branch would go on strike.

In 1913, for the first and last time in Paterson, the trades joined together. The silk workers had learned from their defeats in 1902 and 1912 that if they didn't stick together, they would lose. This lesson was re-inforced by IWW speakers—Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Bill Haywood, and Carlo Tresca—who came to Paterson after a successful 1912 textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

The initial aim in 1913 was to defend the status quo in loom assignments. The Doherty mill had raised the number of looms assigned to each broad-silk weaver from two to four, and broad-silk weavers began the strike. When the dyers helpers joined, they brought an emphasis on an eight-hour day. Then the ribbon weavers also joined, to protest the tactics of the Paterson

municipal government in arresting IWW speakers and peaceful pickets.

Observers of the strike were amazed by the strikers' disciplined nonviolence, despite police provocations, which included over two thousand arrests and the closing of the strikers' meeting halls. Observers were also struck by the democratic spirit of the strike, the way strikers—including women—actively joined in decision making, rather than blindly following their local leaders or IWW speakers. Finally, observers were impressed by the solidarity among the different ethnic groups, the Italian, Jewish, German, and English silk workers.

The strike began on February 25; by mid-March, 23,000 silk workers (out of a total of 25,000) had joined the strike, and the silk mills and dye houses in Paterson were entirely shut down. But the larger Paterson silk mills and the dye houses had annexes in Pennsylvania. These annexes, which the manufacturers began building in the 1890s to escape the militancy of Paterson workers, enabled them to hold out in 1913, despite the fact that production was halted in Paterson. The Paterson silk workers and the IWW sent people to Pennsylvania to persuade local workers to strike. But the resulting strikes in Allentown and Hazelton were brief. The Paterson silk manufacturers, using the annexes in Pennsylvania, were able to limp through the strike.

Unable to win a quick victory, the Paterson strikers organized themselves for the long haul. Community organizations, especially the local chapters of the Sons of Italy and the (Jewish) Workmen's Circle, donated money and food. Socialists in New York and New Jersey aided the strike. With the help of the IWW, the strikers reached out to Greenwich Village writers and artists, who came to Paterson to see the strike and were moved by it. John Reed (later known for his coverage of the Bolshevik Revolution) came to Paterson and was arrested and sent to jail. Margaret Sanger (later known as the advocate of birth control) went to Hazleton and was also arrested and sent to jail. In Paterson, Sanger and Flynn talked birth control to the women strikers and the wives of the men strikers.

The most spectacular result of the cooperation between Paterson silk workers and New York artists was the Pageant of the Paterson Strike. The Pageant took place in Madison Square Garden on June 7. The Garden was sold out. There were 1,100 strikers who played themselves, the strikebreakers, and the police; many strikers, responding to Reed's questions, had previously helped develop the script. John Sloan, already famous as a painter of the "Ash Can" school, painted the backdrop, a giant silk mill. Robert Edmund Jones, later Eugene O'Neill's set designer, designed a center aisle through the audience, down which the strikers ran at the end of the first act, screaming, "Strike! Strike! Strike!"

The audience became passionately involved in the Pageant, and the press acknowledged its power. But in July, worn down by the long strike, silk workers began to return to work. The strike was lost. For the strikers, it was only a partial defeat. They succeeded in preventing the manufacturers from going ahead with four looms, and they lived to strike again, albeit in smaller numbers; in 1919, the weavers won an eight-hour day.

But left-wing supporters of the strike turned on each other after the 1913 defeat. Socialists blamed the IWW. The IWW, which had been on the rise in the eastern United States, was essentially finished there. Haywood and Flynn quarreled, with Flynn blaming the Pageant for the loss of the strike. Many historians have accepted her judgments. Others have argued that the Pageant succeeded in its original aim, which was to publicize the strike in New York, and that the strike was lost not because of the Pageant, but because the manufacturers, with their annexes in Pennsylvania, were even stronger than the strikers.

For a brief moment, in Paterson, the great hopeful energies of the strikers, the IWW, and the young radicals from the Village came together, creatively

and powerfully. Then, for Paterson and for the American left, the moment passed.

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See also **Industrial Workers of the World**

PATTERN BARGAINING

After a decade of massive organizing campaigns, the American labor movement emerged from World War II with secure national strongholds in the auto, steel, and meatpacking industries. Unions aspired to uniform bargaining standards with all the employers in each industry; recalcitrant employers in fragmented industries resisted. Thus, unions developed pattern bargaining as a hybrid strategy to enforce industry bargaining by presenting common contract demands at each company within an industry. Particularly in manufacturing, pattern bargaining became a defining feature of unions' collective identity, and the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the United Steelworkers (USW) waged strikes to "protect the pattern." But during the 1980s and 1990s, unions learned that the universal gains won during a flush economy could turn to collapsing dominoes of losses when ailing companies dragged down the pattern for entire industries.

Since the advent of collective bargaining in the United States, laborites had argued that unions could function as rationalizing agents in fragmented industries by harmonizing wages and work rules and forcing employers to co-ordinate with each other. Common contract standards would preclude ruinous wage undercutting as a competitive strategy for employers, and unionists hoped to help stabilize boom-and-bust cycles, particularly in industries like textiles and coal. In the 1930s, New Deal policy makers embraced this reasoning. The National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) created ad hoc industrial councils to set production, price, and wage standards, and a range of World War II-era federal agencies, from the National War Labor Board to the War

PATTERN BARGAINING

Manpower Commission, arbitrated disputes between unions and employers and promulgated shop-floor rules and wage settlements.

The apotheosis of this vision was multi-employer, industrywide bargaining. However, federal policy imposed industry bargaining only during crisis. American businesses, scarcely reconciled to New Deal legislation obliging them to recognize unions, tolerated industry bargaining but showed little interest in continuing it when federal mandates expired. A few industries stood out as exceptions: clothing manufacture, full-fashioned hosiery, and railroads sustained national bargaining between unions and industry associations for some years after World War II. The Teamsters came close to achieving a sectoral agreement. In 1964, solid organizing and strategic bargaining enabled the Teamsters to win a national master contract covering most motor freight carriers.

Thwarted at industry bargaining, unions came up with pattern bargaining. Obligated to deal bilaterally with individual employers, unions simply devised their own industry standards and then bargained for them. This required national co-ordination among locals and a centrally directed bargaining policy. To achieve a national pattern, unions generally selected the dominant firm in an industry as its target, negotiated the best possible settlement, and then turned to smaller competitors to insist acceptance of similar terms. The Steelworkers showed the way. After settling with industry leader U.S. Steel in 1937, the Steelworkers waged organizing campaigns at Little Steel firms like Bethlehem and Republic. After winning union recognition, the Steelworkers demanded and won similar contracts with Little Steel, in what came to be called "me-too" agreements. The potency of pattern bargaining is suggested by employers' efforts to ban it; in 1953, employers unsuccessfully lobbied to prohibit the practice in amendments to the Taft-Hartley Act. Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions embraced the tactic and pursued patterns in auto, rubber, farm equipment, aerospace, and meatpacking.

Features of pattern bargaining included master agreements with employers covering all plants and work locations; common expiration dates for each master contract; and successorship provisions binding the employer to include a union recognition covenant as a condition of sale for its plants and operations. Contracts generally required a master wage schedule, thus obviating regional wage variations. Unions needed strong centralized authority to enforce the pattern on locals; workers at a well-performing plant could be tempted to break off and bargain independently, while underperforming plants needed solidarity to sustain contract standards. Employers coordinated

closely as well, generally meeting privately to exchange notes and plot strategy, while maintaining a public façade of bilateral bargaining. Moreover, pattern bargaining required a high degree of unionization within an industry. By the 1960s, workers in auto and steel enjoyed a predictable cycle of steady contract improvements.

Pattern bargaining was most entrenched and sustained in auto and steel, with less durable instances in other mass production sectors like farm equipment and meatpacking. Workers in diverse industries adopted variants. Airline pilots established strong craft density within an incompletely unionized sector and achieved an industry pattern. New York City public unions representing workers from teachers to clerks to police officers formed a bargaining council to negotiate with the city and insist on the same percentage wage increase for all municipal workers.

As unionization rates nosedived across the economy beginning in the 1980s, the advantage in pattern bargaining shifted from unions to employers. In steel and auto, recession and overcapacity combined to bankrupt manufacturers, which promptly demanded contract concessions from their unions. Employers borrowed the unions' logic and insisted that concessions granted to one employer must be extended to all. Manufacturing unions faced a spiral of givebacks that dismantled contract edifices built over a generation. Further, the pattern disadvantaged entire industry sectors contending with nonunion competitors; thus, nonunion Japanese and European auto assembly plants in the United States all shared a widening competitive edge over Detroit's Big Three auto firms. In other sectors, different competitive pressures eroded union density and bargaining power. Deregulation of trucking swiftly produced a new low-cost nonunion trucking sector that undercut Teamster signatories and eviscerated the master freight agreement; in meatpacking, anti-union slaughterhouses gradually overtook the once dominant union firms. Janitors were a marked exception to the general decline. The Justice for Janitors campaign, launched in the late 1980s, systematically organized cleaning contractors in urban markets and, upon achieving market density, won marketwide agreements and in some cases forced contractors to bargain in industry associations.

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See also **Collective Bargaining; National Industrial Recovery Act; National War Labor Board (WWII); Steel and Iron; Teamsters for a Democratic Union**

PEONAGE

Peonage is a form of coerced labor that emerged in the southeastern United States after the emancipation of African-American slaves. The English term "peonage" originally derived from the Spanish *peon*, meaning foot soldier. Before being imported into the United States, peonage referred to a type of involuntary servitude based on a laborer's indebtedness to a creditor. This hybrid of free labor and chattel slavery was prevalent in European colonies in Latin America and the Philippines. In 1850, the first instances of such peonage arose in the United States with the conquering of the New Mexico territory at the end of the Mexican-American war.

After the Civil War ended in 1865, American peonage became most closely identified with the plight of indebted African-American farmworkers in the South. Although the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude in 1865, white southerners attempted to return their former slaves to a system of labor as close to chattel slavery as possible. Southern legislatures passed so-called Black Codes to authorize peonage practices. Though varying by state, the Codes generally restricted the labor choices of freed slaves and ensured a steady labor force for southern landowners. They prohibited freedpeople from renting agricultural land and from working in nonagricultural trades. They also required blacks to carry written proof of lawful employment to avoid arrest for vagrancy. Although the federal Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands protected former slaves in many ways, its requirement that they sign yearly labor contracts with landowners who were often their former masters bolstered white power.

After Union military officials invalidated the Black Codes in late 1865 and early 1866, Congress passed a number of federal civil rights statutes and an antipeonage statute. Congress also proposed, and the states ratified, the Fourteenth Amendment in 1867 and the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870. A web of both social customs and racially neutral laws nonetheless emerged to strengthen involuntary servitude in the South. By

the late 1800s, a new system of labor had emerged. African-Americans seeking a modicum of autonomy rented land through sharecropper or tenant farmer agreements. Despite the improvement this represented over gang labor, the system remained oppressive as legal barriers severely hampered renters' profits. Losses fell disproportionately on tenants due to crop lien statutes, which funneled profits directly to pay white landlords and merchants who lent supplies. Sharecroppers, who paid landlords with shares of crops, had a more difficult time. Both tenants and sharecroppers were so indebted to landlords that crop profits did not even cover their debt, let alone the ability to forego additional loans.

Additional state legislation made it difficult for southern African-Americans to choose their employment freely. One common law among southern states prohibited an employer from enticing a laborer away from a job. Another—the criminal surety law—allowed courts to hire out African-Americans who failed to pay their fines. Employers had their own employees convicted of often trumped-up petty offenses in order to obtain cheap and guaranteed labor in return. Convict leasing, while not unconstitutional per se, was a publicly administered version of the surety system. Emigrant agent licensing laws required labor recruiters to pay exorbitant fees in southern states. By 1900, additional laws emerged to help entrench the peonage system. Modified contract labor laws made it a crime for a laborer to fraudulently sign and break a labor contract. Southern states inferred a fraudulent signing from the very act of breaking the contract.

In addition to labor-specific laws, many other laws encouraged peonage by curtailing the mobility of African-American workers. Hitchhiking laws, for example, forbade a free mode of transportation for workers to reach other sources of employment. Vagrancy laws afforded law enforcement considerable discretion to arrest African-Americans and put them to work.

The oppressive atmosphere in the South provided fertile ground for peonage and prevented simple legal solutions from eradicating the deeply rooted problem. In a society committed to defending white supremacy, southern landowners supported by white officials could effectively ignore federal laws that may have protected African-American laborers. By the 1890s, white southerners had largely disfranchised African-Americans, barring them from positions of power. White planters could also rely on rural isolation to prevent workers from discovering other sources of work and from asserting their legal rights. They could also resort to beatings, lynching, and property expropriation to instill fear in African-American laborers.

African-Americans attempted to escape their peon status by moving between farms or between states. They also resisted by shirking on loans, by resorting to violence, and by occasionally obtaining their own property. Legal challenges, however, were largely beyond their means.

Historians have long debated the extent of the southern peonage system in the late nineteenth century. Some argue that the tenant system did not operate to the detriment of African-Americans in some areas of the South. The evidence is clear, however, that a significant amount of agricultural peonage existed in the South before 1900. Peonage also flourished during this period in rural industries like turpentine, lumber, naval stores, and railroad construction.

The Progressive Campaign against Peonage

By the time the first public campaign against peonage emerged, the Thirteenth Amendment and the Peonage Act of 1867 had lain dormant for more than a quarter of a century. At the turn of the twentieth century, peonage caught the attention of American progressives bent on eradicating a bevy of social ills. Even as white progressives in both the North and the South tolerated increased white-on-black violence and the general deterioration of the status of African-Americans, they deemed peonage—with its overtones of chattel slavery—beyond the pale of a civilized nation.

In the North, a progressive press exposed the problem of peonage, portraying it as proof of the South's backward and pariah status. Progressives like Ray Stannard Baker wrote exposés on southern peonage, and Oswald Garrison Villard—grandson of the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison—attacked peonage in the newspapers much as his grandfather had critiqued chattel slavery.

White southern liberals played critical roles in exposing Progressive Era peonage. Fred Cubberly, a Florida Commissioner, filed the first test case of the federal peonage statute. In Alabama, Erastus Parsons, the grandson of a former state governor, instituted habeas corpus proceedings to free a peon, and Judge Thomas Jones, a patrician former Alabama governor himself, impaneled a grand jury to investigate peonage.

In the African-American community, leaders united in their opposition to peonage despite differences on other issues. Even Booker T. Washington, usually seen as an accommodationist in contrast to such civil rights activists as W. E. B. DuBois, joined in

the antipeonage crusade. Washington secretly funded litigation and provided information about peonage practices to the northern press.

The federal government under President Theodore Roosevelt responded to public outcries against peonage with litigation. Not only was peonage the subject of much opprobrium, but it also enabled Roosevelt's Republican Justice Department to embarrass the largely Democratic white South. By 1905, the Justice Department had prosecuted more than 100 peonage cases.

The Justice Department's first test case reached the Supreme Court in 1905. Although *Clyatt v. United States* did not result in a conviction, the Court upheld as constitutional the Peonage Act of 1867. In 1911, *Bailey v. Alabama* struck down a contract labor law for violating the Thirteenth Amendment's prohibition on involuntary servitude. A third case, *United States v. Reynolds* in 1914, ruled unconstitutional Alabama's criminal surety system, whereby indigents convicted of misdemeanors were subject to criminal penalties if they ceased working for the sureties who had paid their fines.

Despite these decisions, the federal government ultimately did little to help black peons. Statutes limited the reach of federal law enforcement, as they only allowed for prosecutions of involuntary servitude based on debt. Although some state courts struck down laws facilitating peonage, other states took advantage of the narrowness of Supreme Court decisions to maintain peonage laws. Still other states, notably Florida and Georgia, defiantly repassed statutes virtually identical to those struck down. The juries of southern states were similarly recalcitrant. Almost always all white, most juries would refuse to convict local white planters of peonage.

Federal investigations after 1906 emphasized the plight of immigrants rather than that of blacks. Many immigrants were lured to the South by promises of high wages but found themselves in debt working as peons in railroad and turpentine camps. The United States sought to avert international embarrassment from these stories of European immigrants. Assistant Attorney General Charles Wells Russell and Mary Grace Quackenbos, a wealthy New York attorney and the first female special assistant U.S. attorney, traveled across the South to investigate peonage among immigrants.

Pressure from white southern congressmen contributed to the new emphasis on immigrants. These congressmen criticized the Justice Department's focus on African-American peonage in the South. Congress accordingly passed a bill calling for an investigation into nationwide peonage among immigrants.

The resulting Immigration Commission Report concluded that peonage had existed in the United States in 1907 but that it had largely been eliminated by 1911.

The belief that peonage was not a serious problem stemmed from two related impulses. The first, generally espoused by southerners, was that the South opposed peonage, viewing it as a vestige of the past and an outlier practice. The second was that, as a general matter, progressives in the North and South had faith in the power of public exposure. They believed changing public opinion—rather than battling to punish landowners—would easily end peonage. The Alabama judge Thomas Jones reflected this belief when he obtained several peonage convictions but gave light sentences and recommended pardons for some of the guilty.

Interwar Period

From the start of World War I through the 1920s, 1.5 million African-Americans escaped oppressive conditions in the rural South and headed to northern and southern cities. Their departure strengthened the resolve of many southern planters to retain remaining workers through oppressive peonage practices. Though peonage clearly endured in this environment after 1914, its exact scope was unknown. The remoteness of rural peonage practices made measuring the problem difficult. Although written complaints poured into the Department of Justice and the NAACP after 1909, isolated and often illiterate victims had difficulty making their complaints heard.

Sporadic exposés during the interwar period suggested the persistence of peonage across the South. The case of John Williams, the notorious “murder farmer” of Jasper County, Georgia, exposed a southern planter willing to murder laborers who might testify about peonage. Williams, who was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of an African-American laborer, inspired a former governor, Hugh Dorsey, to publish a pamphlet documenting a horrific picture of peonage across rural Georgia.

In another notorious incident, the federal government appeared to sponsor the establishment of peonage camps after the flooding of the Mississippi River in 1927. Camps providing shelter for those displaced by the flood forced African-American refugees to work on river levees and for white landowners. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover and the Red Cross denied these allegations, which the NAACP documented through its own investigations.

During the Great Depression, farm mechanization and bankruptcies, a labor surplus, and federal agricultural policies decreased the need for farmworkers. Though peonage may have declined in the 1930s as a result, high-profile incidents of forced labor proved its existence. In Arkansas, Paul D. Peacher was charged in 1937 with slavery under an 1866 Slave Kidnapping Act for forcing 20 striking African-Americans to stay in jail-like conditions and work on his farm. Another infamous Depression-era case involved a Georgia farmer who chased escaped peons to Chicago in 1939. The African-American lawyer William Henry Huff interceded on behalf of the escaped peons. He created the Abolish Peonage Committee to publicize the case and pressure the federal government to prosecute. Ultimately, a federal judge threw out the charges against the farmer.

The World War II Campaign against Peonage

During World War II, southern planters renewed efforts to maintain coercive control over African-American laborers despite the many who fled north for lucrative industrial jobs. Landowners fearful of labor scarcity used coercion to force remaining workers to stay rather than higher wages to induce them to do so. As the rural South became less isolated, however, planters found it increasingly difficult to restrict worker movement and hide egregious practices from federal authorities.

Within this context, the federal government revitalized its antipeonage work. Building on the peonage and slave kidnapping statutes, the Thirteenth Amendment, and additional civil rights statutes, Justice Department lawyers in the newly established Civil Rights Section instituted numerous investigations. One particularly widespread incident occurred in 1942 on the United States Sugar Corporation’s Florida sugar plantations. The federal prosecution ultimately failed when an all-white grand jury refused to indict. As a general matter, the Civil Rights Section sought to expand the meaning of peonage under federal statutes to include cases that did not implicate a debt. Despite these efforts, the debt element of statutory peonage remained and limited some prosecutions.

The Supreme Court supported Justice Department efforts to eradicate peonage with its wartime decisions. In *Taylor v. Georgia* and *Pollock v. Williams*, the Court re-affirmed its 1911 decision striking down coercive contract laws. *United States v. Gaskin* ruled

that the arrest of a person with intent to force him into labor to repay a debt violates the Thirteenth Amendment, even if no labor is actually performed.

Other civil rights organizations contributed to federal efforts to end peonage during the 1940s. The Justice Department often received reports of peonage from groups that had conducted their own investigations. The Workers Defense League (WDL), for example, repeatedly exposed peonage in Florida, Texas, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. The NAACP also brought peonage complaints to the government's attention.

Peonage after World War II

Reports of peonage and federal prosecutions of the practice declined during the 1950s. Nevertheless, it is likely peonage changed in form rather than entirely disappeared. One sign that peonage persisted was the WDL's success in persuading the United Nations to create a Commission on Forced Labor. Another came in 1951, when a white social activist from Florida named Stetson Kennedy testified to that Commission about the problem of peonage in the United States.

Whatever the scope of the peonage problem since 1950, the types of victims and circumstances clearly changed. Peonage became more closely associated with immigrants, who generally replaced African-Americans as the poorest farmworkers. One study of peonage from 1961 to 1963 found the highest incidence in California, likely due to the prevalence of Mexican migrant labor in the state. The study also found incidents of peonage in 29 other states.

A tool used in this new type of peonage was the traditional one of the unconscionable labor contract. The United States government undertook to formalize the use of alien farmworkers in both the Bracero and H-2 workers programs. Despite these federal efforts, several exposés revealed the continued threat of peonage to foreign farmworkers. In 1961, Edward Murrow's CBS documentary titled *Harvest of Shame* focused national attention on the problem. In 1969, a *New Republic* article by Robert Coles and Harry Huge spotlighted peonage in Florida.

After the 1950s, peonage also changed by expanding to nonrural industries. Sweatshops, particularly in the garment industry, and prostitution rings became fertile ground for peonage and other forms of involuntary servitude. In the late 1980s, the Supreme Court clarified the definition of involuntary servitude under the Thirteenth Amendment. In *United States v. Kozminksy*, the Court said the law, though not requiring

a laborer to be indebted, did require an objective determination of coerced labor. The Justice Department continued to prosecute peonage and involuntary servitude under this definition into the twenty-first century. Newer laws protecting immigrants from peonage have augmented the federal government's ability to address the problem.

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See also African-Americans; Convict Labor in the New South; Emancipation and Reconstruction; Migrant Farmworkers; Sharecropping and Tenancy; Slavery; South; Thirteenth Amendment

PEOPLE'S PARTY

See Populism/People's Party

PERKINS, FRANCES (1880–1965) Department of Labor

Born in 1880, Frances Perkins attended Mount Holyoke College, graduating in 1902. After teaching for several years, the Boston native went to New York City in 1909 to study for a master's degree at Columbia University. Finishing her degree the next year, she joined the Consumers' League of New York, an organization devoted to raising labor standards for working women and children.

Perkins personally witnessed the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire on March 25, 1911, where 146 garment industry workers, mostly young, immigrant women, died trying to escape a factory fire. A determined Perkins went to work for the Factory Investigating Commission (FIC), created in June 1911 by the New York legislature to investigate working conditions in the state's manufacturing. While working for the Commission, Perkins became close friends with the FIC's two major political figures, State Senator Robert F. Wagner Sr. and State Assembly Majority Leader Alfred E. ("Al") Smith. Perkins also lobbied for the passage of a 54-hour workweek bill for New York's factory women workers, which became law in March 1912. These experiences convinced her that labor legislation constituted the most effective means of helping labor, although Perkins also supported trade unionism.

In 1919, the newly elected governor, Al Smith, appointed Perkins to New York's Industrial Commission. For the next 10 years (except from 1921 through 1923) Perkins gained invaluable experience overseeing New York's workers' compensation system, as well as mediating strikes.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became Smith's successor in 1929, he appointed Perkins the state's first female industrial commissioner. Previously cool to Roosevelt because of his perceived superciliousness, a surprised Perkins soon formed a close working relationship with the new governor. She also provided subtle, but effective, assistance to reformers working

for a minimum wage bill for workingwomen in New York, which passed in early 1933. She also became a major critic of President Herbert Hoover's attempts to alleviate the growing depression and convinced Governor Roosevelt to form a governmental committee that sought to stabilize New York's unemployment situation.

Perkins became the first woman member of the U.S. cabinet when the newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed her head of the nation's Department of Labor in March 1933. Confirmed by the Senate, Perkins faced widespread skepticism among both business and labor interests doubtful about a woman's ability to manage the nation's labor affairs. Within the next two years, however, Secretary Perkins won grudging admiration as an effective, if sometimes prickly, arbitrator between management and labor, helping to settle disputes in San Francisco and Minneapolis. Her attempt to reconcile skilled and unskilled laborers failed, however, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) remained separate from the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) until 1955.

While not directly involved with the Wagner Act, Perkins shepherded through Congress the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935 and the Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act of 1936, which required federal contractors to meet minimum wage standards.

The passage of the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) perhaps proved the most significant triumph for Perkins, since it provided the first federal floor wage requirements for workers in the United States. The secretary of labor prepared the groundwork for the FLSA by holding seven national minimum wage conferences from 1933 through 1937, which brought together business leaders, labor leaders, and government officials to discuss the issue. Perkins lobbied for the FLSA after President Roosevelt introduced the law to Congress in May 1937. A significant feature of the final bill, enacted in June 1938, gave the administration of the FLSA to Department of Labor officials.

Although organized labor never warmed to Perkins, business interests became increasingly hostile to her. When Perkins delayed the deportation of the controversial longshoremen leader Harry Bridges in 1938, the House Judiciary Committee considered a motion for impeachment. While Perkins testified before the Committee, the motion never reached Congress.

Perkins continued to serve as secretary of labor after President Roosevelt secured his third term in 1940. Her influence, however, diminished as President Roosevelt's tendency to create myriad administrative agencies during World War II meant that Perkins possessed little control over the United States'

wartime labor situation. The secretary of labor did ensure that labor standards established during the New Deal did not end.

Forced to resign by President Harry S Truman in July 1945, Perkins published her surprisingly balanced memoirs, *The Roosevelt I Knew*, the next year. The former cabinet officer continued her active career, most notably teaching at Cornell University's School of Labor and Industrial Relations until her death in 1965.

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See also **Department of Labor; Triangle Shirtwaist Fire**

PERLMAN, SELIG (1888–1959) Labor Intellectual

Best known to labor historians for his collaboration with his mentor, John R. Commons, on the classic *The History of Labour in the United States* (1918), Selig Perlman emerged from Jewish immigrant origins to become one of the most influential labor intellectuals of the early twentieth century. Born to a small merchant family in Bialystock, Russia, Perlman passed from Jewish day school to a Russian gymnasium to a brief period studying medicine with other politically radical Russian émigrés in Italy before a fortuitous connection with the visiting American socialist, William English Walling, provided the invitation to emigrate to the United States and, shortly thereafter, enroll at the University of Wisconsin.

Combining a sharp-edged theoretical disposition with a commitment to empirical research, Perlman soon substantially advanced contemporary understandings of the workers' movement in America and elsewhere. His undergraduate thesis, "History of Socialism in Milwaukee," completed after one year of coursework, reflected an initial continuity of intellectual and political commitments. Espousing the revisionist "opportunism" of Eduard Bernstein, Perlman extolled Victor Berger and the Milwaukee socialists for the triumph of "realism" over "revolutionism" in labor and political circles. Pursuing graduate training at Wisconsin under Commons and Richard T. Ely, Perlman assimilated Commons's emphasis on the role of marketplace forces (as opposed to class conflict at

the point of production) as influences on workers' behavior. His dissertation, published as the last part of volume two of Commons' *History of Labour* (1918), emphasized the skilled worker's view of job control as a kind of property right. Next, Perlman's *A History of Trade Unionism in the United States* (1922), begun as an update of Ely's *The Labor Movement in America* (1886), continued this emphasis on trade unionism as a worker's form of market protection. Rather than contending over ownership of the means of production, Perlman insinuated, American workers sought to insulate themselves from cheap goods and cheap labor through the power of collective bargaining agreements.

Ultimately ensconced in his own teaching position at the University of Wisconsin's economics department and School for Workers, Perlman produced his most influential work, *A Theory of the Labor Movement* (1928). At once offering a summary historical reflection on worker movements in Russia, Germany, and Britain, as well as the United States, Perlman here developed the concept of "job consciousness—with a limited objective of wage and job control" as the characteristic way that American labor, in contradistinction to European "class consciousness," defended workers' economic security. The reasons that a European-style "class consciousness" continually failed to take root in the United States, enumerated Perlman, included the mobility of the wage-earning class, with outlets both in the "West" and in lower-level managerial positions; early access of workers to the ballot and identification with the larger public; and massive immigration, making for "the most heterogeneous laboring class in existence" (pp. 165–169). Another prominent theme of *A Theory* was Perlman's pointed reflection on the continual struggle of "organic labor" against "dominance by the intellectuals." Instead of an American exceptionalism, à la Werner Sombart, Perlman's intellectual-versus-worker paradigm implied a "Soviet" exceptionalism, with "backward" Russia the one country where the "will to power" of intellectuals within the workers' movement had prevailed. Outside the Soviet Union, he argued, built-in tensions between the two social groups persisted (with intellectuals weakest of all in the United States), but the trade unionists, mature and well-organized, tended increasingly to shape both industrial and political action in their own pragmatic, nonrevolutionary image. Perlman's personal experience had likely made him particularly aware of the social standing and role of the intellectual. An outsider both as an immigrant and a Jew to American academic culture, he also enjoyed relatively little direct contact with the American labor organizations—let alone the ordinary workers—he wrote about. In the circumstances, his

assimilation of American pragmatism (one combined with a particular reading of Jewish law) likely led him to a mistrust of all abstract faiths and utopian political projections. Always conscious of the anti-Semitic slights around him, in his later years, Perlman turned his focus to the plight of European Jews, and, but for health reasons, would have accepted a chair at Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the mid-1950s.

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PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Broadly conceived, personnel management encompasses any effort by supervisors to direct employees, but the term is largely associated with the maturation of industrial capitalism and construction of formal employee policies. It involved the establishment of specialized activities within public and private institutions, which created rules and procedures for employee relations, including hiring, training, promotion, discipline, and dismissal. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, business firms blended informal employee relations practices with more formal employee policies, often relying on both personal decisions and impersonal rules to govern employees. By 1880, specialized personnel offices and staff positions began to appear in large corporate entities, such as John Wanamaker's department store, but few businesses followed suit until the 1910s and 1920s, and many of these offices remained small. Narrowly conceived, they often focused on record keeping. In 1883, the Pendleton Act created the U.S. Civil Service Commission to oversee implementation of a merit system in the federal government. Although hiring remained decentralized within agencies, the commission became the government's central personnel agency. During the Great Depression, the establishment of specialized personnel offices accelerated—perhaps in response to the expansion of unions—both in the public and private sector. One study estimated that the number of personnel departments doubled in companies employing more than 250 people between 1929 and 1935, and the Department of Agriculture established the first federal department personnel office in 1925, with

many agencies following in the 1930s. By 1939, the federal government had a Council of Personnel Administration consisting of agency personnel directors who discussed common issues, such as union relations, and sought to unify personnel practices.

Scholars offer myriad explanations for the creation of personnel administration. For some, the emergence of this field is largely a function of size; as organizations, especially corporations, grew larger and more complex, firm owners sought ways to standardize employee relations practices, standardizing them across far-flung divisions. Often drawing on theories articulated by the sociologist Max Weber, this view stressed the way that bureaucracies—with their functional division of labor, hierarchical organization, and impersonal rules—became the most efficient way of conducting business. Explanations placing more emphasis on human agency and internal pressures focused on the role that middle-level managers played in creating new functions as a means of expanding career options and their professional authority. Scholars influenced by Marxism argued that the emergence of personnel administration reflected a management effort to assert greater control and discipline over labor, particularly as a means of combating high employee turnover rates in the early twentieth century, strikes, and union power. Turning this interpretation on its head, some students of personnel management maintained that unionization and collective bargaining, with its reliance on contracts and rules, encouraged management to adopt more formal personnel management procedures. Harkening back to a Weberian model, those who attempted to blend these two interpretations suggested that both managers and workers desired a more predictable environment based on standard employee procedures and policies. Finally, some more politically inclined scholars asserted that government regulations and legislation, such as affirmative action, led firms and public agencies to develop personnel offices to administer these regulations.

Scientific Management, Welfare Work, and Gender

As an occupation, personnel management has strong ties to Progressive Era movements and deep roots in engineering and social welfare work. Like many Progressive Era reformers, some early personnel management proponents valued technical expertise, efficiency, and standardization. While others in the field prized these concepts, and demonstrated a characteristic Progressive proclivity to support intervention,

they were equally influenced by moral concerns. They conceived of personnel management as an opportunity to humanize industrial capitalism and improve the life of workers by stressing the personal, over technocratic, aspects of personnel work.

Frederick W. Taylor's influential scientific management theories, and the movement spawned by them, contributed to the early formation of a technically oriented form of personnel work. Drawing on the new field of engineering and its foundation in mathematics and emphasis on scientific method, Taylor and his followers sought to increase worker efficiency through the application of scientific principles to the management of labor. While not specifically designed for personnel management, Taylor's theories nonetheless encouraged devotees to apply scientific management to employee relations. Harlow Person, for instance, a member of the Society to Promote the Science of Management (renamed the Taylor Society after Taylor's death), devised the first college course for employment managers, offering it at Dartmouth College's Amos Tuck School of Administration and Finance in 1915. Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, members of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and two founders of the Society to Promote the Science of Management, conducted experiments on how to reduce worker fatigue and increase productivity. One company, Plimpton Press, which had introduced Taylorism into its workplace, established a separate employment department in 1910 with Jane C. Williams as its manager. Her department had multiple responsibilities ranging from matching workers to appropriate jobs, training, orientation, and grievance work to maintaining a library, offering financial advice, and providing a lunchroom. These developments coalesced into an employment management movement, which gathered force in the 1910s and initially stressed the need to match workers' mental and physical traits with appropriate jobs.

Williams's diverse tasks suggested the welfare roots of personnel management. Sometimes referred to as "industrial betterment," this movement attracted reformers eager to soften the industrial experience. At times influenced by the Social Gospel movement, proponents focused on improving the lives and raising the morale of workers. To this end, they favored the implementation of recreation, health, and educational programs and the establishment of other employee services, such as dining rooms. Usually labeled welfare departments or offices, their heads perceived themselves as operating between line and staff positions and as mediators balancing the needs of management and workers. The National Cash Register Company established the first recorded welfare office

in 1897, with Lena H. Tracy as its head. Several other large companies, such as Filene's Department Store, Westinghouse Electric, and H. J. Heinz Co., subsequently created their own offices. A study by the National Civic Federation reported 2,500 firms with welfare offices by 1914, many of them headed by women. At about the same time, the term "employment management" began to replace the phrase "welfare work."

Notably, personnel work offered women access to white-collar managerial positions. Usually referred to as social or welfare secretaries, women who ran welfare offices frequently had backgrounds in vocational guidance, social reform, and teaching. Other women came to personnel administration through training in psychology. Lillian Gilbreth, for example, became an early advocate of applying psychology to management. Like Gilbreth, Person supported the blending of social and behavioral sciences, especially the emerging field of industrial psychology, with scientific management and its engineering emphasis.

Industrial psychology, pioneered by Hugo Münsterberg, who came to Harvard from Germany in 1892, suggested that mental tests could match the best person with the best job and that an ideal psychological environment could increase worker output. During World War I, the federal government significantly supported this program by hiring psychologists, such as Walter Dill Scott, who developed intelligence and occupation aptitude tests for both the military and industry.

This reliance on psychology served as a bridge between the hard scientific basis of personnel administration and its softer origins in welfare reform, a split that further revealed the gendered dimension of personnel work. Both men and women acted as proponents of the scientific and welfare versions of personnel management, but men and a masculine discourse generally dominated the scientific management movement, and women and a feminine discourse tended to be more prominent in welfare reform efforts. Scientific management's emphasis on rationality and efficiency was portrayed in masculine terms and contrasted to the more feminine versions of employee welfare work, which was conveyed as focusing on emotional well-being. Tensions over the masculine and feminine forms of personnel management, including ongoing efforts of women to break into management careers dominated by men and equally powerful attempts by managers to make the field more manly as a means of gaining professional legitimacy, led to significant fragmentation of the personnel movement in the early twentieth century. It also suggested the struggle this field and its

practitioners faced as it attempted to build professional authority.

Professionalization

In a sign of the field's desire to carve out a specific identity and to professionalize, employment management associations and journals began to appear in the 1910s. The National Association of Corporation Schools (NACS), created in 1913, became the first national organization to examine personnel management explicitly. It began publishing a bulletin in 1914. In 1922, NACS merged with the National Association of Employment Managers, to form the National Personnel Association, which eventually became the American Management Association (AMA). Ostensibly a neutral, professional organization, the AMA nonetheless had strong ties to large corporations, such as Standard Oil, DuPont, and General Electric, and in the 1920s showed a distinctively anti-union bias. Its journal underwent several name changes, calling itself *Personnel Administration*, *Personnel*, and finally *HR Focus* in 1991. In 1919, many of the same companies associated with AMA had organized a Special Conference Committee, chaired by the former personnel director for Standard Oil, to coordinate personnel policies and labor relations activities. A few years later, they formed the Personnel Research Federation to promote industrial psychology. The Federation's *Personnel Journal* (formerly the *Journal of Personnel Research*) was published until 1996. Although none of these associations called overtly for the hostile suppression of unions, they promoted employee representation plans, such as company unions, with a clear aim to undermine worker support for labor organizations.

In the public sector, managers, who generally did not deal with the same union issues as their private-sector counterparts, had their own professional organizations and journals. Public personnel managers tended to join the Society for Personnel Administration, which published *Personnel Administration*, starting in 1938. In 1972, the journal merged with *Public Personnel Review* to become *Public Personnel Management*. By the 1940s, journals with the term "human relations" in the title began to appear, and in the 1980s, "human resources" became more prevalent.

The human relations school of management, which many personnel administrators eagerly embraced in the 1930s and 1940s, provided personnel work with closer ties to the academy and cemented personnel management to the social and behavioral sciences.

It emerged from a series of experiments conducted by the Harvard sociologist Elton Mayo and others at Western Electric's Hawthorne plant in the 1920s. These experiments reflected the increased attention paid to management issues by academics and the desire by many in the field to marry psychology and sociology to personnel administration. Drawn to the writings of the German sociologist Emile Durkheim, Mayo believed that organizations should be viewed as social systems in which individual problems and group dynamics could easily undermine morale, and hence productivity. Supervisors therefore needed to recognize that worker behavior was often guided by emotional sentiments seemingly disconnected from the actual job performed. To maximize morale and increase productivity, line managers would need to diagnose and address workers' psychological and social problems. Mayo's more personal approach to management appealed to personnel specialists with a reformist orientation and those wishing to enhance the field's professional credibility. It also connected management studies more firmly to the academy, as evidenced by the University of Chicago's Committee on Human Relations in Industry (1943), which collaborated with Sears, Roebuck and Company on numerous studies. This management school also spawned a plethora of publications, including Fritz J. Roethlisberger and William S. Dickson's book *Management and the Worker* (1939), which became the most widely distributed text on Mayo's brand of human relations. Personnel offices often sought to train line managers in the art of human relations, which encouraged managers to improve their interpersonal skills so that they could counsel and communicate more effectively with subordinates. As part of a larger industrial democracy movement, human relations seemed to humanize management in a way that the technocratic Taylor system had not.

Critics complained that human relations merely masked power relations within firms and ignored legitimate worker complaints about work conditions and pay. Moreover, they argued, the underlying aim of human relations was to force the worker to adjust to a hierarchical work environment, rather than encourage a more democratic workplace. Many perceived it as an effort to undermine unions. A simultaneous stress, starting in the 1920s, on creating employee representation programs as a means of promoting industrial democracy often led to the establishment of company unions, which was further evidence to critics of the conservative aims of these efforts. Although some human relations experts sought to include unions in programs, labor organizations often expressed skepticism of its value as an empowering source for workers.

Personnel Management in the Post-World War II Era

Labor relations specialists often found themselves organized as a subset of a personnel office, particularly after passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935. Overall, however, personnel offices concentrated on training, benefits, job classification, and payroll. Developments in post-Mayo management schools reinvigorated the field's academic orientation but also put new emphasis on the growing white-collar workforce of the widening service sector. These theories included the management guru Peter Drucker's "management by objectives," Douglas MacGregor's "Theory Y," which stressed worker self-actualization, and "Theory Z," an American interpretation of familial management styles practiced in postwar Japan. Simultaneously, scholars sought to reconstruct a science of administration, using cybernetics, economics, and math. Although critical of Taylor's scientific management, the most prominent organizational theorist, Herbert Simon, applied mathematical and economic models and used theories drawn from political science, sociology, and psychology in an effort to construct an overarching theory of bureaucratic rationality.

The proliferation of new federal regulations regarding workplace equity also contributed to shifts in the field. In the 1970s, personnel departments began to take over administration of affirmative action programs and implement sensitivity training. They also acquired a new nomenclature, calling themselves "human resources" rather than personnel departments. A major exception to this occurred in 1976, when the government created the Office of Personnel Management to replace the U.S. Civil Service Commission.

Under increasing economic pressure to become leaner, many corporations began to lay off middle-level managers in the 1980s and 1990s, and human resource specialists found themselves particularly vulnerable. Weaker unions and a political environment less conducive to enforcing personnel regulations made it more difficult for human resource employees to justify their positions. In many cases, companies put more responsibility on line managers to oversee employment issues, suggesting a return to the more decentralized, less formal structure characteristic of nineteenth-century firms. Nevertheless, formal personnel functions continue to exist in large and small companies and in government agencies. The fluctuating fortune of personnel management suggests the ways in which this concept continues to make and remake itself as an integral aspect of an organizational society.

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PESOTTA, ROSE (NOVEMBER 20, 1896–DECEMBER 7, 1965) Anarchist, Labor Organizer, Trade Union Officer

Rose Pesotta was born Rachelle Peisoty in Derazhnya, Ukraine, Russia. Her parents, Itsaak (Isaack) and Masya, were prosperous grain merchants, and Pesotta grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home relatively untouched by the vicious anti-Jewish pogroms so many experienced during this time in the shtetls of the Russian Empire. Educated at home as well as at a local private girls' school, by the time she was a teenager, Pesotta was fluent in Yiddish, Hebrew, Ukrainian, and Russian. She was also by her teens active in the radical Russian anarchist movement, well read in and heavily influenced by the work of Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, and Pierre Joseph Proudhon. Seeking to escape a planned marriage, Pesotta immigrated to America before the age of 17, joining her sister Esther in New York City just before Thanksgiving, 1913. During processing by immigration agents, her name was changed to Rose Pesotta,

and she soon found work in New York City's booming garment industry, a trade she returned to repeatedly for the next 50 years.

By the time Pesotta became a garment worker and joined the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), the union had endured the bitter strike of 1909–1910 known as “The Uprising of the 20,000” and the 1911 Triangle Factory Shirtwaist Fire with the tragic loss of 146 workers, most of them young women, barely out of their teens, and like Pesotta, Russian Jewish and Italian immigrants. While conditions within the New York City garment industry were still far from ideal, much needed reforms had occurred in the wake of the Triangle fire, and Pesotta credited the union for much of it. She was soon active in her local, part of a significant anarchist minority. In 1920, she was elected to the executive board of Local No. 22, and throughout the 1920s, she served on several strike committees at the same time that she attended various worker education programs, including the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers and Brookwood Labor College in Katonah, New York. For Pesotta, trade unionism was the most effective vehicle to not only improve workers' conditions but also to advance the principles of anarchism she held so dear. Since her arrival in America in 1913, Pesotta had also been active in the vibrant anarchist movement in New York City and suffered personally the government repression during the Palmer Raids of 1919–1920 when her then fiancé, a fellow Russian immigrant and anarchist Theodore Kushnarev, was deported along with hundreds of others. But Pesotta continued her active involvement in anarchists' circles and devoted much time and energy working during the 1920s on behalf of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian immigrant anarchists charged with murder and robbery and executed in 1927.

As a committed anarchist, Pesotta was also virulently anti-Communist, and it was her efforts to expel Communist union members within her local, combined with her engaging personality, that brought her to the notice of the ILGWU leadership, who made her an organizer by the end of the 1920s. With the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, whatever gains the ILGWU had made were quickly eroded as the garment industry, too, felt the impact of this worldwide economic devastation. Pesotta would later remember this as a time when thousands of New York City garment workers went hungry for lack of work. Those who did find work experienced conditions similar to those in the sweatshops of the early part of the twentieth century. However, with the election of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932 and the New Deal reforms beginning with the National Industrial

Recovery Act that aimed at putting Americans back to work, the ILGWU seized the prolabor moment and increased its organizing efforts across North America. In 1933, the union hired Pesotta as a full-time organizer, and she was soon organizing Mexican women garment workers in Los Angeles as well as their counterparts in Montreal, Puerto Rico, Boston, and Cleveland. She also helped striking United Auto Workers in their 1936 sit-down strikes in Akron, Ohio, and Flint, Michigan. An effective organizer who spoke to the workers as a worker herself, Pesotta was equally adept at getting press attention during the numerous strikes she oversaw during the 1930s. News photographs from the time repeatedly show a smiling Pesotta, fashionably dressed, holding a picket sign in her white-gloved hands. Her success in the field brought her recognition within the hierarchy of the ILGWU, and at the union's 1934 convention, Pesotta was elected as one of 24 vice presidents, the only woman then serving, and the third woman ever elected to that position in ILGWU history. While she enjoyed a close, if sometimes volatile, working relationship with her mentor, the ILGWU president David Dubinsky, Pesotta was frequently frustrated in her role as an officer in a union in which the rank and file was predominately female and the leadership was decidedly male dominated. Her frustration was further compounded by the tension between her anarchist principles and her leadership role, however limited it was by her sex. In 1942, she resigned her position as a full-time organizer and returned to her trade, working as a dressmaker in a New York City shop. Two years later, she resigned from the ILGWU executive board—the same year she published her own account of her years as an organizer and union officer. That memoir, *Bread upon the Waters* (1944), was immediately well received, translated into several other languages, and remains a vivid look at organizing and union politics during the 1930s.

Although in her later years she worked briefly for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the American Trade Union Council for Histadrut, the Israeli labor organization, it was through her work as a union dressmaker that Pesotta supported herself until her retirement in 1963. She spent her last years living in the recently opened ILGWU cooperative housing complex at Penn South in New York City and remained politically active until shortly before her death in 1965. Pesotta's biographers emphasize the apparent contradictions of her life—she was a warm and engaging woman, beloved by many in the rank and file, while in her personal life, she experienced several disappointing, even heartbreaking love affairs, including with Powers Hapgood. Although she initially welcomed the opportunity to join the

ILGWU, in doing so she often came into conflict with her strong anarchist beliefs at the same time she battled the male domination of the union she served for 50 years.

KATHLEEN BANKS NUTTER

Selected Works

Pesotta published two memoirs, the above-mentioned *Bread upon the Waters* (1944) and *Days of Our Lives* (1958), which focuses on her earlier years in Russia; her papers are held by the New York Public Library.

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See also **Anarchism; Brookwood Labor College; Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry; Dubinsky, David; Hapgood, Powers; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995); National Industrial Recovery Act; Triangle Shirtwaist Fire; Uprising of the 20,000 (1909)**

PETERSON, ESTHER (1906–1997) Labor Organizer, Educator, Lobbyist, and Political Activist

Working with a group of labor reformers in the 1940s and 1950s, Esther Peterson helped develop an economic agenda to enable women to achieve equality at work and accommodate responsibilities at home. Peterson skillfully moved this agenda forward at the U.S. Department of Labor, where she was the highest-ranking woman in the Kennedy administration. Her major accomplishments there included the groundbreaking work of the first President's Commission on the Status of Women and the passage of the 1963 Equal Pay Act, thus laying the groundwork for major shifts in employment policy and a renewed feminist movement that brought about fundamental changes in society.

The daughter of Anna and Luther Eggertsen, Peterson grew up in Provo, Utah, where her Danish grandparents had settled. She was raised in a strong Mormon community and graduated from Brigham Young University. In 1930, she moved to New York City, where she received a master's degree from Columbia Teachers' College and married Oliver Peterson, a socialist who introduced her to the labor movement.

During the 1930s, Peterson taught at a private girls' school in Boston, but also at the YWCA and the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers. She became an organizer for the American Federation of Teachers and in 1939 was hired in the education department of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). Peterson became the first legislative representative for the ACWA in 1944, working closely with then Congressman John F. Kennedy.

In 1948, her husband joined the Foreign Service as one of the new labor attachés. For the next 10 years, and now with four children, the Petersons lived in Sweden and Brussels, where Esther worked with European trade unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). In 1952, during the McCarthy Era, Oliver was accused of Communist activities. Although eventually cleared of all charges, he was soon diagnosed with cancer and never fully regained his health, shifting more financial responsibility to Esther.

The Petersons returned to the United States in 1958, and Esther became the first woman lobbyist for the AFL-CIO, in the Industrial Union Department. She renewed her working relationship with Kennedy and was an early labor supporter for his presidential campaign. She was appointed director of the Women's Bureau (1961–1964) and assistant secretary for labor standards (1961–1968), U.S. Department of Labor. Building on her trade union work, she then served in the administrations of Presidents Johnson and Carter as an advisor on consumer affairs and as a delegate to the United Nations in the Clinton administration. She also worked with private industry and helped develop the UN's Guidelines for Consumer Protection.

Esther Peterson's contributions to the labor movement and to workingwomen were firmly grounded in her family's commitment to education, hard work, and helping others and strongly shaped by her husband's progressive politics. Her leadership in what Dorothy Sue Cobble, in *The Other Women's Movement*, calls "labor feminism" further reflected Peterson's experiences with collaborative and cross-class organizations like the Bryn Mawr Summer School, where she was influenced by women and men from the Progressive Era and Roosevelt's New Deal. She never lost sight of workingwomen's needs as she struggled to balance her own work and family life. She strongly supported protective legislation for women, opposed the Equal Rights Amendment, and advocated for increases in the minimum wage and expansion of the labor laws to include domestic and other low-paid workers. She argued that women's lives were undervalued at home and in the workplace, and she

championed the union women's approach to solutions through both government and collective bargaining.

The President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) was the culmination of union women's activities over 30 years. The commission was an idea discussed in the 1940s when Peterson served on a labor committee that advised the Women's Bureau on a range of workingwomen's issues. She wanted the PCSW's focus to be broad, covering employment as well as the civil and political efforts of women, and inclusive. The 26 commissioners came from all walks of life, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, and the advisory committees eventually numbered over 250 people. For the first time, federal attention focused on problems of African-American women.

The final PCSW recommendations were extensive but reflected the tensions of the time over women's multiple roles. They called for equal opportunity and protective legislation while seeking improvements for women in a wide range of areas including training, child care, and benefits for maternity, social security, and unemployment. The Commission brought together women from the many different feminist movements, who went on to work toward sex and race equality in a multitude of ways.

As the PCSW was getting under way, Peterson's backing was also important for the equal pay bill introduced by Congresswoman Edith Green. While union women had long advocated the idea of equal pay for comparable work, they compromised on this narrower legislation guaranteeing equal pay for equal work, which became law in 1963. The heated debate over the legislation opened a discussion on sex discrimination in employment that was greatly expanded by the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the decades of legislation and court cases that followed. As protective laws were dismantled under this new framework, Peterson no longer opposed the Equal Rights Amendment but renewed her commitment to improving labor standards for all workers. In her 90s, however, she was quick to note that the family problems of workingwomen had yet to be solved.

Peterson went on to bring her formidable political skills and her ability to reach across barriers of race, gender, and class to consumer issues. When she took these issues back to the labor movement, she found little interest, although she considered them important for working families. Internationally recognized for her work on behalf of consumers, she championed legislation for truth in lending, unit pricing, meat and poultry inspection, and occupational safety. In 1981, Esther Peterson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian honor.

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PETRILLO, JAMES CAESAR (1892–1984) President, American Federation of Musicians (AFM), 1940–1958

One of the most powerful and well-known labor leaders of his era, after World War II James Petrillo publicly exemplified the "labor czar." Petrillo's primary focus was ensuring jobs for musicians, and his battle against recording companies, radio stations, and movie theaters' use of recorded, or "canned," music was the defining issue of his career. While Petrillo helped solidify and extend the AFM's position as a strong, national union, his most pervasive legacy may be the Musician's Performance Trust Fund, which has employed musicians for free, public concerts since 1948.

Petrillo was born on the West Side of Chicago, and despite the lack of a formal education, he used a combination of toughness and talent to rise to influence in the musicians' union. As a youth, he began playing the trumpet in a Hull-House band, but he "lost his lip" early and was an undistinguished musician. He found his calling in union politics, however, after joining the Chicago Federation of Musicians (CFM), Local 10 of the AFM, in 1918. His first assignment for the CFM was to organize musicians playing in Chinese

restaurants, and his success and acuity at this difficult task propelled him to the local's vice presidency in 1919. The early 1920s were a period of intense factional fighting for control of the CFM. After Local 10's president was severely beaten, and a bomb exploded in the union's offices, Petrillo was elected president in 1922. The CFM remained a contentious organization, with in-fighting and strong disagreements expressed in violence. As president, Petrillo survived a bomb blast at his home, gunfire attacks on his car, and being kidnapped to hold office for 40 years.

Despite early violence and controversy, Petrillo was an aggressive and effective leader of the CFM. In 1927, he led Chicago theater musicians on the biggest strike in AFM history to date. Petrillo's attorneys, including Clarence Darrow, defeated an injunction in court, and the union won the strike only four days later. Petrillo also changed the union's relationship with radio stations, signing the first union contract with a radio station, forcing the station to pay musicians who had previously played without payment, and negotiating for stations to hire "standby" musicians. Petrillo also brought musicians working in Chicago hotels into the AFM, and by the 1930s, the CFM controlled most of the musical jobs in the city. After staving off a Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) organizing drive in Chicago by lowering CFM membership fees, Petrillo took on his next issue: battling "canned" music. In 1937, Petrillo made a move to ban CFM musicians from making recordings or transcriptions without the consent of the union's executive board. The ban never transpired; instead, radio stations using the recordings agreed to hire staff musicians. Petrillo's bold action was in sharp contrast to AFM leaders' policy regarding canned music, of which he was an outspoken critic. Technological displacement had been a major problem for the AFM since 1926, when the first "talking" movie appeared. During the 1930s, the AFM, under its president, Joseph Weber, fought the increased use of recorded music, with a publicity campaign claiming it "debased" musical performance. In contrast, Petrillo argued that musicians needed to fight for a cut of the recorded music business profits. He claimed that musicians were unique in creating the very product that made them obsolete and that they had the right to protect themselves and their jobs from technological displacement. By the late 1930s, Petrillo's message resonated within the AFM, and he became president in 1940.

In 1942, as AFM president, Petrillo announced a national ban on recording and transcription by AFM musicians, with the exception of recordings for the armed services. The aim of the ban was to force the

music entertainment industry to compensate musicians for their recordings. Record companies were difficult foes because they had large stockpiles of previously recorded material to turn to and also faced a shortage of resources for new recordings due to the war. By 1944, however, the AFM had won concessions from the record producers in the form of the Recording Trust Fund, in which every sale of recorded music included a small fee paid to the AFM. The AFM distributed this revenue to unemployed musicians to offer free public concerts. Although this practice was deemed illegal in 1946, Petrillo launched a second, similar recording ban in 1948 that resulted in a new fund, the Musicians' Performance Trust Fund (MPTF). Since 1948, the MPTF has provided millions of dollars' worth of free public concerts in cities throughout the United States.

Petrillo's successes made him a postwar icon: he was the highest-paid labor leader in the country, was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine twice, and played a widely publicized duet with Harry Truman at the 1948 AFM convention. At the same time, he became a target of Congress, and Petrillo and the AFM's bargaining tactics came under investigation. In 1946, Congress passed the Lea Act (commonly known as the "Anti-Petrillo" Act), a precursor to Taft-Hartley. The Lea Act barred musicians from collectively bargaining with recording companies, forcing radio stations to hire standby musicians, or receiving funds for recordings previously aired. After the Supreme Court ruled the Lea Act constitutional in 1947, the AFM leadership reluctantly accepted the law, but after membership pressure forced them to challenge the Act again in later years, it was repealed in 1980.

Although Petrillo's reign did survive congressional action, by the mid-1950s he was facing a number of new challenges from within the AFM itself. Some musicians, particularly those working in the California film industry, complained that the MPTF surcharge made them vulnerable to foreign competition. In 1958, they formed a rival union, the Musicians Guild of America (MGA), which threatened to split the union. In addition, black musicians, the vast majority of whom had historically been segregated in subsidiary locals, challenged the AFM to integrate the locals. Faced with a rebellious membership, Petrillo stepped down in favor of his handpicked successor, Herman Kenin, in 1958. Four years later, Petrillo was voted out of the Local 10 presidency when a group of musicians calling themselves Musicians for Democracy won the CFM election emphasizing issues of democracy, health plans, and racial integration. Petrillo survived to play an encore, however, when in 1964 he was anointed head of the

AFM's Civil Rights Commission. Over the next decade, the Commission oversaw the integration of AFM locals, although racial divisions within the union remained a problem. Petrillo retired from the union in 1975, and passed away in 1980.

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See also **American Federation of Musicians**

PHELPS DODGE COPPER STRIKE (1983–1984)

When the Phelps Dodge Copper Strike began in the early morning hours of July 1, 1983, members of

organized labor were optimistic that they would prevail, as they always had in recent memory. Every time their three-year contract expired, they would walk out, shut down the mines for a few weeks, and ultimately force the company to grudgingly give organized workers what they had demanded in the first place. Everyone seemed to play by an unwritten set of rules. However, when the 1983 strike ended a year or so later, labor, including some of the largest and most powerful unions in the United States, was left licking its wounds and wondering how it had suffered one of its worst setbacks since the Great Depression. Some observers claim that the Phelps Dodge copper strike resulted in the largest decertification of union locals in American history, and they are probably right.

The coalition of 13 unions that represented workers employed at Phelps Dodge's massive Morenci and Ajo, Arizona, mines, mill, and smelter complexes had begun to informally prepare to negotiate a new contract to replace the one that would expire at midnight, June 30, 1983. Phelps Dodge had begun to



Production. Copper (refining). Copper ingots on conveyors at a large copper refining operation. Large amounts of copper are produced for the war effort at the El Paso, Texas plant of Phelps-Dodge Refining Company. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USE6-D-009687].

prepare, too. The copper giant publicly and repeatedly announced that because the price of copper had fallen so low in 1982, it would demand major changes in the workers' wage and benefits package, notably the elimination of the union's hard-won cost of living increase, or COLA.

For unions, COLA became a rallying cry. Give back COLA, labor warned, and you will return to the dark days of autocratic rule by copper bosses. For Phelps Dodge's senior management, desperate because it felt squeezed by runaway inflation on one hand and the plummeting price of copper on the other, eliminating COLA became the surest and fastest way to trim the cost of producing copper in the United States so that its big Arizona and New Mexico mines could compete successfully with low-cost copper streaming out of Chile.

Less publicly, Phelps Dodge leaders began to take formal steps to work through a strike of any length. Quietly, they were changing the rules of engagement, though periodically they publicly warned organized labor what it would do if workers refused to accept the elimination of COLA in the contract scheduled to be implemented on July 1, 1983. The company bible was a newly published compendium instructing management how to operate during strikes. The book was conceived and endorsed by the labor economist Herbert Northrup of the University of Pennsylvania's prestigious Wharton School of business. Richard T. Moolick, the company no-nonsense president, purchased paperback copies of the thick "how-to" guide and made certain they circulated among key personnel. Giving management an additional measure of confidence was President Ronald Reagan's recent firing of the striking airline controllers. The nation's conservative political climate definitely favored management.

One particularly dramatic event occurred in the spring of 1982 when Phelps Dodge temporarily closed its Arizona mines for several months, citing the abysmally low price of copper. During that same time, Chairman George Munroe toured the company's production sites and held open forums in which he used charts and graphs to lay out the company's dire economic predicament for its workers. Cynical union workers openly questioned the company's explanation, and the union protested that management should not speak to workers without going through union spokespersons. Decades of contentious labor relations made any dialogue between Phelps Dodge and its unionized workers difficult at best.

Labor did not believe that the economic picture was as gloomy as the eloquent Munroe made it sound. Further, with the mines remaining closed for several months, it was easy for labor spokespersons to

claim that the company was maneuvering to drain workers' bank accounts and thus make them lean and hungry to work through any call to strike. Phelps Dodge always denied that, but there is no denial that the company was quietly working to implement Northrup's suggestions of how to work through a strike. The company had in place a master plan to work through the strike if organized labor walked off the job as promised on July 1. Labor seems to have believed it was all a bluff.

Though workers struck on July 1 as predicted, nothing else went as predicted for organized labor. The company continued to operate its plants with supervisory personnel and a growing number of unionized workers who decided they needed the money to feed their family and pay bills. Some families split down the middle, with one brother defiantly crossing the union picket line while the other loudly cursed his sibling as a "son of a bitch."

The strike remained a standoff until one night late in July, when someone never identified fired a bullet through the side of the Ajo home of Keith Tallant, one of the union workers who conspicuously defied the union by crossing its picket line. The bullet lodged in the brain of his sleeping two-year-old daughter, who had to be rushed to a hospital in Phoenix for lifesaving neurological surgery. For the Democratic governor of Arizona, Bruce Babbitt, this was a wake-up call. He had tried to stay out of the conflict, but when he visited the little girl in the hospital, he felt new urgency to somehow mediate the mounting conflict.

The situation grew more tense in early August when Phelps Dodge announced that it would soon begin hiring permanent replacement workers and that the die-hard strikers would be out of jobs. It was one thing to use supervisory personnel, or even independent-minded union members, but to hire outsiders was more than strikers in Morenci and Ajo could take. A loud and menacing crowd of strikers converged on the Phelps Dodge general office building in Morenci and forced visibly-shaken managers to agree to a 10-day shutdown of Phelps Dodge's flagship property. President Moolick immediately flew to Arizona from the company's New York offices and angrily berated his Morenci managers for cowardly yielding to labor's threats. He publicly promised that the property would re-open at the end of the forced 10-day shutdown.

Working behind the scenes, Phelps Dodge managers pushed Governor Babbitt to be prepared for the worst when the Morenci complex re-opened. Babbitt, shaken by the course of events, publicly maintained that he was not in Phelps Dodge's employment, but behind the scenes he began readying the Arizona

National Guard for strike duty. The state's military rumbled into the mining town in a mighty show of force, and the plant re-opened as scheduled on August 20.

President Moolick always maintained that as far as he was concerned, the strike ended when the Morenci plant restarted. Labor would never concede that point. Instead, it launched several legal battles with the company, none of which ever forced the copper giant to yield anything in the long run. It also vented its wrath on Governor Babbitt, whom one prominent spokesperson for the Steelworkers union now referred to as "Governor Scabbitt."

According to federal labor law, workers on the job were eligible to vote on union representation exactly one year after the beginning of the strike. They did so under the watchful eyes of federal mediators, and the overwhelming majority of replacement workers at every facility voted the union out—more than 30 union locals died that day. It was a humiliating defeat for organized labor. But workers who had for the past year been cursed and spat at by union brothers and sisters on the picket line had no love left for the unions. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Morenci complex, with the largest open-pit copper mine in North America, still remained nonunion. Phelps Dodge shut down its Ajo complex in 1984.

Organized labor attempted for several more years to publicly shame and humiliate Phelps Dodge leaders, but it was to no avail. Phelps Dodge did not produce a product it sold directly to the public, and thus the public outside the Arizona copper towns took almost no notice of the struggle. Even the Steelworkers eventually gave up on the strike. Labor was left with nothing but bitter memories.

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PHILADELPHIA JOURNEYMEN CORDWAINERS STRIKE (1806)

The Philadelphia shoemakers strike of 1806 resulted in the prosecution and trial of its leadership. Because the case involved the application of British common law in postrevolutionary America, Caesar A. Rodney, a prominent Delaware jurist and later U.S. attorney

general, defended the workers, in a case touching on the applicability of English common law in the United States.

The published proceedings of the trial offer a rare documentary snapshot of a vibrant labor organization early in American history. The union's origins and its name—the Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers—imply origins among those shoemakers involved in supporting the 1796 strike of the Federal Society of Journeymen Cabinet and Chair-Makers. Frequent labor disputes created well-practiced procedures; when the union voted to "strike" specific shops, it sent "tramping committees" to patrol those workplaces against "scabs." Several employers resorted to legal action to break the 1806 strike.

The legal foundations for *Commonwealth v. Pullis* grew from the definition of such associations as "criminal conspiracy" under English common law. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, parliamentary "Combinations Acts" explicitly extended this to place workers' organizations beyond the law. Prosecutors believed that the parliamentary action had clarified the meaning of common law as prohibiting labor organizations, while the Jeffersonians doubted the applicability of the common law here. The strikers argued that the employers regularly made binding arrangements as to the price of the product and that workers should have an equal right to make similar arrangements as to the price of what they contributed to the process, their labor. The conviction of the strikers, though it only involved a nominal fine, established just such a distinction between the rights of capital and the rights of the only capital workers themselves controlled.

This 1806 strike cast a long judicial shadow. Although *Commonwealth v. Hunt* (1842) in Massachusetts accepted the legitimacy of unions, it left ambiguity as to strikes. Although the courts gradually accepted strikes, the *de facto* legalization of labor activities in the 1930s also implied the legal regulation of what would and would not be acceptable practices. More broadly, "criminal conspiracy" remains a legally ambiguous area by which the authorities have continued to take action against combination of citizens.

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PHILADELPHIA PLAN

Named for the city where it was first put into practice, the Philadelphia Plan required contractors bidding on government construction projects to set goals and targets for the number of minority workers. Signed by Assistant Labor Secretary Arthur Fletcher on June 27, 1969, the administrative order was the product of decades-long civil rights agitation and policy innovation. The Philadelphia Plan was a significant chapter in the development of federal affirmative action legislation.

Background: Racial Discrimination in the Building Trades

With the Philadelphia Plan, the federal government targeted one of the most racially exclusive sectors of the labor movement. This was especially the case in the highest-paying skilled trades, in which contractors—especially in union strongholds in the urban North and West—depended on union hiring halls to furnish the best-trained workers for each job. Entrance to these trades required years of union-sponsored apprenticeship and technical training, and building trades unions preferred to fill these slots with family and friends. Thus, it was easy for unions in trades that had been white from the beginning, such as steamfitting, electrical installation, and sheet metal work, to reproduce a white membership. But even in older trades such as carpentry and masonry, which had a tradition of African-American craftsmen (especially in the South), whites were disproportionately represented. Jim Crow decreased the number of black craftsmen in the South, and labor unions ensured that subsequent generations of blacks would find it increasingly difficult to gain access to training and work in these trades in the North. By 1961, less than 1% of the nation's building trades apprentices were African-American. Instead, racial minorities were disproportionately concentrated in the lowest-paying trades that did not require tremendous skill—namely common laborers and hod carriers.

Before the 1960s, African-Americans had resisted organized labor's racial practices with little success. Prior to the World War I Great Migration, African-Americans responded to union exclusion on an individual basis, typically by strikebreaking and working for open-shop contractors. In the interwar years, however, resistance increasingly became a collective endeavor. Black craftsmen attempted to put pressure on white unions by forming their own unions, associations, and training programs. Whenever possible, they sought assistance from any organization that was willing to offer support—whether it came from moderate groups such as the Urban League or a radical organization such as the Communist Party. But these efforts were usually no match for powerful building trades unions, and African-Americans realized that their best hopes rested with state intervention.

The federal government meekly intervened on behalf of African-Americans on several occasions. From 1935 to 1937, the Public Works Administration (PWA) attempted to secure jobs for black construction workers by implementing a quota plan on its projects. But while the PWA produced short-term gains for a small number of blacks, the agency's program did nothing to address the issue of union membership and apprenticeships and therefore did not expand the black workforce in construction in the long run. The World War II Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC), with its weak enforcement mechanisms, produced similar results. Finally, the President's Committee on Government Contracts, established by Eisenhower in 1953, and the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, established by Kennedy in 1961, sounded good in theory but did little in practice to increase the number of minority construction workers.

All the while, union construction workers benefited from increased government spending in national defense and heavy construction. The Interstate Highway System, Housing Act, and Area Redevelopment Act, among others, helped provide steady jobs for union construction workers. Moreover, the unions' ability to restrict the labor supply ensured that these jobs would command high wages. This trend would continue with the construction boom of the 1960s.

The 1960s: Protest and Policy

The construction industry's long history of racial discrimination made it a prime target for civil rights activists and policy makers in the 1960s. Between 1963 and 1967, the Congress of Racial Equality

(CORE) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) staged protests and pickets at federally funded construction sites in Cleveland, St. Louis, Philadelphia, New York City, Newark, Oakland, and Washington, DC. These protests caught the attention of government officials. In 1963, violent protests at the site of a partially built school in Philadelphia prompted President Kennedy to issue Executive Order 11114, which ambiguously called upon contractors to take “affirmative action” with regard to black workers on government projects. In 1965, President Johnson issued Executive Order 11246, which shifted the development and enforcement of affirmative action programs to the Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC).

For the next two years, the OFCC moved toward a workable application of affirmative action. In 1966, it took a major step when it established the pre-award program for construction, in which the OFCC would first review a contractor’s employment “system” *before* the government awarded a contract. The Department of Labor experimented with different pre-award affirmative action plans in St. Louis, San Francisco, and Cleveland before settling on the Philadelphia Plan in 1967. The Philadelphia Plan required contractors bidding on government jobs to submit “manning timetables” listing the number of minority workers they intended to employ on each aspect of the project. Before a contract was signed, a compliance committee examined the lowest bidder’s employment practices—including periodic on-site head counts and evaluations.

The Philadelphia Plan met immediate resistance. The AFL-CIO and its Building Trades Department protested the federal intervention. Organized labor claimed that they were being unfairly singled out by the government and that the plan would discriminate against deserving whites. For most of the twentieth century, labor leaders in the construction trades could accurately assert that their unions’ national policies did not condone racial discrimination. Instead, they attributed the paucity of minority workers in the skilled trades to economic realities and a general lack of interest. Nevertheless, building trades unions tried to head off government action by developing their own minority recruitment programs. In 1963, they teamed up with national contractor associations and established the Joint Committee on Equal Employment Opportunities to increase minority representation in apprenticeship programs on the industry’s, and not the government’s or civil rights movement’s, terms. In 1965, these efforts were intensified as local building trades unions began working with groups such as the Urban League to establish joint apprenticeship programs—special outreach

programs aimed at recruiting minority youths for union apprenticeship programs.

Unions and contractors were not alone in protesting the Philadelphia Plan. The National Association of Manufacturers and conservative Republicans objected to the Plan as well because they believed that affirmative action programs violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Dissent also came from within the ranks of the Johnson administration. The opposition proved to be too much, and in November 1968, General Comptroller Elmer Staats ruled that the Philadelphia Plan was illegal.

The Nixon administration revived the Philadelphia Plan. Scholars have debated Nixon’s motives in implementing a pioneering affirmative action program in federal employment. Most agree that support for the plan was in large part political—putting the Democratic Party in the awkward position of having to choose between the labor movement and the civil rights movement. The Nixon administration also had a keen interest in lowering construction costs. By the late 1960s, large corporations and open-shop organizations complained that building trades unions benefited from artificially high wages derived from their restrictive apprenticeship programs and the Davis-Bacon Act. Nixon could anticipate that the Philadelphia Plan would both expand the labor supply and enervate organized labor’s position in the industry. Finally, some have argued that Nixon was motivated by his opposition to discrimination and his hope to quell urban unrest.

Regardless of Nixon’s personal motives, his Department of Labor was largely responsible for the administrative order. Although his prime interest was increasing the construction industry’s labor supply, George Shultz, Nixon’s secretary of labor, also considered himself a supporter of African-American civil rights. In the spring of 1969, he re-organized his department and gave Assistant Secretary of Labor Arthur Fletcher, one of the administration’s highest-ranking African-Americans, his blessing in retooling the Philadelphia Plan. Meanwhile, a new wave of protests and counterprotests struck in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Chicago—creating the added urgency of heading off potentially explosive racial conflicts in American cities.

Under Fletcher’s revised Philadelphia Plan, the OFCC surveyed local conditions and established a target range, expressed in percentages rather than numbers, for each trade. Contractors bidding on federal projects exceeding \$500,000 were required to meet these “goals” and “timetables.” Mindful of the first Philadelphia Plan’s fate, Labor Department officials took pains to emphasize that the Plan did not implement numerical quotas and that the revised Plan

PHILADELPHIA PLAN

simply required contractors to show good faith in hiring minorities. Although opponents continued to cry foul, this time the Philadelphia Plan withstood legal challenges. And although the Plan originally only applied to five counties in eastern Pennsylvania, it was extended in 1970 to cover all government contracts exceeding \$500,000. The Plan was amended again in 1971 to include women.

Ultimately, the Philadelphia Plan did little to increase the numbers of minorities and women in the building trades. Some black unionists and civil rights leaders criticized the Plan for not providing for adequate apprenticeships for black youths and for not upgrading older workers. The architects of the Plan underwrote it with the assumption that the construction industry would maintain the vitality of the 1960s boom. However, government construction spending plummeted throughout the 1970s, creating hard times for construction workers and framing civil rights employment legislation as a zero-sum game between blacks and whites. Indeed, the increase in minority and female construction workers since 1969 owes more to the weakened position of building trades unions than it does to the Philadelphia Plan.

The most significant legacy of the Philadelphia Plan is its contribution to affirmative action employment policies. Although Nixon distanced himself from anything that hinted at quotas shortly after approving the order, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission built upon affirmative action tools such as goals, timetables, and quotas throughout the 1970s. The debates that engulfed the Philadelphia Plan continue to swirl around the issue of affirmative action.

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PHILADELPHIA PRINTERS STRIKE (1786)

During the British occupation of New York City, journeymen printers there formulated a scale of

wages, but no job action seems to have taken place. In the spring of 1786, though, Philadelphia masters prepared to reduce wages, and 26 journeymen printers signed a formal protest to the plan coupled to an insistence that the old scale be maintained. They left work and refused to return until the masters agreed to pay the old scale, the equivalent of 20 shillings or one Spanish dollar per day. Participants included old colonial printers, former Continental soldiers such as Samuel Lecount, and future leaders of the local trade unions that began emerging a decade later.

The strikers seem to have acted with the tacit support of Benjamin Franklin, the aged but mentally alert and open-minded patron of the “art preservative” in the New World. Franklin had arranged a citywide scale of prices and wages in 1754 and favored a uniform scale. During the prerevolutionary resistance, the war, and the postwar conditions of the Confederation, real estate and rents had soared and food prices had risen steadily. Still, the strikers were not interested in a pay increase or a permanent trade union but in maintaining the scale of Franklin’s day and the legacy of master-worker fraternalism. The outcome of the strike is difficult to tell, but it did not result in a uniform citywide scale and surely varied from shop to shop.

In March 1788, a number of the veterans of this strike met with their employers in Franklin’s home to establish a more permanent society to cooperate in managing the local craft. Believing in a common artisan interest that united employers and employees, Franklin left a codicil in his will setting aside funds to loan enterprising journeymen to help them become self-employed. After his death in 1790, the association adopted the name of the “Franklin Society.”

Through the Franklin Society, the artisan standards of the 1786 strike continued to inspire the hired men. The expansion of the workplace and the introduction of boys and “two-thirds” journeymen eroded the quality of apprenticeship standards and craft labor, as well as wages. Increasingly, they imposed modern hierarchies in production that reduced hired craftsmen to a merely more skilled kind of wage labor. A defense of artisan standards became inseparable from the drive toward self-organization among the hired hands. After a short-lived Typographical Society in New York, journeymen there started a “Franklin Typographical Society” in 1798, and Boston journeymen launched a Franklin Society in 1802. Hired men in the Philadelphia craft formed a mutual aid Asylum Company in 1799 and the Philadelphia Typographical Society in 1802. By 1815, local printers unions had also appeared at Baltimore, Albany, New Orleans, and Washington.

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PHILADELPHIA TRANSIT STRIKE (1944)

Philadelphians living on Broad Street would have seen a remarkable sight if they had peered out their windows at 4:00 a.m. on August 1, 1944. Buses, a dozen or more, stood idle in the middle of the street, some with their engines still running. Elsewhere, trolleys sat in their carbarns and subways at their stations, waiting for drivers who would not come. Thousands of people across the city stood at their trolley stops waiting, probably impatiently, before returning home to call City Hall and the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) to ask what was wrong. Operators started off by telling each person that “No cars are moving anywhere in the city” but soon became so overwhelmed that they quit answering the phones. By noon, with the newspapers’ morning editions having hit the streets, everyone understood what had happened: PTC workers had gone on strike to prevent black promotions to the traditionally white position of driver, and the nation’s third largest war production center was at a standstill. The PTC strike, the largest racially motivated “hate” strike of World War II, ultimately lasted six days, ending only when the U.S. Army, following the orders of President Franklin Roosevelt, took over the transit system and ordered everyone back to work under penalty of conscription for failure to return.

The Philadelphia transit strike had its origins in the racial tensions that plagued urban centers across the United States during the war. From Mobile to Detroit to Philadelphia, American cities had to come to grips with migration patterns that drained the South’s rural population while adding millions of residents to ill-prepared metropolitan areas. In Philadelphia, the black population jumped from 250,000 in 1940 to 375,000 in 1950. New arrivals found the city inhospitable: they were forced into the city’s worst housing, their children attended segregated schools, and studies showed that as many as 90% of area businesses openly discriminated in their hiring practices. While any discrimination was bad, the company that disturbed black Philadelphians the most was the PTC. African-Americans had worked for the transit company for decades, but only in positions of menial

labor. They were not allowed to drive transit vehicles or interact with the public. This policy angered African-Americans because the PTC was a semi-public company that received taxes as well as fares from the black community. PTC discrimination was, according to the *Pittsburgh Courier*, “tantamount to discrimination by the City of Philadelphia.”

When black employees pressed PTC management to change its policies, they were told the company could not promote African-Americans without the consent of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Employees Union (PRTEU)—a company union unaffiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) or the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). PRTEU leaders worked closely with the company, demanding the PTC reserve the best jobs for whites in exchange for wages some 10% below national standards. Management and its white workers were happy with this arrangement, and the black employees knew they would never overturn Jim Crow without help.

They found support in three places: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Transport Workers Union (TWU—a CIO affiliate), and the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC). The NAACP staged protest marches and petition drives and generally energized the black community so that all African-Americans saw their vital stake in overturning PTC segregation. The TWU, which had supported African-American access to transit jobs in New York City, won a representation election against the PRTEU in the spring of 1944 that guaranteed organized labor would no longer stand in the way of black rights. And the FEPC, which Roosevelt had established in 1941 to combat discrimination in war plants, held hearings that determined the company and the PRTEU were illegally imposing a Jim Crow system on the workforce. That system, the FEPC ordered, had to end by August 1, 1944.

White workers were angered by the campaign against their supposed right to control transit jobs and began a movement to stop integration at the PTC. They circulated fliers in the carbarns, telling white workers they had to form a “white supremacy movement” to protect their jobs and held meetings on PTC property, where they swore they would go on strike rather than work with African-Americans. The PTC happily allowed this movement to grow because it could halt the TWU. In contract talks, the CIO union had demanded a 15% pay raise and a better pension, which management knew would cost millions. But PTC leaders also knew the Smith-Connally Act forbade wartime strikes and gave the government the power to abrogate any contract and toss out a union if it led a strike against a war production

company. So management used its workers' racism to try to undermine the CIO union and consequently set the stage for the war's worst hate strike on August 1, 1944.

The strike itself was relatively short, lasting less than a week. Since Philadelphia was such a vital war production center, making everything from ammunition to uniforms, President Roosevelt could not let the stoppage drag on. He sent in five thousand heavily armed troops on August 5 to break the strike with force if necessary. The strikers, who knew they would be drafted if they stayed out, returned to work a couple of days later. African-Americans, with the support of the federal government, won their campaign to secure driving jobs at the PTC. Their victory cracked Jim Crow in an important local industry and opened the way for many African-Americans to get driving jobs. A month after the strike's end, the FEPC reported that blacks were doing well in their new jobs and that the company had two more trainees in the process of becoming drivers. By October, the number of black drivers had doubled from the original eight to 16, and within a year, the PTC counted some nine hundred black employees, including drivers, conductors, and a member of the publicity staff. The PTC became a valuable employer for the black community.

The Philadelphia transit strike was only one of many hate strikes that swept America during World War II. Tense race relations in the nation's cities led to walkouts at shipyards, aircraft factories, and transit companies across the United States. The Philadelphia strike stopped production for a week, slowing the war effort and costing the local economy some 4.6 million hours of lost production. But in the end, the strike failed as a combination of black activism, CIO support, and federal intervention ensured African-Americans equal access to the best jobs at the PTC.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Congress of Industrial Organizations; Fair Employment Practice Committee; Smith-Connally Act; Transport Workers Union

PINKERTON DETECTIVES

Six railroad corporations financed the 1855 Chicago opening of Allan Pinkerton's North West Police Agency. Renamed Pinkerton's National Detective Agency three years later, it became the world's largest and most notorious supplier of paid labor spies and strikebreakers. Pinkerton's so dominated public imagination that the title "Pinkertons" was often used to denote any labor detectives.

Allan Pinkerton, a Scottish immigrant and abolitionist, pioneered spying on U.S. railroad workers in the 1850s. Called "spotters," the Pinkerton operatives watched workers, especially conductors, for offenses such as socializing with passengers, keeping ticket money from ticket sales, or sleeping on the job. During the Civil War, Allan Pinkerton worked undercover for General George McClelland and claimed to have foiled an assassination attempt against President Abraham Lincoln. Parlaying his wartime exploits into national fame, Pinkerton, with his sons Robert and William, added offices in New York and Philadelphia. In addition to general detective work for diverse clients, the agency provided three antilabor services to large employers: labor spies, strike guards, and strikebreakers. In 1873, the Pinkerton spy James McParlan infiltrated the Molly Maguires, a militant group of Irish miners in the Pennsylvania coalfields, and became a lodge officer. Exposed after two years, McParlan gave dramatic testimony that resulted in the execution of 13 men. Most spying was not dramatic, but Pinkerton's approach stressed the value of elaborate subterfuge and patience in labor espionage.

In addition to labor spies, Pinkerton's also provided strike guards and strikebreakers. The corporations claimed that the guards were to protect company property and prevent violence. In practice, the strike guards worked under the employer's direction to prevent picketing and embolden strikebreakers. Local officials often deputized private guards during strikes, but the guards remained accountable only to the employer. Pinkerton strikebreakers were often armed, too, and ready to club or shoot strikers.

When Allan Pinkerton died in 1884, his sons continued the agency. By then, many railroad and coal corporations had established in-house railroad police or coal and iron police. They still called on Pinkerton's, however, for undercover work and additional men during strikes. Many new strikebreaking agencies, such as Pearl L. Bergoff, Baldwin-Felts, and Waddell-Mahon, opened in the 1880s, and some, like Thiel's, were headed by former Pinkerton operatives.

Pinkerton's prided itself on the distinction between its detectives, who were said to be carefully recruited and trained, and its guards and strikebreakers, who

were hired hurriedly, selected mostly for strength, and employed only while disorder continued. According to Frank Morn, Pinkerton operatives may have been involved in the never-solved 1886 Haymarket bombing in Chicago, and there were increasing reports of Pinkertons shooting at workers in the late 1880s. In the 1890s, Pinkertons helped break mine strikes in Idaho, Arizona, Alabama, and Pennsylvania.

The best-known use of Pinkertons was at Homestead, Pennsylvania (1892), where the appearance of a barge of armed Pinkertons provoked a battle with unionists that left 13 people dead. The Pinkertons retreated temporarily, but lethal conflict at the formerly peaceful strike served as a pretext for mobilizing the Pennsylvania National Guard. Trade unionists, socialists, Populists and many others were outraged over the use of Pinkertons at Homestead and urged curbs on private police. The Knights of Labor had demanded the prohibition of detectives in labor disputes since 1885, and working people had campaigned for state Anti-Pinkerton Acts since 1886.

Anti-Pinkerton Acts typically prohibited the importation of armed guards or detectives for strike work. Private police, often deputized for strike work, were paid and directed by the employer. When a Pinkerton committed a crime, it was virtually impossible to prosecute him because he left town quickly. Private police removed the advantage won by unionists who had built local political power. Even when elected officials, as at Homestead, refused to mobilize armed force, the corporations could order it by telegraph. Congress passed an Anti-Pinkerton Act immediately after Homestead, and workers won Anti-Pinkerton Acts in 24 states by 1899. The agencies, however, easily circumvented the law by tactics such as transporting strikebreakers separately from weapons.

Allan Pinkerton had been a relentless self-promoter who wrote 17 books with lurid titles such as *Strikers, Communists, Tramps, and Detectives* (1878). Pinkerton amplified the hostile late nineteenth-century stereotypes of unionists and unemployed workers. These caricatures of subversive violence both emphasized the need for Pinkertons and justified what the public tended to see as corporate mercenaries. Pinkerton was also a founding member of the International Association of Police Chiefs (IACP), a professional association in which he advocated inculcating police leadership with the outlook and techniques of the detective agencies.

Pinkerton's expanded in the twentieth century despite union objections, newspaper exposés, and government investigations. Historians often attribute the rise of private police in the United States to the

relative weakness of public police. The private forces, however, continued to expand in the twentieth century despite the growth of additional public law enforcement bodies. In the 1921 paper workers' strike, for example, Pinkertons patrolled the village of Corinth alongside the recently created New York State Police.

Pinkerton's was the largest supplier of labor spies, with 27 offices and 300 clients for whom it did anti-labor work in 1935. General Motors was its largest client. From 1934 to mid-1937, 52 United Auto Workers members were Pinkerton spies. A Pinkerton was the president of the Chevrolet local in Flint, and another was vice president of the Fisher Body local in Lansing. General Motors also hired Pinkertons to spy on William Green, John P. Frey, Homer Martin, Walter Reuther, and others.

The National Labor Relations Act (1935) changed the legal context for private policing by legalizing unionization efforts. The La Follette Committee on Civil Liberties' exposure of private police in industry echoed many of the revelations of the earlier Homestead report and Commission on Industrial Relations report. In its early years, however, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) heard complaints of labor spying and sometimes ordered the re-instatement of workers who had been dismissed. In 1937, in response to the changed political climate, Pinkerton's board of directors formally ended industrial espionage.

NLRB regulations did not, however, put an end to either espionage or commercial strikebreaking. Private detectives and corporate police adopted new techniques using high technology, ingenious legal tactics, and public relations to defeat unionization efforts. Infamous in the nineteenth century, private police are even more pervasive in the twenty-first century.

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See also **Homestead Strike (1892)**; **Molly Maguires; Strikebreaking**

PITTSTON COAL STRIKE (1989–1990)

In 1989–1990, Pittston coal miners waged a 10-month strike that galvanized the labor movement as striking miners engaged in the largest labor civil disobedience campaign in recent history, including a mine occupation reminiscent of the 1930s sit-down strikes.

The Pittston strike exemplified efforts by major American corporations to break out of traditional collective bargaining procedures that had been established in the post-World War II era. Pittston, in the late 1980s and early 1990s the leading U.S. coal exporter, sought to end pattern bargaining, common in auto, steel, rubber, earthmoving equipment, and mining, where one company would negotiate a contract with its union and other companies would follow the pattern and negotiate basically the same terms. Pittston refused to sign the contract the union negotiated with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, demanding an end to company payments into the industrywide health insurance fund for retirees, cuts in pension and health-care coverage for working miners, work rule changes, and the right to open new mines without union representation.

In January 1988, Pittston terminated its health benefits to 1,500 retired and disabled miners and widows, ended pension contributions for working miners, and eliminated arbitration of unresolved grievances. The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) miners worked without a contract for 14 months while continuing to negotiate, and then from April 1989 to February 1990, 1,700 workers struck Pittston mines in Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia. The retirees' health care became a galvanizing issue, creating a tremendous sense of unity among the miners—not a single miner crossed the union's picket lines throughout the strike—and fostering community support throughout the mine towns. Legally, the strike was an “unfair labor practice strike” called over company violations of labor law, which prohibited the company from permanently replacing the strikers.

The UMWA president, Richard Trumka, elected in 1982 with pledges to rebuild and unify the faltering, divided union, threw the resources of the international union behind the strike and turned it into a national cause célèbre within the embattled labor movement. The union declared that the Pittston struggle was more than just a strike but was a “people's movement.” The filmmaker Barbara Kopple produced *Out of Darkness*, which combined strike footage with a history of the mineworkers' union, and Anne Lewis produced the film *Justice in the Coalfields*.

The union determined to wage a sustained non-violent civil disobedience campaign, drawing on the lessons of the civil rights movement. Union staff,

trained by peace activists in the principles of nonviolent resistance, spread out across the eastern coalfields to train the Pittston miners. Richard Trumka declared in “Out of Darkness” in the midst of the strike, “Labor law is formulated for labor to lose. If you play by every one of those rules, you lose every time. So what it forces you to do, is to change the way you've operated.” Vice President Cecil Roberts echoed this sentiment, saying, “They didn't think that a predominately white, mountain, rural workforce would ever follow the teachings of Dr. King. But they did. Dr. King says there is nothing more invigorating than being in jail for a cause that you believe in. And I think that's absolutely right. There's nothing wrong with going to jail when you are trying to change an unjust system or an unjust law.”

The civil disobedience campaign was kicked off by women, calling their strike support group the Daughters of Mother Jones, who staged a two-day sit-in at Pittston headquarters. Subsequently, the miners began a series of sit-downs blocking the roads to the mines. In the course of the strike, over 3,000 people were arrested; many miners and family members were arrested multiple times for a total of over 5,000 arrests. The union formed Camp Solidarity, a tent city near Castlewood, Virginia, for the over 50,000 supporters who came to show their solidarity. The miners and family members wore camouflage to symbolize their resistance and to make it difficult for the police to identify protesters accused of picket-line violence.

On April 30, 1989, 12,000 miners and supporters rallied in solidarity, hearing speeches from UMWA leaders, rank-and-file miners, and Reverend Jesse Jackson. In June 1989, 46,000 miners in 11 states declared “memorial days” and struck in solidarity with the Pittston miners. The miners were forced to return to work when the international union was advised the strikes violated the Taft-Hartley Act's prohibition on sympathy strikes.

The union also waged a corporate campaign, picketing Shawmut Bank, which had the Pittston board member William Craig as its vice president, and influencing unions and supporters to withdraw deposits. A Pittston workers' solidarity committee in Boston succeeded in pressuring the Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville city councils to withdraw city funds. Craig was forced to resign his position with Shawmut Bank. The miners received additional moral support and publicity when an international delegation including a representative from Polish Solidarność (Solidarity) arrived in October 1989. At the height of the strike, the union received 15 to 20 requests for speaking engagements a week, and rank-and-file miners traveled the country publicizing their strike.

By July, union leaders had been thrown in jail for refusing to order the miners to end the civil disobedience campaign, and court fines against the union passed \$4 million. When the company refused to back off its demands, in September the union escalated its civil disobedience campaign. Dubbing their plan "Operation Flintstone" in tribute to the 1936–1937 UAW sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, 99 miners and one pastor marched into the Moss 3 mine and occupied it. For three and a half days, thousands of miners and supporters demonstrated outside the mine, but faced with an imminent police assault, the miners ended their sit-in.

On New Year's Day, 1990, the union reached a tentative agreement that gave some concessions but saved the workers' pensions and retirees' health coverage, and on February 20, the Pittston miners ratified the contract, ending their 10-month strike. The company agreed to petition the courts to drop the \$64 million in fines, and the fine was tossed out in a unanimous decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1993.

UMWA President Trumka declared the union had overcome the combined efforts of the company and the courts to eliminate the union, and the entire labor movement celebrated its first major victory since President Reagan fired 11,359 striking air traffic controllers and crushed the PATCO union in 1981.

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See also **Trumka, Richard L.**

PLUMB PLAN

Named for the railroad union attorney Glenn E. Plumb, the Plan aimed to nationalize U.S. railroads in the aftermath of World War I. Railroad labor unions led the campaign for nationalization, and the Plan became a rallying point for broader progressive forces in the labor movement. Despite widespread support from railroad workers, who had seen benefits from temporary federal control of the railroads during the war, the Plan fell victim to the Red Scare that soon followed the Armistice.

During World War I, private control of the roads had seriously hampered the national coordination needed to boost industrial production and transport war supplies. Moreover, there was a labor shortage, as higher wages drew workers out of the largely non-union, low-wage railroad repair shops. These problems led the Wilson administration to seize control of the railroads in December 1917, temporarily putting them in the hands of the U.S. Railroad Administration (USRA). Co-ordination improved under federal control. Under pressure from workers, commissions set up under the USRA granted substantial wage increases and protection for union organization, which shot up during 1918. Late that year, the Railway Employees Division (RED) of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which represented unionized shopcraft workers, conducted a referendum asking workers whether they wanted government control of railroads to continue after the Armistice: 99% said yes.

Glenn Plumb, who served as attorney for the four railroad operating brotherhoods, thought that public railroad ownership could deliver justice for workers, lower rates for shippers and passengers, and reduce class conflict. Under his plan, the government would charter a public corporation to run the railroads. It would buy out the current owners with a combination of cash and government bonds. The board of directors would consist of 15 members, five elected by railroad workers, five elected by railroad management, and five appointed by the president to represent the public. If revenue exceeded expenses, the surplus would be split evenly between the federal government and the employees. The 50%

“dividend” going to the employees, however, would be divided between the “operating officials” and the workers, and the former would receive twice the rate of the latter. The government would use its share to extend and maintain the roads and to create a fund to retire the bonds used to buy the roads. If the government share was more than 5% of gross operating revenue, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) would be obliged to reduce passenger and freight rates by this amount. With lower rates and possibly lower revenue the next year, workers and managers would presumably be motivated to be more efficient; if they succeeded in lowering costs, they would continue to receive a dividend. It would be, as Plumb put it, “scientific management under democratic control.”

Since President Wilson pledged that he would return the roads to private control and a privatization bill sponsored by Senator Albert Cummins (R-IA) gained momentum in 1919, the Plumb Plan League swung into action. Led by Arthur Wharton, the head of the RED, the League included on its executive board officials of the railroad brotherhoods, who remained outside of the AFL. Its newspaper, *Railroad Democracy: The Plumb Plan Weekly* (later renamed *Labor*), eventually reached some 500,000 readers. The League charged one dollar per year for membership, organized six hundred local chapters, and sponsored speaking tours. In a bid to widen its base, League leaders named the AFL chief, Samuel Gompers, honorary president in the summer of 1919, though without his consent. While this move angered Gompers, who viewed nationalization as a dangerous move in the direction of Bolshevism, the League won a political victory when delegates at the national AFL convention in January 1920 passed a resolution that endorsed railroad nationalization. Their vote reflected the wave of working-class militancy that swept the United States after the Armistice, as an unprecedented four million workers went on strike.

It was in this heated context that in August 1919, Thetus W. Sims (D-TN) introduced a bill in the House of Representatives to put the Plumb Plan into effect. Though the Plumb Plan was far from Bolshevik, Plumb was attacked as a dangerous radical, and the Sims bill was buried. Meanwhile, the Senate passed the Cummins bill, with a provision outlawing railroad strikes, and in January, the House passed a similar bill, sponsored by John Esch (R-WI). The conference bill, without the antistrike provision, was approved in February 1920 as the Transportation Act, which formally returned the railroads to private control.

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POLITICS AND LABOR, NINETEENTH CENTURY

To understand working-class politics in nineteenth-century America, we must understand how the American political and class systems changed. Contrary to De Tocqueville, mass democratic electoral politics did not emerge directly out of the American Revolution but slowly through struggles over generations. Indeed, suffrage did not become universal until the last third of the twentieth century. And a workforce in which the largest occupational categories in 1800 were slaves, farmers, farmhands, domestics and unpaid household workers, artisans, and sailors changed to a workforce with a majority of blue-collar wage earners. Working-class politics involved struggles for interests of an evolving working class within the polity and struggles to gain full inclusion in that polity.

Undemocratic America

In 1800, somewhat over half of the adult white male population (and perhaps one fifth of the adult population) could vote (Keyssar, p. 24). No other country had suffrage this wide, yet the United States was still profoundly undemocratic. The daily lives of a majority of the people violated basic criteria for democratic rights: proprietorship over the individual’s “own person and capacities” (Macpherson, p. 263).

Three categories of adults—composing at least two thirds of the adult population—could not expect American law to recognize their title to their persons

or their labor: slaves, Indians, and women. African-Americans—almost all slaves—composed nearly one fifth of the population. Indians, like African-Americans, had virtually no enforceable legal standing. Yet, native peoples still controlled more than three quarters of the territory of what would become the United States and may have still numbered as much as one fifth of the white population. While the law recognized white women, the doctrine of *femme covert* legally subsumed women under their fathers and husbands. Most women also did not own property or the products of their labor.

Even among white males, proprietorship over persons and capacities varied. Indentured servants, still numerous in the late 1700s, were short-term slaves. Free white males who did not own property (as about half of them did not) faced legal and customary restrictions. Many of their commonest occupations restricted the right to quit. Sailors could not leave their ship without permission of the captain and faced life-threatening corporal punishment if they questioned the authority of officers. Agricultural workers (the largest category of waged labor) often signed annual contracts under which their employer held their wages as a bond until completion of the contract. If they quit or were fired, they forfeited all of their accumulated wages.

Thus, the daily lives of a substantial majority of working Americans in 1800 did not match any substantive understanding of freedom. Directly or indirectly, much of nineteenth-century politics reflected the contradictions between that daily reality and the promises of our founding revolutionary documents.

Three underlying factors shaped how those contradictions would be translated into the formal political arenas of parties, elections, and policy making: the heritage of European colonialism, the rules for political activity set out in federal and state constitutions, and a highly tribalized religiosity.

Heritage of Colonialism

The United States would not have existed but for the world-changing impact of European colonialism. However, within the resulting Atlantic economy, British North America occupied a niche that shaped subsequent political development differently from the rest of the hemisphere. British North America contained no land appropriate for sugarcane and no precious metals, the two greatest sources of colonialist wealth and plunder. While slave societies developed around the Chesapeake and in the coastal Carolinas,

other parts of British North America had few slaves. North American slavery remained a sideshow to the sugar colonies until the nineteenth century cotton boom. Because slave owners did not dominate, British North America disproportionately attracted European immigrants. The northern colonies and some western parts of the southern colonies became the most substantial white majority societies in the hemisphere.

As a result, by the American Revolution a bifurcated political culture combined reverence for the rights of Englishmen with defense of undemocratic racial hierarchy in an uneasy co-existence of political tendencies representative of metropole and colonial periphery. This contradiction fundamentally shaped and eventually dominated antebellum politics and influences American political culture to this day. Working-class politics emerged in a society where racial hierarchy and regional alignments functioned (and still function) as crosscutting axes to political divisions based on bourgeois versus proletarian.

Rules of the Political Game

If the colonial heritage structured American political culture, the constitutional heritage structured party politics and electoral behavior. Our constitution drafters left us with a political system markedly different from most other electoral democracies.

Chosen in a winner-take-all election conducted separately from legislative elections, and holding power at the behest of this national electorate rather than by maintaining a parliamentary majority, the American president resembles a constitutional monarch more than a parliamentary prime minister. The president nominates key government personnel unilaterally (subject to congressional approval, rarely refused until quite recently), in contrast to the parliamentary alliance building typical of prime ministers. The president similarly operates far more unilaterally than a prime minister in setting policy goals, suggesting budgetary priorities, and conducting foreign policy.

The principle of separation of powers, of which the separate election of president and legislature is a prime example, also means that effective governance demands simultaneous majority coalitions in several political institutions and at several levels. Power in American government is decentralized as well as divided among three branches of the national government. States select congressmen and senators. Maintaining national legislative majorities in both houses

of Congress thus demands cultivation of political influence within the states. State constitutions, with rare exceptions, mirror the national constitution.

All successful American political parties have adapted to the logic of this constitutional structure. Since no party could remain politically credible for long without capturing the executive, and no party could actually govern without dual legislative majorities, parties defined themselves as engines for manufacturing and holding majority electoral coalitions, not as bearers of a coherent ideological vision. They became patchworks of constituencies. Most of what critics and reformers have lamented about American party politics ever since—the emphasis on personalities rather than issues, the intellectual shallowness and inconsistency of electoral appeals, and the preoccupation with winning at all costs—are a result of the strategic logic embedded in the constitutional structure.

This constitutional system presented working people with a double political dilemma. First, they needed to gain entrance. Second, they needed to negotiate within the party structures that constitutional rules dictated. Although activists frequently tried to flout the constitutional logic by organizing labor parties, such parties could never exercise significant political influence beyond the local level and could never sustain themselves for long periods. But working-class voters rarely had sufficient political clout to effectively pressure major party politicians to shape party programs around working-class demands.

Religious Identities

Finally, a distinctive religious heritage shaped cultural and political life. Many of the colonies had been founded by religious dissenters (Puritans in New England, Quakers in Pennsylvania, Catholics in Maryland) or attracted others (Baptists, Methodists, German Evangelicals and Lutherans). Several founding sects attempted to establish their denominations within their own colonies, aggravating conflicts between denominations. Well before mass party politics emerged in the nineteenth century, there had been a tradition of ethnoreligious conflict. Party coalitions developed in part around this tradition. As the Second Great Awakening stimulated both religiosity and the proliferation of religious sects, ethnoreligious identity became the most consistent determinant of partisan loyalties. Ethnoreligious and regional identities, which divided workers, frequently trumped other concerns.

Mechanics

Prior to the Jacksonian Era, formal politics had largely been a gentlemen's hobby, but in the major seaports, working people—who made up the overwhelming majority—exercised influence both through crowd activity and through organization among skilled workers. Enough artisans could meet the property qualification for suffrage to constitute a sizable constituency—a “Mechanics Interest.”

However, commercialization and industrialization divided the old Mechanics Interest after the 1790s. Journeymen began organizing separately from the Revolutionary Era Mechanics Societies. Journeymen's societies successfully pressured employing masters to raise wages, maintain customary work rhythms, and hire only union members. In response, masters locked out workers and took union leaders to court under British common law doctrines of conspiracy in restraint of trade. More than two dozen such trials took place between 1805 and the 1830s, accompanied with packed courtrooms, popular pamphleteering, mass demonstrations, and political debates in city councils and state legislatures. The controversies around these trials symbolized the increasing bitterness of the larger conflict that provoked them. After the verdict in an 1836 trial of journeymen tailors in New York City, activists plastered the city with a “coffin handbill” denouncing the judge for burying liberty and equality and implicitly threatening his safety.

Decades of such conflict politicized and radicalized urban artisans and laborers, a process heightened by the self-conscious agitation of a scattering of European political exiles—United Irishmen, Luddites, Jacobins—and native Paineite radicals. By the end of the 1820s, radical artisans attempted to organize the world's first labor parties.

Workingmen's Parties

Workingmen's Parties startled political observers in Philadelphia and New York City in 1829, despite their amateur leadership and rudimentary organization. The Philadelphia Party ran poorly in its first campaign in 1828 but garnered about 20% of the vote in Philadelphia County the following year. The New York City Party did even better, with 31% in the 1829 state assembly races electing Ebenezer Ford, a carpenter.

Publicity of these initial successes inspired a frenzy of imitators and opportunists. Working people

organized dozens of local Workingmen's Parties in the next year or two, and in some cities, ambitious politicians launched workingmen's tickets of doubtful authenticity, hoping to capture votes with the popular label. None lasted more than two or three years.

Yet despite their brief flare, they crystallized popular sensibilities about the implications of capitalist development and the potential of mass electoral mobilization. American politics would never be the same. The Workies made a larger public conscious of how commercialization, industrialization, and the transportation revolution had begun to alter the American political economy. A world of workers and bosses had started to replace a world of farmers, sailors, merchants, slaves, and planters. The Workies looked to the state to remedy their problems with the new political economy. The proper role of the state in economic life has been a staple of American politics ever since. The Workies also suggested that politics was too important to be left to gentlemen. Working people, who had often ignored elections even when they were eligible to vote, discovered politicians and voting booths.

The Workies also helped politicians discover the people. They demonstrated the electoral potential of a populist style pitting the People against the Enemies of the People—Tory bosses, Masonic cabals, the slave power conspiracy, and later economic royalists or secular humanist intellectuals.

Emergence of the Second American Party System

The Workies also benefited from fortuitous timing. Party competition had disappeared during the previous decade with the collapse of the Federalists. The Workingmen appeared just as political entrepreneurs sought new rhetoric and constituencies around which to build a second party system.

The Workingmen suggested possibilities both to incipient Jacksonian Democrats and proto-Whigs. Organizers of Jackson's 1828 presidential campaign successfully re-invented the wealthy and well-educated Tennessee military hero as a backwoods man of the people fighting for just plain folks against an Eastern establishment. Jackson—an Indian fighter, slave owner, and advocate of the creditor rather than the debtor faction in Tennessee politics—had no history of sympathy for the downtrodden, but he did harbor hostility toward the pretensions of seacoast elites, and he was willing to play the part. The Jacksonians won decisively amidst unprecedented turnout.

Both parties responded to this demonstration of how populist style could mobilize voters, and both also recognized that successful mass mobilization demanded a party organization run by political professionals. Their competition for voters undermined elite resistance to white manhood suffrage. By the 1840s, voter turnout reached the highest levels in American history, often topping 80% in national and state elections.

The Whigs defined themselves against Jackson by combining an economic program for capitalist development with an emphasis on respectability and Protestant morality. Their economic program anticipated the belching smokestacks and full dinner pails of late nineteenth-century McKinley Republicans: a national bank for monetary regulation and capital formation, a federally funded infrastructure to facilitate movement of goods, and high tariffs to protect American workers and manufacturers from foreign competition. The Whig formula: economic growth, prosperity for all, plentiful high-wage jobs plus moral stewardship with enforced Sabbath observance, prohibition, and Bible reading in the public schools.

Democrats built a coalition capable of winning national elections even after Jackson no longer headed the ticket by combining diverse groups repelled by the Whigs. The majority of slave owners opposed the Whig economic program. They feared that European nations that bought their cotton might retaliate against American tariffs, and protection for American industry meant higher prices for manufactured goods. A more fundamental concern intensified these objections: any program that strengthened the capacities of the national government strengthened the one institution that could threaten slavery.

Others threatened either by Whig economics or Whig morality joined slaveholder opponents of federal power: Catholics, Protestant sects that also feared persecution, secularists, drinkers and other enthusiasts of sensual pleasures, noncommercial farmers who viewed capitalist development as a threat rather than an opportunity, labor unionists embittered by conservative judges, and entrepreneurs who thought of themselves as outsiders or had local rather than national economic interests.

Two slogans—"personal liberty" and "white men's democracy"—united the diverse Democratic coalition around an assertively laboristic rhetoric. Not until New Deal Democrats did any major political party match Jacksonian claims as friends of labor or their appropriation of a language of class anger. Whigs countered that their formula for prosperity made them the true friends of labor.

That both major parties consciously competed so strenuously and self-consciously for a labor vote is

at first glance surprising. The emerging working class of industrial wage earners, journeymen, urban day laborers, and servants still constituted a small percentage of the national electorate—not much more than 10% in 1840—and that minority, divided like other Americans by region, race, ethnicity, and religion, could hardly function as a politically cohesive group. But laboristic rhetoric meant more than an appeal to labor as a potential constituency. It symbolized widespread concerns about capitalist development.

Working People and the Second Party System

Many labor activists responded skeptically to the laboristic appeals of Jacksonians and Whigs. The former Philadelphia Workingman William English complained how “once a year politicians call us *men*; ... once a year we are the *intelligent, virtuous, orderly working men*. But then they want our *votes*.” His colleague, John Ferral, accused both Democrats and Whigs of trying “to lure...working people into the meshes of their nets” (Pessen, pp. 123–124). Yet both, like most labor leaders, campaigned for the Democrats, attracted by antibank and antimonopoly diatribes, and by willingness of some urban Democratic politicians to defend workers’ right to strike and support legislative goals like 10-hour-day laws. President Van Buren’s 1840 executive order establishing the 10-hour day for workers in federally funded projects seemed like tangible evidence that Democrats’ proworker language had substance.

But while labor activists tended to support the Democrats, working-class voters divided their votes between the two major parties. In part, this reflected the regional and ethnoreligious identities of working people. That region, ethnicity, and religion are the most reliable statistical predictors of partisan behavior in this era makes it appear that class concerns were irrelevant to antebellum politics. But that argument is hard to reconcile with other evidence about antebellum politics and culture—the widespread labor unrest of the 1830s and the 1850s, the popularity of literature darkly critical of capitalist development, and the eagerness of political campaigners to use explicitly class-tinged rhetoric. After the Bible, the two best-selling books in the antebellum United States were both critiques of America’s labor systems: Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and George Lippard’s surrealist denunciation of capitalist exploitation, *The Quaker City*. Or consider the response of an Ohio congressman to a Whig colleague’s speech about the harmony of interests between capital and labor (Ashworth, pp. 88–91):

Well this is very fine.... I suppose the capitalist will have no objection to exchanging situations with the laborer; that he will give up his capital to the laborer...his lands... the key to his costly sideboard, and the freehold to his rich wines, gold goblets, cut glass decanters...and he, the capitalist will enter the field of toil and sweat and there labor from morning till night.... And when shall such an example as this take place...when the lion and the lamb shall sit down in peace.

It seems more likely that class concerns mattered to working-class voters but that workers did not agree about which party best addressed those concerns. For example, Whig promises of tariff protection looked like job protection for some workers but higher living costs to others. In iron cities like Pittsburgh and in New England cotton mill towns, working people tended to vote Whig because tariffs offered protection from British competition threatening their livelihoods. In New England shoe towns, where tariff protection was less important, working-class voters were not as likely to vote Whig. In Philadelphia and Boston, both strongly Whig cities, correlations between the property values or wealth of each ward and the percent voting for Whigs or Democrats show a statistically significant tendency for voters in the poorer wards to vote more Democratic than the rest of the city, even when Whigs carried the cities overwhelmingly.

Overall, the Democrats’ proworker rhetoric may have given them a slight edge among working-class voters, especially where Democratic politicians went beyond laboristic rhetoric to actively support workers. But industrial workers represented too small a percentage of the national electorate and were too divided by region, race, religion, ethnicity, and sectoral economic interests to form a cohesive voting bloc, except in a few scattered local elections.

Politics of Race and Slavery

The second party system depended on a bipartisan evasion that eventually scuttled it. Whig and Jacksonian leaders agreed to keep discussion of slavery out of the electoral arena. Some did so because they valued preservation of the Union above all else; some because they hoped slavery might gradually disappear without conflict; some because they believed a successful national party needed to draw votes on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line and could only do so by avoiding the issue. The congressional “gag rule,” as its opponents called it—a procedural agreement to automatically table without discussion all petitions and proposals relating to slavery—symbolized the evasion.

But industrialization and capitalist development undermined this gentlemen's agreement. Mechanical production of cotton textiles produced an explosive worldwide demand for cotton. The American South was the best cotton-growing land on earth. King Cotton made southern slavery more profitable than it had ever been, dashing illusions that slavery might peacefully fade away. The cotton boom fueled the entire economy and stimulated westward expansion. In the first two hundred years of European settlement in North America, few Euro-Americans had moved more than two hundred miles west of the Atlantic coast. In the next 50 years, they would sweep across the continent. Each time a new territory petitioned for statehood, Congress had to revisit slavery. In an economy driven by cotton mills and cotton factories in the fields, slavery could not be kept out of party politics.

Repeated political crises over territorial expansion kept the issue of slavery in the consciousness of citizens, who also felt vaguely threatened by capitalist development. For example, leapfrogging slave territory threatened free white farmers' access to prime land (because slave owners could outbid them for the best acreage) when they were already nervous about the growing commercialization of agriculture.

The expansion of slavery also threatened to muddy the color line that had helped to maintain the loyalty of non-slaveholding and poor whites. The Jeffersonian ideal of a yeoman republic envisioned a society where a majority of white families owned land and those who didn't had reasonable hope of doing so. Within this ideology, whiteness corresponded with financial independence from the wills of others. The color line marked both a cultural and a material boundary. But with the rapid increase in waged labor that accompanied industrialization, an ever-growing portion of the white population faced what they insistently called wage slavery: lifelong financial dependence on employers and daily submission to the will of another, work regimes that uncomfortably mirrored the situation of chattel slaves. Both industrialization and the expansion of slavery thus served to intensify the racialization of American culture and the perception of slavery as degrading and threatening.

Working People and the Politics of Slavery and Race

Working people divided bitterly over slavery and race. For example, both the mobs who attacked abolitionist meetings and the victims of those attacks were disproportionately working class. On the one hand, many working-class radicals interpreted the

growth of wage labor as a Tory counter-revolution designed to undermine their revolutionary birthright. They argued that industrialists and slave owners—lords of the loom and lords of the lash—collaborated in this plot to expand exploitation. All working people, regardless of race, legal status, ethnicity, or religion, should unite against their oppressors. Yet, given the racialized nature of American political culture, it is not surprising that even many white workers who preached a radically democratic version of American republicanism saw potentially emancipated slaves not as allies but as a barbarian horde that would further weaken their position against industrialists.

George Henry Evans, a New York City printer, organizer of the Workingmen's Party, and editor of the *Workingmen's Advocate*, had been the only editor in New York to defend the slaves' right to revolution after the 1831 Nat Turner Uprising. White workers shared blame for the loss of life in Virginia, Evans argued, because they had allowed slavery to persist by not actively fighting for abolition. But by the 1840s, Evans had become an anti-abolitionist convinced that northern industrialists had joined the abolitionist movement to shift popular attention away from the white slaves of the North.

Other labor radicals went further than Evans, trying to ally with southern politicians against northern industrialists. Mike Walsh, an Irish-American union organizer, editor, and New York City congressman, sought an alliance with John C. Calhoun, whom he viewed as an American equivalent of the British "Tory Socialists" who had sponsored factory inspection and other reforms in Britain.

Slaves and White Southerners

Perhaps the only cohort of working people who had absolutely no disagreement or confusion over the slavery question were African-Americans. About one American in five was African-American in 1790, about one in seven in 1860. However, because nearly every African-American performed menial labor regardless of age or sex, African-Americans represented about twice as large a percentage of the labor force as the population. The cotton they grew was decisive to the growth of the entire economy. They literally carried the rest of America on their backs.

Slaves resisted in small and individual ways such as shirking and tool breaking, and in large, collective actions such as mass escapes and rebellions. Free blacks, often linked to slave rebels, organized annual race conventions, armed vigilance committees against slave catchers, and decisive support for white

abolitionists. William Lloyd Garrison's famous *Liberator* could not have gotten off the ground in 1831 without black support. When its first issue rolled off the presses, Garrison had only one hundred white subscribers.

During the course of the nineteenth century, slave rebellions also suggested a growing political self-consciousness among black working people. Many colonial slave revolts had been rooted in African cultural traditions and ethnic solidarities. They were as much mass escapes seeking refuge in Maroon communities as political assaults on the slave system. But the largest slave rebellions and conspiracies of the nineteenth century—the 1800 and 1802 Virginia conspiracies, the 1811 Louisiana revolt, Denmark Vesey's 1823 plot in Charleston, and the Virginia uprising of Nat Turner's followers in 1831—were all self-consciously revolutionary political movements seeking to overthrow the slave system. To a striking degree, the ideological visions of their leaders mirrored those of white labor activists—Paineite radical democracy and millenarian evangelical Protestantism.

Thus, despite their exclusion from formal electoral politics, African-American working people were self-conscious and decisive political actors. Their resistance made it impossible for other Americans to avoid recognition that slavery depended on systematic mobilization of coercive violence. Slave resistance undermined the moral claim of the United States as the democratic city on the hill and inspired other critics of the shortcomings of American democracy. The violence visited on slave rebels also dramatized the claims of antislavery activists trying to convince non-slave-owning whites that slavery threatened their liberties as well.

It is difficult to judge how consistently such arguments resonated with southern white working people. As W. E. B. DuBois noted, the "psychological wage" of white supremacy gave poor white southerners an emotional investment in slavery. Many poor white men wanted to join the planter class more than they wanted to overthrow it. But generations of conflict between Tidewater and Upcountry had also fostered a long tradition of class antagonism within the white South. Carriers of this tradition, such as the Kentucky abolitionist Cassius Clay or the North Carolina artisan Rowan Hinton Helper, who published an antislavery tract in 1857, tried to convince white working people that slavery robbed them of economic opportunity and liberty. Both had a following, especially in the Upper South and in cities with cohorts of immigrant workers and labor unions such as Baltimore, Richmond, and New Orleans. But proslavery mobs burned the printing presses of men like Clay who tried to rouse southern workers to fight

the planter class, threatened the lives of iconoclasts like Helper, and terrorized political activists who attempted to campaign for the Free Soil or Republican parties. While intense electoral competition between Democrats and Whigs gave southern politics a democratic appearance, in a region where black and white opponents of the slave regime faced overwhelming violence and terror, overt working-class political opposition to the slave regime had no chance of even getting started.

Free Soil and the Rise of the Republican Party

But a militarized South, with ubiquitous armed slave patrols pursuing runaway slaves into free territory, with militant advocates of slaveholder rights seemingly bent on nationalizing slavery, suggested to white northern workers that slavery no longer was someone else's problem. This sense that southern firebrands wanted to nationalize slavery enhanced the political capital of moderate antislavery politicians. While the abolitionists' moral critiques of slavery had never come close to winning a majority of the northern public, moderate antislavery politicians hoped to combine those who opposed slavery on moral grounds with those willing to fight the Slave Power—the slaveholding class—out of self-interest. As one Michigan Free Soiler put it, they had to show voters "that their *bread and butter* depends upon their doing right" (Formisano, p. 214).

The Republicans' 1856 campaign slogan—"Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men"—embodied that strategy. Free labor, Republicans argued, could not compete with slave labor. Only in Free Soil states, states that outlawed slavery, could free labor thrive, and only where free labor thrived could workingmen be free. Recruiting savvy political veterans from both major parties, the Republicans combined what had been most appealing in both Jacksonian and Whig appeals to working people. They married the Jacksonians' paeans to honest workingmen and democratic self-reliance with Whig economics and promises of full employment and upward mobility.

Like all successful American parties, the Republican Party consciously built a diverse coalition. They cultivated nativists and prohibitionists, balanced tickets, and promised spoils. But they nonetheless conveyed a sense of idealism and integrity that perhaps made platitudes about honest labor seem meaningful. Republicans, after all, had done something unusual in American political history: they had taken an unequivocal position on the most controversial issue of their day.

Republicans did not run well among unskilled workers, disproportionately Irish Catholics and Germans (also two thirds Catholic). They carried too much of the scent of militant Protestantism and nativism. But they ran well among northern skilled workers. Lincoln got as many as two thirds of the votes of skilled workers in such industrial cities as Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, although he averaged only 40% of the national popular vote. Radical labor activists, from German Marxists to aging Workingmen, increasingly saw the abolition of slavery as a prerequisite to any successful response to the labor question of industrial capitalism.

Working People and the Politics of War and Reconstruction

Civil War draft resisters argued that the Civil War, like most wars, was a rich man's war and a poor man's fight. They objected to the draft law's provisions allowing the well-to-do to escape service by paying substitutes. Some objected to risking life and limb to free the Negroes. In New York City in 1863, where Irish and African-American workers had long harbored mutual hostility, draft riots became murderous pogroms against people of color.

But the war also kindled a remarkable surge of working-class political idealism, a sense that the working class was being called to a great moral purpose and that out of suffering would come a society that offered the working class something closer to the promises of its founding documents.

Perhaps the most startling evidence of political purpose was the conduct of African-American young men. Long before Lincoln had committed himself to emancipation, slaves became convinced that the war would usher in the day of Jubilee. Wherever Union lines moved close enough to suggest the possibility of successful flight, they abandoned the plantations. Men of military age begged a reluctant army to train and arm them so they could fight their oppressors. By war's end, perhaps a quarter of the male slaves of military age had escaped slavery to join the Union army, guaranteeing a ready supply of enthusiastic infantrymen just when draft resistance had seemed to threaten the war effort and withdrawing a pool of the most valuable labor power from the Confederate economy. W. E. B. DuBois called this mass flight the largest general strike in American history.

Lincoln, the first poor boy to reach the presidency, understood how to dramatize that sense of mission. His Gettysburg Address redefined the war for the Union as it was to a war for what it should be—"government

of the people, by the people, for the people." His second inaugural address clothed the political project he had posed at Gettysburg in the evangelical language of sin, suffering, and redemption.

In the mid- and late 1860s, this idealism of the War years, combined with an inflationary spiral, stimulated the greatest outpouring of labor activism since the 1830s. The Boston machinist Ira Steward, the theorist and promoter of the eight-hour day, summarized a widespread sentiment among northern workers at the end of the war: "the workingmen of America will in future claim a more equal share in the wealth their industry creates...and a more equal participation in the privileges and blessings of those free institutions, defended by their manhood on many a bloody field of battle." Steward urged radical Republicans to turn their eyes northward: "[L]et our dinner tables be reconstructed," he declared.

Steward helped to refine a working-class interpretation of republicanism that had been percolating among Paineite labor radicals, utopian labor reformers, and evangelical millenarians for much of the previous century: the political struggle for human rights and democratic government and the conflict between producers and nonproducers, who lived off the value produced by other men, were essentially the same. In the next generation, this producer republicanism would culminate in the national ascendancy of the Knights of Labor. Working-class political activists imagined that labor republicanism would politically unite an emerging working-class majority who would use the American political system to emancipate wage slaves just as they had emancipated chattel slaves.

Producer Republicanism and Gilded Age Politics

At the end of the Civil War, the prospects for restructuring American politics around the question of wage labor, as the Republicans had done around slavery, seemed much better than they would be in retrospect. Although still small and fragile, labor unions had expanded significantly. What had begun as a war to prevent secession had been transformed into a war to abolish an undemocratic labor system. Surely, labor activists believed, their fellow Americans could be made to see that liberty and justice for wage slaves was merely an extension of the principles for which they had just fought and died. Who could have imagined just 30 years ago that the small circles of abolitionists who risked their lives whenever they spoke in public would live to see slavery abolished?

Rising working-class discontent would make “the labor question,” as it came to be called, one of the central topics of public discourse for the next 50 years, but would-be worker politicians found it far harder to translate discontent into political power than to raise the question. Major parties occasionally selected labor leaders as candidates, a few prominent national politicians expressed sympathy for industrial workers, and some big-city machine politicians courted labor by restraining strikebreaking by police and local judges, but such pockets of support were too scattered and episodic to significantly shape national party agendas.

Discontented workers, disgusted with the unwillingness of the Republicans and Democrats to address their concerns, frequently tried to run labor candidates on Labor, Socialist, Greenback, and Populist tickets. Such efforts followed a recurring pattern. Following peak moments of industrial conflict, they often did surprisingly well, emerging out of nowhere with sufficient electoral clout to challenge the major parties and occasionally win a few offices. Thus, the Massachusetts Labor Reform Party elected 22 state legislators in 1869 and polled 15% of the state vote the following year. The Greenback-Labor Party received over one million votes in 1878, ran particularly strongly in industrial cities like Pittsburgh, and elected the union leader Martin Foran to Congress from Cleveland and the future Knights of Labor grand master workman Terence Powderly as mayor of Scranton. Socialists elected local officials and state legislators in Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Detroit, and Louisville during the 1870s. Local labor parties associated with the Knights of Labor also displayed electoral strength in the mid-1880s. Their 1886 mayoral candidates drew more than a third of the votes in New York and Chicago and won elections in several smaller cities. Populists in the 1890s ran competitive races in many industrial and mining towns.

Such surges of labor protest voting demonstrated that working-class discontent ran deep, but almost invariably such surges turned out to be one-hit wonders, quickly fading into insignificance in subsequent efforts. The labor organizations that spawned them could rarely sustain their own organizational base through fluctuations in the business cycle, so labor party resources frequently disappeared. Even at their peaks, the most powerful national labor organizations represented too few members to win elections outside their strongest bastions. The Knights’ peak membership reached over 700,000 in 1886, but nearly 11.5 million people voted in the 1888 presidential election. Even if turnout among Knights eligible to vote had been 100%, and even if they had all voted as a bloc, they could not have represented more than 5% of the national electorate.

Given the structure of American politics, minor parties, which might have slowly built support within a parliamentary system, seemed impotent after the initial flush of enthusiasm faded, even where they had local victories. Labor activists elected in local races found themselves undermined by incumbent opponents and officials and outflanked by hostile state and national governments. They could not deliver on the expectations of their voters. Accomplishing anything demanded compromise and political alliance, but skeptics about independent political action pointed out that this necessity suggested they should bargain for concessions within the major parties.

Finally, their electoral base usually had prior major party partisan preferences based on regional and ethnocultural identities. At peak moments of industrial conflict and agitation, significant numbers of working-class voters might put such identities aside temporarily, but as emotions calmed, and as third-party politicians could not deliver on millenarian expectations, let alone even minimal pork-chop benefits, the lure of returning to the power and security of a major party home became compelling.

A Century of Working-Class Politics in Retrospect

What did a century of working-class political action accomplish? For many activists and for many historians sympathetic to working people, the answer was frustrating. Explicitly prolabor parties went down to inevitable defeat, while joining major parties seemed at best to offer limited gains. The structures of political power seemed nearly as impermeable to working-class influence at the end of the century as at the beginning. Neither major party offered workers more than episodic support or more than occasional tangible material benefits—no social security, unemployment insurance, workmen’s compensation, food stamps, public housing, enforceable safety standards, enforceable statutory limits on employer demands, or right to collective bargaining. Indeed, by the end of the century, the rapid increase in such anti-union devices as court injunctions, yellow-dog contracts, and heavily armed private company armies made union membership more dangerous than it had been for the members of journeymen’s societies who had faced conspiracy indictments at the beginning of the century. Every year, police, troops, and armed company guards killed peaceful and unarmed strikers. Between the Gilded Age and the 1930s, more Americans died in the class war of the picket line than died in the shooting war with Spain. Not until

the New Deal would working people achieve significant influence on public policy or the right to organize without having to fear for their lives.

Yet in other ways, working-class political agitation had improved working-class life. Democratic values had become sacrosanct in American political culture—even though practices still didn't always match. Slavery had been abolished and de jure universal male suffrage achieved—although many African-American southerners would not have de facto voting rights until the 1970s. Women's suffrage would follow within the next 20 years. A century of agitation had lowered the length of the average working day by three or four hours. Workers would rarely tolerate forms of intimidation common in 1800: corporal punishment in the workplace, long delays in wage payment designed to make them compliant for fear of losing accumulated pay, restrictions on freedom of movement.

Working-class politics had also shaped American culture. By 1900, virtually everyone in America knew what people meant when they used words like union, strike, boycott, scab, picket line, or solidarity. Such cultural knowledge provided a basis for struggle by subsequent generations of American working people. The “labor question” would be at the core of Progressivism and the New Deal.

Yet, for all the benefits they provided, Progressive and New Deal reforms would certainly have disappointed such nineteenth-century labor activists as the Workingmen Thomas Skidmore or George Henry Evans or advocates of producer republicanism like Ira Steward. They would have recognized the value of these reforms. But they would have argued that the social bargain of the New Deal, while granting important social welfare benefits and the right to organize, still left working people in a subservient dependence on their employers. In a new century, with the victories of the New Deal era seemingly relentlessly rolled back, perhaps American working people need to relearn a key lesson of these nineteenth-century labor radicals: meaningful democracy is incompatible with sharply unequal economic power.

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POLITICS AND LABOR, TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the first two thirds of the twentieth century, organized labor moved from the margins of American politics to a position of power and influence, its rise facilitated by a series of carefully crafted strategies and bitterly fought battles. As American public life shifted to the right in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, labor's standing tumbled, so that by the end of the century, it was once again on the margins, seemingly incapable of influencing politics and policy in any significant way.

The late nineteenth century had been a particularly difficult period for the labor movement. Unprecedented economic change fostered profound conflict at workplaces across the nation. Yet when working people tried to protect or advance their interests through collective action, they often faced fierce resistance from the combined power of capital and the state. Employers regularly secured court injunctions declaring particular strikes illegal. When workers violated those injunctions, government officials enforced the court orders with massive shows of force. Time and again, federal troops and state militias intervened in strikes the courts had prohibited, shattering walkouts at gunpoint, arresting strike leaders, and even battling workers in the streets. “All the machinery of the state stands ready to protect and further the interests of capital,” complained a pro-union observer, “while labor is absolutely without law, a law unto itself, save when it commits some act, to be dealt with as a criminal.”

Unionists had no single solution to the dilemma they faced. Some argued that business and government were so hopelessly intertwined that only revolutionary action could tear them asunder. Others favored a democratic evolution to socialism, a perspective that was gaining a substantial following in the working class at the turn of the century, thanks in

part to the relentless agitation of the Socialists' dynamic spokesman, Eugene V. Debs. Still other labor activists favored government regulation of the capitalist economy and the creation of a welfare state. The fledgling American Federation of Labor (AFL), meanwhile, argued that there was no point in trying to restructure the American political economy. Instead, union members should adopt a more modest goal, pressuring politicians to rewrite the laws that constrained union action so that labor might pursue its self-interest as it saw fit.

The AFL president, Samuel Gompers, reduced his strategy to a simple dictum: "Reward your friends," he famously said, "and punish your enemies." In practice, however, the AFL did not maintain the nonpartisanship that Gompers claimed to favor. Although the Republican Party had a progressive wing, most of its major figures opposed labor law reform. In the Democratic Party, the balance was much the opposite. Democratic conservatives, such as Grover Cleveland, were more than willing to lend their weight to corporate interests. But by the first decade of the twentieth century, party leaders were willing to endorse the AFL's demands. In exchange, Gompers brought the federation into alliance with the Democrats. In both the 1908 and 1912 presidential elections, for instance, the AFL worked closely with the Democratic National Committee to mobilize the working-class vote, and federation officials campaigned on behalf of the Democratic candidates.

The AFL's mounting involvement in Democratic affairs brought Federation officials into contact with the Party's growing progressive wing. It was not always an ideal match. Gompers's primary political aim was to reduce government involvement in labor's affairs, whereas progressives generally supported greater government action, albeit on behalf of working people rather than on behalf of business interests. So Gompers opposed calls for a law mandating an eight-hour workday, state-supported health-care plans, federal mediation of labor conflicts, and a minimum wage, all reforms progressives strongly supported. But other unionists were drawn to the progressives' expansive view of government power. Many connections occurred on a local level, where labor activists joined with settlement house workers, socially minded lawyers such as Felix Frankfurter and Frank Walsh, ethnic politicians such as Al Smith, some socialists, and even a handful of liberal businessmen to promote progressive causes. In the course of the Wilson administration, however, the labor-progressive alliance shifted from the streets of Chicago and New York to the highest levels of government.

When Woodrow Wilson was elected president in 1912, he was not considered a champion of labor.

His first three years in office did little to change that impression. But as Wilson faced re-election and the possibility of war in 1916, he shifted his administration's labor policy dramatically. First came a burst of progressive reform, including a limited minimum wage law and a long-awaited prohibition on child labor. Then, after the United States entered World War I, Wilson launched what one historian has called "a mini-legal revolution" in collective bargaining. Desperate to bring order to a chaotic wartime economic mobilization, the president created a National War Labor Board (NWLB) to adjudicate industrial disputes. Directed by a cadre of progressives, the board used its power to support workers' right to unionize without employer interference, to promote workplace democracy through formal systems of shop-floor representation, to extend the eight-hour day and the minimum wage to more industries, and to provide women workers with equal pay for equal work. Such vigorous government policy helped to trigger a surge in union membership from 3 million workers in 1917 to over 5 million in 1920, a 70% increase in three years. Suddenly, Samuel Gompers's circumscribed vision of the state's proper role appeared hopelessly antiquated—a relic of another age.

But the bold experiments of the war years did not last. In 1919, businessmen and their conservative allies launched a political offensive that shut down the NWLB, reversed the labor movement's great surge forward, and triggered a Red Scare so ferocious that it eviscerated the radical left. By the early 1920s, organized labor was reeling, whipsawed by a Republican ascendancy that had no interest in its agenda, a judiciary once again willing to wield the cudgel of injunctions, and a business community determined to re-assert its absolute authority over the workplace. Badly battered by labor's dramatic turn of fortunes, Gompers drew the AFL back from its engagement with party politics, a policy endorsed by his successor, William Green, who assumed control of the Federation after Gompers's death in 1924. Labor's progressives, meanwhile, desperately tried to open new political avenues, but their most ambitious effort—Robert La Follette's 1924 third-party campaign for the presidency—ended in crushing defeat.

The severe setbacks of the 1920s did not destroy the progressive ideal, however. With the collapse of the NWLB, its advocates returned to their settlement houses, unions, law offices, college campuses, and congressional offices, policy makers in exile. But they maintained the network they had built during the Wilson Administration. And through that network they sharpened the ideas that had shaped the wartime labor program. In the midst of the 1920s boom, to talk of economic rationalization through federal

support of unionization, workplace democracy, and the expansion of the welfare state must have seemed like an academic exercise. When the boom gave way to a massive depression, though, the progressives were perfectly positioned to resurrect their program.

In the early days of the Great Depression—1930, 1931, and 1932—the progressive bloc promoted its ideas primarily through congressional allies such as New York’s Robert Wagner, Wisconsin’s Robert La Follette, and Nebraska’s George Norris. The 1932 presidential election shifted the balance of power from Capitol Hill to the White House. Like Woodrow Wilson before him, Democrat Franklin Roosevelt enjoyed substantial support from organized labor during the campaign. But that support was hardly decisive, and when FDR took office, he was not beholden to labor interests. He desperately needed a labor policy, however, and the progressives had one to offer. So Roosevelt integrated the network into his administration. The connections ran from Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins through the presidential aides Tommy Corcoran and Benjamin Cohen to Roosevelt’s informal advisor Felix Frankfurter, back to Senator Wagner and other New Deal congressmen and finally to select union leaders, most notably the United Mine Workers (UMW) president, John L. Lewis, and Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA).

It took the progressive network almost three years to consolidate its position within the administration. Roosevelt endorsed the right of workers to form unions free of employer interference with Section 7 (a) of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), but weak enforcement undermined the measure’s effectiveness. By the winter of 1935, it was clear that Section 7(a) was not working. Senator Wagner therefore introduced a replacement bill designed to put the power of the federal government behind workers’ rights. In concept, the bill embodied the progressive idea that unionization would regularize industrial relations and thus help to rationalize the American economy. What’s more, progressives argued, unionized workers would have the leverage necessary to win higher wages, which would boost purchasing power and foster the economic growth an economy mired in depression so obviously needed. In practice, Wagner’s bill followed the model established during World War I: creating a federal agency—the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)—empowered to protect workers as they organized unions.

At first, FDR did not endorse the bill. But as it moved through Congress in the spring of 1935, he added his support. The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) became law on July 5, 1935. The progressives’ moment had arrived.

For the next two years, politics, policy, and direct action fused in a fashion it never had before. When AFL leaders refused to launch a nationwide organizing campaign to bring unionization to the nation’s core industries, Lewis and Hillman abandoned the AFL to create their own federation, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). To make sure that the CIO had the political support it needed to take on corporate America, Lewis and Hillman threw themselves and their unions into Roosevelt’s 1936 re-election campaign. Lewis funneled over \$500,000 of Mine Workers’ money—an unprecedented sum—into Democratic coffers. Union organizers worked tirelessly to bring working-class voters to the polls. And Lewis himself campaigned for Roosevelt across the country, his efforts capped by a joint appearance with the president in the heart of Pennsylvania’s coal country days before the election. When Roosevelt swept the election—carrying 46 of 48 states—Lewis knew the CIO was ready to move. “We...must capitalize on the election,” he told his executive board shortly after the votes were counted. “The CIO was out fighting for Roosevelt....We wanted a president who would hold the light for us while we went out and organized.”

That is precisely what they got. On the last day of December 1936, autoworkers in Flint, Michigan, began their epic sit-down strike. From that spark, the CIO fire spread across industrial America, its advance aided by sympathetic New Dealers such as the Michigan governor, Frank Murphy, who refused to use force to evict the sit-down strikers, and the progressives who staffed the new National Labor Relations Board. In the course of 1937, union membership increased by three million as the CIO organized workers in some of the nation’s most powerful companies, among them General Motors and U.S. Steel. There were also some stinging defeats that year. But by the beginning of 1938, organized labor had become a major power in the American economy, its dramatic rise—and future prospects—tied intimately to the New Deal state.

Just how intimately the two were tied became clear over the next decade. As the militancy of 1937 began to fade, the CIO came to rely more heavily on its allies at the NLRB to advance the union cause. There were still dramatic strikes—CIO unions shut down both Bethlehem Steel and the Ford Motor Company in 1941, for instance—but it was as much NLRB pressure as mass protest that forced the firms to recognize their workers’ right to unionize. The United States’ entry into World War II at the end of 1941 strengthened the connection. Patriotic fervor demanded that the labor movement pledge not to strike for the duration. In exchange for that critical concession,

the federal government guaranteed unions “maintenance of membership.” That is, if a union had a contract with an employer when the war began, all new hires would automatically become union members after 15 days on the job. As a result, union membership shot up by five million during the war, thanks not to union action but to government policy.

Both AFL and CIO unions benefited from the Democrats’ support for unionization; in fact, the AFL grew more quickly than the CIO in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Still, AFL leaders kept their distance from Roosevelt and the Democrats. The CIO, in contrast, strengthened the ties it had forged in the crucible of 1936. It was partly a practical matter, of course, a quid pro quo for all that the New Dealers had done for the labor movement. But it was more than that. The CIO had its share of bread-and-butter unionists, who wanted nothing more from their unions than higher wages and shorter hours. But the CIO was also home to a vast array of progressives who hoped that the labor movement might promote a range of reforms. National health care, public housing, federal aid to education, civil rights, national economic planning, even the nationalization of key industries: CIO activists supported these and many more causes. And at least as long as Franklin Roosevelt was alive, most of them believed that the Democratic Party offered the only real avenue for advancing their agendas.

So the CIO integrated itself into the Democratic Party machinery. Union leaders such as Sidney Hillman took seats on the Party’s policy-making committees, while local labor activists filled positions in the Party’s state and city councils. In the 1944 presidential election, Sidney Hillman built an elaborate campaign structure, the CIO Political Action Committee (PAC), that raised campaign contributions from every union local, produced reams of campaign literature, crafted radio advertisements, and sponsored get-out-the-vote drives—all on behalf of Roosevelt and the Democrats. Dissent was not an option. When John L. Lewis announced that he would not support FDR’s re-election bid in 1940, his fellow unionists abandoned him. Eight years later, the CIO’s left-wing faction rallied behind Henry Wallace rather than the Democratic nominee, Harry Truman; Lewis’s successor as CIO president, Philip Murray, responded by purging the leftists from the federation.

Many historians have concluded that the CIO’s commitment to the Democratic Party in the 1940s was a fundamental error. As they tied themselves to the Democrats, they argue, CIO leaders were forced to subordinate their agenda to that of the Party. This was particularly damaging by the late 1940s, when the Cold War forced mainstream politics to the right.

Party loyalty and political calculation demanded that CIO spokespersons back away from the most radical of their demands—such as the nationalization of industry—in favor of the Democrats’ increasingly watered-down reformism. Murray’s purging of the left was but one result of the Faustian bargain the CIO had struck, the historians say. And with that bargain, the great hopes of the 1930s simply faded away.

The argument has much to recommend it. American politics certainly did drift to the right in the years immediately after World War II, and as it did so, CIO leaders were forced to soften their militant edge. One example illustrates the point. In early 1949, Walter Reuther, the president of the United Automobile Workers, proudly told a union audience, “I am not particularly interested when people talk about free enterprise. I am a believer in a planned economy.” Two years later, as McCarthyism swept the nation, Reuther felt compelled to declare that he “believe[d] strongly in the free enterprise system.” Reuther had not changed, but the times had. Because the Democrats were sure of labor’s support, moreover, Party leaders did not have to give labor everything it wanted. Instead, they could treat unions as simply another constituent group, one part of a larger coalition whose expectations had to be managed.

But the argument can be taken too far. For all the limitations that post-World War II politics imposed, the unions of the CIO and, after their 1955 merger, the AFL-CIO wielded enormous influence in the 1950s and 1960s. Democratic presidents regularly consulted with union leaders. Labor officials held a number of important political appointments. Arthur Goldberg, for instance, moved from the staff of the United Steelworkers to become John Kennedy’s secretary of labor and from there to the United States Supreme Court, while Walter Reuther’s administrative assistant, Jack Conway, helped to direct Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty. Most important, labor lobbyists were instrumental in passing into law some of the most important reforms of the postwar era, including the creation of Medicare and Medicaid, the expansion of Social Security, and the destruction of the southern system of segregation, a triumph secured by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. On its own terms, this is an imposing list of accomplishments. Given labor’s position at the start of the twentieth century, it is truly remarkable.

Despite its political sophistication, however, organized labor was ill-prepared for the shocks that shook the movement in the late 1960s and 1970s. Trouble began in the latter half of the 1960s, when the era’s searing political conflicts began to dissolve the electoral coalition that the New Dealers had

assembled in the 1930s. At the same time, a combination of war-induced inflation, rising foreign competition, and declining investor confidence loosened the United States' once iron grip on manufacturing. The problems deepened in the 1970s, as a series of unprecedented events pushed up prices on basic goods while an influx of foreign goods cut deeply into American corporations' market share. By the end of the decade, profit margins were tumbling. Desperate to reverse the decline, corporate executives began the restructuring that would strip the United States of much of its manufacturing base.

But the business community understood that restructuring alone was not sufficient. If profits were to be improved, they argued, the federal government had to abandon the New Deal system, which they insisted had become a drag on innovation and investment. To that end, the corporate elite allied itself with the growing conservative movement of the late 1970s, itself an amalgam of tax rebels, free marketers, supply-siders, religious and cultural conservatives, and aggressive cold warriors. Like the New Dealers of the 1930s, the conservatives traded on the economic crisis of the 1970s to take control of the federal government. In January 1981, Ronald Reagan took the oath of office as president of the United States—and the conservative revolution began in earnest.

For the next 20 years, the revolution pummeled the labor movement. The assault was multisided. As major manufacturing firms downsized their operations, unions lost thousands upon thousands of members. The Reagan and Bush administrations, meanwhile, turned government policy against unionization. Reagan signaled the shift during the famous PATCO strike of 1981, when the president fired 11,500 striking air traffic controllers. The more significant change resulted from Reagan and Bush appointing conservatives to the NLRB. The appointees greatly widened management's power to resist union organization and demands, stripping away many of the protections the New Dealers had put in place a half century earlier. Many corporations with unionized workforces used their new leverage to demand that their workers accept wage cuts and reduced fringe benefits. Companies without unions felt free to intimidate those workers who dared to consider organizing or even to complain about working conditions. According to one study, one of every 20 workers who demanded union representation in the 1980s lost his or her job.

Together, these blows crippled labor's political power. Obviously, the labor movement had no leverage with the Republicans, who now dominated Washington. But the problem extended to the Democratic Party as well. By the end of the twentieth century, only 13% of the American workforce was

unionized, down from its mid-1950s peak of 35%. With its base reduced so dramatically, the union movement no longer had the ability to marshal a huge bloc of voters or invest vast sums of money in political campaigns. Consequently, Democratic officials no longer believed it necessary to support even the most basic demands of the union movement, a point driven home in 1993, when the Democratic president, Bill Clinton, pushed the North American Free Trade Agreement through Congress, despite labor's vociferous opposition. That was perhaps the most telling symbol of labor's precipitous political decline. A movement that had once promised to reward its friends and punish its enemies found itself in the closing years of the twentieth century with far too many enemies to punish and few friends to reward.

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POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

While it is sometimes regarded as the disappointing final chapter of the civil rights movement, the Poor People's Campaign of 1968 signaled a shift in protest politics from legal reform to economic transformation. Frustrated by the limits of earlier civil rights victories and the government's flagging support for Great Society social programs, Martin Luther King Jr. initiated the Poor People's Campaign, which he envisioned as a series of disruptive protests in the nation's capital that would force Congress and the president to take action to end poverty. After King's April 4, 1968, assassination, his associates in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) proceeded with the campaign, and for six weeks, three thousand poor blacks, whites, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and Native Americans made their home in



Poor People's March at Lafayette Park and on Connecticut Avenue. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, U.S. News & World Report Magazine Collection [LC-DIG-ppmsca-04302].

Resurrection City, a symbolic protest community of plywood and canvas huts constructed near the Reflecting Pool at the Lincoln Memorial. Bogged down by mud and infighting, harassed and infiltrated by police and government agents, and largely ignored by the public, the SCLC disbanded the city and ended the Poor People's Campaign when its demonstration permit expired in June.

Origins of the Poor People's Campaign

From the earliest days of his leadership of the civil rights movement, King had been rhetorically committed to economic justice. As a young pastor of a middle-class congregation in Montgomery, Alabama, he provided leadership to the historic bus boycott that had its most direct impact on female domestic workers and laborers. Overseas visits to Africa and India in the late 1950s exposed King to the colonial dimensions of poverty and inequality, and his addresses at union conventions indicate that he valued the labor movement's role in bettering the wages and conditions for working people. But in the months following his unsuccessful open housing campaign in Chicago during the summer of 1966, King spoke more frequently and with greater urgency about the need for a redistribution of economic and political power. King believed that President Lyndon B. Johnson had sacrificed his War on Poverty and other domestic

reforms for an expanded war in Vietnam. He was also frustrated by the limitations of earlier civil rights victories that may have ended legal discrimination but did little to guarantee true equality. As dozens of cities erupted in spontaneous violence during the summer of 1967 and Black Power militants challenged his leadership, King spoke openly about the need for the movement "to find a kind of middle road between riots and timid supplication." What was needed was "a method of dislocating the functioning of a city without destroying life and property," he told the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders that fall.

King Proposal Meets Resistance

The Poor People's Campaign proved to be a tough sell, even among King's coworkers and closest confidants. In the weeks after he announced plans for the campaign at a December 4 press conference, SCLC staff grumbled privately that the goals for the protests were unclear and that a Washington mobilization would pull them from their ongoing work in Cleveland, Chicago, and Grenada, Mississippi. The longtime advisor Bayard Rustin broke publicly with King and warned that the demonstrations would damage the Democratic Party's showing in the 1968 elections and sink the pending civil rights bill banning housing discrimination. NAACP officials predicted

that the protests would lead to violence and even more repressive countermeasures.

In the early weeks of 1968, a more sinister opposition sprang into action, as the FBI stepped up its long-standing campaign against King. At the FBI director J. Edgar Hoover's urging, clandestine informants infiltrated SCLC regional offices, gathered information on the organization's supporters, and spread rumors intended to divide the movement. Welfare recipients considering the trip to Washington were warned that their benefits would be cut, and organizational allies of the SCLC were told of the group's alleged mishandling of funds. Agents leaked exaggerated threats of violence to panicky Washington city officials, fueling their deepest fears of an invading mass of poor people. As an overwhelmingly white organization with few agents who could convincingly pass as poor black people, the FBI welcomed the cooperation of military intelligence units that had their own extensive spy operations. With the important exception of the Community Relations Service Division of the Department of Justice, which provided SCLC leaders valuable advice and logistical assistance, a constellation of local and federal government bodies lined up to contain, if not destroy, the Poor People's Campaign.

On the Way to Washington

King's efforts to mobilize support for the campaign in the weeks before its scheduled late April kickoff stiffened his resolve. Traveling by chartered airplane and driving along backcountry roads, King delivered dozens of addresses at rural churches and community centers across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. In the tiny Delta town of Marks, Mississippi, King spoke at a Head Start center that had received no federal assistance in its two years of existence. He repeated the campaign's demands that the federal government provide jobs or a guaranteed income for every adult, and he listened somberly as African-American women spoke of their need for shoes and better schools for their children.

Between scheduled stops in Mississippi, King addressed a rally on March 18 in support of the Memphis sanitation workers, who had been on strike for more than a month over the city's refusal to recognize their union. He was moved by the black workers' spirit. Their struggle reminded King of his early days in the civil rights movement and embodied the goals of the Poor People's Campaign. Despite the protests of SCLC staff, who feared that he was stretching himself too thin, King agreed to the strike

leaders' request that he return to the city to lead a nonviolent protest march. That march, on March 28, ended abruptly in violence. Acts of vandalism by youthful protesters were met with brutal retaliation by the police; one protestor was killed and dozens were wounded. King's FBI enemies and their media allies used the news to cast doubt on his reputation as a nonviolent leader and to suggest that the Washington protests promised more of the same, but on a larger scale. On his return to Memphis a few days later, King was felled by an assassin's bullet.

The Poor People's Campaign

In the wake of King's death, his close friend Ralph D. Abernathy assumed the leadership of the SCLC and the Poor People's Campaign. Ironically, the tragic events in Memphis re-energized the campaign; the number of volunteers pledging to come to Washington exceeded expectations and the SCLC suddenly found itself awash in donations. On April 29, Abernathy led an advance group of one hundred poor people to Washington, where they met with government officials and made their demands public. Following a meeting with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Abernathy declared these initial efforts a success: "I think this is the most fruitful three days ever seen in the history of this city. The leaders here for the first time heard the cries and groans of the poor people speaking in their own language, unpolished—an outpouring from the souls of poor people. The poor are no longer divided. We are not going to let the white man put us down any more. It's not white power, and I'll give you some news, it's not black power, either. It's poor power and we're going to use it." Meanwhile, nine caravans of poor people from as far away as Seattle and Los Angeles prepared for their cross-country trips. From Marks, Mississippi, where King had spoken just a few weeks earlier, a 50-person delegation began its slow journey across the Deep South on several wagons pulled by teams of mules. Several hundred Mexican-Americans affiliated with the *Alianza de Pueblos Libres* and the Crusade for Justice traveled from New Mexico and Colorado, while staff members from the Highlander Center and the Appalachian Volunteers organized a contingent of white and black poor people from Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

The Poor People's Campaign officially began on May 12 with a Mother's Day march cosponsored by the SCLC and the National Welfare Rights Organization. Coretta Scott King led demonstrators through Washington neighborhoods that had been

devastated just weeks before in the riots that followed her husband's murder. Speaking to an audience of five thousand people at the Cardozo High School stadium, she called for the repeal of recent amendments to the Social Security Act that had raised eligibility standards and cut benefits for women and children. The following day, Abernathy officially opened Resurrection City, and arriving protestors began moving in to their new homes on the National Mall.

Over the next five weeks, protestors took part in dozens of demonstrations around the capital, most of which targeted government agency heads and congressional leaders. Protesters were usually greeted by sympathetic officials who discussed pending legislation but offered no firm commitments or concessions. For fear of alienating white supporters, the SCLC had agreed to refrain from the disruptive protests King had promised the previous year, at least until the June 19 mass demonstration that was to be the highlight of the Poor People's Campaign. Billed as "Solidarity Day," the event drew more than 50,000 people to the foot of the Lincoln Memorial, where they heard speeches by Abernathy, the United Auto Workers president Walter Reuther, and Coretta King. Reporters drew comparisons to the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, contrasting the mood of frustration and anger with the earlier march's "exhilarating sense of hope and promise."

The momentum provided by the strong showing on Solidarity Day arrived too late to save the Poor People's Campaign. Resurrection City had descended into chaos, and SCLC failed to provide the camp with the necessary leadership. Paid provocateurs and gang members intimidated visiting journalists and protesters. Residents complained about poor food and muddy conditions created by many consecutive days of rain, and they noted that several of the SCLC's top leaders slept at the Pitts Motor Hotel. Untrained young men serving as marshals provided inconsistent security, and incidents of violence, though exaggerated by the dozens of clandestine operatives inside the City, grew more frequent. The Mexican-American leader Reies Lopez Tijerina criticized Abernathy and the SCLC for ignoring the nonblack coalition members and declined to move his delegation to Resurrection City, choosing instead to stay at a nearby private high school. The daily demonstrations at government offices grew progressively combative, but they were unfocused. In the days following Solidarity Day, police shot tear gas into the campsite in response to several incidents of rock throwing. With their permit from the National Park Service due to expire, SCLC and Justice Department officials devised plans for a face-saving retreat. On June 24, about 200 protesters, including Ralph Abernathy, were arrested at Capitol

Hill, while 120 more who remained in Resurrection City were arrested without major incident. Sporadic protests continued late into the summer, but the media turned its attention to the upcoming Republican and Democratic national conventions.

Though the SCLC left Washington without gaining any substantial concession from the government, the Poor People's Campaign marked a departure from earlier civil rights protests in that it placed economic justice at the center of its demands. In this sense, the campaign had much in common with the contemporaneous protests of African-American cafeteria workers at North Carolina universities, who went on strike for an end to racist employment practices, and black workers in Detroit, who launched a series of wildcat strikes that would hobble the auto industry during the late 1960s. The Poor People's Campaign also laid the groundwork for subsequent SCLC solidarity work on behalf of factory workers and municipal employees in Atlanta and hospital workers in Charleston, South Carolina. For nonblack participants, the Poor People's Campaign signaled the growing maturation of the Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Native American movements, all of which gained visibility in the 1970s. Their struggles, like those of the black workers, were built upon earlier civil rights victories, while aiming to complete the unfinished business of the 1960s social protests—a radical reordering of the U.S. economy.

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See also **Rustin, Bayard**

POPULAR FRONT

Throughout its existence in the roughly 1934 to 1939 period, the Popular Front (also translated as "People's Front") promoted coalitions and fostered

organization building by the political left. Although not without problems, the resulting coalitions in the United States led to notable political achievements. Calls for a united front against fascism were raised in the early 1930s, but only with the Communist Party's official abandonment of organizing toward revolution and accompanying outreach to non-Communists was a movement against the growth of international fascism initiated. The Popular Front, which began as a diplomatic strategy by the Communist International (Comintern) to secure the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, grew outside the Communist Party's immediate control, although heavily influenced by the Party's cadres. Ultimately Communist in origin, the resulting Popular Front reached across party, class, and professional lines from working class to upper class, from labor to law. The achievements and shortcomings of this strategy and its effects remain disputed among historians.

The 1932 World Congress Against War in Amsterdam, where less than half the delegates were Communist Party members (830 of 2,196), was an early attempt to forge coalitions against the growth of fascism, but the Comintern only backed this effort in March 1933. The League's significance lies in its early appeal for united action against fascism. It took many more months to formalize the unity, but when it was codified, it assumed a Communist cast as the League Against War and Fascism became a vehicle for the Communist Party.

Student Communists and Socialists were also at the forefront of co-operation, uniting in organizing antiwar strikes. The Communist Party, though, continued to insist that only it held the model for realizing world socialism and fiercely attacked other opponents on the left even while working with them in the League Against War and Fascism. This marriage between leftist factions was always precarious, with frequent sniping and an eventual ban on party affiliation in League work.

Not until Hitler's seizure of power and suppression of the German left did the Comintern officially endorse a united effort against fascism. Previously, it had feared such a strategy would inhibit the revolutionary potential of a Communist movement stemming from the political right's accruing of power. The rise of the Nazis and their threat to left-wing parties shook the foundations of Communist initiatives. Adolf Hitler crushed the political left in Germany, where the strongest Communist movement outside of Russia had been seated, and the Comintern reconsidered its approach. French, German, and Polish Communist leaders issued a joint communiqué offering alliances to social democrats in mid-February 1933, two weeks after Hitler became chancellor.

Throughout 1933, the Comintern also observed capitalist opposition to President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs.

Then at Nantes, France, on October 24, 1934, the Communists endorsed a Popular Front when the French Communist Maurice Thorez spoke before the French Communist Party. The Comintern approved of Thorez's plan in January 1935, and later in the summer at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, the Bulgarian Georgi Dimitroff suggested the need for a people's front in order to combat the rising threat of fascism, which was promising to undo the Russian revolution. Dimitroff's policy was adopted officially by the Comintern for all Communist parties shortly after.

The new policy urged co-operation among left-wing parties in the defense of liberal democracy even while the Communist goal of monopoly over the left remained the same as before.

The coalitions resulting from the Communists' abandonment of revolutionary rhetoric and their co-operation with other left and liberal forces were loosely knit. Many activities in this period involving Communists remained informal alliances like the New Deal's center-left coalition of grassroots supporters in which the Communist Party spent more time building other pro-New Deal groups than building itself. The new strategy fostered Communist popularity as membership increased throughout the period, while other left-wing parties lagged behind. The apparent moderation and embrace of Americanism also made the Communist Party more palpable, or at least less subversive in appearance, to the mainstream. But despite these gains, turnover of party membership ran at 50% throughout the era.

The Popular Front never achieved the sort of critical mass the strategy hoped for, and it has even been suggested by some historians that the change to a more moderate united front strategy limited the possibility of making the types of political gains the Communists had achieved during the strike wave of 1934. Still, the Party secretary Earl Browder credited the Party's membership achievements to its work in American labor, which benefited greatly from Communist help after 1935, which placed communists at the forefront of the labor movement even when they faced discrimination. The three largest unions in the American Federation of Labor (AFL) all backed the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1935, and the CIO's John L. Lewis, an anti-Communist, tapped into Communist experience by inviting Party activists to organize for the new labor organization. Having backed off from creating their own union organization, the Trade Union Unity League, and opposing dual unionism, the Popular

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Front Communists became valuable organizers for the CIO. A symbiotic relationship developed between Party members and unions. The strength of the steel and autoworkers unions, in particular, owed much to the Communists' Popular Front strategy. Hopes for a Farmer-Labor Party were not realized, but with the American Labor Party (ALP), the Communists attempted to build a powerful national force. While that also failed, the ALP, with Communist aid, played a pivotal role in the elections of Fiorello LaGuardia and Vito Marcantonio.

Another achievement of the Popular Front was the advancement of desegregation among the African-American community. The Communist Party stood at the forefront of black empowerment among organizations not officially affiliated with civil rights. In New York City, where the Communist Party was strongest, Communists permitted interracial couples in its co-operatives, integrated toilet facilities at Party functions, and racially mixed audiences at the Greenwich Village club, Café Society. The interracial environment benefited jazz culture with its many black performers and forged valuable ties within and outside the black community. The Communist Party was also the only major opponent to mobilize against the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Many black non-Communist leaders, benefiting from the assistance of Party cadre, began to speak positively of Communist work.

Gender relations were far more contentious. By 1936, 25% of the Communist Party members were women, who reached around one third of the membership in 1940. Recent research by Kate Weigand suggests that women were also benefiting from the Communist work through "opportunities, education, and self-confidence they probably could not have found elsewhere" and also from the periodic defense of women's rights by the Communist Party secretary Earl Browder. Auxiliary organizations under women's leadership formed to bolster other Popular Front organizations, but as auxiliaries they also reflected the limits of women's participation. Through these experiences, women began to develop a more radical gender consciousness and criticize the Party's gender divisions, which eventually resulted in Party attempts to pressure male cadres to behave more generously toward their female equals. Still, the failure to commit to women's uplift also marked Popular Front practice.

The long-lasting legacy of the Popular Front period, however, was antifascism, which earned the Communist Party support from the left around the world long after the Second World War concluded. The fascism the Popular Front intended to confront is still not easily defined, but the Communist Party put

forth a Marxist reading that construed fascism as the dangerous and militant last gasp of capitalism. While the enemy itself remained vague, the initiative attracted many non-Communists into the coalition. In the United States, antifascist organization building was manifested as a series of campaigns and layers of coalitions. Antifascism offered the American left a unifying theme it had long desired. Divisions remained, but the Popular Front fomented a semblance of cohesion where there had been many fissures before.

No other event characterized this more than the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), the era's most celebrated cause. The right-wing rebellion by Francisco Franco and half of the Spanish army against a Popular Front government provoked an international outcry among the political left. Communists, Socialists, anarchists, and many nonaligned individuals in the United States and elsewhere formed aid organizations in defiance of their governments and in cooperation with Spanish Republican leaders. A number of small strikes against freighters carrying alleged war material to Spain in late summer of 1938 were among the most obvious actions by American workers, but hundreds of unions across the country donated money, goods, and supplies to the ailing Spanish Republicans. The furriers union, for example, donated fur coats, and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) donated clothing. Many more liberal Americans also rallied to the cause with donations and support. The Communist Party was central to the campaign, but it would have gone nowhere without broad support.

This Spanish aid movement was also instrumental in provoking a shift from the Popular Front to the Democratic Front. The difference was largely semantic, and few of the Popular Front's proponents even in the Communist Party understood the change, but the Comintern nonetheless issued statements altering the policy in early 1937. The main difference lay in monied opponents of fascism now being included in the People's Front coalition. Spanish Loyalist organizations had already brought out some of America's wealthiest scions to the side of Spanish aid. The change in Comintern policy caught up with then current practice.

Interest in Spain had waned by early 1939 as defeat loomed. The Spanish war ended in March, preceding the official end of the Popular Front by six months, a shift ushered in by the Hitler-Stalin Pact in September 1939. At that point, the Soviet Union, isolated by the western nations, submitted to a nonaggression pact with Germany as a measure of security in the coming world war. While this ended the Comintern's People's Front and led to massive resignations from the Communist Party, the Popular Front itself ceased to

disappear. Aid organizations that emerged out of the Spanish, Chinese, and Czech crises refocused on the growing refugee crisis rising from the onset of World War II, and unions built by the Party gathered strength. With the entry of the United States into the conflict as an ally of the USSR following Pearl Harbor, the Popular Front was renewed, albeit with bitterness against Communists for the 1939–1941 interval. Now, though, a virtual consensus on antifascism was reached. Communist Party membership never reached Popular Front levels, however, even as the new united front against fascism after Pearl Harbor became institutionalized in the culture.

The Communists themselves were never satisfied with the results of the Popular Front efforts and should not be the final judges of that movement's achievements or failures.

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See also **American Labor Party; Communist Party; Congress of Industrial Organizations; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995); Sit-Down Strikes (1937); United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America**

POPULISM/PEOPLE'S PARTY

“Populism,” in its historical American meaning, refers to the People's or Populist Party, which emerged out of a movement of farmers and workers in the 1890s. The Populist label has also been applied to

many popular movements or tendencies, both progressive and reactionary, in the United States, Europe, and Latin America. This essay focuses on the historical third-party movement and its antecedents.

To characterize Populism as a “movement” is to say it was not a spontaneous outburst in response to economic or social ills but rather an organized effort by people who considered themselves to be oppressed. The People's Party arose out of several organizations of farmers and workers in the 1880s and 1890s. These sometimes disparate groups shared the “common sense” of working people at the time that producers—anyone whose labor creates value—deserve to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Farmers, sometimes in collaboration with the Knights of Labor (KOL), established economic co-operatives, but they were also drawn to electoral politics, where they sought redress through legislation.

Birth of a Movement

Hard times made folks consider extraordinary measures. Although the health of the American economy was relatively good in the 15 years following the Civil War, farm commodity prices declined at a much steeper rate than the overall deflation rate. Between the 1870s and mid-1890s, the price farmers received for their wheat, corn, or cotton dropped by over half. Wages for workers outside of agriculture declined, but not so precipitously. Then the bottom fell out in 1893 with what contemporaries called the “Great Depression.”

At the same time, farmers and workers saw that a wealthy few controlled strategic resources such as credit, transportation, and wholesale trade, while federal monetary policies further depressed prices. If “producerism” gave them a way of expressing why hard work should be rewarded, the spread of monopoly and contraction of the money supply helped explain why that was not happening.

Hard times and the ideological “lense” of producerism made people angry, but the mobilization of millions into a national movement required more than strong feelings. In the 1870s and especially the 1880s, farmers and workers formed community-based organizations, adapting the organizing techniques of voluntary associations including churches, fraternal organizations, and early farmer and labor organizations. Women as well as men participated. In Kansas and elsewhere, women who had honed their leadership skills in churches and groups like the Women's Christian Temperance Union emerged as spokespersons.

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Farmers and workers met to discuss common problems, practice familiar rituals, and plan strategies. To offset the economic power of monopolists, they created marketing and purchasing cooperatives. Believing that their enemies controlled government, they pressed upon the major parties legislative demands to benefit the people.

Who and where were these people? They were, by and large, small property holders—farmers, mainly, but also artisans, railroad workers, miners, rural doctors, and preachers, and even some small-business owners. Their organizations were strongest in the South, the Great Plains (from Texas to the Dakotas), and the Mountain West. Ethnically, they were mainly of European descent, although in the South, black farmers joined racially separate organizations. Heroic efforts to unite southern producers across the racial divide had only limited success. Most black “farmers” were actually tenants, sharecroppers, or laborers, and those in the last two categories were employees of farm owners. In several states, the Knights of Labor made serious efforts to organize this marginalized group.

In the 1880s, farm organizations spread across the South and West, mobilizing an army of potential recruits for political insurgency. Several went by the name of “Farmers’ Alliance.” One began in upstate New York in 1877 but was transplanted to Chicago in 1880 by the farm editor Milton George, who used his newspaper to recruit members in the Midwest. The most successful group, commonly known as the “Southern” Alliance, began in central Texas, also in 1877. Its membership was restricted to whites. A parallel “Colored” Alliance began in Texas in the 1880s. A fourth group, the Agricultural Wheel, sprang up in the lower Mississippi Valley, led by the Canadian-born machinist Isaac McCracken. As a young man, McCracken had joined the Blacksmiths and Machinists’ Union, where he met Terence Powderly, later the grand master workman of the Knights of Labor. Upon moving to Arkansas, he worked as a railroad machinist and farmed. McCracken was an effective organizer and a forceful advocate of independent political action.

After a shaky start, in the mid-1880s, the Texas-based Alliance launched an ambitious program of centralized co-operatives and an equally ambitious plan to expand across the South and into the Plains states. The architect of these schemes was Charles W. Macune, a small-town doctor and editor. An inveterate joiner and organizer, Macune was at the right spot at the right time. By the end of the 1880s, his organization, now officially the National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union, had over 1.5 million members in more than 20 states.

Traveling organizers were instrumental in the rapid spread of the farmers’ movement. While most were rural community leaders—often preachers or teachers—some had learned organizing skills in the union movement. Many of these were Knights of Labor, and membership overlapped between the Knights and the Alliance. Indeed, cooperation between farmers and workers in successful railroad strikes in Colorado (1884) and the Southwest (1885) swelled the ranks of both groups. The Alliance and Knights cooperated nationally to advance a common agenda, but relations between Alliance leaders and Powderly ranged from cool to hostile.

Toward the People’s Party

From its inception, the Alliance was political, though officially nonpartisan. Some of its earliest leaders were veterans of third-party movements of the 1870s. Their political program reflected a producerist tradition that affirmed private ownership of property but was grounded in the belief that monopoly power had stifled the fair working of capitalism. The legislative program they devised was intended to ensure access to land, credit, transportation, and an expanding money supply, thereby ensuring equal opportunity and abolishing special privilege.

The fullest development of the Populists’ agenda was the platform adopted at the People’s Party’s 1892 convention. While several streams converged in this document, its origin is traceable to the 1886 legislative demands of the Texas Alliance. That document was heavily indebted to the 1878 preamble to the Knights of Labor’s constitution, which in turn drew from 1867 manifestos of the National Labor Union.

This political agenda could not be easily implemented in a system where the dominant parties opposed even modest economic reform. Reformers faced a difficult choice: should they press their claims as a political interest group and force one or both parties to adopt their plan, or should they form a new party? The answer depended, in part, on how the major parties responded.

In December 1889, these choices were debated at a joint meeting of the Alliances and the Knights of Labor. Westerners, many of them veterans of earlier third-party movements, argued for a new party. Most southerners preferred to apply pressure within their region’s dominant Democratic Party. The St. Louis meeting adjourned with no consensus on strategy but with agreement on a platform that re-affirmed the unity of farmers and labor and demanded federal action to protect access to land, control monopolies

(in part through public ownership of railroads), and currency reform. There was also support for schemes to provide federal loans to farmers based on the value of their land (popular in the West) or their crops (the southern Subtreasury Plan).

In 1890, recent history and major party reaction dictated different strategies in the West and the South. Many key western leaders had long since left the old parties, and leaders of the dominant Republican Party scoffed at the demands presented to them. In the South, white reformers had to contend with the recent history of Reconstruction and Democrats' skillful use of the race issue. Nevertheless, the dominant reaction among southern Democratic officeholders to the "Alliance Yardstick" was to pledge their support, whether they meant it or not.

In 1890, both approaches seemed to work. In Kansas and elsewhere in the West, the Alliance and the Knights joined forces to create independent parties, and Colorado followed suit in 1891. Kansas independents won most of the congressional elections and controlled the legislature, where they elected the farm leader William Peffer to the Senate. In Colorado, the labor editor Davis Waite later won the governorship. Four southern states elected governors with ties to the Farmers' Alliance, and three fourths of the region's congressmen (all Democrats) endorsed the Alliance agenda. Much the same happened in Iowa, where because of close competition between Republicans and Democrats, *both* major parties pledged their support.

But pressure for a new party continued to build. Soon after the 1890 elections, southern Democrats reneged on their promises. Despite an Alliance directive not to join the caucus of any party that did not support its demands, all but one of the congressmen elected with Alliance support joined the Democrats in organizing the House. The exception was Georgia's Tom Watson.

When delegates convened again in St. Louis in February 1892, the stage was set for creation of a party with strong southern representation. The North Carolina Alliance leader Leonidas Polk chaired the meeting. A version of the now-familiar platform was adopted, including a stirring preamble written by Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota. The People's Party was launched. Polk was the likely presidential candidate, but he died before the Party's convention in July. Instead, in Omaha the Populists nominated James B. Weaver, a veteran of the Union Army and of third-party campaigns (he was the Greenback Party's presidential nominee in 1880).

Weaver won 22 electoral votes, the first by any third-party candidate since the Civil War. But the prospects for future success were not encouraging.

His only victories came in the western heartland of third-party movements. In only one southern state (Alabama, with strong union support) did Weaver win even a third of the votes. The Party barely scratched in the Northeast and did little better in the industrial belt stretching from Illinois to Pennsylvania.

Clearly, the People's Party would be hard pressed to win national elections and implement its program. The American system of elections created huge obstacles for new parties. Populists were divided among themselves on issues such as prohibition and women's suffrage, and leaders of the old parties brought the weight of culture to bear on citizens who considered defecting. Also, in those western states where Populists had already won elections, they now had records to defend, some of them not attractive.

The depression that struck the nation in 1893 made President Grover Cleveland hugely unpopular, but the Populists could not capitalize on their position as champions of the downtrodden. Not even the Pullman Strike in 1894 galvanized the Party's potential base. Even in Illinois, where the American Railway Union leader Eugene V. Debs campaigned for the Party, Populists were badly beaten. So the Populists faced yet another decision: stick with their platform and stay in the field as an independent party, or cooperate with a major party.

In 1892 and 1894, Populists in some states had formed alliances with the weaker of the two major parties—Democrats in the West and Republicans in the South. North Carolina Populists successfully fused with Republicans in 1894, sending Marion Butler to the Senate. Co-operation or "fusion" with a major party was not unusual for third parties in nineteenth-century America, but for a movement that viewed itself as being above petty partisanship, such tactical shifts could confuse and demoralize grassroots Populists and leave fusionists open to charges of selling out.

Then there was the silver issue. The Populist agenda included aggressive proposals for an expanded and more flexible money supply. Elements in both major parties began pressing for coinage of silver as a means to the same end. It was a weak substitute but a strong political tactic, particularly after President Cleveland forced repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act through Congress. By 1894, western Populists were increasingly drawn to the silver issue and to collaboration with Democratic silverites, including William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska. The silver craze also swept southern Democratic parties, but many southern Populists, having left the Democratic Party at great cost, were loath to rejoin the fold.

The issue came to a climax in 1896 when Bryan, having received the Democrats' presidential nomination,

was put forward for the Populist nomination as well. Neither Debs nor Peffer, though opposing his nomination, would agree to challenge him. In a highly charged convention, the People's Party nominated Bryan while rejecting his Democratic running mate in favor of Tom Watson. Although the convention endorsed the full Omaha Platform, by nominating Bryan, Populists conceded that silver was the issue of the campaign. National fusion with the Democrats meant local confusion. In the South, some Populists were simultaneously co-operating with Republicans, while most of their western counterparts were making common cause with Democrats.

Bryan carried the South and most of the West in a losing battle, but as a Democrat. Only in a few western states did the Populist contribution make a difference. Fusion agreements brought some local victories to the Populists in 1896 and 1898, but the Party's career as an independent force was over.

Bryan would dominate Democratic politics for two more decades, and when Democrats regained control of both Congress and the White House in 1912, he played a major role in passage of several bills that were heavily indebted to the Populist agenda, with former Populists in Congress in support.

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PORTAL-TO-PORTAL PAY

Portal-to-portal pay is compensation from the time a worker enters the workplace until he or she leaves. It covers such "nonproductive" activities as travel, eating, resting, preparatory work, waiting, and sleeping. The issue originally arose in coal mining in the 1930s. Traditionally, miners were paid only "face-to-face pay" for the time they spent at the mine's face. However, in 1941, a federal district court held that travel from the mine's portal to its face constituted work. Thereafter, portal-to-portal pay became a key union demand in bargaining negotiations and a subject of litigation for nonunion workers. Key controversies arose from weaknesses in the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Although it set a minimum wage and required time-and-a-half compensation for overtime work, the FLSA did not define what constituted "work time" and gave the Wage and Hour Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor no power to resolve controversies. Thus, the FLSA opened the way for a series of court battles over what comprised compensable work. These cases and the Portal-to-Portal Pay Act of 1947 revealed conflicts between Congress, federal courts, employers, and unions regarding labor law, custom, and collective bargaining contracts.

In two key cases, *Jewell Ridge Coal Corp. v. Local 6167, UMWA* (1945) and *Anderson v. Mt. Clemens Pottery Co.* (1946), the Supreme Court extended the reach of portal-to-portal pay. *Jewell Ridge* arose from the bitter 1943 United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) bituminous coal strike. Desperate for a resolution that would raise miners' pay without undercutting the Little Steel Formula for collective bargaining agreements, the War Labor Board and the UMWA head, John L. Lewis, agreed that miners would be paid for travel time. Companies objected that the agreement voided both customary labor relations and collective bargaining agreements. In the resulting *Jewell Ridge* case, the Court held that its definition of work time superseded custom and contract.

In *Anderson v. Mt. Clemens*, the Court's three-part opinion created the conditions for a national controversy. The Court held that under the FLSA, travel and preparatory time were compensable unless the amount was very small; the Court's own standards for work time overwhelmed custom and contract; and employers bore the burden of proof for compliance with the Court's decision. Workers seized on this decision and on the fact that employers found in

violation of the FLSA were liable for back wages plus damages of 100%. A spate of lawsuits for unpaid portal-to-portal wages met objections from employers, which complained that the courts had illegitimately redefined “working time” and that portal-to-portal claims would amount to over \$5 billion in liability. In response, Congress passed the 1947 Portal-to-Portal Pay Act, which restricted judges’ jurisdiction in disagreements over the definition of “working time,” preventing them from contravening a labor contract or customary labor relations.

The Portal-to-Portal Pay Act highlighted a congressional movement to protect against employer liability and to emphasize collective bargaining. Thus, the law was a companion to the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, which made illegal organized labor’s most effective direct-action tactics. The Portal-to-Portal Act also contributed to the growing distance between the fortunes of union and nonunion workers. Subsequently, workers traditionally unpaid for “nonproductive” duties could win portal-to-portal pay only through collective bargaining contracts.

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See also Fair Labor Standards Act; Lewis, John L.; National War Labor Board (WWII); Taft-Hartley Act; United Mine Workers of America

POSTAL STRIKE (1970)

The national postal wildcat strike of March 1970 is one of the most impressive strikes in all of American history. Despite a multitude of obstacles, more than 200,000 postal workers not only successfully struck, but they also forced a significant change in their status, their rights, their working conditions and earning power, and their own collective organization. Their actions compelled every branch of the federal government (legislative, executive, and judicial) to recognize the legitimacy of union power. This strike was one of the key events that signaled the arrival of public employees into the ranks of organized labor.

What makes this strike and its success so surprising? It occurred in the midst of a war, with hundreds of thousands of American soldiers away from home and dependent on the delivery of packages and messages from their families. Likewise, their loved ones relied on the mail to receive messages from their sons and daughters in the military. Older Americans depended on the postal service for their social security and pension checks. A strike would have an immediate disruptive impact on the lives of millions. Any strike by postal workers, or other federal employees, would have been illegal. Postal workers were (dis)organized into nine different unions, seven of which were granted some degree of recognition (but not formal collective bargaining rights) and two of which were not. Most of the unions were not affiliated with the AFL-CIO, and some of them had openly hostile relationships with each other. Postal workers and their organizations were also legally prohibited from participating in organized political activity. Postal workers’ pay was so low that some of them qualified for food stamps and welfare assistance, hardly the basis for the building up of savings that might tide a worker and his family over during a strike. Last, postal workers were the most diverse workforce in the country, their ranks including urban African-Americans and small-town white southerners, veterans and college degree holders. That they would act in a unified, collective, militant fashion seemed—and seems today—amazing.

Yet many of the same factors pushed them in the direction of taking action. The Vietnam War itself,

opposition to the war, and debate over the war functioned to politicize everyday life in America, not just on college campuses but also in post offices and working-class neighborhoods. As energy prices and interest rates spiked upward, workers asked whether the war was bringing them economic security or increased risk. African-Americans, Chicanos, and women, their expectations and aspirations raised by the civil rights movements and seemingly historic pieces of legislation, chafed when they bumped into glass ceilings and limited opportunities. Postal workers knew that the vast American populace depended on their labor, and they felt empowered by that. While the multiplicity of unions made monolithic organization unlikely, the tight fit of particular unions to their members (such as specific crafts, on the one hand, or the all-black National Alliance of Postal Employees, on the other) gave rank-and-file workers a sense of ownership of their organizations, an access to direct voice. The low pay prompted postal workers to take risks, even to the point of possibly losing their jobs, while the diversity of the workforce brought the influence of progressive ideologies and social movements into the inner life of the unions. By the spring of 1970, only the lid of legal restriction seemed to hold down the bubbling cauldron of discontent and militancy.

On March 12, 1970, frustrated by continuing inaction by Congress on a series of proposals, New York City letter carriers at a regular monthly union meeting demanded that their leaders conduct a strike vote. Despite the opposition of both the national and local presidents of the National Association of Letter Carriers, five days later, on St. Patrick's Day, the New York local voted to strike and put up pickets. Although the local president had not even communicated with his counterpart at the Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union (which represented inside workers), the latter organization's leadership chose to encourage their members not to cross the letter carriers' picket lines. At 5 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, the strike was on, and within a day, it was 100% effective in New York City. Over the next few days, the strike spread, first to the Northeast, then to the Midwest, and then to the West Coast, having its greatest strength in large cities. Court orders and injunctions were ignored, as some 200,000 joined the strike. Fearing that police action would only exacerbate the situation, the government and postal officials refrained from arresting union leaders. Their efforts to use National Guardsmen to sort and deliver the mail were disastrous. Finally, after a week, a combination of threatened fines and promises of wage increases and health benefits brought the strike to an end.

This strike brought profound changes to postal workers and the post office. Over the next month, union representatives and the postmaster general reached an agreement that included a 6% wage increase retroactive to December 1969, a commitment to encourage Congress to pass legislation enabling collective bargaining, with the promise of another 8% wage increase at that point, a compression of the wage schedule so that workers could reach top levels much more quickly, and a promise of amnesty for all strikers and union leaders. Congress then followed through with the sweeping Postal Reorganization Act, creating a quasi-corporate United States Postal Service (USPS) and providing postal employees with full organizational and collective bargaining rights under the National Labor Relations Act, except for the right to strike (replaced by binding arbitration). At the same time, some of the unions moved toward merger. In July 1971, five of the unions joined together to create the American Postal Workers' Union, the National Association of Letter Carriers and the Rural Letter Carriers Association merged, while the National Association of Post Office Mail Handlers, which had been within the Laborers' International Union, chose to remain so. For the next three decades, these three unions would approach the USPS from a position of consolidated strength, at times bargaining jointly, even if they remained organizationally separate.

Union cohesion and militancy in the Post Office were promoted by the generation that had lived through the 1970 strike. Many of them became the first officers of their local unions, bargaining local agreements and recruiting new members. As they moved into retirement, locals and the national union honored them and their recollections and stories would be told and retold at banquets and in local union publications. The national postal wildcat strike became the foundational narrative of postal workers' unionism, no matter which union they belonged to, no matter what town or city they worked in.

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See also *American Postal Workers' Union*

POWDERLY, TERENCE (1849–1924) **Knights of Labor**

Terence Powderly led the Knights of Labor (KOL), the largest working-class organization of the nineteenth century, for 14 years, from 1879 to 1893. His reign was defined by controversy, and many scholars have blamed him for the order's demise. Portrayed by some as moralistic, disloyal, dictatorial, and even pusillanimous, Powderly's detractors, then and now, argued that his commitment to acquiring a more equitable distribution of wealth did not match his dislike of strikes, distrust of political action, and opposition to radicalism. Essentially, this anti-Powderly narrative portrays him as increasingly out of step with the men and women he represented and thus unable or unwilling to fashion a powerful industrial union movement at the very moment corporate capitalism took off. Others have come to Powderly's defense, pointing out that he was well respected and labor's first media superstar, a man who built a diverse and strong organization. Powderly's character, and his perceived inability to lead, in actuality had little to do with the decline of the Knights of Labor. Rather, the organization declined as a result of divisions among workers on issues of race, ideology, and skill. The presence of powerful corporate foes who had the support of politicians, judges, police forces, state militias, and the army also hurt the Knights of Labor.

Born in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, on January 22, 1849, the deeply Catholic Powderly left school at 13, worked on the railroad, and in 1866 began an apprenticeship as a machinist in Scranton. Politics sparked his interests during the 1870s. Identifying with his Irish immigrant father, he joined the popular Irish Land League movement, which sent money across the Atlantic and lobbied U.S. leaders to defend the Irish people against British imperialism. Closer to home, Powderly often supported the Republicans but, in 1878, he did join the Greenback Labor movement. Beginning in 1879, he served six years as mayor of Scranton.

Powderly's career as mayor coincided with his election to the position of grand master workman of the KOL. He likely joined the Knights in the mid-1870s, but the exact date is difficult to pinpoint as the order was secret until 1882. Philadelphia tailors founded the KOL in 1869, and by 1876, it welcomed unskilled laborers throughout Pennsylvania. When Powderly won the order's top spot in 1878, he insisted upon abandoning secrecy and organizing as many workers as possible, and building a highly democratic organization. Power flowed from the bottom up, as

local and district assembly leaders ran day-to-day affairs. The Knights welcomed immigrants, African-Americans, and women into their ranks, although Chinese workers were excluded. Throughout its existence, the KOL claimed over 12,000 local assemblies in roughly 3,000 communities. At its peak, between 1885 and 1886, the order grew from 110,000 workers to 729,000. By the end of the decade, however, there were 250,000 Knights. Defenders of Powderly point to the lack of centralization, the emerging differences between skilled and unskilled workers, and simultaneous strikes as some of the reasons he cannot be blamed for the order's ultimate failure. No one person, they suggest, could have managed a relatively new national labor movement in this era of industrial expansion and class struggle with a small treasury and limited power.

Such a position makes sense when one considers that in 1885 alone the Knights were involved in a protest against Chinese immigrants in Rock Springs, Wyoming, engaged in a coal strike in Indiana, and embroiled in a confrontation with Jay Gould's railroad managers throughout the Midwest and Southwest.

Ultimately, the event that continues to define Powderly's career as a labor leader was his handling of the Haymarket Affair in 1886. On May 4, a group of citizens from the greater Chicago area gathered to protest acts of police brutality perpetrated against striking workers at the McCormick reaper plant. During the protest at Haymarket Square, four police officers died when a bomb exploded. The police responded by shooting into the crowd. Eight men were found guilty of conspiracy to commit murder, and eventually the state of Illinois hanged four of them. The state had little or no evidence to arrest the eight men; all eight were condemned, rather, for their anarchist beliefs. Although most Knights favored cooperativism, socialism, or a type of social democracy, as opposed to anarchy, they understood this trial as an attack on their right to protest.

Powderly chose to distance himself from those on trial, fearing that the KOL's public image would be injured. His decision came just as Knights started to lose strikes and skilled workers were considering whether or not they should join Samuel Gompers's new union for craftsmen. Under Powderly, the order had adopted the motto, "An injury to one is the concern of all." To many of his followers, he betrayed this guiding principle. In 1893, radicals defeated Powderly as their candidate won the office that had made the machinist from Scranton a national celebrity.

After losing his position as grand master workman, Powderly worked as commissioner general of

immigration and performed various tasks within the Department of Labor until his death in 1924.

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See also **Haymarket Affair (1886); Knights of Labor**

PRESSER, JACKIE (1926–1988) President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) from 1983 until the time of his death in 1988, Presser's career highlighted the way in which corruption, organized crime, and government investigation combined to shape this union. Presser rose through the ranks of the Teamsters thanks partly to his ties to organized crime figures, but also through his role as an informant for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In 1988, the federal government used both his election as IBT president in 1983 and his informant reports to support an effort to impose a trusteeship over the IBT.

The grandson of Jewish immigrants, Presser was born in Cleveland in 1926. His father, William Presser, had become a union organizer during the 1930s and eventually led an organization of workers who serviced vending machines. Through that organization, Presser's father developed relationships with Jewish and Italian-American organized crime figures; he would later be described as an associate of the Cleveland Mafia. In the early 1950s, James R. Hoffa helped bring the elder Presser's union into the IBT and then supported the Ohio Teamster leader's rise through the Teamsters hierarchy. As a Hoffa loyalist who also enjoyed strong ties to Hoffa's successors, William Presser held a number of important offices in the Teamsters, including serving as an IBT vice president with a seat on the General Executive Board. He was, therefore, well positioned to do favors for his

organized crime connections and to promote his son Jackie's career in the Teamsters. With his father's help, Jackie first became an organizer with the Teamsters in 1952, and then in 1966, he gained a charter for a new local, Local 507, which would organize industrial and warehouse workers. His father arranged to transfer members from other locals into Local 507, and it grew into the largest Teamsters local in Cleveland. Finally, the father provided his son with one final boost. In 1976, William Presser resigned his post as vice president of the IBT, and Jackie was chosen to take his place.

Having gained a seat on the IBT's General Executive Board, Jackie Presser sought next to become the general president of the union. In seeking that goal, he engaged in a dangerous but ultimately successful strategy. Publicly, Jackie Presser represented himself as part of a new generation of Teamster leadership interested in improving the union's public relations, but privately he cultivated the same organized crime connections that his father had developed. Presser assured prominent Mafia figures that they could gain more money from his leadership of the union, thus making them allies in his political efforts to achieve the IBT's top position. At the same time, beginning in 1974, Presser became an informant for the FBI, providing the Bureau with information about organized crime's influence in the union. Presser's relationship with the FBI brought him a measure of protection from prosecution. It also allowed him to sabotage his rivals within the Teamsters leadership by providing damaging information about their activities. In this way, the federal government developed a criminal case involving Roy Williams, Presser's predecessor as president of the Teamsters Union. When Williams resigned after being indicted, representatives of the Cleveland Mafia met with other Mafia leaders in Chicago and New York urging them to support Presser's election. To what degree that support played a pivotal role remains open to question, but the union's General Executive Board did vote unanimously for Presser to succeed Williams. Still playing a double game, Presser reported on the Mafia's support for his election to his FBI handlers.

Presser assumed the presidency of the IBT during a difficult time in the union's history. Congress had passed legislation deregulating the trucking industry, and the new economic environment undercut the union dramatically. Membership numbers declined as the union-organized proportion of the trucking industry shrank. The recession of 1981–1983 exacerbated these declines, and under Presser's leadership, members were asked to accept a series of concessionary contracts that proved very unpopular. Angry dissidents within the union depicted Presser, who earned

over \$500,000 a year from his various union positions, as out of touch with the needs of the members. For his part, Presser spoke of the need to move the union into new areas of organizing, calling for more vigorous efforts to bring in public employees and workers in high-technology industries.

Presser's position became more tenuous in 1986, when the Justice Department indicted him on charges of embezzling union funds through providing no-show jobs. The case brought to light the FBI's tangled relationship with Presser, when it surfaced that Bureau officials had misled their counterparts in the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Department of Labor about Presser's status. One FBI agent would later serve time in prison for perjury as a result of his efforts to shield Presser from prosecution. But less than a week after his indictment, Presser won re-election by a roll call vote of delegates at the IBT Convention, overwhelming the candidate supported by the dissident group, Teamsters for a Democratic Union, by a vote of 1,729 to 24. Nor were his fellow Teamster officials the only ones to rally around the embattled Presser. In the face of news of an impending federal effort to impose a trusteeship over the troubled union, the leadership of the AFL-CIO welcomed the Teamsters back into a labor federation from which it had been ousted in the 1950s because of its corruption. The recently indicted Presser was given a seat on the AFL-CIO's executive council.

A year later, in 1988, the Justice Department filed a civil suit using the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statute and asking a federal court to impose a trusteeship over the Teamsters. The department claimed that organized crime controlled the union's top leadership. The suit drew on evidence that included Presser's informant reports and trial testimony by Mafia figures involving Presser's 1983 election to the union presidency. Less than two weeks after that suit was filed, Presser died from cardiac arrest, having been ill for some time with brain cancer.

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See also **International Brotherhood of Teamsters; Organized Crime; Racketeering and RICO**

PRINTING AND PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

Johannes Gutenberg introduced printing methods using movable type in Germany in 1440, while William Caxton imported the first printing presses into England in 1490. Together, these modern printing methods quickly spread throughout Europe's major cities. In Colonial America, the first independent weekly newspaper appeared in 1721, while the first daily emerged in 1783. By the end of the nineteenth century, newspapers were published in all major U.S. cities.

Technological developments could be characterized by stability and evolution during the industry's first 250 years. Printing presses moved from hand to steam power, and from single sheet to continuous roll, while the setting of type evolved from hand to mechanical typesetting, after Ottmar Mergenthaler invented a keyboard-based mechanical typesetter, the Linotype, around 1890. Additional developments in stereotyping (enabling multiple presses to produce a single copy of a newspaper) and photoengraving (reproducing photographs) enhanced both the productivity and physical appearance of printed matter, but together none of these processes radically departed from previous technologies—they still brought paper into contact with inked type. Aided by larger business, social, and demographic changes, they did, however, contribute to the rapid growth of the industry into the twentieth century.

For most of the nineteenth century, printing was concentrated in large cities, notably New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Boston. As late as 1900, they accounted for 40% of newspaper printing and 50% of all book and job work. Until 1880, book and job work (commercial printing) was only a small side business in newspaper shops. After 1880, commercial work became a distinct printing sector. Unlike newspaper offices that were larger, hierarchical, often monopolistic and, during the twentieth century, part of larger chain organizations, commercial shops were smaller, engaged in intense local competition, earned thin profit margins and produced nonstandardized batch work using skilled printers. Compared with the emerging mass production industries, printing industry firms were smaller in size.

Changes in industry structure by 1880 led to greater complexities in the production processes in newspapers and commercial shops. The labor process experienced a growing division of labor. These shifts went furthest in the larger newspaper offices. Moreover, aggregate changes in the industry and the larger economy created tensions between labor and management. Work relations became more impersonal, and journeymen printers experienced decreased mobility

owing to greater capital requirements, increased firm size, and capitalist control of resources. The historical pattern of reciprocity between labor and management had eroded.

Printers: Work Culture, Unions, and Control over the Labor Process and Labor Market

The vast majority of printers were native-born white men with German parentage. They were highly skilled. Their job duties—setting type by hand—required a high degree of literacy. Both craft workers and proprietors shared a common cultural heritage, with many proprietors starting out as journeymen printers. Women worked in the printing industry, but they were more likely to be employed in book binderies doing semiskilled jobs, and in clerical positions. Only 5.7% of the industry's manufacturing workforce was composed of women in the mid-twentieth century.

The printers' work culture was rooted in the nature of work and spread across the country by itinerant or "tramp" printers. At its core were the principles of mutuality, respectability, and independence. The culture promoted solidarity and control over work. Journeymen printers began organizing during the last quarter of the eighteenth century in support of "price lists" (unilaterally determined prices of labor accepted or rejected by employers) and benevolence. By the late nineteenth century, as industry and economic transformations altered the context in which printers lived and worked, a new work culture formed that resembled Selig Perlman's "job consciousness."

Until the mid-nineteenth century, printers' unions were highly unstable and short-lived, moving in lockstep with economic conditions. But printers had organized "chapels" during the 1830s as key workplace institutions that regulated the trade, adjudicated disputes, and imbued apprentices with craft values. Chapel governance gave printers considerable authority over daily affairs at the point of production and provided them with a strong institutional foundation that would eventually support permanent unionism by the mid-nineteenth century. Chapels also retained a high degree of autonomy from unions for many years. The "father of the chapel," later the "chapel chairman," presided over chapel affairs, which also included the regulation of personal and professional conduct. Workplace disputes over union-promulgated rules were adjudicated by peers and chapel chairs. Printers considered these disputes to be internal governance issues, such that most workplace

grievances were resolved inside the chapel and union free of employer involvement. Later, an "external" procedure, typical of modern grievance procedures, emerged as a complement to this "internal" one once collective bargaining emerged around 1900. Chapel chairs' roles expanded to include policing the labor contract.

Not until 1852 did local printing unions combine to create a national union, the National Typographical Union (NTU). In 1869, the International Typographical Union (ITU) replaced the NTU when it admitted Canadian locals to membership. The main purpose of national federation was to regulate travelers and uphold craft standards. Aside from a traveling card system, the ITU remained a decentralized union until the 1880s when, as a result of steady growth and activist locals, the ITU initiated a series of changes to wrest control from locals. Among the most significant institutional changes were the creation of a national strike fund; referenda voting procedures; a salaried professional staff, including organizers and district representatives; a benefit fund; and the negotiation of a series of arbitration agreements with the publishers' association between 1901 and 1922.

Inside the ITU, the compositors composed the majority of members and wielded great influence. This created tension and frustration among the other printing crafts inside the quasi-craft ITU. Between 1889 and 1903, five separate crafts split from the ITU to create their own national unions. Because they still shared common interests, these unions formed local allied printing trades councils to coordinate activities and cooperate in areas such as bargaining, union label enforcement, and concerted activities. Despite cooperative efforts, there existed sometimes bitter rivalries and other differences that made printing unions ill suited to deal with industry and technological changes after 1960.

Union democracy nonetheless was a key institutional characteristic of the ITU. Rooted in secret groups, factions, and cliques that formed in defense against employer blacklists, anti-unionism, and abusive foremen, the ITU's formal two-party political system debuted in 1912. The "Wahneta" party tended toward conservatism, while the "Progressives" were more militant. These different orientations were reflected in labor relations practices depending on which party was dominant. That is, when the Wahneta ruled, the ITU negotiated national arbitration agreements and maintained peaceful labor relations. On the other hand, when Progressives were in power, they took a more militant stand in labor relations and voted to end the arbitration agreements in 1922. Still, legacies of local union autonomy often protected local labor relations traditions.

The ITU sought to regulate the workplace and the labor market through a variety of policies and practices. Abusive foremen were problematic, so the ITU passed two significant “laws” designed to rein in their excesses. In 1899, it required that all foremen be union members (an ITU law that, in many places, continued after the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947), and in 1890, it promulgated the Priority Law, which limited foremen discretion in hiring and discharge and granted printers the right to choose their substitutes in their absence. In essence, Priority established a high degree of both job control and due process for printers. Combined with the closed shop and an ITU overtime law designed to spread work to other ITU members, these laws went well beyond other unions’ control over jobs. Moreover, they were part of internal union governance.

Printers’ demands for shorter hours were part of a larger process to gain control over the external labor market. The quest for shorter hours that began during the latter part of the nineteenth century came easier for newspaper printers than it did for commercial printers. The main reason was the mechanization of typesetting. Linotypes and similar machines reduced the need for certain tasks, facilitated a shift from piece rates to wage payments for operators, and reduced hours. National arbitration agreements contributed to labor peace. While there was some technological displacement, printers’ fears of widespread job loss never materialized owing to reduced production costs, increased productivity, especially at larger newspapers, and an overall increase in demand for labor. The ITU successfully won jurisdiction over these machines and encouraged members to acquire skills to operate them. While some additional divisions of labor occurred (for example, proofreader, advertising, and machinist classifications), the ITU preserved overall skill levels and jurisdiction, wages supplanted piece rates, and the workday was reduced without conflict.

In the commercial branch, the ITU’s drive for shorter hours was generally met with resistance. During the second half of the nineteenth century, in response to labor organization, printing employers formed separate local and national organizations. Even though these organizations operated in the same labor markets, their product markets were different. New York and Chicago were at the forefront of employer organization. The American Newspaper Publishers Association formed in 1887 but did not address labor matters until the Linotype’s introduction in the 1890s. In the commercial branch, the United Typothetae of America (UTA) formed in 1887 to fight unions and the ITU’s demand for the nine-hour day. Battles over shorter hours were episodic in

nature and lasted into the early 1920s. In 1898, the UTA and three major printing unions established the “Syracuse Agreement,” which initially created the 57-hour workweek but gradually reduced hours to 54 by 1899.

But as soon as the ink dried, the ITU began pushing for an eight-hour workday or 48-hour workweek. This action pushed the UTA toward an aggressive open-shop stance and led to a strike in 1906 in which the ITU succeeded and the UTA lost 45% of its membership. After World War I, printers again sought reduced hours. A joint labor-management conference agreed to a 44-hour workweek beginning May 1, 1921, with pay rates unchanged. Strikes broke out when some shops refused to accept these terms. This time, commercial employers were more successful; many shops became nonunion. Another significant outcome of these strikes was that, until 1935, the workweek in newspaper offices was shorter (44 hours) than in commercial shops (48 hours). Moreover, wages were higher in newspaper offices than in commercial shops, and higher in printing than manufacturing in general. Printing industry wages generally held firmer than manufacturing wages during economic downturns. In general, industry wages were locally determined and, given the decentralized nature of the industry, highly variable.

Between the Civil War and World War I, employers attempted to redesign the labor process to lessen costs, increase speed, raise output, and reduce union power. Employers subdivided tasks, tried different payment schemes, and implemented new machinery, but union compositors used their strategic position in the labor process to preserve their skill and control over the labor process. They formed strong unions, often allied with other printing trades, passed and vigorously enforced union laws and regulations, and bargained collectively for shorter hours, better working conditions, and higher wages. But after World War II, union fortunes began to change for the worse in the face of new technologies, industry restructuring, unfavorable public policies, and a climate that was becoming increasingly hostile to unions.

The Postwar Consolidation of the Printing Industry

The number of daily newspapers held steady between 1950 and 1980, at roughly 1,750, but reached an all-time low by 2000. The decline was largely the result of consolidations and the shuttering of afternoon papers. Independently owned newspapers declined

from 1,300 in 1953 to about 700 by 1980 and to fewer than 300 by 2000. Large, publicly traded media companies and chain ownership came to dominate the industry. By the late 1990s, chains controlled 77% of daily newspapers and over 80% of circulation. Over the course of the twentieth century, but with roots in the late nineteenth century, locally owned family ownership gave way to chain and publicly traded media corporations endowed with great amounts of resources.

In commercial printing, three significant industry changes occurred after 1960. First, there was a movement toward firm re-organization through chain ownership and mergers and acquisitions. This led to larger, multiplant operations and a move toward decentralization to avoid unions. Second, there was an outmigration of firms from traditional downtown printing centers. This trend spawned the growth in the number of nonunion firms operating outside city limits and the decline of master collectively bargained agreements. Third, and the most significant factor that impacted both the newspaper and commercial branches, companies rapidly introduced new computer-based technologies. These technologies, centered primarily in composing rooms, greatly increased productivity but also raised production costs. As part of this switch from “hot type” to “cold type,” employers searched for ways to lower production costs. They saw unions as both contributing to high costs and as obstacles to lowering production costs.

New Technology and Union Decline

The origins of the industry’s rapid technological transformation date to 1945, when newspaper employers experienced a surge in strikes for higher wages as wartime wage freezes were lifted. Higher wages and production interruptions caused costs to rise and led firms to find new methods to lower costs. One solution was a new composition technique called photocomposition, a revolutionary electronic technology that was four to six times faster than mechanical machines. Installed first at the Quincy (Massachusetts) *Patriot-Ledger* in 1953 to weaken the ITU, photocomposition machines automatically justified type and set it to film instead of lead. This cold type method employed less-skilled and lower-paid operators, many of whom were women. But because many employers feared the ITU, few photocomposition machines were installed until the early 1960s. This fear was justified in 1963 when an ITU-led strike over jurisdiction over these machines closed seven New York City dailies for 114 days.

Employers moved more aggressively toward cold type after a recession in the late 1950s and new competition for advertising revenues from television and magazines squeezed profits. Sandwiched between rising production costs and falling revenues, employers sought to reshape the labor process once more. With photocomposition, photoengraving and stereotyping became superfluous. Offset printing press technologies, however, maintained the skill levels of press operators. A technological revolution beginning in the early 1960s dramatically reduced production costs and the quantity and quality of labor demanded to manufacture newspapers. The center of this revolution was the composing room. Responses to the new technology ranged from controversy, conflict, and capitulation. By the early 1980s, the diffusion of the new technology was complete.

The most common responses to the new technology were workforce reductions by attrition and buyouts, and the decertification of bargaining units. The ITU negotiated an 11-year lifetime job security (automation) pact with New York City publishers in 1974. Similar agreements followed at other newspapers. In essence, these long-term contracts guaranteed jobs for printers doing other tasks in exchange for management’s freedom to implement new technology. Attrition would humanely eventually shrink the workforce.

The effect on ITU and union membership was severe and predictable. ITU membership was stable until about 1969, but between 1970 and 1982, active rolls fell by over 40%, while the ranks of apprentices dropped by over 70%. Despite these membership losses, total industry employment fell by only 13%. In absolute numbers, ITU union membership (including retirees and apprentices) declined from 90,000 to 43,000. The Graphic Communications International Union, a union of press operators and allied printing workers with the bulk of its membership in commercial printing, saw its membership fall from 220,000 to 154,000 between 1969 and 1983. Total printing union membership peaked in 1969 at 309,000 but fell by one third by 1983, while printing industry union density declined from 39% in 1959 to less than 20% by 1986. Newspaper industry union density dropped from about 18% in 1975 to under 10% by 2000.

Changes in the labor process have reduced skill levels for most printing crafts. Since the early 1930s, for those crafts that have not been obliterated by new technologies, there has been a steady convergence of skills toward the lowest-skilled mailer classification. The effect of this secular shift has been a re-ordering of power from craft workers and their unions to employers. Aside from falling union membership and density rates, other outcomes reflect this power shift.

Between 1964 and 2004, there were eight printing union mergers that have been completed and a handful of others that failed. The Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters are the two most significant international unions that represent printing industry workers, with many of the old crafts now divisions within these unions. Related to these mergers have been interunion jurisdictional rivalries that have historically hindered printing industry labor solidarity.

Strikes in the newspaper industry peaked in 1978 and, following larger industrial relations trends, have become quite rare. When they have occurred since then, as they did in New York, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Seattle, they were often contentious and damaging to both sides. Unions also have made many numerous concessions in work rules and economics as a result of these strikes and contract settlements. For example, there have been reductions in “featherbedding” staffing levels, continuing implementation of new technologies, changes in the distribution and delivery of newspapers, an increased use of independent contractors, less lucrative retirement and health protections, and a movement toward merit pay systems in newsrooms. Since 1970, printing industry production workers’ wages have fallen relative to those of manufacturing workers in general, while newspaper production workers saw their wages fall below manufacturing wages for the first time in 1996.

Technology has always played a critical role in the printing industry. From Gutenberg’s press to the Internet, the communication of news and information continues to inform, educate, and entertain. But technological evolutions and revolutions also have reshaped the labor process, inverting power relationships on both the shop floor and in larger society. The once mighty printing unions have been weakened greatly, while the autonomous and high-skilled craft printer has become a wage worker with much less control over his or her work, and often employed in a large, publicly traded media corporation.

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PROFESSIONAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS ORGANIZATION

The Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) was founded on January 11, 1968, when several hundred air traffic controllers from around the United States met at a hotel near New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport. The controllers worked for the U.S. federal government’s Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Their jobs were to direct airplane traffic into, out of, around, and between airports all over the United States. Their union grew out of their dissatisfaction with forced overtime, belligerent supervisors, inadequate equipment, and high stress. During the 1970s, PATCO became one of the most militant unions in the federal service. It led a strike in August 1981 that was ultimately broken by President Ronald Reagan in one of the most important events in late twentieth-century U.S. labor history.

The formation of PATCO owed to rapidly burgeoning air travel in the 1960s and the spread of union organization in the federal sector following President John F. Kennedy issuance of Executive Order 10988 in 1962, which cleared the way for limited collective bargaining for federal workers. After several false

starts, in the fall of 1967, controllers in the New York metropolitan region together with allies in Chicago, Atlanta, and later, Los Angeles, settled on a plan for a national organization of air traffic controllers. The leading forces in that effort were two New York controllers, Michael J. Rock and John F. Maher. Initially, Rock, Maher, and other controllers were divided over whether the new organization should be a union or an employees association. In a desire to build an organization with broad appeal, they opted not to place the word "union" in their organization's name. To help attract members, they invited the famous trial attorney F. Lee Bailey to serve as chairman of their organization. Bailey helped PATCO attract thousands of members in its first few months and gave the organization publicity. But Bailey never desired to lead a union, and his growing differences with the PATCO's board ultimately led to his departure from the organization in 1970.

Between 1968 and 1970, PATCO transcended its early ambivalence and developed into a militant union. Its first job action, a work-to-rule protest mounted in July 1968 called "Operation Air Safety," drew attention to controllers' chronic state of overwork. Snarling air traffic across the country, the protest attracted both public and congressional sympathy. A second job action, a sick-out launched in several key air facilities in 1969, led to worsening relations between PATCO and the FAA. The FAA's subsequent efforts to weaken PATCO triggered a 19-day national sick-out that began on March 25, 1970. The sickout amounted to a strike (privately, PATCO leaders referred to it as such) held in defiance of federal law. The sick-out never involved more than one quarter of the FAA's workforce, yet it led to weeks of chaos in the national air transit system before a federal injunction finally ended the job action. The FAA initially fired dozens of strike leaders. Significantly, however, the FAA later rescinded all but one of its firings as a part of President Nixon's effort to woo union leaders to support his policies and his re-election.

The deal between the Nixon administration and labor paved the way for PATCO's re-organization. John F. Leyden, who led New York area controllers during the sick-out, became PATCO's president in 1970. His rise coincided with PATCO's affiliation with the Maritime Engineers Beneficial Association (MEBA), a small but politically powerful affiliate of the AFL-CIO. Through MEBA's intervention, PATCO won recertification as a union eligible to represent federal employees. In October 1972, PATCO won election as exclusive representative for air traffic controllers and won its first collective bargaining contract in 1973.

In its early years, PATCO won significant victories for its members, including an early retirement/second career program that offered medically disqualified controllers to retrain for new jobs; an immunity program, which allowed controllers and pilots to anonymously report near midair collisions in hopes that such reporting would lead to safety reforms; a relaxation of the FAA's white-shirt-and-necktie dress code; and free familiarization flights in airline cockpit jump seats. Soon PATCO developed a loyal membership of over 13,000 members and enjoyed a higher dues-paying membership rate than any other union in the open-shop federal sector.

Yet controllers' gains were limited by federal law, which prohibited bargaining over wages and benefits in the federal sector. PATCO creatively circumvented the law by using a series of slowdowns to pressure the FAA to reclassify its members in 1976 into higher scales of the government service (GS) code. Yet, that strategy was not repeatable. In subsequent years, a series of developments placed PATCO under intense pressure. The organization saw an influx of militant Vietnam-era veterans who were disenchanted with the government. Inflation began to eat at the value of its members' salaries and benefits, and federal workers' wages and salaries began to fall behind rising prices. Meanwhile, government deficits made politicians increasingly tough negotiators. These developments came to a head in 1978 negotiations with the FAA, which yielded a three-year contract that deeply disappointed PATCO members.

The disappointment of 1978 led Leyden to initiate a strike-preparation program to give the union a stronger hand during its planned 1981 negotiations. That program saw PATCO create a strike fund and a network of anonymous strike leaders who could direct the organization should its elected leaders be arrested during a strike. Leyden was nonetheless reluctant to wage an illegal walkout. His well-known position was not shared by members of the union's executive board. In January 1980, a majority of his board announced that they would support the union vice president, Robert Poli, a former Cleveland area controller, against Leyden in upcoming union elections. Leyden angrily resigned his office, and Poli immediately acceded to the union's presidency.

During 1980 and 1981, Poli prepared PATCO for the 1981 negotiations and a potential strike. In hopes of strengthening PATCO's position, Poli endorsed Ronald Reagan in the waning days of the 1980 presidential campaign after Reagan promised PATCO members that he would consider their needs carefully if he were elected. Negotiations with the Reagan administration did not result in a contract acceptable to PATCO, however, and in 1981, the union led

an illegal strike against the federal government on August 3, 1981. When PATCO strikers did not return to work after two days on strike, they were permanently replaced and PATCO was broken. During its 13-year existence, PATCO helped illustrate what was possible—and impossible—for a militant federal government workers' union to achieve.

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PROFESSIONAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS ORGANIZATION STRIKE (1981)

The disastrous 1981 walkout by the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) was one of the most important strikes in American labor history, marking the onset of a period of virulent anti-unionism. The strike was staged by roughly three quarters of the largely white male workforce of nearly 16,000 air traffic controllers employed by the U.S. government's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and was held in defiance of laws that prohibit strikes by federal workers. It was broken when President Ronald Reagan issued orders to fire strikers 48 hours into the walkout. Reagan's act in turn helped legitimize the permanent replacement of strikers by private-sector employers in the 1980s.

The 1981 strike grew out of a decade of contentious relations between PATCO and the FAA that followed the founding of the union in 1968. Controllers, who provided guidance and coordination to the nation's air traffic system, objected to the stressful nature of their jobs and believed they deserved compensation comparable to that of airline pilots, who worked for private employers. The FAA, meanwhile, opposed PATCO's demands and strove for a regimented work culture that many controllers detested. In many ways, these adversaries had been on a collision course since 1978 when PATCO agreed to a contract that disappointed controllers and the FAA

began a more aggressive effort to weaken the union's power.

Still, the 1981 strike might have been avoided had not two developments occurred. First, PATCO's longtime president, John Leyden, resigned from office in January 1980 when his executive board decided to endorse a rival, the PATCO vice president Robert Poli, for the union presidency. Unlike Leyden, Poli was prepared to launch an illegal strike if his members saw it as necessary to achieve PATCO's bottom-line contract demands. Second, Ronald Reagan was elected president. In October 1980, PATCO endorsed Reagan's candidacy after Reagan promised to respond to controllers' job-related concerns. Ironically, this promise elevated controllers' expectations going into the 1981 negotiations and helped pave the way for the strike.

As negotiations began in 1981, controllers sought a shorter workweek, compensation for on-the-job training, and other improvements in their stress-filled working conditions. Importantly, they also sought higher salaries. Federal law prohibits unions from negotiating over wages, yet PATCO demanded a \$10,000 across-the-board wage increase for controllers. Ultimately, the salary demand proved to be a public relations blunder. At a time of rising unemployment, high inflation, and concession bargaining by industrial unions, even some in organized labor proved less than enthusiastic about defending PATCO's contract demands once the strike began.

The PATCO strike was initially set for June 22, 1981. But the strike was postponed on that day when the union was unable to muster 80% support for the strike among working controllers. Robert Poli thus accepted a tentative contract offer from Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis that improved controllers' compensation, a precedent-setting concession by the government according to many observers since the government was legally forbidden to collectively bargain over salaries.

But the FAA's June 22, 1981, offer fell far short of PATCO's demands. After re-assessing the situation, PATCO's executive board recommended that the membership reject the tentative contract and hold a second strike vote. Controllers overwhelmingly complied with the board's recommendations and rejected the contract by a wide margin in a mail ballot. Negotiations between Poli and Lewis resumed on July 31, but quickly stalemated. The union held a strike vote on the night of August 2, 1981, meeting its 80% support goal. The walkout began at 7 a.m. EST on August 3, 1981.

The government and leading air carriers were well prepared for the walkout. Air traffic proceeded without major incident, though with thousands of flights

canceled in a pattern predetermined by the FAA and the airlines. Meanwhile, injunctions were issued in jurisdictions across the country, leading to the subsequent arrest of several strike leaders for contempt of court orders that demanded that controllers return to work. President Reagan issued a televised ultimatum that gave controllers until August 5 to reclaim their jobs. Failing to do so, they would be fired. More than 11,500 strikers ignored Reagan's warning and saw their employment terminated. The AFL-CIO protested this union-busting act. But threatened sympathy strikes by other unions in support of PATCO never materialized. Public opinion tended to support Reagan's hard-line response to the walkout. When no major midair collisions occurred, and air traffic volume began inching up, it became clear that Reagan had won, though at a considerable cost to air carriers, taxpayers, and the national economy. PATCO was subsequently decertified as a union.

Reagan's busting of PATCO reverberated widely through the American economy in the following years and marked a turning point in the history of U.S. labor relations. Although the courts had long ruled that the 1935 Wagner Act allowed the permanent replacement of economic strikers, few large employers had actually exercised this option before 1981. Flagrant union busting was widely viewed as unethical and un-American. Reagan changed that. In the years after the PATCO strike, Phelps-Dodge, Hormel, and other large companies joined a growing list of private employers that simply replaced strikers.

The rise of the permanent replacement tactic clearly dampened workers' willingness to strike. Between 1947 and 1980, the Bureau of Labor Statistics annually reported at least 180 strikes involving more than 1,000 workers each. Since 1982, the number of such strikes has never once reached even one half that level. Figures show a sharp decline from the 235 strikes involving roughly one million workers in 1979 to a record low of 17 walkouts involving only 73,000 workers in 1999. The PATCO strike and the use of permanent replacement workers that it legitimized were not alone responsible for this trend. The threat of plant closings and other factors also played a role in the diminishing use of organized labor's oldest weapon. But more than any other single event, the PATCO strike signaled a profound decline in organized labor's power in the late twentieth-century United States.

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PROGRESSIVE ERA

The Progressive Era has the reputation for being one of the great eras of social and political reform in American history. While scholars debate the period's precise chronology, most historians pinpoint the age from the turn of the century to World War I as the high point of a progressive impulse that transformed the country. Historians argue vigorously over whether this impulse was unitary and coherent enough to be called "Progressivism," or whether it was a collection of related but fundamentally different political movements. Regardless of the terminology that might be used, the wave of reforms that came during or immediately after this period was indeed impressive and included—among many others—the first wave of constitutional amendments since the Civil War: the income tax, the direct election of senators, prohibition, and woman suffrage.

Traditional scholarly interpretations of Progressivism have placed the middle class at the center of these reform efforts—and with good reason, as reform efforts from antimonopoly efforts to prohibition had significant middling constituencies. However, historians have tried to situate labor more fully at the forefront of the period's most significant events. We can now see that workers were both the motive force behind and the subjects of crucial reform legislation. Moreover, much of what happened during "the Progressive Era" fell outside the dramas of Progressive reform—and this was particularly the case in relation to the lives of the mass of workers who lived during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The Main Contours of Social and Economic Change

The primary social changes of the period were mass migration and immigration, and the rise of large corporations. We cannot tell the stories of these changes without putting workers front and center.

Numbers alone tell an important part of the story: Because these trends began in the late nineteenth century, it is best to discuss the period from roughly the end of the Civil War to the end of World War I. For example, from 1870 to 1920 more than 10 million Americans migrated from farm to city, while another

20 million—a great number, for the first time, from Southern and Eastern Europe—came to the United States as immigrants.

Most of these migrants ended up working within manufacturing, making the United States for the first time the most powerful economy in the world. The number of employees within the manufacturing sector skyrocketed from 2.5 million in 1870 to 11.2 million in 1920 (or nearly 40% of the workforce). An increasing number of these employees worked in gigantic factories owned by huge corporations like U.S. Steel. The growth of these big business behemoths was also explosive, with quasi-monopolies formed in industries ranging from meatpacking to textiles to tobacco—particularly during the great merger movement that swept the economy between 1897 to 1904.

Under a regime of laissez-faire capitalism, the lives of workers in corporate factories were often relentlessly bleak. Bells rang and whistles blew before sunrise to announce the start of what, not unusually, was a 10- to 12-hour workday. Work conditions could be extremely hazardous, with accidental death and dismemberment frequent and almost always poorly compensated. Although wages generally grew over the period, seasonal and cyclical unemployment made the lives of all but the most privileged workers insecure.

Despite the prevalence of this kind of work experience, however, it is incorrect to generalize too much about American workers during this period. While the above description fits the lives of millions of male immigrants, the single most numerous occupation during the period was actually that of domestic servant. Agricultural employment remained supreme in much of the South and West, particularly for African-Americans. And the majority of employees in the country actually continued to work in relatively small businesses.

Still, when commentators invoked the problem of labor in the early twentieth century, they spoke primarily of “what it meant to work in a large-scale, mechanized, rationally managed, corporate system of production.”

Growth of Unions: American Federation of Labor and Industrial Workers of the World

Workers responded to these conditions with the first sustained and long-lasting drive for unionization in American history. The primary organization vehicle for workers was the American Federation of Labor (AFL), although other more radical unions such as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) also played crucial roles in the era’s unionizing ferment.

The American Federation of Labor became the only truly national union in the country after the demise of the Knights of Labor during the 1890s. The AFL, however, had a distinctly different approach to organizing from that of the Knights. The Knights were, by philosophy if not always in practice, an industrial union that sought to include the skilled and unskilled, women and men, and workers of all races. The AFL, on the other hand, generally limited its recruiting to skilled workers; it also refused to admit the storekeepers and reformers who had provided much of the community-based support for the Knights of Labor. And while the AFL began with a commitment to racial egalitarianism, it quickly accepted the segregation common in the skilled trades. The AFL also poured out its hostility upon immigrants, particularly those from Asia; at the turn of the century, for instance, the Federation published a pamphlet titled *Some Reasons for Chinese Exclusion. Meat vs. Rice. American Manhood against Asiatic Coolieism. Which Shall Survive?*

Despite its severe limitations, the AFL brought genuine gains to many American workers during an era that witnessed one of the most virulent anti-union offensives on the part of employers. Between 1897 and 1903, its membership shot up from 400,000 to nearly three million. The AFL also began to admit some industrial unions, such as the United Mine Workers (UMW) and the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU). The group’s expansion did temporarily come to a halt when corporate elites used violence and the power of the courts to launch an effective movement for the open shop. Yet the attempt to suppress the AFL ironically benefited the organization, providing legitimacy to its self-characterization as the primary voice for American workers.

Much of the AFL’s success was due to the tireless energy, ambition, and vision of Samuel Gompers. Gompers was elected annually to serve as the organization’s president every year, except one, from the group’s formation in 1886 until his death 1924. Born in London in 1850, the Jewish Gompers began his work life at the age of 10 as a shoemaker before taking on his father’s trade of cigar making. The family moved to New York City in 1863, and the following year Gompers joined the Cigar Makers’ International Union. He became president of his local in 1875 and vice president of the international union in 1886.

That same year Gompers also helped form the AFL. Throughout the 1890s, the moderate Gompers battled socialists for influence within the organization, although Gompers was himself actually never completely unsympathetic to socialism. Yet through

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the turn of the century, he decisively rejected not only that movement's radicalism but also its emphasis on political action. Although Gompers later brought the AFL into a close connection to the Democratic Party, he remained convinced that politicians were treacherous and that workers could ultimately only rely on themselves. By 1900, Gompers's position as AFL chieftain was firm.

Gompers and the AFL were class conscious, believing in a fundamental divide between workers and employers. Yet they accepted the prevailing economic structure, seeking to get—in Gompers's famous words—more and more and more out of the coffers of capitalists. The AFL's main rival to this “pure and simple” unionism, in contrast, sought an outright overthrow of capitalism.

Formed in Chicago in 1905, the Industrial Workers of the World made little doubt of its revolutionary commitments—and its disdain for the AFL. The IWW preamble declared:

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common....Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth...

The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars....Instead of the conservative motto, “A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,” we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, “Abolition of the wage system.”

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism.

The Wobblies, as they came to be known—the origin of the label is unclear—had distinctive centers of regional strength. Growing out of brutal struggles in western mines, the IWW effectively organized many of the West's miners as well as the region's migratory labor stream of lumbermen and agricultural harvest workers. The Wobblies went out of their way to organize cross-racially, although their claims to speak for the entire working class were sometimes belied by the hyper-masculinity common in migratory work camps. Yet the IWW proved its success among women workers, too, claiming several remarkable successes among northeastern textile employees. In the process, the Wobblies became a cause célèbre among bohemian intellectuals, with the cross-fertilization between Greenwich Village rebels and organic working-class intellectuals producing some of the most interesting cartoons and songs of the entire American working-class tradition. The IWW also

became the object of often deadly and extralegal vigilantism from employers and local authorities who used jailing, murder, and terrorism to combat Wobbly fights for free speech and workers' rights.

The Wobblies always prided themselves on a decentralized, even anarchist organizational structure. Yet, like the AFL, they too had a guru. William Haywood was The Bad Man of the labor movement, especially compared to the clean and respectable Gompers. Born in Salt Lake City in 1869, Haywood began mining work when nine years old—the same age that he also lost use of his right eye while whittling a slingshot. He joined the Western Federation of Miners (WFM) in 1896, and by 1900, he had joined the WFM's executive board and was soon helping direct the union's response to violent warfare in Colorado's mining districts.

In 1905, Haywood helped found the IWW; the following year he was arrested along with two associates for his alleged involvement in the assassination of the Idaho ex-governor, Frank Steunenberg (authorities tracked him down in a brothel). In one of the most celebrated criminal court cases of the era, Haywood was declared not guilty—although the leading authority on the case, J. Anthony Lukas, has made a tentative case for Haywood's guilt.

In 1908, Haywood was ousted from his WFM leadership position and quickly gravitated toward the Wobblies' espousal of socialism and direct workers' action. By 1915, he had become the IWW's official leader. A large physique and a booming voice, along with a visceral fearlessness, enabled “Big Bill” to inspire followers and intimidate his enemies in the class struggle. Upset at the IWW's continued class warfare during World War I, the federal government lowered the boom, and Haywood served a year in Leavenworth on charges of violating the Espionage and Sedition Acts. While out of jail on appeal, the Supreme Court rejected his case, and Haywood fled to Moscow; many Wobblies believed that he had betrayed their cause to save his own skin. He died desperate and lonely in 1928. Half of his ashes were buried in the Kremlin, with the remainder making their way back to Chicago for interment near a monument to the Haymarket anarchists who had initially helped inspire Haywood's activism.

An Era of Great Strikes

Especially because of the efforts of Samuel Gompers and the AFL, during the Progressive Era the national union movement became institutionalized for the first time in American history. The AFL's moderate stance

often led to attempts at conciliation, with certain segments of labor and capital both recognizing the value of industrial peace. Such growing harmony, however, never solidified, and the first two decades of the twentieth century have instead a well-deserved reputation as an age of often-violent labor conflict.

The number of strikes dramatically increased between 1900 and 1917. Each conflict of course had its own texture and significance. Two particularly important strikes, however, well illustrate the differing approaches of the AFL and the IWW—as well as the growing political power of labor.

When the 1902 anthracite strike in Pennsylvania began, it appeared that powerful mine owners held all the cards in their attempt to beat back the largely Southern and Eastern European immigrant workforce. Yet by the end of the five-month strike, the president of the United States had broken a potent precedent to intervene on behalf of workers.

The United Mine Workers was the primary organizing force in the anthracite (hard coal) districts of northeastern Pennsylvania. While not recognized by the mine owners, the UMW had successfully pressed for a 10% wage increase after a brief 1900 strike. This settlement was extended through April 1902. At that time, the UMW insisted on a 20% wage increase, an eight-hour day, fair weighing of the coal its miners extracted, and recognition of the union. George F. Baer, the mine owners' representative, refused to bargain at all, despite the union's offer of arbitration.

In May 1902, 150,000 miners put down their picks and shovels. As the strike extended through the summer, the price of coal quadrupled, and citizens began to fret about their inability to heat their homes during the winter. As calls for presidential intervention mounted, Theodore Roosevelt and the Republican senator Mark Hanna convinced the mine owners to meet with union officials at the White House. John Mitchell, the UMW president, impressed the president, but Roosevelt was furious at the intransigent heads of the coal companies. Finally, with threats of violence in the air, Roosevelt made plans to send in federal troops to operate the coalfields. Just before the implementation of such radical—albeit temporary—nationalization, Roosevelt's secretary of war, Elihu Root, convinced J. P. Morgan, the New York financier who was effectively in charge of the mines, to get the mine owners to stand down. They agreed to arbitrate, and the miners returned to work in late October.

President Roosevelt then appointed the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission to investigate and work out a solution. With the skillful aid of Clarence Darrow and Henry Demarest Lloyd, Mitchell and the UMW successfully made their case that many miners lived

in abject poverty and that the companies did little to make this deadly occupation safer (513 miners were killed in the nine-county anthracite region in 1901 alone). Low wages made child labor a necessity for family survival. The Commission found this testimony compelling and, while it did not grant the UMW official recognition—a crucial blow to the union—it did significantly increase the wages and decreased the hours of the miners. Even more significantly, the president had, for the first time in American history, weighed in on a labor dispute—and vindicated the rights of workers.

There was, however, no such story of conciliation in the 1912 great uprising in Lawrence, Massachusetts. In January of that year, 10,000 women, men, and children left their jobs after 500 Italian employees of the American Woolen Company found their pay shortchanged. The IWW had previously not conducted any significant labor struggles in the East, but a fledgling Wobbly local gained leadership of the strike and created a festive culture of opposition. Four days into the conflict, police turned icy fire hoses on the workers, but this merely energized the strikers. Several weeks later, the police raided the train depot in Lawrence, where IWW “Rebel Girl” Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was organizing a transport of children out of the increasingly violent city. Officers attacked the women and children and then detained them at police headquarters. National public opinion was becoming riveted on Lawrence, although citizens found it difficult to figure out which side best exemplified law-breaking anarchism.

The root cause of the strike, as in the anthracite region, was simple: wages well below poverty level. Male breadwinners could not earn enough money to support a family in even the most rudimentary fashion, and the textile mills were full of women and children—without whose wages it would have been impossible for families to pay for food and shelter. When mill owners cut wages and hours after the state of Massachusetts passed a 54-hour-per-week work law for women, family survival was once again threatened. The mill owners held so much power that even AFL-affiliated skilled workers were unable to organize. Yet the solidarity that the IWW generated was impressive enough that, by mid-March, it enabled the workers to declare victory. Yet, because of the legitimacy they granted the system of capitalist wage slavery, the IWW would not authorize the signing of contracts. So although the Wobblies reaped a massive public relations triumph from the Lawrence strike, their local collapsed the next year, and there would be no further Wobbly contributions to the long and bitter struggle to organize the textile industry there.

The Realm of the Political

We should, however, resist the temptation to see such acrimonious strikes as the primary pattern of labor relations. Arguably of even greater significance was the increasingly friendly relationship between the house of labor and national political figures. While the federal judiciary retained a basic hostility to the organization of workers, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson increasingly courted “responsible” unionists. The result was the origin of the tight connection between unions and the Democratic Party that has continued to this day. While many critics have pointed to the great costs to workers of putting all their eggs in the Democratic basket, during the Progressive Era, the unions’ political strategy brought unprecedented legislative gains.

The roots of labor’s political activity were at the local level, where unionists, and even members of independent working-class parties, were elected to city councils throughout the country. Trade unionists became an important constituency for reform-minded mayors such as Hazen Pingree of Detroit and Tom Johnson of Cleveland. In San Francisco, the most powerful municipal labor movement in the nation took over city hall in 1901 and held power until a corruption scandal led to the mayor Eugene Schmitz’s downfall six years later. Workers produced a kind of working-class progressivism that focused on issues relating to the eight-hour day for public employees, fairer taxation, and municipal ownership of utilities.

The increasing success of working-class local politics in part flowed from the pressure exerted by the period’s powerful socialist movement. Indeed, socialism was more respectable and influential during the Progressive Era than at any time in American history. The charismatic presidential candidate Eugene Debs received nearly one million votes in the 1912 election—6% of the total. That same year, more than a thousand socialists won state and local office, while socialist members of Congress Morris Hillquit of New York and Victor Berger of Milwaukee helped ensure that at least a mild version of the class struggle appeared in a good number of the nation’s newspapers.

Although the mainstream of the American socialist movement was moderate by European standards, its potential radicalism helped pave the way for the relationship between mainstream politicians and members of the AFL. For instance, Theodore Roosevelt—who was, at best, suspicious of unions—warned that if business elites and members of Congress did not heed the legitimate claims of respectable workers’ advocates like Samuel Gompers, they would face the revolutionary specter of socialism.

The primary obstacle to such a rapprochement between labor and government was the federal judiciary. As Melvyn Dubofsky has noted, “it was unelected judges with lifetime tenure who determined national labor policy more often and more decisively than elected public officials did” (Dubofsky, 1994, p. 37). These judges, heavily influenced by a highly individualistic vision of political economy, by and large declared war on organized labor. Judges, declaring that unions violated the prohibition on restraint of trade found in the 1890 Sherman Act (which was designed to regulate monopolistic businesses), routinely used injunctions to cripple strikes. Nor could unions any longer use other effective weapons in their arsenals. In the infamous “Danbury Hatters” case of *Loewe v. Lawlor* (1908), judges effectively outlawed secondary boycotts, which were meant to pressure companies uninvolved in a particular conflict between workers and an employer not to purchase nonunion or “unfair” products. *Gompers v. Buck’s Stove and Range Co.* (1911) ratified this prohibition of boycotts and sanctioned the jailing of union leaders for daring even simply to speak out against an offending company. The Supreme Court also upheld the “yellow-dog contract,” which allowed employers to demand as a condition of hiring that workers never join a union.

This judicial hostility is what ultimately drove AFL leaders to embrace political activism. Gompers and his colleagues continued to retain deep suspicions about the federal government. Yet a “pure and simple” unionism that largely eschewed politics was proving more and more inadequate under the avalanche of unfavorable court decisions. As John Mitchell commented in 1903, “the trade union movement in this country can make progress only by identifying itself with the state.”

Starting in 1906 with the presentation of its “Bill of Grievances,” the AFL threw itself wholeheartedly into the national political realm. Promising to punish its enemies—and, secondarily, to reward its friends—the AFL attempted at first to maintain its nonpartisanship by supporting candidates who advocated the cause of workers. The result over the next decade was the election of an increasing number of friends of labor, including trade unionists themselves. For example, in 1910, 15 unionists were elected to Congress, including the former United Mine Workers official William B. Wilson, who would become the first secretary of the Department of Labor in 1913.

In 1908, Samuel Gompers made the fateful decision to all but officially endorse William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic nominee for president, after the Democrats embraced the AFL’s demand for reform of the injunction system. Bryan suffered defeat,

but four years later, the Democrat Woodrow Wilson was elected to the White House. Wilson had only a few years before been extremely antilabor; in 1909, the then governor of New Jersey declared, "I am a fierce partisan of the Open Shop and of everything that makes for industrial liberty." Yet, Wilson's ideology evolved as he recognized the value of the labor constituency. Despite the AFL's preference for Missouri's Champ Clark as the Democratic nominee, the organization fell in behind Wilson and played an active role in his campaign.

Initially, much of the support that Wilson provided to the AFL in return was symbolic, such as when he became the first president to address the organization's annual convention. Yet increasingly, organized labor expected concrete results and, in many ways, it received them. Secretary William Wilson was able to use his position in the Department of Labor to become a strong advocate for unions. President Wilson appointed a left-wing radical, Frank Walsh, to head the United States Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR). The CIR, which held public hearings from 1913 to 1915 in an attempt to solicit information that would lead to a reconciliation of labor and capital, issued a final report that was, in the words of the labor historian Melvyn Dubofsky, "perhaps the most radical document ever released by a federal commission." The report recommended strong governmental support for union organizing efforts, as well as for a variety of government programs to meet the crises of poverty and unemployment. Procapitalist and more moderate "public" members of the CIR wrote dissenting minority reports, however, and in the end, the cautious Wilson refused to embrace Walsh's call for social democracy.

What labor did get under the first Wilson administration, however, was first and foremost the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914. While the Clayton Act had many components that had nothing to do with unions, its most important provisions, at least rhetorically, proclaimed that labor was not "an article of commerce" and upheld the legitimacy of unions and strikes. Because it also seemed to promise relief from judicial injunctions, Gompers declared the law labor's "Magna Carta." Yet in practice, the law was ambiguous enough to allow judges to continue to intervene in ways destructive to unions—an outcome that Congress and Wilson were likely comfortable with as they sought to please labor without making radical changes in the American political economy.

Still, labor could point to genuine reasons to be pleased with Woodrow Wilson. In 1914, the president sent the military to Colorado after the Ludlow massacre, one of the most infamous events in American labor history. After many violent interchanges with

the workers, militia and coal company police associated with John D. Rockefeller's Colorado Fuel and Iron Company raked a tent camp of strikers with machine-gun fire and then burned the camp to the ground. The 25 murdered workers included a dozen women and children who suffered a particularly horrifying death. In response, Wilson gave clear orders that the federal troops were under no circumstances to help the coal-mine owners protect strikebreakers as they sought to resume production.

Moreover, as Wilson looked toward a close re-election campaign in 1916, he put aside his concern with "class" legislation and signed into law progressive reforms such as the La Follette Seamen's Act of 1915. This bill for the first time regulated the work conditions of sailors. The following year, Wilson signed the Keating-Owens Act, outlawing child labor. In 1916, the president also appointed to the Supreme Court Louis Brandeis, one of the country's most powerful champions of protective labor legislation. Wilson culminated his courting of labor with his approval of the Adamson Act, which granted railroad workers the eight-hour day. Unionists avidly turned out to support Wilson's successful re-election bid, and according to Melvyn Dubofsky, "things had never looked better for organized labor."

Women Workers

While AFL political activism was designed primarily to aid skilled workers, by no means did all labor-oriented politics revolve around the agenda of privileged male workers. Indeed, at the very heart of middle-class as well as working-class Progressivism was the push for protective legislation for women workers, as reformers tried to fathom how to respond to the increase of female factory workers from 324,000 in 1870 to more than two million in 1920.

Those who concerned themselves with the plight of early twentieth-century labor often hoped to pass laws that would limit the hours and provide for a minimum wage for all workers. Yet the Supreme Court made clear in its infamous 1905 case of *Lochner v. New York* that such legislation was a violation of the individual worker's freedom of contract. Three years later, however, the Court proved willing to approve an Oregon maximum-hours law for women workers. In the case of *Muller v. Oregon*, Florence Kelley and Josephine Goldmark of the National Consumers' League joined with Louis Brandeis to argue that overwork not only harmed female employees but also endangered the propagation of the entire human

race because of their deleterious effect on women's maternal function.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911, one of the worst industrial disasters in American history—and certainly the most visible during the Progressive Era—tragically highlighted the necessity of such laws. The Triangle Shirtwaist Company employed approximately 600 workers, mainly young immigrant women, in its Greenwich Village factory. These workers generally labored for up to 14 hours per day for meager wages. The massive “Uprising of the 20,000,” a gigantic 1909 garment workers’ strike, had begun at Triangle; the company then refused to sign on to the collective bargaining agreement that other employers reached with the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union.

Conditions in the factory well epitomized the dangers facing so many industrial workers—*The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair’s 1905 exposé of the Chicago meat-packing industry, being the most famous portrait of these hazards. Flammable textiles filled the factory, but despite the prevalence of smoking and gas lighting, the company did not have on hand any fire extinguishers. When a blaze began on the eighth floor of the building on March 25, 1911, workers from that floor and two floors above were generally able to escape. Those on the ninth floor, however, were trapped, at least partly because of a door that Triangle’s owners had locked to prevent theft or unauthorized breaks. New Yorkers looked on with horror as young women who were not incinerated inside the factory jumped to their deaths.

Public reaction to the 146 deaths at Triangle was swift, as was the passage of legislation mandating improved factory safety. Much of the powerful advocacy on behalf of women workers, including in the aftermath of the Triangle disaster, came from the Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL). More than any other national organization, the WTUL showed the promise of cross-class solidarity as wealthy women combined with their working-class sisters to support strikes and advocate for the cause of labor. The WTUL also injected a working-class spirit into the struggle for woman suffrage.

Along with a broad circle of female reform groups, the WTUL fought hard for protective labor legislation for women workers. Yet laws that capped hours for women and that mandated a minimum wage did not unproblematically assist their intended beneficiaries. The justification of such laws—whether for reasons of expediency or genuine concern—emphasized women’s status as powerless victims who desperately needed aid from the paternal hand of government. The laws at times seemed to sap the energy of female union organizing, and they also served to drive women

out of some previously mixed-sex occupations. Contemporary feminists, celebrating individualism, joined the Supreme Court in voicing their concern about the law’s stripping individual workers of full personal choice. The response of protective labor law advocates, in turn, emphasized that poor immigrant workers did indeed need protection from their much more powerful employers and that working-class women had needs genuinely different from those of middle-class or elite women. The conflicts over the gendered uses of government presaged the bitter conflicts between women activists that broke out during the 1920s over the Equal Rights Amendment.

Conclusion

Historians have traditionally marked American entry into World War I as the end of the Progressive Era. The fate of labor lends considerable credence to this chronology. Moderate unions entered a new era of official legitimacy as Woodrow Wilson enlisted Gompers and the AFL in the war effort. Yet the IWW, and many socialists, vocally opposed the war; in turn, the government launched an intense wave of repression against those it deemed disloyal. While radicals like Eugene Debs languished in prison, workers unleashed one of the largest strike waves during the bloody year of 1919. The birth of Bolshevik Russia and the entry of women into voting booths dramatically changed the political culture of American class relations.

The immediate aftermath of these conflicts was a renewed government and employer offensive that left organized labor reeling during much of the 1920s. Yet the reforms of the Progressive Era had planted seeds that New Dealers—many of them involved in these early twentieth-century struggles—would nurture as the United States entered the even more transformative 1930s.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Danbury Hatters Case: Loewe v. Lawlor (1908, 1915); Debs, Eugene V.; Gompers, Samuel; Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Industrial Workers of the World; Lochner v. New York (1905); Triangle Shirtwaist Fire; Women's Trade Union League

PROSTITUTION Sex Work

Prostitution, to which the adage “the world’s oldest profession” has often been applied, has been practiced by women, and to a lesser extent men, in America ever since Europeans arrived on the North American continent. Perhaps ironically, because precontact Native Americans possessed strikingly different conceptions of sexuality and property than did their European counterparts, prostitution as we think of it today did not exist prior to European contact. Most Indians, although custom and practice varied from group to group, were relaxed about sex and sexuality, had few proscriptions on sexual experimentation and sexual choice for men and women, and possessed no concept of sexual ownership, making the sale of sex literally impossible. Yet early Western visitors to what would later become the United States often referred to so-called promiscuous Indian woman as whores, a term synonymous in the English language with prostitutes and other sexually immoral women. This assumption allowed white men to justify demands that they either be allowed free access to the Native American women’s bodies or be able to buy them as they could lower-class women or women of color in their own societies. It also allowed white women to assume a sense of moral superiority over the supposedly “heathen,” uncivilized women and men whose land they were overtaking.

The Puritan religion of a few of the northeastern American colonies condemned all forms of sexual excess and immorality and called on its followers to be clean in both mind and body. Puritan ministers likened the body of a debauched individual, whether man or woman, to the brothel, wherein all manner of unspeakable evils might occur, and redemption was surely lost as a result. Close-knit Puritan communities not only provided materially for their members, minimizing the economic factors that often lead to prostitution, and also ostracized those who crossed sexual taboo lines. A relatively even sex ratio helped channel sexual activity more often than not into

marriage. This combination of factors minimized the existence of prostitution in these small New England towns. However, the growth of smaller towns and the influx of new townspeople over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries resulted in greater social heterogeneity, the fraying of social safety nets, and a decline of ministers' and familial moral sway. Concomitantly, prostitution and other forms of sexual immorality began to rise in these once "pure" communities.

The social and economic situation in the mid-Atlantic colonies, so markedly different from that in New England, ultimately also kept prostitution rates relatively low during the early colonial years. The Europeans who settled in such colonies as Maryland and Virginia held much the same views about sexual morality as did their neighbors to the north; however, skewed sex ratios and residence patterns based on a plantation economy created a situation wherein men vastly outnumbered women and close-knit communities were virtually nonexistent. The practice of indentured servitude drew many young women from Europe and placed them at the mercy of their masters, who often expected sexual favors from them at no cost. In addition to free sexual access to their white servants, white southern men perceived the growing numbers of women of African descent enslaved in these areas as legitimate, free sexual outlets. Although southern colonies banned interracial unions, miscegenation was common among white men and black women.

As urban areas consolidated in the mid- to late-1700s along the Atlantic seaboard, prostitution became an increasingly viable outlet not only for male lust but also for women looking for work. Expanding maritime trade and commerce at ports such as New York and mercantile hubs such as Philadelphia drew sailors and entrepreneurs alike looking for willing female company. Alexander Hamilton reported in 1744 that sexual commerce in New York City was rampant, especially near the battery.

During the French and Indian wars and as the colonies geared up for the War of Independence, soldiers became an increasingly common feature in late eighteenth-century colonial cities, providing a steady trade for prostitutes. During the latter conflict, female camp followers of all classes kept soldiers company and provided such services as laundry, nursing, and cooking; they also quite often worked as prostitutes for the troops, causing concern about the spread of venereal disease among the ranks.

After the American colonies won their independence from Britain and the new United States began its slow but inexorable westward expansion, urban areas such as Philadelphia and New York continued to

attract consumers and purveyors of sex. Indeed, sexual commerce exploded in these areas over the nineteenth century. Embracing the liberal and libertine ideals flowing in the young country, male citizens of the City of Brotherly Love during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries frequented the many so-called bawdy houses that peppered the city; women, too, participated in the loose sexual atmosphere of the town. As a result of the promiscuous atmosphere of the time, which permeated all social classes, venereal disease and illegitimate pregnancies were rampant. However, lower-class women—some prostitutes, some not—especially suffered under a system that labeled them (but not the men with whom they had engaged sexually) immoral if they became diseased or pregnant and then abandoned them to an unmerciful urban welfare system. In this atmosphere, prostitution both exemplified sex as a recreational activity and symbolized the dangers of promiscuous sexuality for individuals and society. Prostitution for at least some women, however, remained a viable occupation at this time when wage work for women was sorely limited.

The years from 1820 to 1840 marked a change in the relative autonomy some prostitutes had by that time gained in such cities as New York City. This span of time coincided with a period in women's history that some historians have referred to as the Cult of True Womanhood, wherein respectable women were expected to be religiously pious, sexually pure, and socially subordinate to men in all dimensions of life. Between 1832 and 1838, a series of brothel riots occurred in the city, which, according to the historian Timothy J. Gilfoyle, represented an effort by disgruntled men to regain economic and sexual control over sexually and economically independent women in the city. In 1836, Helen Jewett (the alias of Dorcas Doyen, originally from Maine), an educated, successful, and sought-after prostitute living in a well-known brothel patronized by businessmen and politicians, was murdered by her lover, Richard Robinson, who then tried to incinerate her body to cover the evidence. The press sensationalized Jewett's murder, exposing all of the details of Jewett's life, both sordid and mundane, as well as those of Robinson, who was eventually acquitted of the murder.

Jewett and Robinson riveted public attention; each symbolized Americans' fears of the changing gender roles and relationships of the time. The murdered Jewett, on the one hand, epitomized the proverbial result of walking down the "primrose path," which, respectable folks warned young women, inevitably led to social marginality and, ultimately, death. Yet at the time of her death, Jewett owned clothing and jewelry worth more than \$1,500, lived in a fine house,

and possessed what most women did not, personal freedom. On the other hand, Robinson represented a new cohort of middle-class young men who were moving to urban areas and seeking employment, and hopefully their fortune, in the professions the city afforded them. Away from the watchful eyes of their communities of origin, supported in their sexual exploits by the homosocial groups in which they socialized, and with spending money in their pockets, these men were part of the newly emerging “sporting male” subculture that quickly thereafter came to be identified with urban life. Both Jewett and Robinson represented unfettered sexuality and the growing independence of young men and women, but the outcomes for their behaviors were radically different. Whereas through his acquittal Robinson received the ultimate validation of sexual license and economic independence, through her murder Jewett received the ultimate punishment for the very same behaviors. Although many New Yorkers clamored for Robinson’s punishment, a significant number of others supported Robinson, claiming that Jewett deserved her fate and that no man should be accountable for the death of a whore.

The question of why a woman from such an initially respectable and educated background as Jewett would choose to become a prostitute was one that has perplexed nineteenth- and twentieth-century Americans. William Sanger, the author of *The History of Prostitution* (first published in 1858 and remaining in print well into the twentieth century), asked just that question of over a thousand American prostitutes in the mid-nineteenth century. Expectedly, the largest number answered that economic hardship was the cause. What bothered Sanger and other social reformers of the age, however, was that women gave “inclination,” which Sanger explicitly defined to mean sexual desire, as their second most common response. Although, of course, many American women worked outside the home and also had enjoyable sex lives, this last revelation confounded most white, middle-class, Christian Americans who had embraced the domestic ideal of women. The possibility that some women were turning to sex work as a way to engage in sexual activity that they might both enjoy and profit from was a frightening possibility for these Americans, who believed a woman’s proper place was in the home (with a man providing for her economically) and that women lacked sexual desire.

The behavior of real American women, many of whom were not middle class, belied this supposed norm of dependence and frigidity. By the late 1870s and early 1880s, mining towns flourished everywhere

in the American West. Towns such as Butte, Montana; Cripple Creek, Colorado; Virginia City, Nevada; and Deadwood, South Dakota, grew overnight from small camps to booming cities. Mining was the magnet drawing people to these newly formed communities, and gender and age ratios in these new boomtowns often were skewed toward adult males, to whom canny prostitutes were quickly drawn. Women of all races, classes, and backgrounds headed west looking to make their fortunes (albeit in a bit different manner from the men who preceded them) in the goldfields of California, silver smelters of Nevada, and copper mines of Montana.

Families followed the gold-digging men and women a few years later, creating a more civilized feel and bringing with them the more respectable markers of community—schools, churches, and theaters—which co-existed alongside the less respectable—saloons, gambling halls, and brothels. This mix of frontier and civilization led often to antiprostitution campaigns, wherein respectable, pious men and women, many of whom were members of such reform groups as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, did their best to eradicate prostitution from their midst. Such efforts were typically futile, however, until the Progressive Era. Indeed, western towns came to be known as much for their hard-drinking miners and loggers as for the “sisters of joy” who lived by their sides.

Although frontier life was often hard and many prostitutes died of disease and accidents or were murdered, some women who sold sex in western towns created a decent life for themselves. The truism promoted by social reformers that a prostitute’s life span was no more than five years, as she progressed from high-class whore to suicidal drunk, was the exception to the rule. Instead, western prostitutes followed a more common trajectory, entering prostitution when they were young and performing sex work, often in a transient manner, to make ends meet or to get ahead financially before moving on to another occupation or marriage. Some worked as prostitutes until they married and settled down, either in the same vicinity or another western community where their past was not so well known, and resumed a more “respectable” life. Others continued to work in the sex trade after marriage, sometimes as prostitutes, sometimes as madams. Still others, such as Nevada City’s Julia Bulette or Seattle’s Lou Graham, became prominent members of their communities, contributing time and money to philanthropic causes, business development, and political campaigns.

Just like in other groups of workers, prostitutes throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries functioned within a hierarchy in very different

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kinds of work environments. The historical sociologist Marion Goldman, who studied prostitution on the Comstock Lode in late nineteenth-century Nevada, found that this stratification resulted from a number of conditions in these women's work lives: whether the unions were clandestine or flagrantly solicited; the subtlety with which a prostitute asked for payment; whether a woman had talents or attributes other than sexual ones; how many men a woman was involved with; whether she was expensive or cheap; and the social class of the men who patronized her. Goldman found that women perceived to be higher class were those whose services were clandestine; who did not openly ask for payment; who were educated or had some talent, such as acting or dancing; and who limited their encounters to one or only a couple upper-class men who could afford her expensive fee.

This hierarchy did not exist only in Nevada. Almost every study of prostitution has outlined a very similar kind of class distinction among sex workers, with local variations. Typically, madams and higher-class prostitutes, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century brothels of New Orleans, New York, Chicago, or San Francisco, lived in sumptuous surroundings where men of means and power, often the most respected and connected persons in their communities, could not only have sex with a beautiful and often well-educated, accomplished woman but also socialize with other wealthy men, conduct business transactions, drink alcohol, dance, and sometimes just sleep. A famous example of this kind of establishment was the Everleigh Club, which was run by Minna and Ada Everleigh (aka Lester), two sisters from Kentucky who left acting careers to open a brothel first in Omaha, Nebraska, and then in Chicago. The Everleigh sisters' opulent house and wealthy clientele made them both famous and rich. When their doors finally closed as a result of pressure from the Chicago Vice Commission and the mayor, rumors circulated that they had made a million dollars in their chosen profession. The exact amount of their profits is unknown, but the sisters did live out the rest of their lives quite comfortably in New York City.

Some elite prostitutes were women who moved in and out of other more respectable occupations, such as acting, dancing, or secretarial work, whom a man might "keep" as a mistress by paying for her rent, clothing, and food in exchange for occasional sexual encounters. Middle-class prostitutes in urban areas often worked together out of apartments or furnished rooms, sharing expenses and arranging "dates" so as not to coincide with each other's schedule; others worked within the "call girl" system whereby a central

dispatcher took "orders" and sent the appropriate "dish" out to the client. Lower classes of sex workers typically worked out of small, dirty cribs, where they performed no-frills sex acts as quickly as possible for 50 cents to \$5; others walked the streets looking for johns, who would often receive sexual services in their cars or in taxis, or who would take the prostitute to a cheap motel or houses of assignation that rented by the hour.

Another hierarchy among prostitutes was based on race. African-American and other ethnic and immigrant women were at the bottom of the hierarchy. Many black prostitutes earned far less than did white prostitutes, were arrested more often than were whites, and had fewer options for leaving the business than did their white counterparts. Although they functioned at the bottom of the social hierarchy, black prostitutes sometimes were able to use to their advantage deeply held white stereotypes of black men and black women as hypersexual (a stereotype that served not only to justify white male access to black women throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries but also to justify white male persecution of black men whom they accused of raping "pure" white women). Vice investigators in both early twentieth-century Chicago and New Orleans, for example, found black women marketing their so-called heated sexual nature to potential white customers.

Althea, a mixed-race Chicago prostitute, promised that she and her colleague could give two undercover cops a better "jazzin" (slang for sex) than a white girl, and she savvily noted that their fee was less than that of white prostitutes. Although they typically made less overall than white women, evidence shows that black women often charged white men more than they charged black men for their sexual services and sometimes catered only to better-paying white customers.

Although African-American women in the United States have suffered sexual exploitation at the hands of white men ever since the first slave ships arrived from Africa, not all black women were at the bottom of the commercial sex work ladder in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In southern cities—New Orleans, for example—mixed-race women (typically referred to as octoroons or quadroons, depending on the percentage of African-American blood in their heritage) often commanded larger fees from white men than did their white counterparts. The brothels of such famous mixed-race madams as Lulu White and "Countess" Willie V. Piazza attracted high-class prostitutes and wealthy men and had reputations as being some of the best houses in the city. Perhaps ironically, at a time when racial segregation was becoming institutionalized in the Jim Crow South,

Piazza's house was a "whites only" establishment. Just as ironically, as the historian Alecia P. Long has noted, New Orleans's octoroon prostitutes were able to maintain their political clout through close contact with powerful white men. Many of these women were able to weather the growing storm of institutionalized racism and not only continue to move in high-class social circles but also acquire significant financial and material wealth because of (not in spite of) their mixed-race, prostitute status.

In the early twentieth century, an outcry from social reformers arose against the so-called white slave trade in the United States. Spurred on by anti-immigrant sentiment, most notably against Southern and Eastern European men, many of whom were Catholic or Jewish, white Progressive Era reformers, most of whom came from "old immigrant" families of Northern European, Protestant stock, published numerous tracts warning families to "protect" their young daughters who were coming to the cities from their rural homes. Unsuspecting young virgins were easy prey for the evil men who awaited their arrival in the city, men who would seduce them and then send them off to work as sex slaves, often drugged and always against their will. In response to the growing hysteria among social reformers concerned with white slavery, Congress passed the Mann Act in 1910, which banned the transportation of women across state lines for the purpose of prostitution. Although a sex trade undoubtedly existed, arrests made under the Mann Act turned on its head the belief that ethnic men were selling white women as sex slaves. Instead, more white, native-born men were prosecuted under the Act than any other ethnic group combined; furthermore, the women whom these men were convicted of trafficking in were more often than not women from immigrant ethnic groups or lower classes, not the white, middle-class farm girls reformers had worried about. Indeed, it was Asians who most often filled the ranks of the real sex slaves in American society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Most prostitutes fell somewhere near the bottom of the sex work hierarchy. But the dream of repeating the Everleigh sisters' success lured many women into the sex trade, while low wages and miserable working conditions pushed those same women out of more traditional lower-class jobs, such as domestic work, factory work, or the sewing trades. Indeed, a significant number of prostitutes had formerly been live-in domestic workers, a job that most women loathed because of the long hours and strenuous labor. Many domestic workers chose to become prostitutes, noting that the work was less demanding of their time and effort and that they at least got paid for what their

former male employers often expected for free. Although some reformers sympathized with the plight of such lower-class women, many of whom were African-Americans or other ethnic minorities, most of society castigated their greed and accused them of "sinning for silk," a veiled condemnation of their desire to gain upward mobility or cross entrenched color and gender lines through disreputable means.

Women's tenuous economic status outside of the family or marriage also created situations that forced them into prostitution. The death of a father, husband, or brother who had been the sole provider; one's own sickness or that of a family member; or divorce could easily send a middle-class woman from a life of leisure to one of prostitution. Madeleine, a nineteenth-century prostitute, was born into a middle-class family and was plunged into poverty and ultimately turned to prostitution when her father died suddenly at an early age.

The experiences of Maimie Pinzer, an early twentieth-century East Coast Russian Jew, provide other examples of factors leading to prostitution. Maimie, who by all appearances was an intelligent and motivated young woman, tried hard to be "respectable," even starting her own mimeographing business at one point with a female partner. Nonetheless, she faced constant barriers to landing or keeping a job: chauvinism, sexual harassment, employers' revulsion when they saw that she was missing an eye, and so on. As a result, Maimie often resorted to prostitution to supplement what income she could make through more respectable means or to enjoy a nice meal out when she was hungry. She was also financially hobbled by her unwillingness to remain married to a man for whom she felt no passion, simply because he loved her and usually provided enough income to keep her from needing to prostitute herself. Maimie felt guilty about selling sex for money and saw her willingness to do so as a moral flaw in herself, and yet she was also quite pragmatic about the inequities women like herself faced in urban America in the early twentieth century. Her experience was likely representative of many young women at the time, who blurred the lines between prostitution and what historians have called "treating," wherein a woman traded sexual favors for entertainment, food, or other goods and services. Like Maimie, these women crossed in and out of commercial sex as needed, and often held "regular" jobs and were married, separated, or divorced from men who knew about and accepted, if not promoted, their forays into prostitution.

Nineteenth-century municipal governments and state legislatures in the United States toyed with the idea of legalizing or regulating (and taxing) prostitution. New Orleans's city council, for example, voted

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in 1857 to tax its prostitutes and to establish a licensing system. The experiment was short-lived for ironic reasons. Madame Emma Pickett reluctantly applied in May 1857 for a license to operate a bordello; two years later, however, she sued the city to recover the fee she had paid for the license. The courts upheld her side of the case and declared the law unconstitutional. Although states such as New York and cities such as San Francisco debated off and on whether to legalize or regulate prostitution in the same manner as England or Paris had in the mid-1800s, only two American cities experimented with such legislation in the nineteenth century: St. Louis, Missouri, which enacted regulated prostitution in 1870 (but then quickly repealed), and New Orleans, which created two limited areas in which prostitution was legal (one that serviced predominantly white clients and one that serviced predominantly black customers). Although these attempts were short-lived, they indicate that many Americans recognized prostitution was a business and its practitioners performing a service, however distasteful middle-class Americans might find it.

The business of prostitution permeated nineteenth- and twentieth-century life much as did any other service industry of the time. Landlords generated huge incomes from properties rented to brothels, often charging exorbitant rents to their disreputable tenants on the one hand while participating in respectable religious, business, or political roles on the other. Additionally, prostitutes and brothels patronized local laundry services, grocers, florists, seamstresses, milliners, alcohol distributors, and many other merchants and service providers. Finally, the fines and bribes prostitutes paid to municipalities and police officers, along with the money they gave to their madams and pimps, rounded out the informal economy of sex work. Indeed, their financial contribution to local economies was often crucial to community development in some neighborhoods.

Prostitutes have lived by the adage, "Whatever you have to sell, it pays to advertise," doing so through such media as New Orleans's famous *Blue Books* and other such sporting guides to American cities, as well as by sitting in street-side windows displaying their wares, strolling down a boulevard exchanging coy glances with potential customers, or in later times, taking out ads in the *Yellow Pages*. Furthermore, many prostitutes and their panderers have realized that it takes money to make money, investing in clothes, props, and other tools of the trade with which to entice and pleasure their customers.

A major change in the history of prostitution occurred in the first and second decades of the twentieth century. With roots in the earlier purity crusades of

the late nineteenth century, Progressive Era antivice campaigns took a new, more scientific approach to eradicating what they now referred to as the "social evil." Reformers from various backgrounds—from fiery ministers to ardent feminists to shrewd politicians—joined together to investigate vice and promote "social hygiene" around the country. The vice commission studies of New York and Chicago were the most prominent, with both of those cities publishing famous reports, both titled *The Social Evil*, in 1902 and 1912, respectively. However, more than 40 cities around the country held their own investigations and published their findings in reports with smaller distribution but perhaps no less impact in their individual communities.

Although prostitutes are stereotypically female, men have also worked as prostitutes in the United States. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially, urban areas exploded in size, providing anonymity and a subculture for homosexual men and women. The presence of gay districts, many of which overlapped with sex districts on the edges of such minority neighborhoods as Harlem or Chicago's Black Belt, provided a new kind of sexual service for interested male customers. As the historian George Chauncey Jr. has revealed, straight male access to the sexual services of both gay-identified and straight-identified men had increased dramatically in New York City by the 1910s and 1920s with street-walking "fairies" and "wolves" frequenting such areas as Times Square and less conspicuous male prostitutes working out of brothels around the city. Far less common, but available for those willing to pay, male and female prostitutes sometimes serviced female customers. However, such cases were by far the least common. Then, as now, men have consumed the vast majority of sexual services available.

A result of Progressive Era vice reform, among its other municipal outcomes, was what has been called the "closing of the red lights." One of the most famous of these districts, in which the sex trade and other vices were tolerated, if not legal, was New Orleans's Storyville, a district named for the alderman Sidney Story, who proposed the ordinance creating the city's segregated sex district in 1898. The district was "named" in his honor, despite the vehement protests of Story, who was himself against prostitution but believed containment was the only remedy for a vice that most people perceived to be a "necessary evil" and that was unlikely to disappear. The name stuck, though, and Storyville was soon reported to have over two thousand prostitutes working out of over two hundred brothels, cabarets, and other such establishments. Just 20 years later, though, another city ordinance officially closed the district. Although

Storyville still boasted eight hundred prostitutes at that time, it had lost its former glory. The combination of this decline, Progressive Era vice campaigns, and wartime fears of soldiers contracting venereal disease from prostitutes were the nails in Storyville's coffin. Similar impulses nationwide led to widespread closures of vice districts both legal and illegal in just a few years. As a result, prostitution, in effect, went underground.

By 1920, although the red lights had effectively been extinguished, prostitution remained. The sex business, however, changed. Whereas before 1920 prostitution had been a predominantly woman-run and woman-staffed business (with a handful of male owners and male brothels thrown into the mix), after 1920, men increasingly controlled the sale of women's bodies through more organized groups, such as the Mafia, as well as through individual pimps, who provided protection to prostitutes made more vulnerable to prosecution as a result of the Progressive Era reforms. The advent of the automobile and the increasing availability of such technologies as the telephone also transformed sex work after 1920. So-called streetwalkers became more common as johns could pull up and pick them up on the street and either take them to hourly motels or houses of assignation or else receive their services in the privacy of their private vehicles or taxicabs. Call-girl services became more common, too, providing a central phone number to clients and then sending girls out to a home, business, or hotel in response to customers' requests.

Streetwalking, call-girl services, and a few remaining brothels predominated the sex trade throughout the middle of the twentieth century, with massage parlors, peep shows, and burlesque and strip clubs rounding out the kinds of sexual services available to customers. Autobiographies of madams and prostitutes published in the mid-twentieth century and Alfred Kinsey's controversial studies of male and female sexuality published in 1948 and 1953 attested to the continued existence of prostitution between 1920 and 1970, but researchers devoted little study to prostitutes or prostitution during those years, as the U.S. public worried more about the Cold War than about vestiges of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century heyday of commercial sex. However, events coalesced in the late 1960s and early 1970s to put prostitution back on the public radar screen. Legalization of the birth control pill in 1960 and then abortion in 1973, freer sexual attitudes surrounding the so-called second sexual revolution, and the "second wave" of feminism dramatically increased women's control over sexuality and reproduction. At the same

time, two events returned attention to prostitution in American society: the legalization of prostitution in the perhaps aptly named Storey County, Nevada, in 1971 (four other counties quickly followed suit) and the publication of Xaviera Hollander's *The Happy Hooker* in 1972.

Xaviera Hollander, a Dutch transplant to the United States who proclaimed that she made a fortune on her back and loved every minute of it, represented for many "liberated" women the epitome of a woman's control over her own body and her ability to gain economic freedom through sex work. Similarly, Nevada brothel owners capitalized on their ability to attract male customers and female employees to their establishments by claims to having disease-free, happy hookers who enjoyed all the benefits of more traditional employees. Such claims to prostitutes' choice and control over their work and bodies quickly led to a bitter division among feminists in the 1970s and 1980s. Whereas so-called sex-positive (or pro-sex) feminists usually agreed that not all prostitutes were victims and that some women found pleasure and power in performing sex work, other feminists vehemently denied the ability of any sex worker to claim that she had choice or control, arguing instead that prostitution was the ultimate symbol of men's sexual exploitation of women and therefore must be eradicated completely from society.

Although sex-positive feminists conceded that there was a wide spectrum of reasons that women (and men) chose prostitution—from coercion to choice—they nevertheless wished for prostitutes to be accorded the same status as other workers. Such activists wished to alter negative perceptions of prostitution, referring to the job instead as "sex work" and to its practitioners as "sex workers" and advocating for decriminalization and even regulation of the sex trade. In response to this shift in thinking about the nature of sex work and its practitioners, such organizations as COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, 1973) and U.S. PROS (U.S. Prostitutes' Collective, 1980) formed to advocate for prostitutes' rights. COYOTE, for example, was founded by Margo St. James in 1973 to work for the repeal of the prostitution laws and an end to the stigma associated with sexual work.

Antiprostitution feminists formed other prostitutes' rights groups, such as WHISPER (Women Hurt in Systems of Prostitution Engaged in Revolt). These organizations coalesced around members who, in opposition to those in pro-sex and pro-sex work organizations, believed all prostitutes were victims and that all prostitution was an indicator of men's sexual exploitation of women.

Although each of these prostitutes' rights organizations had (or has) different—and sometimes oppositional—underlying ideologies and goals, the majority have approximated more traditional types of labor organizations. Legalization and decriminalization, such as had occurred in Nevada, according to U.S. PROS, created “the new sex assembly lines” of the world (West, p. 279) and actually deprived women of their rights by allowing employers and even the state to control their labor. Instead, COYOTE and U.S. PROS (which was formed as part of the larger International Wages for Housework Campaign) advocated complete abolition of laws against prostitute women in order to return women's ability to choose prostitution as a viable business option and maintain control over their working conditions and wages. Prostitutes' rights advocates clearly distinguished between voluntary and forced prostitution, and they also were adamantly against any use of children or unwilling individuals in sex work. However, they argued, adult women who chose to sell sex for money should be accorded the same rights as other service workers. The fact that prostitutes were providing sex instead of clean sheets or someone's dinner, prostitutes' rights advocates proclaimed, should not alter the simple fact that sex workers are workers.

Although the number of prostitutes' rights organizations exponentially increased in the 1970s and 1980s, COYOTE, U.S. PROS, and the like apparently were not, however, the first such organizations for prostitutes. Although the research to date is slim, evidence from late nineteenth-century New Orleans suggests that madams in that city formed a benevolent association, much like those formed for workers in other fields (firemen, police, insurance salesmen, and the like), called the Venus and Bacchus Society. Such formal or informal networks or organizations likely existed in other urban areas that contained large numbers of prostitutes and their affiliated businesses.

At the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, sex work once again transformed. Traditional prostitution, escort services, stripping, massage parlors, and live sex shows still existed, but new technologies also fostered the rise of phone sex, Internet sex, high-definition pornography, and even virtual sex—all geared (perhaps ironically) toward facilitating solitary masturbation. Additionally, sex workers of both genders saw a rise in the business of bondage and other fetish-oriented services, both heterosexual and homosexual in nature. Transsexual and transvestite sex workers were increasingly obvious, perhaps most notably in their drag performances but also as streetwalkers selling sex to customers.

The Work of Sex

According to such English-language dictionaries as Merriam-Webster's, prostitution is the exchange of sex for money. Most dictionaries do not gender the act of prostitution. A “prostitute,” however, is first defined as a woman who sells sex for money. The second definition is a man who does so, especially those who engage in homosexual practices for pay. In both cases, the heteronormative implication is that men—often referred to as “johns,” a term that the dictionary defines specifically as coming from the masculine name John—are the customers. No word exists in the English language for a woman who purchases sex, whether it be from a man or a woman, although the term “gigolo” refers to a man supported by a woman, usually in return for his attentions, the nature of which the dictionaries never outline (although they explicitly refer to prostitutes as selling sex).

Thus, prostitution is an economic exchange in which women, and to a lesser degree men, provide services to male, and to an almost invisible degree, female customers. Just as, for example, waitresses provide food service to hungry customers or nurses succor suffering patients, prostitutes' labor is the performance of sex acts designed to produce orgasm in their aroused customers. However, despite the labor-intensive and service-oriented nature of sex work and the supposed truism that prostitution is the “oldest profession,” labor historians, even those who study women's labors, have devoted considerably less attention to prostitutes and prostitution than they have to other occupations.

Prostitutes engage in a wide variety of sex acts—sometimes pleasurable, often distasteful, meaningless, or violent—with multiple partners for pay on the job. Additionally, they construct a separate sexual persona when off the clock. By doing so, prostitutes are both agents and victims—agents in that they choose to perform certain sex tasks as part of their workaday life but also victims because they must also appeal to (and presumably sate) customers' desire in order to earn a living.

According to prostitutes' historical and contemporary accounts, the fantasies they appeal to and the sex acts they sell represent both savvy marketing and the limits of what they will and will not do as part of their daily work requirements. This might mean offering fellatio instead of intercourse, because the former is less work for equal or the same pay, while refusing to kiss her customer on the mouth, because it would allow him to cross a barrier she maintains while “on the clock.” She still must satisfy her customer's need

for orgasm by offering the service that will get the job done; yet, she finds ways to maintain her sense of self while doing so. Thinking about prostitutes' work as a task, rather than a value-laden sexual act, reveals that the binary of agent/victim does not necessarily hold up in the commercial sex environment. Sex as work complicates traditional distinctions between prostitutes and other women, most of whom sell or trade their services in some form.

Striking images of Nevada brothels taken in the late twentieth century "read" alongside prostitutes' and madams' autobiographical writing from the same time reveal to labor historians and historians of sexuality alike the importance of the quotidian nature of the work prostitutes perform. Examination of images and memoirs reveals that prostitutes surrounded themselves not only with the tricks of their undoubtedly skilled trade but also with the tools, marketing sexual allure and performance to each customer in assembly-line fashion. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century brothels alike created a fantasy environment for customers. Although fashions undoubtedly changed from the 1880s to the 1980s, the environment in which many prostitutes worked also provided the tricks—red velvet walls, mirrors, erotic images, heart-shaped beds, and an occasional S and M or fetish closet—while each sexual performance space also contained the tools—lotion, condoms, porn, plastic-lined trash cans, the requisite sink, and an occasional bidet.

Furthermore, sex workers saw themselves as business owners and workers, professionals in all senses of that term and with similar hierarchies as other professions. As such, prostitution has had a well-developed work culture and identity. Although sex work encompasses sex tasks and marketed fantasy, it is also on a daily level quite routine and repetitive and, at least internally, contains little of the stereotypical stigma that outsiders attach to the women who do the work. Indeed, most prostitutes view their work as simply a job, which, as does any job, has ups and downs, pluses and minuses, and ins and outs (pun fully intended). Like factory workers, prostitutes have been expected to maximize their labor costs by turning as many tricks as possible in as short a time as possible. Pictures of Nevada brothels, for example, reveal panels of timers with which to regulate exactly how much service a girl would provide for her fee. Although the tricks and tools of the trade have changed over time, the inextricably interconnected nature of sex/sexuality (be it fantasy, sexual performance, or a sexual/work identity in the more modern sense) and work tasks and culture have remained much the same.

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PROTOCOL OF PEACE

On July 7, 1910, the cloakmakers' "Great Revolt" began, as almost 50,000 members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in New York City walked off their jobs. As work ground to a halt throughout the city, diverse actors moved to reshape the future of industrial relations. Involvement came from many fronts. Meyer Bloomfield, a prominent Boston social worker and industrial reformer, began an effort to end the strike on behalf of A. Lincoln Filene, the owner of the Boston department store Filene's. Bloomfield, Filene, and others had been involved with "the labor question" for some time by 1910. Both had been active in the national and

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regional National Civic Federation. Both had experience with the ladies' garment industry and Jewish labor. On July 21, Bloomfield met with manufacturers, to offer his services in settling the strike. The next day, Bloomfield met with Julius Henry Cohen, the lawyer for the manufacturers. On July 21, Bloomfield wrote to the famed Boston attorney Louis Brandeis and explained how he laid the foundation for talks and that Brandeis should come and lead them.

Brandeis left for New York on July 23, writing his brother Alfred that "I was called to N.Y. Saturday p.m. to try to settle the N.Y. Garment Workers' strike." He took with him a "draft of a proposed labor agreement." This draft included several ideas, the most important of which was the request that the union give up its demand for a closed or union shop. Brandeis told the 20 men assembled that they were witnessing an important moment in history, the birth of a new system of industrial relations. Brandeis's proposed settlement called for a novel approach: an industrywide agreement, a limited form of industrial democracy, a "preferential shop," health and safety regulations, a grievance mechanism, and an industry-standard wage policy.

The union at first rejected the new plan, holding out for a closed union shop rather than mere preference for union members. But an injunction barring picketing, coupled with the activities of Filene and Brandeis, forced the ILGWU's General Executive Board to rethink the strike. The union finally officially dropped its demand for the closed shop. And on September 2, the two lawyers for each side met to draw up a settlement. The Protocol established "a kind of industrial self-government" that Brandeis had been trying to establish for some time. There were three parts to the Protocol. First were the normal labor contract issues of hours, wages, and paid holidays. In this regard, the Protocol was better than most contracts of the day, clearly better than garment workers ever saw. The second part involved features unique to the garment industry: abolition of charges for electricity and supplies; the establishment of shop committees to establish a just piece rate; and most revolutionary, a Joint Board of Sanitary Control—a committee made up of representatives of both the union and the association who would oversee working conditions. The third and most important part of the Protocol was the implementation of Brandeis's conceptions of efficiency and industrial democracy.

The centerpiece of Brandeis's program for industrial democracy was clearly the preferential shop, the ban on all strikes and lockouts, and the establishment of grievance and arbitration mechanisms. Crucial was the last clause and agreement, on the preferential

shop, which, in effect, recognized the union shop indirectly. As the garment industry expert Benjamin Stolberg states, "The clause was as effective, for the union's purpose, as if the full closed shop had been adopted" because the union could always supply workers.

A central aspect of the Protocol was the attempt to rationalize, standardize, and Taylorize the garment industry. All work stoppages would be eliminated. Work would continue as grievances were arbitrated. As a tripartite agreement between labor, management, and the public, the Protocol steered the industry into the modernity of an industrial consumer society. In exchange for giving union leadership some authority, the Protocol mandated industrial self-management. In essence, the association expected the ILGWU to police its own members for the benefit of the industry. The union was to supply "efficient" workers and ensure continuous and rational production. If the union could do this effectively, workers would benefit. By controlling its own members, the union brought to industry what the manufacturers could not: stability and rationality. One measure for the Protocol's success could be seen in both the unionization that followed and by the new role for union leaders and outside arbitrators. Union leaders could be cheered by swelling membership rolls, as with the increased authority and respectability the Protocol vested in them. In 1910, the New York City cloakmakers represented three fourths of the entire ILGWU membership. The agreement covered 1,796 out of a possible 1,829 shops. By 1912, 90% of all cloakmakers were in the union. Manufacturers could take a measure of hope that the anarchy and chaos of the seasonal wildcat strikes were over as all garment workers were being brought into a disciplined and maturing labor union. The signing of the Protocol of Peace finally institutionalized for the cloakmakers, and then for the whole industry, some of the major features that the shirtwaist workers had struggled for in 1909.

The structure of the Protocol intended to impose efficiency and rationality on a chaotic industry. Bringing industrial hygienists, reformers, shop owners, and workers together, it sought to contribute to the larger discourse on the role of work in the newly forming consumer society and on the rights of management and workers in an industrial society. Most shared the opinion that the current situation was chaotic. The Protocol's answer was the principle of layered bureaucracy, which Protocolists envisioned as an industrial version of our nation's constitutional checks and balances.

At the top of this system stood the Board of Arbitration, which consisted of three members: one from

management, one from labor, and Brandeis, who represented the public. All decisions of the Board were binding. Below it was the Committee on Grievances, which consisted of four members, two from each side, which acted as a conciliation agency. This committee heard all grievances filed by either side. A majority vote brought settlement, meaning at least one member from the other side had to switch. Only if a deadlock occurred—which happened, as we will see, all too often—would it go to the Board of Arbitration.

Another remarkable feature of the Protocol was the Board of Sanitary Control. This was a prototypical Progressive Era reform effort. This Board consisted of seven members, two from the union, two from management and the remainder chosen by the four to represent the public. Its first order of business was a systematic investigation into the sanitary conditions of the cloak, suit, and skirt industry. This was one of the first full-scale public health surveys of the industry. The Sanitary Board did not, at first, have enforcement powers. Its power lay in its ability to marshal public outrage against unsanitary conditions. Members of this board had great faith in the public at large, believing that if they only knew the true conditions, they would become outraged and demand action. The most dramatic of these new sources was the authorizing of “sanitation strikes.” Under the sanitation provisions of the Protocol, workers would be allowed to strike over unsanitary conditions authorized by the Sanitation Board. In addition, the Board developed a sanitary certificate that shop owners had to hang in their shops to show they were in complete compliance with the sanitary features of the Protocol.

While the machinery of the Protocol was being put into place, Protocolists began to spread the agreement to other sectors of the ladies’ garment industry in New York City. To prove their thesis about the Protocol’s revolutionary potential, they needed to demonstrate its potential to bring peace to an entire industry. Thus, even before the bugs were worked out of the initial settlement, Brandeis and company were seeking to implement the Protocol in new sectors of the ladies’ garment industry.

The union and the association hit on a novel way to organize the industry and thereby spread the protocol to all sectors of the garment industry: an orchestrated general strike. Both sides embarked upon a co-ordinated effort to quickly and painlessly rationalize the industry. First, the association provided the union with a list of all member shops. The union, in turn, pledged to pressure all nonmember shops to join the association. Last, both agreed to a general strike to organize both workers and employers in the industry. The association stated that “unless the union . . .

as a result of the ‘general strike’ enroll[ed] in its membership the bulk of the workers in the industry” the agreement would certainly fail. It was clear, then, that these strikes were, from their inception, a tool to organize not just the workforce, but the entire industry. By the end of March, the Protocol had come to encompass the entirety of the ladies’ garment industry. Reformers and the press heralded these events, but few anticipated the problems that would soon arise. To many outside of the rank and file, the Protocol was a magic bullet, an inoculation against class disruption and an “uncivilized” economy. Blind to the realities of the day-to-day functioning of Protocolism, the public soon moved on to other concerns. While on the surface the Protocol seemed to be functioning as planned, problems were smoldering beneath. The Protocol mechanisms were bureaucracy embodied. The Arbitration Board sped up the centralizing mission of the new labor system that the Protocol had unleashed. It took almost all authority from workers and the shop floor and placed it in centralized and regulated bodies dominated by industrial experts. The Protocol officially ended with the settlement of the 1916 strike, though sections such as the Board of Sanitary Control lasted for decades more.

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PUBLIC-SECTOR UNIONISM

From the early 1960s to the present, public-sector unions have been the major success story of American labor. From the early 1960s to today, public-sector union density rose from less than 12% to around 40%; meanwhile, from the mid-1950s to today, private-sector union density declined from more than 33% to less than 10%. Also, by the year 2000, about 40% of all union members were public workers. This counters some conventional wisdom about the American working class. Counting those who, for example, clean public schools as “workers” reveals an American working class quite receptive to the labor movement.

Yet the history of public-sector unions is studied much less than the history of private-sector unions.

Perhaps this is because government employees are still stereotyped as bureaucrats, not authentic “workers.” But public workers fought long and hard for the right to unionize and did so for the same reasons as private-sector workers. Also, despite their successes, public-sector unions have still not won even the basic right to bargain collectively on a national scale. A sizable minority of states still do not grant any public employees the right to bargain, and many states deny bargaining rights to significant categories of public workers.

Throughout American history, public workers have encountered the claim that governmental labor relations are entirely distinct from private-sector labor relations. In 1920, Senator Charles Thomas (D-CO) stated that the “fundamental idea lying at the foundation of organized labor . . . has been the assumption . . . of an antagonism of interest and of purpose between employer and employee. . . . That situation cannot be applied to public employment.”

Unionists articulated a different vision. Public workers had “grievances just the same as men in other walks of life,” insisted Boston’s labor newspaper in 1919. “Government workers who are unorganized can be and are exploited as cruelly as unorganized workers in private industry,” echoed the newspaper of the Transportation Workers Union (TWU) in 1942 (Slater, *Public Workers*, pp. 1, 27, 193).

Policy makers still treat public and private employees quite differently. Yet public employees have struggled for over a century to organize into unions to improve wages, hours, and conditions of work and to have an effective voice in their working lives. The question of how these desires should be balanced against concerns of democracy (determining policies based on public choices) and public budgets has been at the center of public-sector labor relations policies.

Studying public-sector unions provides a different picture of labor history, generally depicted solely as a rise and decline of private-sector unions. Further, it demonstrates another way in which American labor was “exceptional.” In comparable countries, public workers have long been accorded most or all of the same rights as private-sector workers. It also demonstrates a variety of political strategies and tactics labor has used, largely distinctive to the public sector.

The “False Dawn” and the Boston Police Strike of 1919

Public employees began forming unions in the mid-nineteenth century. Organized public employees were typically members of mostly private-sector unions, for example, skilled workers in naval yards. Public

workers in Philadelphia won the 10-hour day after a protest in 1835. In 1867, the National Labor Union unsuccessfully called for the closed shop in public employment. The different tactics public workers would use and the different responses those tactics provoked were highlighted in 1895 when the postmaster general, William Wilson, barred any employee from visiting Washington to influence legislation affecting his or her employment. In 1905, the Chicago Electricity Department signed the first known formal labor contract between a municipal public employer and a union. In 1906, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) created its first national union of government workers, the National Federation of Post Office Clerks.

Public-sector organizing began to take off around the time of World War I. The AFL chartered the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in 1916, and in 1918, the AFT grew from 2,000 to 11,000 members. In 1917, the AFL established a union for employees of the federal government (the National Federation of Federal Employees), and in that same year, the National Association of Letter Carriers and the Railway Mail Carriers affiliated with the AFL. In 1918, the AFL created the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF); from 1918 to 1919 alone, the number of IAFF locals increased from 82 to 262. In 1910, union density in the public sector was around 3.5%; from 1915 to 1921, it went from 4.8% to 7.2%. Combined with an increase in the size of government, this meant that the number of unionized public workers nearly doubled in those years. The AFL welcomed these developments. In June 1919, for the first time the AFL agreed to charter locals of police and soon chartered 37.

But in September 1919, the Boston police strike occurred, a seminal and crippling event that cut short this first, false dawn of public-sector organizing. More than 1,100 police went on strike over wages, hours, working conditions, and the right to form a union. The consequences were devastating. The Boston police commissioner, Edwin Curtis, helped cause the strike by banning police from affiliating with the AFL, claiming that police officers could not have “divided loyalty.” Private employers also strongly opposed the police union. Police officers, who had seen almost no increase in pay in 20 years, insisted on their right to affiliate with the AFL and were suspended for so doing, thus triggering the strike.

The strike instantly provoked trouble. As the officers left their posts, crowds gathered to attack them, substitute police officers, and others. For three days, the city suffered from significant lawlessness and violence. A total of around 5,000 state National Guard troops finally intervened, killing nine and wounding 23 others. Although other Boston unions

had threatened a general strike in support of the police union, it did not materialize. In the context of other labor radicalism in 1919, the mainstream press opposed the union. Governor Calvin Coolidge capitalized on his harsh treatment of the strikers to launch a career in national politics.

Future public workers were especially unlucky that this strike involved police. In later years, it was used to argue against any public workers being allowed even the right to organize, on the grounds that such rights would lead literally to death and destruction. After the strike, many jurisdictions barred police officers from organizing unions (all police locals were soon destroyed), but further, many other types of unions, including teachers and street cleaners, would be banned. Public-sector union density stagnated through the 1920s. For decades to follow, arguments against public-sector unions echoed those made in Boston. As late as 1963, the Michigan Supreme Court upheld a bar on police unionizing, stressing the need for “undivided allegiance”; President Ronald Reagan cited the Boston strike as a precedent for firing striking members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Union (PATCO) in 1981.

Another lingering effect was that public employees now often sought to unionize outside the AFL. Indeed, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, some major public-sector unions remained outside the AFL-CIO: the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Education Association (NEA), and others, such as the National Treasury Employees Union.

Legal Status from the New Deal to the 1960s

America is unique among industrialized democracies in sharply differentiating legal rules for public- and private-sector labor relations, and these rules had a tremendous effect on public-sector unions. Before the 1960s, the law everywhere in the United States prohibited strikes and almost all collective bargaining in government employment, and courts routinely allowed public employers to bar union membership itself. While the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935 gave basic protections to private-sector unions, no federal law has ever covered these public-sector unions. Nor, up to the 1960s, did any state laws. Prior to the 1960s, state courts made public-sector labor law, typically endorsing whatever rules public employers imposed. Federal workers were marginally better off, as the Lloyd-La Follette Act of 1912 gave federal employees the right to form unions, albeit not to bargain. This “pre-collective bargaining era” for public workers in the United

States lasted decades beyond when public workers in, for example, Britain and France won bargaining and related rights quite similar to those of private-sector workers in those countries.

Since the 1960s, a majority of states have passed laws allowing some public employees to bargain, but public-sector laws are more restrictive than the NLRA. And even in the twenty-first century, many states refuse to grant bargaining rights to most or all public employees, and only 11 states permit any public employees to strike under any circumstance. Thus, the rules governing public-sector labor relations have always been different from and less generous than private-sector law.

Why was the development of public-sector law so delayed and deformed? First, the Boston strike was a major blow. Second, judges who made the law until at least the early 1960s blended several types of concerns. They were, like many judges in those days, hostile to labor. They also promoted a particular vision of state structure and sovereignty in which judges gave considerable deference to local public employers, partly because courts did not want to be in the business of reviewing personnel decisions. Most broadly, the federalist structure of the American state, with its extreme division of power, had the practical effect of placing the power to make the “law” of labor relations squarely in the hands of local officials, themselves the actual employers. Finally, judges simply assumed that public workers would want to strike and bargain the full range of issues that private workers bargained, even though, from 1920 through the mid-1960s, all public-sector unions had waived the right to strike and in fact strikes by public workers were rare, small in scale, and short. Still, judges uniformly opposed public-sector labor rights, often in vitriolic opinions. Two separate court decisions in the 1940s, from Texas and New York, used the following quote: “To tolerate or recognize any combination of . . . employees of the government as a labor organization or union is not only incompatible with the spirit of democracy but inconsistent with every principle upon which our Government is founded” (*Railway Mail Association v. Murphy* [1943]; *CIO v. City of Dallas* [1946]).

Union Activities in the Pre-Collective Bargaining Era

Public-sector unions existed and were active before bargaining laws began being passed in the 1960s. Public-sector union density ranged from 9% to 13% from the 1930s to the early 1960s. This was a significant

total number, as by 1934 there were nearly 3.3 million government workers in the United States (12.7% of all nonagricultural workers). To break down the categories, between the world wars, civilian federal employees were about one fourth of all the public workers. Of state and local government workers, school employees constituted from 33% to 50%. In the 25 years after World War II, state and local governments expanded at up to twice the rate of the federal government. For this period, police and fire services were the largest category of municipal employees aside from school employees.

The period before the 1960s also created the central institutions and determined much of the basic character of the public-sector labor movement. The major players of today have been in place for a long time. In addition to the unions listed above, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) were formed in the 1930s; by the 1960s, the National Education Association had been converted from an employer-dominated group to a more traditional union. And public-sector unions, then as now, relied heavily on political strategies.

In this era, public-sector unions used various tactics to represent their members. First, they used politics. They supported sympathetic candidates in local elections. They lobbied and made appeals to the public, trying to enlist public pressure to influence public officials who were employers and those who could enact laws and regulations that would protect workers. Civil service and pension laws were major goals. Second, they represented workers in civil service or whatever other types of hearings were available. Third, they helped provide training, information, and other resources for their members. Fourth, they engaged in “informal” bargaining, which sometimes led to quasi-collective agreements.

Such practices were surprisingly common. A 1946 study found that 97 cities had written agreements with employee organizations. And these contracts helped workers: public school janitors represented by the Building Service Employees International Union were typically better paid than their unorganized counterparts. But these agreements were far short of modern, binding collective bargaining, both in their narrow scope and their dubious enforceability. Employers had no obligation—and in many cases arguably no actual legal power—to enter into them. Union efforts in these decades were creative and sometimes effective, but because they lacked institutional rights, they at best achieved mixed success.

For example, the powerful and militant TWU reacted angrily after its main local in New York

City was converted into a public-sector union when the city bought the subways in 1940. This act removed collective bargaining rights from thousands of workers. The TWU’s reaction included mass protests and huge publicity campaigns. It ultimately won a compromise: a system granting rudimentary bargaining rights, but still with significant restrictions based on its public-sector status.

Civil Service Rules

While unsuccessful in passing bargaining laws before the 1960s, unions did help pass civil service laws. Federal civil service rules originated in the Pendleton Act of 1883. Passed in response to an assassination attempt on President Garfield by a man allegedly disappointed by not receiving a patronage job, the Act attempted to decrease the role of political spoils and increase the role of merit in federal employment. It created civil service exams, barred dismissals of covered employees for political reasons, and created a Civil Service Commission to enforce these rules.

State governments adopted civil service systems for the same reasons as the federal government: to replace the spoils system with the merit system. Illinois actually adopted its law under circumstances remarkably similar to those that led to the Pendleton Act. The state passed the “Optional Civil Service Act for Cities” in 1895, after Mayor Carter Harrison of Chicago was killed by a disappointed office seeker. Illinois then passed a civil service law for state employees in 1905. Other early states included New York, which passed the first such law in 1883, Massachusetts in 1884, Wisconsin in 1905, New Jersey in 1908, California and Ohio in 1913, Kansas in 1915, and Maryland in 1920. By 1948, 25 states had adopted such systems, as had hundreds of cities. Today, essentially all public employers have civil service rules.

These laws initially offered only limited protection: many workers were excluded, and protections were often scant. Still, they brought some standards to hiring (requiring passing civil service exams) and provided some check on arbitrary firing. And today, such laws provide general “just cause” protection in discipline and discharge.

Wisconsin and the Beginning of the Collective Bargaining Era

The end of the old era began with the passage of the first state statute permitting public-sector collective

bargaining in Wisconsin in 1959 and 1962. This law was enacted after AFSCME had struggled for over a decade to pass such a bill, finally overcoming the entire history of objections and obstacles to public-sector unions: fears of police strikes; legal doctrines concerning government sovereignty; policy objections to unions bargaining with government; and opposition from private business interests and conservative political leaders.

The law, after the 1962 amendments, provided that covered public workers (most local government employees) had the right to organize into unions and to bargain. If bargaining reached an impasse, a state agency (the Wisconsin Employment Relations Bureau) could conduct mediation at the request of both parties and fact-finding at the request of either party. Later, the law was amended to provide, among other things, for binding arbitration.

The trend continued. Federal employees received limited collective bargaining rights for the first time just after the Wisconsin law was signed in 1962, when President Kennedy issued Executive Order 10988. In the 1960s, states began passing laws that allowed public-sector bargaining and created specific mechanisms to resolve bargaining impasses that did not involve striking. By 1966, 16 states had enacted laws extending some bargaining rights to at least some public workers. In 1978, the Federal Service Labor Management Relations Act of 1978 was adopted for most federal employees; it provides bargaining rights and binding arbitration at impasse.

In the late 1960s, courts finally accepted an argument that public-sector unionists had made for decades: that the First Amendment of the Constitution prevented a public employer from firing or otherwise discriminating against a public employee because of membership in or support of a union. Thus, while some public employees are still without a legal right to bargain, all have a constitutional right to form unions.

The public-sector laws that have developed since the mid-1960s vary tremendously. At the turn of the twenty-first century, there were more than 110 separate state public-sector labor law statutes, augmented by many local ordinances, executive orders, and other authority. Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia allowed collective bargaining for all major groups of public employees; 13 states allowed only one to four types of public workers to bargain (most commonly teachers and firefighters); and eight do not allow any public workers to bargain. While only 12 states allowed any public workers to strike, 38 states provided some impasse procedures for unionized public workers. Thirty-six states used mandatory or optional mediation; 34 used fact-finding; and 30 had

arbitration as the final step, with 21 states using binding arbitration. Still, a significant minority of states ban bargaining as well as striking, and a few (for example, Virginia) bar any official recognition of a public-sector union.

Political fights over the rights of public workers have continued. In 2004, the governors of Indiana and Missouri unilaterally withdrew executive orders permitting state employees to bargain collectively. After the 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration would not approve a bill creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) unless administration officials were empowered to design a new personnel system that could vitiate collective bargaining rights and civil service protections for DHS workers (notably, about 48,000 of these workers had previously enjoyed bargaining rights in predecessor agencies). Even where collective bargaining is allowed for public workers, state legislatures have sometimes narrowed existing laws to restrict the topics over which some public workers can bargain. For example, in the 1990s, Michigan restricted the topics over which teachers' unions could bargain.

The Rise of Public-Sector Unions in the 1960s and Beyond

With a constitutionally protected right to organize, and rights to bargain in an increasing number of states, public-sector unions greatly increased in membership. In 1955, public-sector unions had about 400,000 members; by the 1970s the total was more than 4 million. From 1955 to 1991, the AFT increased its membership from 40,000 to 573,000; AFSCME grew from 99,000 to 1,191,000; and the IAFF grew from 72,000 to 151,000. The Service Employees International Union, which has a large public-sector component, grew from 50,000 to 108,000.

From 1955 to 1991, the total membership of the AFL-CIO only rose from 12,622,000 to 13,933,000. The growth of these unions thus had an impact on the labor movement. The number of public employees in the organization grew from 915,000 (about 5% of total AFL-CIO membership) in 1956 to 1.7 million (about 9%) in 1966. By 1993, around 40% of union members in the United States were in the public sector. By 1997, AFSCME's 1.3 million members made it the second largest union in the AFL-CIO, after the Teamsters. That same year, the AFT claimed 1 million members.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the highest rates of unionization in the public sector were in local government employment (43.2 % in 2001), with

police, teachers, and firefighters leading the way. Notably, police and firefighters were not allowed to strike even where they could bargain and even where other public workers were allowed.

This boom—and the new state public-sector bargaining laws that were inextricably linked to it—had a variety of causes. The increased size of public employment likely played a role, although notably, levels of public employment were not growing much relative to the economy as a whole. The number of government workers nearly doubled in the 1960s and 1970s (with most of the growth in state and local government employment), bringing the total to more than 16 million in 1980. Still, in 1960, public workers constituted 15.4% of nonagricultural employees, and by 1991, this figure was still less than 17%. Continuing experience with stability in private-sector relations and the climate of social change of the 1960s and 1970s also contributed to the new toleration of public-sector unions.

There was also a brief period of relative militance in the public sector. In the later 1960s and 1970s, teachers, sanitation workers, and even police, among others, engaged in job actions and (often illegal) strikes. In some cases, unions won rights with those tactics; in other cases, the actions caused a backlash.

For example, the American Federation of Teachers became engaged in a bitter and divisive job action in the Ocean Hill-Brownville neighborhood of New York in 1968–1969. Civil rights activists and unionists, generally allies by this time, split badly over whether local community groups should be given more authority over schools, including over labor and personnel matters such as transfers.

Perhaps part and parcel of the general tenor of protesting social movements, illegal strike actions decreased considerably in the 1980s and beyond. The PATCO strike of 1981, involving air traffic controllers, was famous (and arguably was the symbolic start of a wider attack on unions), but it was the exception. Intriguingly, studies indicate that at least in many circumstances, passing laws that gave public workers the right to bargain collectively actually decreased the number of illegal strikes by public employees.

Conclusion

Public-sector unions contain a tremendous variety of types of workers: police officers, kindergarten teachers, road maintenance crews, and white-collar semi-professional and professional jobs, among others. Some of these jobs are unique to the public sector (firefighters); some are widespread in the private

sector (secretaries and janitors). Yet public workers remain a coherent category primarily for two reasons. First, they will inevitably behave politically in some way, because their employers are politicians. Second, in the United States, their bargaining rights are different from and more limited than bargaining rights in the private sector, both in what they can bargain over and what may happen when bargaining impasses arise. Although government workers have always had many of the same concerns as those in the private sector, their unions have had far fewer legal rights, and their range of practical action has been much more circumscribed.

Including public workers requires reconceptualizing the periodization of labor history. In the traditional view, 1935 to 1945 was the watershed, with a small core of unions before the New Deal and a mostly successful labor relations regime after World War II. The decline of private-sector labor has undercut this view. But further, the rise of public-sector unions now seems as meaningful as, say, the creation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The significance of the 1960s and beyond comes as much from the workers who entered the labor movement as from those who left it.

This history also shows that the attitudes of employers are crucial to unions. Modern public-sector employers are less aggressively hostile toward unionization than private-sector employers, possibly because of institutional concerns (they are elected) and possibly because civil service rules constrain them.

In 1942, the TWU's newspaper wrote that "government workers who are unorganized can be and are exploited as cruelly as unorganized workers in private industry. Whatever progress government workers have made in recent years they have made only through labor organization." That vision continues to motivate millions of public workers today.

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PUBLISHING

See Printing and Publishing Industry

PUEBLO REVOLT (1680)

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 was a coordinated uprising on the part of Pueblo Indians and their Apache and Navajo allies, aimed at ousting Spanish settlers from the northern Rio Grande basin of the province of New Mexico in New Spain. Hundreds of Spaniards and Pueblo natives died, including 21 of the province's 33 missionaries. Nearly every Spanish building and church was destroyed or damaged. The revolt was initially planned for August 11, 1680, but the plot was discovered on August 9, and the general revolt was advanced on August 10. While both sides experienced losses, the Pueblo were the decided victors. For approximately three weeks, natives tortured and killed Spaniards, destroyed and appropriated Spanish property, and pushed the colonizers out of the upper Rio Grande. The rebellion allowed the Pueblo Indians to hold their land as undisputed rulers from 1680 to 1692 and caused a shift in Spanish power from Santa Fe to El Paso.

The revolt has often been referred to as Popé's Rebellion after a San Juan Tewa Indian leader, Pop'ay (Ripe Pumpkin) or El Popé, living at Taos pueblo in August 1680. Claiming that the god Poheyemo appeared to him from the underworld and appointed him as his representative, Popé spread word of his vision from the *kiva* (ceremonial structure) at Taos. His instructions were to kill all the Spaniards and missionaries, destroy all evidence of Christian religion, and return Indians to their former freedom. At the turn of the twenty-first century, historians have placed emphasis on the co-operation between multiple leaders and participants, rather than emphasizing one individual's agency in sparking the revolt.

Many additional explanations for the bloody revolt of 1680 have been offered. Religious disputes, disease, environmental changes, population decline, concentration of settlements, Spanish violence, increased land grants to colonists, disrupted trade, and coerced labor are cited for creating increased tensions

and a motive for the uprising. The revolt has often been characterized as a “holy war.” Most scholars agree, however, that it was finally the realization of lost territory, culture, and autonomy that created the conditions ready for the revolt of 1680.

Since the arrival of Juan de Oñate and a group of Mexican settlers to northern New Mexico in 1598, the Spanish asserted control over indigenous religion, economy, and culture. The colonizers applied the name Pueblo (referring to the permanent towns of stone or adobe) to native groups who shared an agricultural subsistence economy. This included groups with diversified languages and traditions including the Tewa, Hopi, Zuni, and Acoma. Often using force and coercion, the governor, soldiers, and missionaries exacted labor from the Pueblo people. Nearly every seventeenth-century governor abused power for economic gain. Native labor was used for weaving in workshops, gathering piñon pine nuts, building carts, and driving mules for trade caravans to Mexico City. Many natives also performed duties as servants. Most of this work was without compensation, but even those who received wages were paid well below the standard.

Under the *encomienda* system, the Spanish government granted citizen soldiers-for-hire labor and tribute in return for acting as the state’s police force. The Spaniards’ demands for grain, livestock, handicrafts, and other goods disrupted the traditional patterns of agriculture and work. Franciscan missionaries demanded indigenous labor for the construction and maintenance of the mission compounds and church structures. Toward the end of the seventeenth century, there were a number of minor and local revolts by the Pueblo in response to Spanish abuses. However, it was not until August 1680 that a full-fledged, coordinated response occurred.

Coordination was a feat in itself, for each Pueblo community was an independent political unit, and within the region native peoples spoke at least six different languages and countless dialects. Period accounts reveal that coordination for the revolt was made possible by close communication between Pueblo leaders. Calendars in the form of knotted cords, representing the days until the attack, were distributed throughout the native settlements. Each day a single knot would be untied, and when there were no knots left, that would be the day of the revolt. Messengers were also sent to spread word to kill all the friars and the settlers on August 11. Two such runners from the Tesuque pueblo were captured on August 9 and revealed the plan to the Spanish. Despite this setback, the Pueblo people were alerted and the rebellion ensued on August 10. Northern Pueblo peoples such as the Tewa, the Northern Tiwa, and the Pecos Indians were the most active in the revolt and suffered the

most casualties. Due to the lack of accurate records, the number of Pueblo killed is not known.

In the aftermath of the rebellion, many Pueblo revived native traditions and reconstructed *kivas* and shrines. While the Pueblo leaders maintained control of New Mexico for a decade, internal discord is cited for causing developing factionalism after 1680. A significant number of people residing in New Mexico at the time of the rebellion were *mestizos* who could claim both native and non-native ancestry, and intermarriage with the Pueblo was predominant by 1680. This acculturation and miscegenation blurred alliances both before and after the rebellion and caused additional unrest on the part of Pueblo leaders. In the early 1690s, the Spanish used the internal weaknesses to re-assume control and were largely successful despite a second revolt in 1696.

Sources for understanding the rebellion are contemporary accounts largely written or recorded by Spanish religious and political leaders. These provide an often contradictory and sometimes misleading picture of the events and require careful ethnographic reading. Adding to the written records, scholars have turned to archaeological remains, oral histories, and material culture to provide additional context.

Although interpretations of the rebellion differ, historians agree that it was one of the most successful revolts against a European power in the New World. Natives and non-natives lost their lives and had property destroyed. Yet for over a decade, the Pueblo people maintained control of their homeland. Many speculate that their success inhibited later Spanish attempts to eradicate their culture and forced government and religious officials to adopt less harsh policies toward natives after reconquest.

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PUERTO RICANS

Puerto Ricans have immigrated to the United States primarily as working-class labor migrants. Economic change in Puerto Rico left many agricultural and other workers unemployed or underemployed. Men and women migrated in search of work. Meanwhile, U.S. employers recruited Puerto Ricans as a source of low-wage workers. The governments of the United States and Puerto Rico promoted migration through contract labor programs. Policy makers attributed unemployment and poverty to "overpopulation" instead of to economic development policies that provided jobs that were too scarce and wages that were too low. Puerto Ricans also came through networks of family and friends, helping each other to make the trip and to find work and housing. As a result of these labor migrations, predominantly working-class Puerto Rican communities have formed throughout the United States.

Since 1917, Puerto Ricans have come to the United States as U.S. citizens. In 1898, at the end of the Spanish-Cuban-American War, Spain ceded sovereignty over Puerto Rico to the United States, and the United States has retained that sovereignty ever since. Hence, Puerto Rican migration is within the confines of the colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. U.S. government policies and U.S. businesses have a pivotal impact on Puerto Rico's economy. Initially, Puerto Ricans coming to the United States had an ambiguous status, considered neither citizens nor "aliens." In 1917, the U.S. Congress declared all Puerto Ricans to be U.S. citizens. Although Puerto Ricans arrived in the United States entitled to full citizenship rights, they also arrived as a multiracial and mixed-race people, with a distinct language and culture, who were often recruited as low-wage workers.

Contract Labor and the Puerto Rican Diaspora

From 1900 to 1901, more than 5,000 Puerto Rican men, women, and children were transported from

Puerto Rico to Hawai'i to work on sugar plantations. The trip by boat and by train was grueling. Half of the passengers escaped en route, some abandoning ship in New Orleans and others refusing to get back on a ship in San Francisco. Those who landed in Hawai'i found harsh working and living conditions. Employers hoped Puerto Ricans would serve as low-wage workers and undermine the organizing efforts of Japanese workers. Puerto Rican migrants, however, included union activists. Although employers fostered conflict and competition among their diverse workforce along racial and ethnic lines, Puerto Ricans, Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Hawai'ians, and Filipinos forged alliances to improve conditions. Along the way, they formed a unique multiethnic local culture, as the anthropologist Iris López describes. In 2000, Hawai'i's Puerto Ricans marked the centennial of their arrival with celebrations.

This early contract labor initiative laid the foundation for future programs and highlights their key dynamics. Policy makers in the United States and Puerto Rico viewed "overpopulation" as the cause of unemployment. They viewed emigration and contract labor programs as a solution. Yet U.S. investments and economic development policies in Puerto Rico displaced workers, causing unemployment. Facing limited opportunities at home, Puerto Ricans migrated in search of work within Puerto Rico, to the United States, and to other countries. U.S. employers hoped to increase profits by lowering labor costs. Government-sanctioned contract labor programs linked workers and destinations, and covered transportation costs, which were then deducted from workers' wages along with other expenses such as food. While some workers returned to Puerto Rico when their contracts expired, others remained in their new destinations, sent for family and friends, and provided the foundations for the Puerto Rican diaspora.

Other contract labor initiatives followed. Although labor migration is often thought of as a male phenomenon, women were recruited as well. In 1904, 50 Puerto Rican women between the ages of 15 and 21 were recruited to work at the St. Louis Cordage Company in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1920, 130 women were recruited to the American Manufacturing Company, a rope factory in Brooklyn, New York. The Arizona Cotton Growers' Association recruited whole families in 1926, and 1,000 made the trip. Finding wages and living conditions far below their expectations and their contracts' provisions, workers protested, trying to force the company to uphold the contracts' provisions. They found support from the Phoenix Central Labor Council, which raised funds, had a bread line, and sent telegrams to the labor leaders Santiago Iglesias in Puerto Rico and William Green in the

United States. During World War I, thousands of Puerto Rican men, recruited to work in war industries and on military bases, found themselves in Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

These contract labor programs sparked widespread complaints from workers. Nevertheless, policy makers increased their involvement and the scope of contract labor programs. During World War II, the U.S. War Manpower Commission recruited men to work in war industries, including canning plants like the Campbell Soup Company in southern New Jersey, and on the B & O and Pennsylvania Railroads. After the war, a private labor agency brought men to work in agriculture and in the steel industry at the National Tube Company, a division of U.S. Steel in Lorain, Ohio. Puerto Rican women were brought to work as domestics in Chicago and Philadelphia. Policy makers briefly promoted labor contracts for domestics but then turned to labor contracts for seasonal farmworkers, especially along the eastern seaboard. The farm labor program lasted for decades and brought thousands of men each year.

Working-Class Communities between the World Wars

After World War I, New York City became the largest Puerto Rican community, as the population surpassed that in Hawai'i. By 1940, 88% of Puerto Ricans living in the continental United States made the city their home. Philadelphia's Puerto Rican community grew as well. These communities grew through social networks, as family and friends helped each other make the trip and get settled. The cigar maker Bernardo Vega left his hometown of Cayey in 1916 and headed for New York City. In his *Memoirs*, he recalled that aboard the steamship, "the overriding theme of our conversations, however, was what we expected to find in New York City. With our first earnings we would send for our nearest relative." Most came looking for work. When they arrived, networks continued, and both cities became home to vibrant, diverse, working-class communities.

Cigar makers and socialists figured prominently among the migrants to both cities. Many were politically active in Puerto Rico. Born in 1885, Vega participated in Puerto Rico's first large-scale workers' group, the *Federación Libre de Trabajadores*, started in 1899, and he was a delegate to the founding convention of the *Partido Socialista* in his hometown in 1915. Cigar makers labored while the lector read, contributing to an educated and politically active group. In his *Memoirs*, Vega wrote, "As socialists,

we dig our trenches everywhere in the world." He continued his activism in New York City, describing Harlem as "a socialist stronghold," with neighborhood clubs for political, cultural, and sports activities. Like Vega, Jesús Colón was a cigar maker and a socialist, who left Cayey for New York City. Between his arrival in 1917 and his death in 1974, Colón's leadership fostered 25 community organizations, as the historian Linda Delgado reveals. A prolific writer, he produced more than 250 essays and vignettes that depicted the economic and racial struggles of working-class Puerto Ricans and the need to work to improve conditions for the community. As the historian Ruth Glasser documents, working-class musicians also migrated to New York City between the World Wars, with many U.S. veterans among them. Puerto Rican musicians had been recruited for African-American regimental bands during World War I. After the war, many made their way to New York City, displaced from their other economic pursuits and searching for jobs and musical opportunities in the city.

In Philadelphia, cigar makers contributed to the growth of the Puerto Rican community. They constituted part of a pan-Latino, working-class community, as the historian Víctor Vázquez-Hernández portrays. Puerto Ricans found work in the cigar-making shops owned by other Spanish speakers, especially Spaniards and Cubans. Known for their political activism, cigar makers were founders of early Spanish language mutual aid societies, and they played important roles in labor movements. As early as 1877, Philadelphia was home to a Spanish-speaking local of the Cigar Makers' International Union (CMIU).

Farmworkers and Garment Workers

After World War II, Puerto Rican migration increased dramatically, and Puerto Ricans became the first airborne migration. Men and women came in search of work, and government-sponsored labor contracts provided transportation and placements for many. Puerto Ricans found work in areas where unions played a role—in agriculture and food processing, and in the garment and steel industries. As post-war strikes sought to improve wages and conditions, Puerto Ricans were among the labor activists. For example, one year after Puerto Ricans were recruited to Lorain, Ohio, to work in the steel industry, they participated in a strike by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). As Eugene "Gene" Rivera notes, Puerto Ricans were accused of meeting with Communists during the strike, and the broader

community's fears of Communist infiltration continued to affect Puerto Ricans' community-building efforts.

Puerto Rican men became farmworkers, either through the government-sponsored contract labor program or through networks of family and friends. Most worked in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, with fewer in other states. Contracts guaranteed wages and specified allowable deductions, hours, and minimum standards for food and housing. Yet workers found contracts violated and conditions harsh, as they struggled to meet their immediate needs and often, to send money home. Some workers left in search of better options, and some sought to improve conditions through organizing.

In 1972, in Connecticut about 100 Puerto Rican tobacco workers formed the ATA, the *Asociación de Trabajadores Agrícolas* (Agricultural Workers Association). As the historian Ruth Glasser explains, the ATA, along with other groups, struggled to improve living conditions, wages, sick and overtime pay, and health care. They challenged the government of Puerto Rico's right to negotiate labor contracts on behalf of workers, and they sought unrestricted access to labor camps for visitors and organizers. During 1973, hundreds of tobacco workers struck to protest the food provided and the firing of workers involved in previous actions. Workers gained free access to the camps. The government of Puerto Rico agreed to stop using misleading radio advertisements to recruit workers, to revise the contract, and to provide more staff to address workers' complaints. Although the ATA affiliated with the United Farm Workers in 1975, the UFW was stretched thin by its efforts in the West, and the mobilization of tobacco workers in Connecticut waned. Still, in light of public scrutiny, the government's contract labor program dwindled from 12,760 workers in 1974 to 5,639 in 1975.

As Puerto Rican women became concentrated in the garment industry in New York City and other urban areas, many became members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), and some became union activists. By 1947, the ILGWU claimed 7,500 Puerto Rican members and estimated that another 4,000 to 8,000 worked in other small shops. Puerto Rican women found jobs mainly in the lower-skilled and lower-paid segments of the industry, especially dressmaking, skirts, and blouses. In Local 22 Dressmakers, Puerto Rican membership doubled from 8% to 16% between 1945 and 1953, while Jewish membership declined from 63% to 51% and African-American membership remained at 15%. Louise Delgado became a union activist with Local 22, first as a shop-floor representative,

then as an executive board member, and finally as a business agent. Born in Guayama, Puerto Rico, she came to New York City in 1923 at the age of eight, joining her family. Like many other Puerto Rican women, she started in the garment industry by helping her mother with homework. In 1934, she started working in a shop, and she continued in the industry until she retired in 1978. Delgado witnessed the dramatic increase in Puerto Rican women workers in the industry, as well as critical changes in the industry. Garment shops left New York City in search of low wages and higher profits, and the industry increasingly relied on contracting shops that competed for assembly work. The 1958 dressmakers strike addressed some of these industry changes. Puerto Rican women were among the 105,000 striking workers in New York and six nearby states.

Conclusions

The scholarship in Puerto Rican studies is largely interdisciplinary. Scholars have examined many dimensions of Puerto Rican working-class communities, especially in New York City, the largest Puerto Rican community. Writers have depicted Puerto Ricans' struggles for inclusion, the creation of community-based organizations, political activism, and other topics. Ethnographers have examined contemporary issues, including gentrification, identity, and family dynamics, especially focusing on Chicago. Other social scientists have focused on the economic restructuring and de-industrialization of urban areas in the Northeast and Midwest that affected communities where Puerto Ricans had settled. Puerto Rican workers were economically displaced again. Fewer works have explored the historical dimensions. Puerto Ricans' working lives and their interactions with labor unions have thus far received too little attention in both historical and contemporary accounts.

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PULLMAN STRIKE AND BOYCOTT (1894)

A local walkout on 11 May 1894 by perhaps 2,800 railway car shop workers at Pullman's Palace Car Company south of Chicago, Illinois, expanded by early July 1894 to encompass more than 150,000 railroaders in a boycott of Pullman-built cars on at least 20 railroads across 27 midwestern and western states. The Pullman strike and boycott drew support from militant members of the fledgling American Railway Union (ARU), an industrial union that organized railroad workers across the range of craft lines and occupational hierarchies. Railroad officials whose indebted corporations had fallen into federal court receivership seized the opportunity of the American Railway Union boycott of Pullman cars to discharge and blacklist ARU members, obtain federal judicial injunctions against ARU actions, and use U.S. military force to re-open rail lines and protect strike-breakers. Although ARU supporters kept U.S. troops occupied along several western railroad lines until late August and September 1894, the combination of personal poverty, federal court injunctions, military force, and the imprisonment of ARU leaders and activists by U.S. marshals effectively ended the strike at the Pullman car shops near Chicago and the national boycott of Pullman cars by late July 1894. The Pullman strike and boycott of 1894 continues to hold historical significance not only for the unprecedented magnitude of government military and civil force employed to break the railroaders' industrial organization, but also for the questions it raised about the proper role of the state in labor disputes and the weighing of conservative trade unionism versus the more inclusive industrial unionism of the ARU.

The Pullman Palace Car Company, a manufacturer and leasor of railway sleeping, parlor, passenger,

freight, and electric street railway cars, opened car-building shops and an adjacent company-owned town 14 miles south of Chicago along the Illinois Central Railroad on January 1, 1881. Attractive brick row houses, wide streets, utilities, indoor plumbing, and nearby shops and parks offered clean, spacious, healthy rental housing for Pullman car builders, seamstresses, and car repairmen. The town of Pullman quickly attracted international attention as a "model" town that would improve the living conditions of working-class families, thereby raising the moral development and productivity of workers. One study found that the death rate in Pullman was one half the average of the urban slum districts of Chicago, while others lauded company officers uncritically for their apparent attentiveness to the well-being of Pullman resident-workers. A handful of observers during the 1880s and early 1890s, however, identified two fundamental flaws in "the Pullman system": the lack of home ownership and the company's exertion of social control through the invasive deployment of "spotters." A third complaint, mismanagement by foremen and lower-level managers, manifested itself in nepotism, favoritism, and abusive treatment of longtime workers during the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Despite the company's projected image of beauty and order, Pullman craftsmen and laborers employed strikes to protest the loss of subsidized streetcar fares in 1882, shifts from daily wages to piecework, and substantial wage cuts in 1884, 1885, and 1887. The walkouts were isolated in specific departments, failed to achieve their objectives, and betrayed the absence of a broader, sustained culture of organization across crafts. One exception, a May 1886 general strike for an eight-hour workday and a 10% wage increase, not only failed, but also provoked the company president and founder, George M. Pullman, to contribute funds toward the suppression and prosecution of labor activists such as the Haymarket anarchists and the Knights of Labor. In January 1888, wood-carvers struck to protest an abusive foreman, but company officials allowed the men to return. Three years later, freight car department workers struck in January 1891, but after managers ordered the men back, only one returned. A strike by 41 steamfitters and blacksmiths in December 1893 ended in defeat.

The economic depression that shut factory gates and plunged an unprecedented number into unemployment in spring 1893 only hit Pullman factory orders in late summer. Car works managers slashed wages in August 1893 and laid off 3,400 workers by November until just 1,100 remained. The layoffs adversely affected rent collection in the company town, though, so the company began bidding for new

construction contracts at a loss, rehired 2,000 shop employees by April 1894, and spread the work among 3,100 workers at the reduced wage rates.

Complaints about abusive foremen increased. In early April, Pullman workers began joining new American Railway Union lodges in Kensington and Grand Crossing. Eventually, 19 local ARU lodges enrolled 4,000 area men and women. An elected grievance committee of 46 members, headed by Thomas W. Heathcoate, identified the investigation and correction of shop abuses, the reduction of rents, and the restoration of pre-depression wage rates as three goals. On 7 May 1894, Heathcoate, the committee, and the ARU vice president, George W. Howard, met Pullman's second vice president, Thomas Wickes, to explain why reducing rents and raising wages would ease the crisis in unpaid rents. Wickes requested a written list of grievances and a second conference in two days. At that second meeting, George Pullman himself appeared after two hours to explain how the shops were operating at a financial loss. Pullman discounted the possibility of restoring wage rates and failed to understand the relationship of high rents to diminished household incomes by justifying the company's right to a reasonable profit from property rental. He did promise to investigate complaints about abusive treatment within the shops. The ARU vice president Howard also obtained a promise from Wickes that no committee member would suffer reprisal.

The following morning, 10 May, three committeemen were laid off by a superintendent, allegedly for lack of work. While Pullman and Wickes knew nothing of the layoffs and the claim of no work may have been legitimate, the workers viewed the layoffs as the latest act of betrayal. That night and into the early hours of the morning, Pullman workers met at Turner Hall in Kensington and authorized a strike. At work the morning of Friday, 11 May 1894, nearly all workers in all departments suddenly walked away from their jobs in a general strike, prompted by a rumor that the company would impose a lockout at noon.

The American Railway Union's vice president and general secretary had counseled Pullman workers that a strike would be premature, due to unfavorable economic conditions and Wickes's promise to investigate shop grievances. Local inexperience in sustaining labor organization also probably factored among the officers' concerns. During the American Railway Union's national convention in Chicago one month later, the ARU vice president Howard recommended that any additional actions be limited to strikes at the Pullman Company's shops at St. Louis, Missouri, and Ludlow, Kentucky, and that a boycott be avoided.

ARU convention delegates, however, were eager to exercise their perceived new strength after an April 1894 strike victory against the Great Northern Railroad. The union, founded in February 1893 by Eugene V. Debs and other former officers of the major railroad brotherhoods on a model of federation long promoted by the Knights of Labor, established many local lodges among western railroaders during the winter of 1893–1894, growing from 96 local lodges in mid-November 1893 to 125 by 1 January 1894 and 453 by early June 1894. Some routes, such as the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railway, were not well organized, though.

Despite the risks, ARU convention delegates voted 22 June 1894 to initiate a boycott 26 June of all Pullman-built cars and the trains that carried them. Since Pullman cars were pulled in passenger trains on nearly all midwestern and western railroads, a boycott would effectively stall all passenger traffic on most railroads from Ohio to Texas, California, and Washington state. The boycott began in the Illinois Central Railroad yards in Chicago on 26 June. The next day, 5,000 workers refused to switch, brake, or run trains with Pullman cars. Fifteen railroads were stopped. The following day, 40,000 men had shut down almost every line. By 29 June, an estimated 100,000 ARU members and supporters honored the boycott, halting traffic on at least 20 railroads. The Pullman strike and boycott eventually extended through 27 states and affected 41,000 miles of railroad routes.

In Chicago, the General Managers' Association (GMA) represented 24 railroad companies that employed 221,000 workers. Formed in 1886 but feeble until a January 1892 re-organization, the GMA coordinated wage scales for different railway trades and, beginning in March 1893, recruited strikebreakers, dealt with individual brotherhoods, and distributed "blacklists" of railroaders barred from employment. By 1894, the General Managers' Association was positioned to fight and defeat the American Railway Union.

Strike activity in Pullman itself remained remarkably peaceful and orderly, due largely to discipline exerted by strike leaders, a picket line that circled the car works, and material support from Chicago area merchants, politicians, and other sympathizers. Throughout the western states, the American Railway Union exhibited significant power because of widespread disaffection with the inflexible brotherhoods, a tradition of federation across craft divisions that originated with the Knights of Labor's District Assembly 82 on the Union Pacific Railroad during the 1880s, and support from local residents of railroad towns. ARU enforcement of the boycott by

interfering with trains carrying U.S. mail, freight, and passengers across state lines prompted the General Managers' Association to enlist U.S. government officials against the union. Limited injunctions against boycott activities were granted by federal judges in New Mexico Territory 27 June and in Chicago 29 June to protect individual railroad companies under federal court receivership protection. Near Blue Island, Illinois, a few miles west of Pullman, a crowd of rowdy, striking brickyard laborers blocked Rock Island Railroad yard traffic on 1 July. On 2 July 1894, the federal judges Peter Grosscup and William A. Woods granted a thorough injunction against all interference with railroad traffic. Later that day, the U.S. marshal John W. Arnold read the injunction twice to a gathering of perhaps 2,000 people at Blue Island. When they seemed unable or unwilling to comprehend the terms of the injunction, Arnold wired for U.S. army troops. In ARU boycott centers throughout the western states, similar confrontations between angry railroaders and incompetent deputy U.S. marshals prompted frantic telegraphs to Attorney General Richard Olney for U.S. troops.

Early in the morning of 4 July 1894, the Fifteenth U.S. Infantry entered Chicago from Fort Sheridan north of the city and took up positions in the railroad yards at Grand Crossing and Blue Island, while the cavalry and artillery occupied the Union Stockyards. Similarly, two companies of the Tenth Infantry entered Raton, New Mexico Territory, on 4 July to intimidate and restrain active ARU participants, while five companies of the Seventh Infantry accompanied deputy U.S. marshals in arresting 48 ARU boycott participants at Trinidad, Colorado. More than one thousand soldiers rode Northern Pacific trains between St. Paul and the Puget Sound 7–9 July to ensure their free passage and the transportation of strike-breakers. At Livingston, Montana, 10 July, a captain in charge of an all-black company of the Twenty-fourth Infantry quelled an especially threatening crowd of perhaps 600 townspeople by striking an aggressive local ARU leader on his head with the blunt side of the captain's saber. Federal troops, sailors, and marines also occupied Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, and the Central Pacific Railroad line to Ogden, Utah. Military forces compelled submission to the judicial injunctions and civil authorities. Arrests, imprisonment for contempt of court without jury trial, and criminal indictments for conspiracy decimated the union's national and local leadership. Debs, Howard, other union officers, and many ordinary railroaders served jail time.

The Pullman strike and boycott of 1894 brought about the central role of the state as regulator of labor-management conflicts and the submission of

labor organizations to state power. Beginning with the Erdman Act of 1898 (originally drafted by Attorney General Richard Olney), Congress would regulate labor relations between railroad workers and employers. Railroaders, long divided and thwarted by craft rivalries, lost a viable industrial union on the western railroads and were relegated to increasingly conservative brotherhoods. Blacklisting by railroad managers kept many ARU members unemployed for years and forced others to seek jobs using assumed names. Along the route of the Northern Pacific Railroad, for example, 1,944 ARU boycott participants were blacklisted by name. Personal sacrifices by those railroaders and Pullman shop workers exacted high prices lasting years after the Pullman strike and boycott ended.

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See also American Railway Union; Blacklists; Debs, Eugene V.; Knights of Labor; Pullman, George Mortimer; Railroad Brotherhoods

**PULLMAN, GEORGE MORTIMER
(March 3, 1831– October 19, 1897)**

George Pullman did not invent railroad sleeping cars, as commonly reported, but his attention to the details of comfort and his technological improvements made sleeping cars economically viable beginning in 1859. Yet, Pullman's inability to recognize his dependence upon the contributions of carpenters, seamstresses, train porters, car cleaners, and others, coupled with paternalistic control of the inhabitants of his namesake company town, caused simmering worker discontent that eventually exploded in the Pullman Strike and Boycott of May–August 1894.

George Pullman was born south of Buffalo, New York, the third of eight children. His father, a carpenter during the Erie Canal's building boom, invented and patented a machine for transporting buildings about 1835. The evangelical fervor of late 1820s western New York pushed his Baptist father to convert to Universalism. Baptists commenced a boycott of the elder Pullman's carpentry business. The father's jobs along the Erie Canal caused frequent absences. Older brothers Henry and Albert began cabinetmaking in Albion, New York, about 1845, and George apprenticed with them and assisted in moving houses. After Albert moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1850 to manufacture furniture, George became a hands-on supervisor of workmen, unjamming mud-clogged rollers and energetically securing contracts during a canal-widening project.

A chance meeting in Albion in January 1859 with a former Illinois governor's wife drew Pullman into jacking up sections of Chicago's business district. Pullman traveled to Grand Rapids (where Albert was impoverished) and Chicago, where his partnership won the contract to raise the Matteson House Hotel, began ahead of schedule, and raised the five-story structure by five feet over 10 days. Albert joined George and worked alongside the laborers under the building as foreman. In spring 1860, George left Albert in charge of subsequent jobs, ventured out to the gold-mining region near Central City, later Colorado Territory, and bought and operated an ore-stamping mill, a store, and other ventures in partnerships between mid-1860 and spring 1863.

Pullman's entry into railroad sleeping car manufacture began in partnership with the New York State senator Benjamin Field in early 1859. Upon Pullman's

arrival in Chicago, he convinced Alton Railroad managers to adopt his innovations and hired a shop mechanic to rebuild two coaches into sleeping cars. The first ran 15 August 1859. His cousin worked as conductor on the cars. In 1867, Pullman's Palace Car Company was chartered and incorporated. Between 1870 and 1880, Pullman erected cars at an acquired factory in Detroit. Albert Pullman supervised craftsmen and laborers as general superintendent, and then second vice president.

Pullman exerted paternalistic control over his younger siblings with some success during the 1850s to 1860s but failed with his own children, wife, and workers during the 1880s to 1890s. The pressures of business, coupled with Pullman's own irascible personality, made him austere and unapproachable. In 1881, Pullman opened a newly built company-owned town and manufacturing plant 14 miles south of Chicago. Most observers lauded the new town, consciously designed to improve the living conditions of working families accustomed to urban slum tenements. In 1885, the economist Richard T. Ely credited Pullman with recognizing the "commercial value of beauty" in the luxurious cars built in Pullman's plant and the broad, tree-lined streets and ornamented red-brick row houses of the adjacent town. However, Ely also found that nepotism, favoritism, company spies, and the suppression of workers' grievances rendered residents silent and unattached and the town "un-American."

Workers did not always remain silent, however. Individual department strikes in 1882, 1884, and 1885 preceded a May 1886 general strike of the Knights of Labor for an eight-hour day. The Haymarket bombing and subsequent prosecution of anarchists prompted Pullman to donate for their conviction and execution. Albert Pullman left the company that same year. Strikes in 1888, 1891, and May 1894 were precipitated by heavy-handed foremen and wage cuts but reflected the underlying discontent with workers' inability to represent their interests collectively. The May 1894 strike, which prompted a 26 June national boycott of Pullman cars by railroad workers loyal to the American Railway Union, brought widespread criticism upon George Pullman for refusing to negotiate, reduce rents, or shift half the financial burden off of the workers. He suffered a "nervous depression" that left him bedridden and ill until autumn 1894 and caused severe strains upon his marriage and family life. Pullman died of a heart attack 19 October 1897. One son, George Jr., briefly worked as a Pullman car inspector in Chicago, and then in New Jersey after his father's death until June 1898. Pullman's enduring legacies more than one hundred years after his death are the National Historic

PULLMAN, GEORGE MORTIMER

Landmark Town of Pullman and the George M. Pullman Educational Foundation, which assists college students of limited financial means.

MARTIN TUOHY

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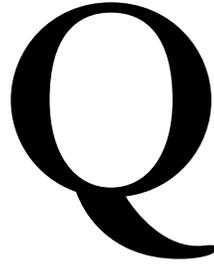
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See also Haymarket Affair (1886); Knights of Labor; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)



**QUILL, MICHAEL J. (SEPTEMBER 18,
1905–JANUARY 28, 1966)
President, Transport Workers' Union**

Michael Joseph Quill headed the Transport Workers' Union (TWU) from shortly after its founding in 1934 until his death in 1966. During those years he also held a series of positions in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), with which the TWU was affiliated, and he served as an elected member of the New York City Council. While the modest size of the TWU—at the time of his death it had 135,000 members—kept Quill from reaching the very top ranks of labor leadership, his radical views, outspokenness, and involvement in New York City politics often brought him into the spotlight of public attention.

Quill's political outlook was shaped by his youthful involvement in the Irish republican movement, which led him to question authority, embrace militancy, and become sympathetic to the political left. Born on a mountain farm in County Kerry, Ireland, to a family that supported the Irish Republican Army (IRA) during the struggle for Irish independence and the subsequent civil war, Quill served with the IRA during the early 1920s. In 1926, he immigrated to the United States and took a job with New York's Interborough Rapid Transit Company. Quill became well known among fellow Irish transit workers through his involvement in various Irish organizations. When an effort began in 1933 to unionize the city's transit industry, which brought together organizers from the Communist party (CP), various

groups of discontented workers, and IRA veterans working in transit, Quill joined early. His wealth of contacts in the Irish community, standing as a former republican fighter, and his gift for speaking quickly brought him to the forefront of the union group.

In 1935, Quill became the first elected president of the TWU (there had been an appointed president before him). Two years later when the TWU accepted a charter from the CIO to be a national mass transit workers' union, Quill was elected as the first president of the reconstituted union, giving up his post as head of the New York local though continuing to help lead it. Flush with recognition victories in New York, the TWU began transforming the lives of the city's transit workers, winning shorter hours, better pay, and new benefits, while slowly spreading to other cities.

During the organization of the TWU, Quill drew close to the CP, possibly joining it. Until the late 1940s, he worked closely with the party members who held the other top posts in the transit union and participated in various political campaigns supported by the Communists. (He also remained active in Irish republican causes.) With his sharp wit and position as the head of a national union, Quill emerged within the CIO as one of its best-known left-wing leaders. When in 1938 dissident transit workers charged in testimony before a congressional committee that Quill and other TWU leaders were Communists, Quill retorted in one of his best-known statements that he “would rather be called a Red by the rats than a rat by the Reds.” In addition to his union post, Quill served for 8 years on the New York

City Council representing the Bronx, elected twice as a candidate of the left-liberal American Labor party and once as an independent. With the onset of the Cold War, Quill broke ranks with the CP. The changing political atmosphere in the labor movement and the country no doubt influenced him, but two specific issues precipitated his 1948 decision, the insistence by the CP that its union backers support the third-party presidential bid of Henry Wallace in spite of the strong opposition of CIO President Philip Murray, and the party's continuing support for freezing the New York City transit fare, which Quill came to believe would undercut the possibilities for wage hikes. After a bitter civil war within the TWU, Quill succeeded in ousting the union leaders who remained aligned with the CP, retaining his presidency by constructing a new set of alliances that included centrists and conservatives as well as anti-Communist liberals.

In the decades after World War II, the TWU, under Quill, expanded into the airline industry; absorbed railroad workers who had been organized by the CIO; and continued to sign up mass-transit workers. In New York the union faced a series of challenges after its initial organization, including the 1940 city takeover of most private transit lines, which forced the TWU to fight for years to win back its status as an exclusive collective-bargaining agent. During the 1950s, Quill and other TWU leaders were criticized by skilled craft workers who felt they would do better with separate unions for their own groups and during the 1960s, by African-Americans who felt they had insufficient access to better paid jobs and union leadership posts.

Quill gave up his City Council seat in 1949, but he remained prominent in New York affairs as president of the New York City CIO Council. In 1950, he became a vice-president of the CIO as well. Even after his break with the CP, Quill stayed on the left of what became a narrowed spectrum of opinion within the labor movement and the country. In 1955, he was the most prominent critic within the CIO of

its decision to merge with the American Federation of Labor (AFL), charging that the constitution of the combined group would allow raiding, racketeering, and racial discrimination. In the 1960s, Quill actively supported the civil rights movement and was an early critic of the Vietnam War. He occasionally described himself as a Socialist and called for the New York subway system to be made free. Though Quill's fiery rhetoric had limited practical impact, it made him stand out in an era of increasingly bland labor leaders and helped keep alive a labor political tradition that openly acknowledged fundamental class conflict.

Though Quill often threatened to strike the New York transit system, he did not lead the TWU to do so until 1966, when he sought a major improvement in wages, especially for more skilled workers, and a militant fight as a way to reunify the union and cement his legacy. The strike, which all but shut down New York City for 12 days, ended in a substantial union victory. Quill, who was jailed, and then suffered a heart attack during the walkout, was the object of fierce public and political criticism as well as support from within the labor movement. He died of heart failure 2 weeks after the strike. Fittingly striking cemetery workers dropped their picket line so that he could be buried.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; American Labor Party; Communist Party; Transport Workers' Union

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RACKETEERING AND RICO

The term “racketeering” came into popular use in the 1920s when it usually referred to the activities of a new generation of organized crime that had emerged during Prohibition. Racketeering often involved labor unions. Examples of labor racketeering included crimes such as extortion from employers and union leaders, embezzlement from union funds, and the creation of various kinds of anticompetitive cartel arrangements. But the word “racketeering” also served as a political tool and was applied by organized labor’s opponents to legal but aggressive forms of union activity. Thus, historically, public alarm about the danger of racketeering often has been used to justify new restrictions on organized labor. Concern about the growing economic influence of organized crime through racketeering has also justified significant extensions of the federal government’s role in law enforcement. One of the most prominent examples of that trend was the passage in 1970 of a broad, new federal conspiracy law, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). This law gave federal prosecutors a powerful weapon with which to attack the leadership hierarchy in criminal gangs; it also included civil provisions that allowed the government to assume control of corrupt labor organizations.

Criminal gangs that emerged during Prohibition (1920–1933) became involved in labor racketeering by the late 1920s. They tended to exert influence over unions with particular kinds of jurisdictions—typically labor organizations that operated in economic sectors that had long been marked by anticompetitive forms of

collusion among employers and unions. At least since the 1890s, some unions in some sectors of the economy had engaged in such collusive arrangements with employers. In return for closed-shop contracts, unions in construction and the teaming trades and in some of the service sectors agreed to help employers control the level of competition in their industry. Typically unions in these sectors helped employers limit the entry of new firms and policed agreements on prices and customer allocation arrangements. These collusive arrangements tended to appear in industries where the initial start-up capital requirements were so low that new firms could easily enter the marketplace, creating a tendency toward cutthroat competition. Businesses in those sectors turned to organized labor in hopes that it could provide economic stability.

Often unions involved in such activity were also troubled by charges of corruption. To a certain extent, those charges reflected the ways in which union leaders in those settings could easily dominate their members; the union’s initial organization stemmed from the leader’s relationship with the employers, not on his ability to mobilize the membership. The employers supported the union because of what it offered them, and so there was rarely a need to rally the union’s rank and file to man the picket lines. Thus, these unions often lacked the basic democratic mechanisms that encouraged active membership, and that in turn made it more difficult for the members to police their leadership. But charges of corruption also frequently reflected the hostility of outside business interests, which resented the strategic power of unions in these

sectors. Indeed, the term “racketeering” itself first emerged in Chicago in the 1920s as a way for anti-union employers to condemn the kinds of collusive arrangements that had allowed some labor organizations to become powerful in certain areas of the city.

The new type of criminal gangs that emerged in the 1920s, during Prohibition, eventually began to assert a role in these kinds of collusive business environments. Union officials in these sectors faced threats of violence and demands for money. Given organized labor’s tenuous legal status, particularly in these collusive sectors, union officials lacked the kind of protection that law enforcement would have provided to businesspersons in an industrial sector had they faced similar threats. Also, in places like Chicago, union officials knew that the police regularly colluded with criminal gangs. Thus, typically the gangland murder of union leaders went unsolved and brought no crackdown by police. In such settings, some union leaders chose to make arrangements with criminal gangs. These arrangements might involve appointing gang members or their associates to lower-level union posts. They also might involve agreements to allow a gang to siphon off a portion of the union’s funds, perhaps by kicking back a share of the top officers’ salaries. With the emergence in the post-WWII era of various benefit funds, arrangements were made in unions such as the Teamsters for organized crime groups to benefit from the financial decisions of some of these funds.

In addition to drawing on the funds of a labor organization, members of criminal gangs found other ways to profit from their ability to dominate some union leaders. One type of racketeering grew out of changes in federal labor laws in the 1930s. In the new political atmosphere of that decade, employers lost two of their most important weapons for combating organized labor. The Norris LaGuardia Act (1932) placed new limits on the abilities of employers to use injunctions against organized labor, while the Wagner Act (1935) made company unions illegal. At the same time, employers faced a wave of militant union organization. Many responded by turning to organized crime groups, which offered them a way to meet this threat. Gangsters provided businesspersons with the opportunity to sign a collective bargaining agreement with a kind of captive union, one controlled by organized crime. Such a collective bargaining agreement would forestall the organizing efforts of legitimate unions while leaving the employer’s labor costs virtually unchanged. Workers covered by agreements with such captive unions saw no increase in their wages, no changes in their work conditions, and received no benefits. Indeed, because the employer now deducted union dues from their paycheck, these workers might

actually suffer a decrease in pay. The employer, on the other hand, received tangible benefits. In return for the employer deducting dues and providing other forms of compensation to the corrupt union official, organized crime muzzled any militancy by the workers and blocked efforts by other unions to intercede. The captive union functioned as a new kind of company union.

Even though employers often benefited from this kind of organized criminal activity, businesses were usually depicted by the press and law enforcement as the main victims of labor racketeering. Payments made by businesspersons to criminal figures or corrupt union officials were described as extortion, a legal term for money paid under threat of harm. This term, however, was applied even in circumstances such as the ones described above, or when an employer paid off a corrupt union official in order to gain a more favorable collective bargaining agreement. Using that definition of extortion left union officials appearing as the perennial villains and employers as the hapless victims. It also made labor racketeering appear to result from the ability of powerful unions to threaten the economic well-being of businesses. In this political context, the term “racketeering” itself became a kind of political weapon to use against the growing power of unions in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Critics of organized labor, such as the newspaper columnist Westbrook Pegler, described legal but aggressive forms of union activity, such as secondary boycotts or even organizational picketing, as forms of racketeering.

This biased depiction of labor racketeering meant that campaigns against organized crime often served as a pretext for efforts to limit the power of labor unions. The McClellan Committee hearings (1957–1959), for example, helped raise awareness about the existence of the Mafia and made labor racketeering an important public issue. But the Committee was dominated by conservative congressmen who used the hearings to promote an anti-union agenda. They sought to raise concern about the connection between organized crime and the Teamsters Union in order to promote anti-union legislation. To protect the nation from the threat of labor racketeering, the McClellan Committee urged Congress to enact new restrictions on the ability of unions to organize and picket. The result was the Landrum-Griffin Act (1959), which among other things banned secondary boycotts and put new limits on organizational picketing.

More recent efforts to confront the threat posed by organized crime and labor racketeering have involved the use of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations statute (RICO) (18 U.S.C. Sections

1961–1968). RICO was passed as one of the sections of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970. This statute came as part of a wave of legislation at the end of the 1960s that aimed to give federal law enforcement the legal tools it needed to effectively combat organized crime. This same generation of legislation, for instance, created the Witness Protection Program and authorized the use of electronic surveillance by law enforcement. The legislation marked a new federal commitment to waging a war on organized crime. In passing such laws, Congress was responding to warnings about the growth of organized crime issued by the Task Force on Organized Crime of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1965–1967). The Task Force had specifically warned that the Mafia was using its ability to dominate some unions as a way to infiltrate heretofore legitimate areas of business. Robert Blakey, who drafted the RICO statute, had served on the staff of the Task Force, and he made sure that the new legislation included specific provisions for stopping organized crime's infiltration of the larger economy.

RICO made it a crime to use a pattern of criminal activity or the proceeds of such criminal activity to gain control over an organization (that is, an enterprise) or to run such an enterprise through a pattern of criminal activity. The criminal provisions of RICO function as a broad conspiracy statute that treats organized crime activity as an "enterprise." Originally, the law was understood to target only such criminal activity that brought criminal gangs into legitimate organizations such as unions or a business. But since 1981, the Supreme Court has held that the term "enterprise" can also refer to illegitimate groups, in effect making it possible for the government to prosecute individuals for participating in a criminal group, such as a Mafia family. According to the language of the statute, anyone who infiltrates, participates in, or conducts the affairs of such a RICO-defined enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity has violated this law.

Establishing a pattern of racketeering activity forms the central part of a RICO prosecution. For the purposes of the statute, such a pattern must involve at least two racketeering acts, with at least one committed since 1970 and the last one occurring within 10 years of its predecessor. These racketeering acts, referred to as RICO predicates, include a long shopping list of federal and state felonies. In this way, the language of the act allows prosecutors to overcome the statute of limitations on crimes and to ignore the jurisdictional divisions between state and federal crimes. In effect, the government can present a jury with the whole career of an individual and a criminal

group, bringing together otherwise disparate acts into one large set of conspiracy charges.

The penalties for conviction under RICO are quite severe, another reason why prosecutors like this statute. Each RICO predicate charge carries a possible 20-year sentence, and a defendant can also be charged with participating in the enterprise conspiracy, a separate charge that also carries a 20-year sentence. As a result, organized crime figures convicted under RICO face lengthy prison sentences. To take one example, in *United States v. Salerno* (1986), the government convicted the leaders of several New York organized crime families on charges related to their role in the commission that oversaw Mafia operations along the East Coast. RICO's tough sentencing provisions made each defendant liable for up to 300 years in jail, and although the judge did not impose that full amount, the men were sentenced to 100 years of prison apiece. In addition, RICO includes a powerful forfeiture provision that allows the government to seize any assets gained as a result of the criminal activity engaged in by the defendant.

In the first few years after its passage, RICO went unused, but by the 1980s, prosecutors made it the workhorse in a campaign against organized crime. This campaign was marked by the FBI's effective use of electronic surveillance, which provided a persuasive new kind of evidence for use in organized crime trials. Similarly, the threat of RICO sentences and the availability of an effective Witness Protection Program led to the emergence of significant cooperating witnesses from within ranks of organized crime families. Aladema ("Jimmy the Weasel") Frattiano, who had been the acting boss of the Los Angeles Crime Family, was one of the first of these Mafia turncoats, but many others followed. Their testimony offered juries an insider's view of organized crime and helped bring about some of the most significant convictions in this law enforcement effort. As a result, hundreds of organized crime figures, including many of the top Mafia leaders, have been convicted and sent to jail.

This campaign against organized crime also took advantage of RICO's civil provisions. While the criminal section of RICO is meant to be punitive, the civil section aims to be preventative, to block organized crime's further use of a labor union or a business. To that end, prosecutors can draw on a range of potential remedies that include court orders barring individuals from having any further connection to an organization as well as court-imposed trusteeships.

Civil RICO offers the government a number of advantages. Civil procedure allows prosecutors to build up their case during the pretrial period by requiring the defendant to respond to the prosecutors'

requests for depositions and internal documents, providing evidence that the government can later use to demonstrate organized crime's control over the organization. A lesser standard of proof is required for the government to make its case in a civil proceeding, a "preponderance of evidence" as opposed to the requirement of "beyond a reasonable doubt" needed for a criminal conviction. Finally, defendants in such a suit face serious financial consequences should the government prevail. They are liable to treble damages as well as court costs and attorney fees, and that financial threat serves as a powerful incentive to reach a settlement with the government before the case goes to trial.

The Justice Department began to use civil RICO against union corruption in the mid-1980s. By 2004, it had filed a total of 21 civil RICO suits against labor organizations, and in several other cases it has used the threat of such suits to convince unions to make specific internal reforms. Only one case, the government's first suit against Teamsters Local 560 in New Jersey, has ever gone to trial. The government's victory in that case, combined with the consequences that defendants face should they lose, has meant that in all of the subsequent cases, defendants have agreed to settlements before trial. Three of the suits involved international unions, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees' International Union (HERIU). The bulk of the suits were filed against local affiliates of those three international unions and against local affiliates of the International Longshoremen's Union (ILA). The President's Commission on Organized Crime (1983–1986) had named those four internationals (ILA, IBT, HERIU, LIUNA) as the unions most dominated by organized crime. Three other civil RICO suits were filed against local affiliates of international unions with quite the opposite reputations. In those cases, though the international union's leadership enjoyed an honest reputation, the local affiliates in question had long been notorious for their alleged connections to organized crime. The civil RICO suit filed in 1994 against the New York City District Council of Carpenters was one example of such a case.

These suits have resulted in various types of trusteeship arrangements, which have ranged widely in terms of the length of their duration and the kinds of oversight exercised. The shortest trusteeship lasted for 18 months, but others have gone on significantly longer, as much as six years. Often, the consent decrees that result from civil RICO settlements call for some continuation of government oversight, on an open-ended basis, even after the formal trusteeship

comes to an end. In the case of the IBT, for instance, the terms of three court officers serving as trustees expired following the certification of the results of the union's 1991 elections. But government oversight continues in the form of an Internal Review Board, which pursues cases of corruption involving Teamster officials. The courts have granted some trustees great authority in conducting the affairs of a union under a civil RICO trusteeship—from negotiating contracts with employers to administering the organization. But other trustees have been limited to a narrower range of activity, from reviewing financial decisions to banning union officials with organized crime connections. In each case, the specifics of the trusteeship emerged out of a combination of what the particular U.S. attorney's office requested, what the union officials in question were willing to settle for, and the decision of the federal judge hearing the suit.

Critics of the use of civil RICO against unions have focused on several issues. Some have noted the apparent lack of a coherent strategy or direction in the government's use of this powerful tool. Individual trustees have operated in isolation from one another, and there has been no effort to develop any kind of guide to policies most likely to rid a union of organized crime influence. Union officials have complained about the costs of paying for government oversight. In some cases, trustees (almost always former federal prosecutors) have earned sums far larger than the allegedly corrupt and piratical union officials who were ousted by the civil RICO suit. Other critics have worried about the ways in which civil RICO challenges the traditional autonomy of labor unions. This threat appears more palpable in cases when a conservative administration filed suit against a national union, such as happened in 1988, when the Reagan administration's Justice Department sued the IBT, then the largest labor organization in the country.

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See also Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; International Longshoremens's Association; Laborers' International Union of North America; McClellan Committee Hearings; Organized Crime

RAILROAD BROTHERHOODS

The railroad brotherhoods are a historically significant but underappreciated set of unions that organized workers in the U.S. railroad industry for roughly a century from the 1860s through the 1960s. Probably because of the large number of brotherhood-style railroad unions and their complex interlocking jurisdictions, predominantly craft orientations, explicitly fraternal natures, and conservative (in some notable instances racist) policies, the railroad brotherhoods have not garnered labor historians' sustained attention. Yet, these unions defined the predominant model of unionism in one of the nation's most vital economic sectors, included among their number some of the earliest successful national-level unions, played vital roles in the development of American industrial relations machinery, and were party to groundbreaking social welfare legislation. In the process, four of them—the so-called Big Four brotherhoods of "train service" or "running trades" workers (engineers, conductors, firemen, brakemen)—became the most powerful set of unions in the United States by the era of World War I and remained among the most influential of unions through the first half of the twentieth century.

The railroad brotherhoods are also significant for their standing as "brotherhoods." More explicitly than most other American unions, the railroad

brotherhoods constituted themselves as fraternal bodies of workingmen. Borrowing from Masonic fraternalism, widespread in the nineteenth-century United States, the railroad brotherhoods practiced fraternal ritual, emphasized the principles of mutual aid and moral uplift, and made male gender and craft occupational identity central to their organizational cultures. Expressed in the ideals of manhood, brotherhood, and craft pride, this bundle of ideals and practices represented a fraternalistic/mutual-aid logic that helped these unions survive in the hostile political and economic climate of the late nineteenth century while meeting the very real material needs of men who labored in a hazardous industry. The Big Four brotherhoods pioneered this brotherhood style of unionism during the 1870s and 1880s. The rest of so-called standard railroad unions of nonoperating workers of clerks, telegraphers, car repairmen, signalmen, and maintenance-of-way workers and the like patterned themselves after the brotherhoods as they organized from the 1880s onward. Thus, the term "railroad brotherhoods" refers to both the operating and 16-odd nonoperating unions of railroad workers as well as to the distinctive style of unionism they practiced.

Origins and Early Development in the Nineteenth Century

The railroad brotherhoods became known for their conservative, mutual-aid-oriented unionism early on. The first successful national-level union of railway workers began in 1863, following a series of short-lived efforts dating from the mid-1850s, when engineers working on Detroit railroads founded the Brotherhood of the Footboard in response to wage cuts and the imposition of piecework. Led by William D. Robinson, the new union aggressively defended wages and work rules in the course of several strikes. However, in the face of the railroads' fierce opposition and division within the Brotherhood's ranks, the union shifted course in 1868, replacing Robinson with the cautious Charles Wilson as grand chief engineer, changing its name to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) and embracing benevolent work among railway workers instead of direct confrontation with capital. The Order of Railway Conductors (ORC), the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen (BLF, which changed its name to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen—BLFE—in 1907), and the Brotherhood of Railroad Brakemen (later renamed the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, BRT) followed the Engineers' example, organizing



Locomotive engineer, Saint Louis, Missouri. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF33-003027-M4].

themselves in 1868, 1873, and 1883, respectively. The Switchmen's Mutual Aid Association, which came into being in the late 1870s and was succeeded by the Switchmen's Union of North America in 1894, organized brakemen whose duties were confined to switching yards, but it never achieved the kind of power that the Big Four came to enjoy. Competing claims inevitably led to jurisdictional conflict among these unions, most notably between the Trainmen and Switchmen. Nevertheless, all of the operating brotherhoods shared a common policy in their restriction of membership to white men "of good moral character."

During the 1870s and 1880s, the railroad brotherhoods perfected their approach to labor relations and mutual aid. The visiting of sick or injured members and the provision of death and disability insurance grew out of customary workplace mutualism, but the brotherhoods quickly institutionalized these traditions and by the early twentieth century boasted some of the largest union insurance funds. With moral uplift, which ranged from technical instruction to the inculcation of sober and industrious habits, brotherhood leaders emphasized the individual's self-improvement and upward mobility. Combining these fraternal practices, brotherhood leaders such as the Engineers' chief engineer Peter M. Arthur and the Firemen's secretary-treasurer Eugene V. Debs sought to recruit running trades workers while simultaneously presenting their organizations to railroad management as bulwarks against labor radicalism,

arguing that they in fact produced "a better class of railway men." In the aftermath of the railroad strikes of 1877, increasing numbers of managers came to see the brotherhoods of train service workers as plausible partners in labor relations. During the 1880s, with continued periodic labor upheavals and a tight railroad labor market due to rapid expansion of the national railroad network, the brotherhoods negotiated favorable agreements on a number of roads. Together with their craft orientation, this success encouraged the brotherhoods to chart a course separate from that of the larger labor movement, refusing protective alliances with other segments of organized railroad labor and declining affiliation with the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

The Big Four might have enjoyed a monopoly on train service unionism had it not been for continued dissatisfaction with conservative brotherhood-style unionism among segments of running trades workers, especially in the aftermath of the BLE's and BLF's near disastrous strike against the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad in 1888. Most acute on the frontier of railroad expansion where labor conditions were tightest, this undercurrent animated the rise and fall of industrially oriented railway unionism in the form of the Knights of Labor (KOL) in the 1880s and American Railway Union (ARU), which Eugene Debs led after breaking with the BLF in the 1890s. However, during these years both of these unions engaged in epic confrontations with capital and were

destroyed. Indeed, the Pullman strike and boycott of 1894 proved a turning point in railroad labor relations as the ARU buckled under the combined might of the railroad corporations and the national state, ending the possibility of industrial, all-grades unionism on the railroads.

The Big Four proved to be the beneficiaries of this episode as they avoided the boycott and in some instances helped to break it. In the aftermath of the conflagration, figures in the federal government and the railroads took favorable note of the brotherhoods' actions and set about including them in a state-sanctioned system of mediation and arbitration designed to prevent conflicts like the Pullman boycott and to ensure that the railroads remained free of "radical" industrial-style unionism. The ensuing Erdman Act of 1898 provided the framework for the nation's first real system of collective bargaining and the first, if de facto, recognition of the right of unions of the brotherhood variety to exist. Nevertheless, the dream of broader unionism did not die with the ARU, as into the 1930s minorities of running trades workers dissatisfied with the Big Four's conservatism periodically mounted rank-and-file rebellions and experimented with dissident union movements, sometimes uniting with nonoperating workers.

Brotherhood Power during the Progressive Era

With its mediation and arbitration machinery, the Erdman Act enabled the Big Four to wax powerful after 1900. The increasing volume of railroad traffic following the severe 1890s depression placed increasing strain upon railroad workers as they worked longer, more intensive hours and confronted a steadily rising cost of living. Rank-and-file pressure from below and recognition of the need to confront the railroad corporations on a broader basis prompted brotherhood leaders to pursue synchronized industrial action through a series of "concerted movements." However, while they became adept at the quasi-courtlike proceedings of the arbitration process and won important gains, they became ever more disappointed with arbitrators' awards. By 1916, the brotherhoods had sworn off arbitration altogether, choosing instead to band together in the presenting of demands for the eight-hour day in the train service to all the nation's railroads and threatening a national rail strike. The ensuing crisis, coming on the eve of U.S. entry into World War I, forced the intervention of President Woodrow Wilson and the passage of the Adamson Act, the first federally legislated eight-hour

day for nongovernment workers and a significant expansion of the federal government's ability to intervene in and regulate labor relations. While the brotherhoods' achievements during these years testified to their increased power and their ability to win appreciable gains for their members in terms of wages and protective legislation, they also used their power toward such decidedly less laudable ends as the eviction from the train service of black workers through legislative lobbying, contract negotiation, and a series of hateful "race" strikes.

If the period from the late 1890s through 1916 marked the waxing of the Big Four, it also represented a time of continued struggle for the rest of the railroad industry's unions. Never as strategically placed as the workers of the running trades, telegraphers, maintenance-of-way workers, car repairmen, and clerks found it difficult to command the respect of management. Beginning in the mid-1880s, a period of heady expansion and tight labor markets in the railroad industry, unions of nonoperating workers emerged as telegraphers, track foremen, and car repairmen formed local and regional associations oriented toward the provision of mutual aid. By the early 1890s, these organizations had formed into national-level unions: the Brotherhood of Railway Trackmen (later to become the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Workers), the Order of Railroad Telegraphers (ORT), and the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America. Following the 1890s depression, which severely tested all of the brotherhoods, the Order of Railway Clerks (later, the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees) joined these unions in 1900. Like the operating brotherhoods, these unions patterned themselves on the fraternal model, initially emphasized benefit work and insurance, and restricted their membership to white men. Unlike the Big Four, the nonoperating brotherhoods did not enjoy the provisions of the Erdman Act (with the exception of the ORT) and at one time or another affiliated with the AFL, a measure of their relative weakness. Thus, while the return of prosperity in the new century enabled the nonoperating brotherhoods to recoup earlier losses and to grow in size, they nevertheless faced an uphill battle in their efforts to win recognition and establish the principle of collective bargaining with railroad management.

In these circumstances, the federal government's World War I takeover of the national railway system catapulted unionism forward and transformed railroad labor relations. As the United States headed into the European conflict during 1917, the nation's railway system, which had failed to expand sufficiently over the previous decade, almost collapsed under

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the weight of war-related shipping. From the beginning of 1918 through early 1920, as the Wilson administration sought to direct and rationalize railroad service through the United States Railroad Administration (USRA), it also worked to rationalize and stabilize railroad labor relations with the establishment of industrywide grievance and collective bargaining machinery and the explicit prohibition of employer discrimination against union membership. The USRA's impact upon nonoperating workers was particularly significant, permitting its brotherhoods to extend their membership, gain recognition for the first time in many instances, win important wage gains, and sign national agreements standardizing wages and working conditions. With these protections, new railroad unions such as the Railroad Yardmasters of America and the Train Dispatchers Association came into existence, and one insignificant union, the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, which had existed since 1901 as only a local affair, expanded into a truly national union. While the benefits of federal control were not quite as dramatic for the Big Four, they nevertheless took note of the positive impact of the state, particularly as one of their number, William S. Carter of the BLFE, served as director of the USRA's Division of Labor. Concluding that it was in their interest to continue federal railroad control after the war, and moved by the World War I rhetoric of industrial democracy, in 1919 the railroad brotherhoods, led by such "progressives" as the Engineers' Warren Stone, mounted the "Plumb Plan" for permanent nationalization of the railways.

Political and Economic Action during the Interwar Years

Expansive as the brotherhoods' postwar plans for the railroads might have been, the heady World War I years sparked a reaction as both employers and conservative politicians, now in control of Congress and the White House, determined to roll back labor's wartime gains. The Transportation Act of 1920 thus not only returned the railroads to private ownership, but it also remade the structure of railroad industrial relations by introducing the Railroad Labor Board (RLB), a quasi-judicial body empowered to decide labor disputes by itself. Heavy-handed and inconsistent in its handling of arbitration cases, the RLB, together with a sympathetic judiciary, permitted the railroad corporations to beat back union advances through the introduction of company unionism and selective observance of Labor Board decisions. With

the depression of 1920–1921 and the railroad shopmen's strike of 1922, the railroads' "open shop" offensive precipitated a considerable decline in union membership among the nonoperating brotherhoods over the 1920s.

The operating brotherhoods also suffered during these years, but with their continued clout, they led railroad labor's counterattack not in industrial action but rather in the realm of electoral politics. While the Big Four had historically shared organized labor's reluctance to become involved in politics, their experience since the turn of the century had demonstrated the advantage of exercising union influence in the political arena. After Congress dismissed their plan for railroad nationalization, the brotherhoods formed the Conference for Progressive Political Action in 1922, an organization that became the focal point for a wide range of unionists, reformers, farm leaders, and intellectuals. This "progressive bloc" hewed to independent political action, succeeded in electing some labor-friendly congressmen, and in 1924, backed the Wisconsin senator Robert M. La Follette (R-WI) in his unsuccessful insurgent campaign for the presidency. While the brotherhoods failed to install their candidate in the White House, their efforts did pay dividends in revision to the railroad industrial relations statutes. As a part of their broader political action, the brotherhoods had sustained a campaign to abolish the RLB, winning passage of the Railway Labor Act of 1926. Marking the first time Congress recognized the right of workers to join unions without employer interference, the Act established the more cooperative framework that would govern railroad industrial relations into the post-World War II era and would serve as a model for industrial relations legislation in other industries.

As the brotherhoods entered into political action in the first half of the 1920s, they also embarked in a new direction: labor banking. The brotherhoods' foray into the financial industry may have appeared anomalous, but in fact it grew out of their tradition of fraternal mutual-aid unionism, the nation's cooperative movement as it quickened during the Progressive Era, and the World War I experience itself. Inspired by the idea that labor banks held the potential to democratize the American financial system, impressed with the possibility of translating workers' savings into economic and political power, and seeing in labor banks a means of blunting employers' open-shop drive, Warren Stone and the BLE founded the first of its 14 banks, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers National Cooperative Bank, in 1920. The BLE's flagship bank achieved deposits of over \$26 million by 1924 and delivered a variety of financial services to union members. However, mismanagement

and ill-advised land investments in Florida drew the Engineers deep into debt and led to the collapse of its banks by decade's end. While the brotherhoods' banking ventures ended in disaster, their bold initiatives in the economic and political arenas revealed a real degree of labor dynamism often overlooked in the 1920s.

Dominated by the Great Depression and the New Deal, the decade of the 1930s marked the consolidation of railroad-industrial relations machinery with the Amended Railway Labor Act of 1934. As the Depression deepened, the brotherhoods used their political power to address the problem of railroad unemployment, supporting full-crew, train-limit, and six-hour-day legislation. The measure with the greatest significance was the Railway Retirement Act of 1937, which established a separate system of social security for railroad employees. Together, these railway laws represented important New Deal industrial relations and social welfare legislation that paralleled the better-known Wagner and Social Security Acts and enabled the brotherhoods to secure national agreements covering almost all the industry's operating and most nonoperating employees by the end of the decade.

Decline and Consolidation after World War II

The World War II period and the return of prosperity in the early 1940s enabled the brotherhoods to begin recovering the wage losses they had suffered during the Depression despite the no-strike pledge they adopted for the duration of the war. However, persistent rank-and-file discontent with the application of national agreements and wartime wage stabilization policies animated a series of short wildcat strikes, some resulting in the temporary government seizures of railroads. This undercurrent of wartime labor conflict burst into the open at war's end as the operating and nonoperating brotherhoods presented demands for increased wages, shorter hours, and work rules revisions. Most of these unions settled their issues through the Railway Labor Act machinery, except the BLE and the BRT, which had become frustrated by the tedious process of working through the Act's machinery. On May 23, 1946, after a series of strike votes and emergency conferences and in defiance of warnings from President Harry Truman, Alvanley Johnston of the Engineers and Alexander F. Whitney of the Trainmen led their unions in the only true national railroad strike of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, two days later, the unions capitulated in the face of Truman's seizure of the railroads and threats to draft striking employees into the military. Successive rounds of demands and presidential

seizures in 1948 and 1950 completed railroad labor's part in the broader post-World War II strike wave.

The postwar strike wave marked the railroad brotherhoods' last moment of true national prominence. In the 1950s, even as union membership peaked, the railroad industry entered a period of decline brought on by competition from interstate trucking, intercity busing, and the growth of the airline industry. Increased automation and rationalization of the industry resulted in steadily declining employment, an eroding membership base for the brotherhoods, and a corresponding reduction in union bargaining power. By the 1960s, the brotherhoods were fighting largely defensive battles, attempting to preserve jobs and maintain wages and working conditions. In 1969, with the exception of the Engineers, the operating brotherhoods merged to form the new AFL-affiliated United Transportation Union (UTU). The UTU aimed to end the craft rivalries that had dogged the brotherhoods through their histories and to increase the railroad unions' economic power. In practice, the UTU devoted most of its energies to political and legislative action, a direction suggested by its central role in the creation of the Congress of Railway Unions in 1969, a federation consisting of the UTU, the Maintenance of Way Employees, the Railway and Steamship Clerks, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union, and the Seafarers International Union of North America. Through the 1970s, the UTU lobbied Congress and fought battles in the federal courts, winning from the Supreme Court the right of railroad workers to strike selectively. By the 1980s, reflecting the turning tide against organized labor brought on by Ronald Reagan's presidency, the UTU was focusing on stopping White House efforts to undo the landmark social welfare and protective labor legislation it had helped to bring about earlier in the century.

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See also **Adamson Act; American Federation of Labor; American Railway Union; Conference for Progressive Political Action; Debs, Eugene V.; Erdman Act; Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union; Industrial Democracy; Knights of Labor; Plumb Plan; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894); Railroad Shopmen’s Strike (1922); Railroads; Railway Labor Acts (1920–1934); Railroad Strikes (1877)**

RAILROAD SHOPMEN’S STRIKE (1922)

On July 1, 1922, hundreds of thousands of railroad shopmen went out on a nationwide strike that directly threatened the country’s economic and social lifeline. The strike became a titanic struggle among union workers, railroad managements, local state authorities, and the federal government. The course taken by the strike was predicated on the relative strengths and tactics of both strikers and railroad management.

The strike began in protest against a wage cut imposed by a government agency, the Railroad Labor Board (RLB). The RLB had been established under the 1920 Transportation Act. Its major role was to oversee the working conditions and wages of the nation’s over 2 million railroad workers. Starting in 1921, the RLB handed down a series of decisions that adversely affected the wages and working conditions of the nation’s 400,000 shopmen. The shopmen were the men and women who built and repaired the country’s rolling stock. This included locomotives and freight and passenger cars. After the RLB handed down a further wage cut in 1922, the shopmen’s union organization, the Railway Employees’ Department (RED), ordered its members to stop work on July 1 in protest.

The strikers established picket lines in cities and towns throughout the United States. In railroad towns especially, the battle became one for the hearts

and minds of the local populace. Shopmen generally were respected members of railroad towns holding positions as mayors, chiefs of police, aldermen, and the like. With such control, they were able to effectively stop the importation of strikebreakers. In those locales where strikebreakers and armed guards were used, tensions mounted. Shootings became common as both strikers and guards were injured and killed. Such confrontations became common throughout the country. In these same communities, local merchants tended to side with the strikers. Thus, strikers and their families were given free groceries, complimentary tickets, and free rent. There was a darker side to this support where those shopmen who continued to work were marked for retribution. Some of the working shopmen (scabs) were verbally threatened, some were kidnapped and whipped or tar and feathered, and their houses often became sites of vandalism. Critical also to the strikers’ success was the support from their wives, daughters, and sweethearts, who gathered badly needed supplies and in some cases stood on the picket line in support. Such support was not universal, however. Some shopmen, especially in the Southeast, refused to let their female supporters get involved. Local police forces also played a supportive role. Armed guards were arrested for carrying concealed weapons. In many cases, such support was predicated on the fact that chiefs of police were trying to maintain their political links to the wider community. Actions during the strike would therefore be remembered during election time.

Community support also attracted the attention of state and federal authorities. Reports by U.S. district attorneys and U.S. marshals highlighted the growing tension. In response, railroad managements were encouraged to apply for injunctions against the strikers. Such injunctions or restraining orders were easily obtained. Once the restraining orders were handed down, U.S. marshals acquired large numbers of deputy marshals to enforce them. These deputy marshals became the protectors of railroad property and strikebreakers and helped escort replacement workers and food and provisions into the railroad shops. Thus, community support of strikers was neutralized by the U.S. marshals.

President Warren Harding and his secretary of commerce, Herbert Hoover, tried hard to mediate a peace agreement between the shopmen and railroad heads. Initially, he appeared successful after a break-away group of railroad managers agreed to negotiate. But a sizable section refused to sit down with the RED leaders. The most obstructionist were the Pennsylvania Railroad officials. Harding and Hoover were forced to back off and await events. By the second week in August (six weeks into the strike), Hoover



Chicago, Illinois. Grinding down a part of locomotive cylinder housing at the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad shops. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USW3-012735-D].

reported to Harding that only two weeks of coal supplies were left. In addition, the nation's rolling stock was becoming increasingly dangerous as repairs could not keep up with demand. With little end in sight, President Harding consulted with his attorney general, Harry Daugherty. Harding's decision was to obtain a federal injunction against the strikers. On September 1, Daugherty obtained one of the most sweeping injunctions in U.S. history. The union leaders were enjoined from issuing strike instructions or funds to support the strike. In essence, the injunction destroyed the strike leaders' effectiveness. Facing heavy court fines if they ignored the injunction, the trade union leadership searched for railroads that would sign a peace agreement. Fortunately, a break-away managerial group had formed. Led by the leaders of the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) and Seaboard Airline Railroads, a solution was hammered out that recognized the seniority rights of the strikers and allowed them to return to work without any discrimination.

The majority of the railroads, however, refused to bargain with the union leaders. Instead, these

railroads were determined to rid themselves of a union presence. Strikers could only return to work as new employees and nonunion members. Over the following months, many strikers were forced back to work under these conditions. But not until 1924 did the union leadership eventually admit defeat and order the remaining strikers back to work.

The shopmen's defeat was a major one. It ended their national power within the railroad industry. The strike also represented the last major industrywide strike until the emergence of CIO unions in the 1930s. Many reasons contributed to the shopmen's defeat. The shopmen were hampered by a lack of unity across race lines. Large number of African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians labored in the railroad shops but were not allowed entry into the shopmen's unions. Such discrimination tactically weakened the strike because many minority shopmen reasoned that the unions were exclusionary and thus there was little incentive to support the strikers. The Harding administration also played a divisive role. Its appointees to the RLB and its eventual unleashing of a sweeping federal injunction sounded the death knell for the

RAILROAD SHOPMEN'S STRIKE (1922)

strike. Above all, though, it was railroad management that did much to defeat the strike. Its determination to push hard for wage cuts and thereby confront the shopmen set the tone for the upcoming battle. Managements were determined to return to the prewar period where union representation in the railroad shops was barely discernible. Management paid an enormous cost in defeating the shopmen, thousands of guards were hired, eating and sleeping facilities were set up in railroad shops across the country, and finally, hundreds of thousands of strikebreakers were recruited. Management obviously thought the cost was worth paying, but by the 1930s and World War II, unions returned to shops and this time they stayed.

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See also **Railroads**

RAILROAD STRIKES (1877)

In the spring of 1877, the United States was still in the grip of a major industrial depression that had begun four years earlier. The depression had devastated organized labor, but labor's demands for a living wage, the right to bargain collectively, and an eight-hour work day, among others, remained—and were even more salient in the midst of widespread unemployment and hunger.

The Railroad Strikes of 1877—known by contemporaries as The Great Strike or Great Upheaval—were one of the most spectacular episodes of urban violence in American history. Triggered by a 10% wage cut instituted by most railroad corporations on July 1, they began on July 16 at the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) railroad yard in Martinsburg, West Virginia. In Martinsburg, railroad workers dismantled a cattle train upon its entrance to the yard. Uncoupling the cars, the men stated that no more freight trains would be allowed to travel until their wages were restored. This job action by railroad workers quickly elicited support from the Martinsburg community. That evening, a crowd gathered at the town depot and prevented the arrest of the strikers by the police; and the following day, freight traffic was disrupted or stopped by striking railroad workers, and more ominously for railroad companies and ruling elites

in general, people with no wage relationship to the B&O. The strike of railroad workers spread rapidly from Martinsburg, engulfing towns and cities throughout the Northeast and the Midwest, extending as far west as the Pacific coast.

The strike of railroad workers triggered a series of widespread, popular uprisings against the railroads—the nation's pre-eminent industrial enterprise after the Civil War and the symbol of the capitalist nature of the American industrial revolution. Though viewed by most people as the carriers of progress and prosperity, the railroads also engendered considerable hostility: their tracks and trains wreaked havoc in urban communities, obstructing the commercial and social uses of streets and killing and injuring thousands of people every year in various types of accidents. Consequently, crowds composed mostly of workers with no wage relationship to the railroad companies, sprinkled with substantial numbers of middle-class folk, joined striking railroad workers in stopping trains; they also engaged in violent attacks against railroad property.

Given Baltimore's proximity to Martinsburg and its status as the major rail nexus for the B&O Railroad, it was the place of the first major outbreak of violence. On Friday, July 20, the Great Strike erupted in Baltimore. Railroad and civil authorities had already filled Baltimore with hundreds of soldiers in expectation of "trouble," and trouble they got. On Front Street, at the armory housing a regiment of troops called out to protect railroad property, thousands of people collected. Women, children, unemployed men, and people from nearly all walks of life in the city gathered to voice their rage at the troops. Catcalls, threats, and brickbats were hurled at the armory. Fairly soon, portions of the regiment were ordered to leave the armory in order to march to the major railroad depot at Camden station. Their exit and the crowd's response were a deadly mixture: in response to a fusillade of stones, brickbats, and perhaps a gunshot or two, the soldiers opened fire upon the crowd. As different companies of the regiment departed the armory and marched through the streets to Camden station, battles broke out all along the route. Nearly a dozen people lay dead and a score injured (only one soldier suffered serious wounds). Not a single one of the dead or wounded was a railroad striker—testimony to the scope of the hostility big business, railroad corporations in particular, had elicited in the years since the Civil War.

As people in Baltimore and other cities experienced the Great Strike or its beginnings that July weekend, the seminal event of the Strike occurred in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh was home to another railroad giant, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the company held the nearly universal antipathy of the city's working class. Its monopoly on rail and

freight traffic into and out of the city had created a deep reservoir of ill-feeling. Antimonopoly sentiment, a set of values with roots stretching back to the eighteenth century, ran deep throughout the country, especially as industrialization created behemoth corporations that crushed small businesses as easily as hapless cows caught on the tracks. Nowhere was antimonopoly sentiment deeper and more widespread than in Pittsburgh. In addition to the city's industrial manufacturing establishments, Pittsburgh was home to the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Its rolling stock, roundhouses, freight houses, and switchyards covered a vast area by the Union depot, running alongside a ridge.

Pittsburgh's railroad workers knew of the strike in other cities, and they too had suffered a pay cut. The strike started on Thursday, July 19 when a group of trainmen refused to take out any freight trains. At approximately the same time, another event was beginning that was to prove pivotal in the city—and emblematic of the hostility railroad corporations had fostered in countless cities and small towns across the nation—a crowd composed largely of non-railroad workers began to form at the Twenty-Eight Street crossing about one mile from the Union depot. This crowd would play a signal role in what was to follow; indeed, they began to interfere with the movement of trains almost immediately. As trainmen refused to run freight trains and also refused to allow the use of strikebreakers—scabs—the crowd at the crossing grew in size. Indeed, striking railroad workers had to intercede to allow passenger trains to continue to run—a conscious strategy on the part of the strikers so as not to alienate public opinion. As the day ended, hundreds of incoming freight cars lay idle in the Pennsylvania yard. On Friday, July 20, no freight trains were moving into or out of the city. The situation remained the same the next day, July 21. Yet as elsewhere, railroad corporations were successfully soliciting the armed intervention of local, state, and federal authority. Local police forces, in Pittsburgh and other cities, were simply overwhelmed by the size of the strike and the crowds. State militias faced a problem, which was particularly pronounced in Pittsburgh: militiamen were drawn from the city, and they did not want to fire on people who might be their neighbors or coworkers. Efforts to get the Pittsburgh militia to control the strikers—and the ever-growing Twenty-Eighth Street crowd—generally failed. Militiamen either failed to show up when called or they fraternized with the members of the crowd. Consequently, militiamen from Philadelphia were rushed to the city via special trains provided by the railroad company. Of the many features of society revealed in stark relief by the Great Strike of 1877,

none was as apparent as the state's willingness to use armed force against ordinary people on behalf of the interests of private capital.

Strikers and the people of Pittsburgh knew that militiamen from Philadelphia were headed to their city. Arriving on Saturday, July 21, these out-of-town militiamen would prove to be the trigger for the most spectacular and violent episode in the history of the Great Strike of 1877. Unlike their Pittsburgh counterparts, the state militiamen from Philadelphia had few qualms about firing into crowds of people who were anonymous to them. By late Saturday afternoon, there were six hundred Philadelphia troops at the Union depot in the city. News of the arrival of the troops had brought even more people to the yards of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The troops had one goal: clear the tracks so that freight trains could run again. With fixed bayonets, they moved on the crowd of striking railroad workers, Pittsburgh militiamen who were openly fraternizing with their fellow residents, unemployed workers, iron and steelworkers, and women and children who blocked the tracks leading out of the freight yards. The crowd was frankly hostile and refused to be moved; a number of the militiamen charged the crowd, stabbing several people. A barrage of stones and rocks followed, people in the crowd even angrier from the sight of unarmed people being bayoneted by out-of-town soldiers. The command to fire quickly followed the hail of stones. When the firing was over, 20 people lay dead and nearly 30 were wounded. The crowd, numbering in the thousands, sent the six hundred troops fleeing back into the relative safety of a roundhouse. Crowd members began to empty the standing freight cars and then set on fire not only the freight cars, but railroad property in general. A three-mile stretch of railroad property—cars, workshops, lumberyards, and roundhouses—went up in a spectacular blaze that lit up the night sky for many miles. When it was over, 2,000 cars of every sort had been destroyed; nearly 40 buildings of various kinds lay in ashes, and more than 100 locomotives were ready for the scrap heap. The shock of the carnage, both material and human (another 20 people had been killed by the Philadelphia militiamen), was such that the city populace itself largely restored order to its streets by Monday morning.

News of what transpired in Pittsburgh shocked and terrified the nation. Newspaper headlines screamed that “the mob” had nearly burned the city to the ground in its fury to get at railroad property; insurrection threatened the nation and property everywhere was at risk. Yet the railroad workers' strike continued—as railroad workers in scores of other cities went out on strike during or after the events in Baltimore and Pittsburgh. The same weekend that

RAILROAD STRIKES (1877)

the western terminus of the Pennsylvania Railroad burned to the ground, the Great Strike began in upstate New York, as striking railroad workers in Buffalo, Albany, and elsewhere struck. As was the case nearly everywhere, their strike quickly caused strikes of workers from other economic sectors, as well as people from the middle classes.

Chicago and St. Louis experienced serious urban disorder consequent upon the Great Strike in those cities. In St. Louis, a general strike followed the strike of railroad workers—for several days, the city was ruled by the Workingmen's Party of the United States, as workers in virtually every industry struck and shut the city down. Chicago, the nation's slaughterhouse and a major nexus for all railroads headed west or east, had its own share of Great Strike violence, with at least one pitched battle between troops and working-class crowds claiming the lives of nearly 20 people. In Chicago, as in the nation generally, the Great Strike of 1877 was put down by the armed forces of the state, whether they were local or state militia, or federal troops called out by President Rutherford B. Hayes. Even San Francisco experienced civil strife as a result of the Great Strike, though the working class in that city vented its anger not on railroad corporations, but on the city's Chinese community.

The Great Strike facilitated the demise of Reconstruction. Waning northern interest in the southern "negro problem" was quickly replaced with the "labor problem" terrifyingly illustrated in northern cities during the strikes. The violence of the railroad strikes accelerated the development of the national state. In the years and decades after the strikes, state militias expanded in size and became more efficient, and National Guard armories were built (many of stone) or strengthened. The 1877 strikes both reflected and accelerated the growth of class consciousness among urban industrial workers, regardless of craft or skill. In many locales where the strikes were particularly pronounced, labor parties, albeit short-lived, formed for the fall elections.

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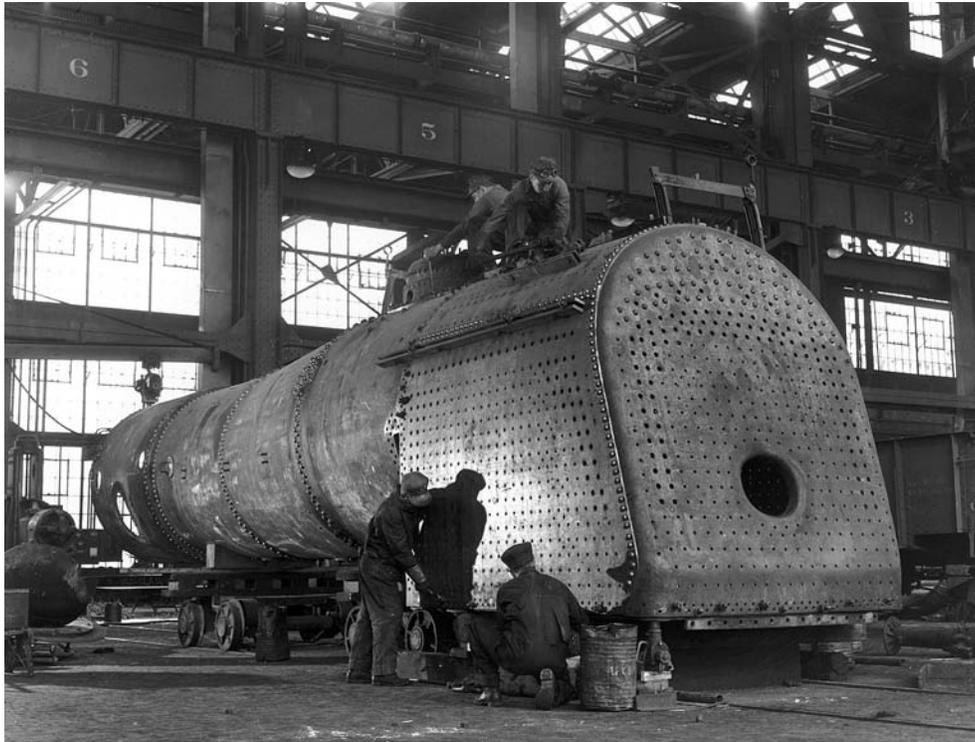
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RAILROADS

Work on the railroads was quite diverse, encompassing the most sophisticated industrial work of the nineteenth century as well as the most backbreaking menial labor. At the top of the industrial pyramid were the designers and mechanics who built the engines themselves. In the 1820s and 1830s, the manufacture of most American locomotives took place in England. But by the 1850s, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh had emerged as locomotive manufacturing centers, largely because of their proximity to iron foundries. Until the 1870s, most locomotives were custom built in locomotive works and shipped to railway companies.

Because of the custom nature of locomotive construction before the American Civil War, every major railroad in the early nineteenth century required extensive repair shops for the rebuilding of broken locomotives and the building of railway cars. A foundry produced custom molds for railway parts. Carpenters, millers, and trimmers fashioned cars. Boilermakers, coppersmiths, tanners, and machinists repaired, rebuilt, and re-assembled these parts to keep railway cars running. After the Civil War, manufacturers' experience with interchangeable parts, particularly in steam engine design, led to a re-organization of repair shops. Manufactured engines in standard models emerged first from the Baldwin Works in Philadelphia. By the 1870s, in New England and the Midwest, and into the 1880s in the South, these standard-sized engines increased in popularity. Parts could be ordered and shipped, diminishing the need for custom-built parts and cheapening the cost of maintaining locomotives and railway cars. Increasingly, repair shops did less and less manufacturing, becoming holding pens for parts and diminishing the need for the diversity of skills in repair shops. By the 1880s, many railway repair shops became white-only enclaves, as black helpers, apprentices, and painters who had been a very visible part of southern shops were closed out of railway work. Conflicts over labor in repair shops were somewhat different than they were for workers who worked on tracks. Repair workers could not simply stop business by stopping work; they had to wait for broken engines and rolling stock to pile up to effectively stop a railway from operating. This inability to fully stop operations would prove crippling in the Shopmen's Strike of 1922. Repair shops were radically



Albuquerque, New Mexico. Working on the fire box of an engine in the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad locomotive shops. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USW3-020490-D].

altered again in the 1940s (the 1950s in the South) with the widespread adoption of diesel locomotives. Even more so than in the 1880s, repair shops became large repositories for parts, further decreasing the need for bespoke parts or re-engineering. Indeed, many steam repair shops were closed and demolished, replaced with streamlined diesel shops that housed spare parts and a staff of engine mechanics and oilers.

Next in order of skill were the operating brotherhoods: engineers, firemen, conductors, and brakemen. A loose system of apprenticeship governed these trades. Firemen, for example, in charge of keeping a fire in engines, acted as apprentice engineers. Through the 1870s and 1880s, as wood-fired engines were replaced with coal-fired engines, the physical demands of this job decreased while proper firing in these more efficient engines became a more delicate matter. Engineers and firemen were invariably the first to die from exploding boilers, “scalded to death by the steam” in the words of the railway song, “The Wreck of the Old 97.” Engineers, meanwhile, maintained control of the engine, setting speed and calling for brakes. Throughout the United States, the romance of railroading focused on the engineer and fireman. Dozens of mountain ballads like “Casey Jones” and “The Wreck of the Old 97” described their exploits, real and imagined. Engineers and firemen, as Walter Licht

has shown, came largely from the ranks of the repair shops and machine shops.

Next among trainmen were conductors and brakemen. A brakeman’s job in the mid-nineteenth century involved jumping from car to car to turn hand brakes when called to do so by the engineer. By the 1880s the Westinghouse air brake minimized the dangers of braking and made braking easier. Brakemen were considered apprentice conductors, as both positions involved the management of the train behind the locomotive. Indeed, conductors managed all parts of the train behind the locomotive, including taking tickets and ejecting passengers who tried to “ride the blind” by hiding in the folds of fabric that separated the passenger trains. Conductors often came from the ranks of stagecoach drivers, though many (perhaps most) came from rural backgrounds.

Perhaps because of the diversity of skills and the fixed nature of control of the parts of the locomotive, each of these skilled workers had their own unions, though the Order of Railway Trainmen and the Knights of Labor both sought to draw these workers into industrial rather than craft unions. A narrower craft consciousness may also have emerged from the peculiar industrial structure of early railways, in which rule books governing the behavior of workers became longer and longer, governing nearly every

RAILROADS

action of trainmen. While working to rule may have helped trainmen push back against the arbitrary power of foremen, it may also have fostered an over-emphasis on rules and order over solidarity and community. The very nature of early trainmen's unions may also have lent a certain closed character to their ideology. Early railway brotherhoods in the mid- to late nineteenth century resembled contemporary fraternities, in which brothers engaged in humiliating and secretive initiations that blended elements of Rosicrucianism and Masonic ritual. Brothers pledged secrecy and undying devotion to the group, exchanged secret handshakes, and pledged to work only with brothers. In a practical sense, these craft unions found it difficult to agree with each other when it came to collective action, most notoriously when engineers refused to support firemen and other trainmen in the Great Upheaval of 1877, and the Southwestern Strikes of 1886.

Railway trainmen have often been associated with radical politics. Whether engineers, firemen, conductors, or brakemen, trainmen saw themselves at the top of the labor hierarchy, both as representatives of labor and as uniquely responsible for the fate of the entire working class. In politics, many were socialists, anarchists, and later communists. Trainmen's constant mobility, both on the train and from job to job, made them particularly important for the growth of radical and working-class movements from the 1860s through the 1930s and 1940s. The Mexican historian Adolpho Gilly, for example, has argued that North American railway engineers and brakemen contributed in important ways to the intellectual ferment that created the Mexican Revolution.

Among railway trainmen, conductors faced the most direct scrutiny because they collected fares on passenger trains. Indeed, the infamous corporate spy (and bungler) Allan Pinkerton got his start spying on conductors to ensure that they did not pocket the fares collected from passengers. By the latter part of the 1850s, Pinkerton created a "detective agency" that promised to ferret out theft and eliminate emerging unions among railroad trainmen. Often the peculiar position of detectives led them to overstate the threat of workers' unions and their own importance in preventing violence. Indeed, during the Civil War, Pinkerton provided inflated figures for Confederate strength behind the lines in the Peninsular Campaign in the Civil War, leading General McClellan to delay his invasion of Richmond and extend the war by four years, a feat that ironically seemed only to expand the renown of the Pinkerton Agency. In 1878, Pinkerton published a highly colored account of railway unions in a book titled "Strikers, Communists,

Tramps, and Detectives," which purported to reveal some of the secret rituals of the railway brotherhoods in the wake of the Great Upheaval of 1877.

By the latter part of the 1870s, George Pullman created the Pullman car, a sleeping car that became a hallmark for luxury. African-Americans by this time had been excluded from the repair shops and from positions as firemen, partly through the actions of white railway brotherhoods. Some African-Americans, however, found positions as servants and cooks on the Pullman cars. Here, too, the connection between trainmen and radical politics was pronounced, as African-American Pullman car porters became important in the growing socialist movement of the early twentieth century, joining the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in great numbers. Pullman car porters, too, may have been influential in facilitating the so-called Great Migration of African-Americans to northern cities in the early decades of the twentieth century. By bringing black newspapers to the rural South, they may have encouraged thousands to leave the Jim Crow South for the less-segregated northern cities, where job opportunities and a thrilling, urban, largely African-American world beckoned.

The final and largest group among railway workers consisted of the maintainers of track, called section hands or track liners in the nineteenth century, and maintenance-of-way workers in the twentieth. Every railway in regular operation required approximately one worker for every mile of track. Usually gangs of five or more workers were responsible for a stretch of track five or more miles long. Most days, track liners relined track that heavy running or storms had driven out of line. A road boss received orders from the roadmaster, who regularly inspected the road from a hand-car. When the roadmaster noted problems on a road, he would drop a wadded note, called a butterfly, near the misaligned track. The butterfly would identify the source of the problem. Track liners relined or replaced track using railway spike hammers that resembled picks. Workers edged the longer, skinnier end of the hammer under the track to lift it. The shorter end would be used to shift the track over and to hammer down spikes. Until as late as the 1960s in the American South, African-American workers relined track by singing songs to co-ordinate the movements of track lining. Sometimes a caller would be appointed to set the pace for workers while workers sang the refrain; other times all workers would sing together. Among these songs was the folk ballad "John Henry," which told of a powerful black man who fought in a rock-drilling contest (or track-lining contest) with a steam drill. Though John Henry defeated the drill, he died

just afterward. Such songs co-ordinated labor so that workers jiggered their “dogs” or picks at the same time, but they also warned workers to slow down. The snatches of song sung by track liners (“I got a girl / She works in the yard / She brings me meat / She brings me lard”) had tremendous reach through the twentieth century, finding their way into jazz, blues, and rock and roll songs of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1960s. In addition, track lining, co-ordinated with song, may have been an important precursor to African-American step shows performed by black fraternities in the 1910s and 1920s. In modern step shows, five or more black performers hold sticks that they dance around in complex and precise lockstep formations.

African-American workers continued to work as firemen and engineers on timber lines in the South, while many continued as brakemen through the turn of the century. African-Americans served as yard workers as well. When the federal government assumed control over railways during World War I, they re-organized and streamlined routes, turning some positions back to African-Americans, who had been removed between Reconstruction and the turn of the century. After World War I ended, the federal government gave these much-improved routes to private hands. Violence ensued as white workers attacked black workers to regain their position, most visibly in the “race riots” of Memphis in 1919. Despite investigation by the Fair Employment Practice Committee during World War II, black workers were denied full seniority rights and equal opportunities for work. Only with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were African-Americans accorded something approaching full rights to wages, benefits, and employment opportunities.

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See also **Henry, John; Knights of Labor; Pullman, George Mortimer; Pullman Strike and Boycott (1894)**

RAILWAY LABOR ACTS (1920–1934)

The Railway Labor Act of 1926 represented a breakthrough in state-labor-management relations. It served as a model for both section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Wagner Act of 1935. Its genesis lay in World War I and the national railroad strike in 1922.

Transportation Act of 1920

American participation in World War I was a boon to the political and economic aspirations of the railway employees and their unions. On December 26, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson issued an executive order asserting federal operational control of the entire railroad industry. Forced to take this action because of severe railroad gridlock in the Northeast and significant rolling stock shortages nationally, the order also opened a new phase in efforts to mediate labor-management disputes in the industry. Under the auspices of the United States Railroad Administration (USRA), railway labor in general, not just the four brotherhoods, made significant advances in wages, work rules changes, membership, and state support in disputes with management. Consequently, they were loath to leave the protection of federal control

as Congress debated ending or extending the tenure of the USRA in 1919. Labor threw its considerable weight behind the Plumb Plan, a proposal for nationalizing the railroads. Instead, Congress enacted the Transportation Act of 1920 (also known as the Esch-Cummins Act) that returned the rail carriers to private operation. Though the Senate's version included both a prohibition on strikes by railroad employees and compulsory arbitration of disputes, the compromise arranged by the conference committee contained neither provision and instead represented a compromise between labor's desire to protect wartime gains and the carriers' demand for a return to prewar managerial authority.

For the first time in federal labor legislation, Title III of the Transportation Act included all employees of common carrier railroads operating in interstate commerce, not just the members of the four operating brotherhoods. It called for the creation of a tripartite United States Railroad Labor Board consisting of three members, each representing labor, management, and the public, all appointed by the president and subject to Senate approval. In practice, the public members often sided with the management representatives. The Board was empowered to act as both mediator and arbitrator concerning unresolved disputes over wages and work rules. Conspicuously absent was any power of enforcement beyond the weight of public opinion, a fact reinforced by the Supreme Court in *Pennsylvania Railroad Co. v. Railway Labor Board*. Subsidiary to the Board was a three-tier system of local, regional, and national Boards of Adjustment to hear grievances arising from disputes over the implementation of agreements. Though the Act required disputants to attempt reconciliation privately, in its five years of life, the Board heard some 13,000 cases. The large number of cases obscured a bitter reality: both unions and management intensely disliked the law. The carriers, especially after 1923, simply ignored Board decisions favorable to their employees. The four operating brotherhoods, with assistance from Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, arrived at a private accommodation with railroad executives to bypass the Board altogether in 1922. Thus, many of the cases heard by the Board involved nonoperating employees, a group fragmented across many small unions, some affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and others not, and consequently as a group susceptible to anti-union efforts by management. This situation, a privileged and minority group of employees generally unaffected by the decade's characteristic re-assertion of managerial authority and a majority that enjoyed far less stable wages and work rules, was ripe for a simultaneously catastrophic and transformative strike.

Shopmen's Strike of 1922

In early 1921 and 1922, the Railway Labor Board ordered two wage cuts that affected nonoperating railroad employees more severely than they did the members of the brotherhoods. This action, in combination with persistent management efforts to push company unions, contract shop work to nonunion firms, and install piecework pay schemes, led the leadership of the AFL's Railway Employees Department to call for a national strike by shop workers. They demanded the revocation of the wage reductions and piecework rates.

On July 1, 1922, over 400,000 machinists, boiler-makers, Carmen, and other railroad shop workers walked off their jobs in the first national railroad strike since 1894. The Railway Labor Board quickly branded the strike illegal in a 5-2 vote, simultaneously asserting that strikers had voluntarily forfeited their positions and seniority and that their replacements were entitled to all the protections of the law. The leadership of the operating brotherhoods sympathized with the strikers in the abstract, but beyond sporadic walkouts emanating mostly from the behavior of railroad guards, their membership stayed on the job. Widespread violence against persons and property by both sides characterized the strike everywhere. After two attempts by President William Harding to arrange a settlement compromise, rejected in turn by the railroads and then the unions, the weight of the federal government fell behind the carriers.

In September 1922, Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty sought and received from Judge James H. Wilkerson of the United States District Court of Illinois a sweeping injunction. Citing the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, Wilkerson branded the strike a criminal conspiracy and enjoined the unions, their executives, and membership from any strike activity whatsoever. The injunction, combined with the success of the carriers in obtaining strikebreakers and the poor finances of the shop unions, led the shopmen's leadership to reach a settlement with a coalition of moderate eastern railroad executives. The agreement guaranteed the positions and seniority of returning strikers and provided for the creation of a commission to negotiate problems between replacements and returning employees. Approximately 100,000 strikers returned to work under this agreement. However, many carriers, especially in the West, were not party to the agreement and were determined to break both the strike and the shop unions, a desire eventually realized, though in some areas strike activity lingered into 1928. The strike essentially destroyed the various shop unions, and even those strikers who returned to work faced an emboldened management.

Railway Labor Act of 1926

The strike, especially its widespread violence but also the frightening implications of the Wilkerson injunction, revealed the inadequacy of the Railroad Labor Board and the deficiencies in the Transportation Act. Between 1923 and 1926, a number of reform proposals appeared in Congress. The bill that eventually became the Railway Labor Act emerged from several meetings between union and railway leaders at the suggestion of President Calvin Coolidge. Passed with little debate, the bill became law on May 20, 1926.

The Railway Labor Act put the federal government squarely behind the principle of collective bargaining in the railroad industry. The Act eliminated the Railway Labor Board, replacing it with a five-member Board of Mediation, empowered to provide mandatory mediation but not compulsory arbitration. It specified the creation of emergency presidential commissions when disputes appeared intractable and specifically prohibited strikes during the 30-day period mandated for its investigations and deliberations and an additional 30 days thereafter. To speed the resolution of minor disputes—those concerning the interpretation of agreements—the Act instituted a series of adjustment boards, an idea borrowed from the period of federal control. Most important, the Act protected the right of railroad employees to bargain collectively and elect representatives free from employee coercion. For the carriers, the bill protected the company unions that had emerged after the 1922 strike, especially in the shop crafts, and limited the scope of collective bargaining to individual systems.

Railway Labor Act Amendments of 1934

Often ignored in the larger sweep of New Deal-era labor legislation, the 1934 amendments to the Railway Labor Act significantly expanded employee and union protections and gave visible indication of the power of the brotherhoods in the building of a New Deal coalition while simultaneously presaging many of the provisions of the Wagner Act. The amendments emerged amidst a railroad industry financial meltdown that left almost 50 major railroads near or in bankruptcy by 1934. The amendments extended to all railroad workers the employee protections written into the Bankruptcy Act of 1932 and the Emergency Railroad Transportation Act of 1933. Those laws had prohibited carriers in bankruptcy from using yellow-dog contracts, influencing employees in representation decisions, enforcing closed shops (often used to

protect company unions), or refusing to bargain collectively with certified representatives. To these provisions were added a new permanent and bipartisan National Railroad Adjustment Board to handle grievances relating to interpretations of agreements with neutral referees appointed in case of a deadlock. The Act also extended the cooling-off period by an additional 30 days and added specific language rendering the decisions of the Board enforceable in federal court and infractions punishable by fine or imprisonment. Last, it called for a reduction in the membership of the Board of Mediation, itself renamed the National Mediation Board, because it no longer handled grievances, but granted the revamped organization authority to conduct representation elections.

These amendments withstood constitutional challenge in 1937 in *Virginia Railway Co. v. System Federation no. 40, AFL*. Later amended in 1936, 1940, 1951, 1964, and 1970, the basic provisions of the Railway Labor Act remain in place. Though the Act served as a model for later legislation for all workers, its emphasis on arbitration, strike avoidance, and federal intervention continue to mark out railroad labor from the rest of the American union movement.

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RAMSAY, CLAUDE (1916–1986) **President, Mississippi AFL-CIO**

Claude Ramsay was born in 1916 on a farm near Fort Bayou, Mississippi, eight miles from the Gulf Coast. He began work at the International Paper plant in Moss Point, Mississippi, in 1939, and advanced rapidly inside the mill until he was drafted in 1942. Ramsay's experience in the Army shook his faith in segregation, and he returned from the war interested in politics. He supported President Harry Truman in the 1948 elections, while the rest of Mississippi defected to the Dixiecrats, who bolted the Democratic Party over civil rights. He became active in his union and was elected president of Paperworkers Local 203 in 1951 and president of the Jackson County Central Labor Council the following year. Ramsay was elected the second president of the recently merged Mississippi AFL-CIO in 1959 because he was regarded as the only candidate who could bring former AFL and CIO local unions together. Both wings of the labor movement perceived him as capable, determined, and deeply committed to unions.

Ramsay made his mark as the president of the Mississippi AFL-CIO. He supported unions, civil rights, and the national Democratic Party in a state that reviled all three. Regarding unions, Mississippi was as hostile and forbidding as any state in the country. Ramsay confronted this anti-union sentiment immediately upon his election as president. Not content with having a right-to-work law on the books, the state legislature decided in 1960 to make the right to work part of the state constitution, which required a referendum by voters. Ramsay led a gallant but losing fight against the proposition. Defeat clarified for Ramsay that the Mississippi AFL-CIO was too weak to defend itself politically. In order to remove anti-union laws and defeat anti-union legislators, the Mississippi AFL-CIO would need allies.

Ramsay found his allies in the emerging civil rights movement. Despite the fact that Mississippi seethed with segregationist sentiment, Ramsay aligned the labor movement with black civil rights groups. Ramsay believed that unions in Mississippi could

prevail only if blacks were enfranchised. Antilabor legislators from agricultural Black Belt districts in Mississippi could be defeated only with the help of black voters who lived there. Simple arithmetic led Ramsay to form coalitions with the Mississippi NAACP, fund register-and-vote drives among blacks, and support local civil rights groups.

Ramsay was also deeply engaged in Democratic Party politics. The Mississippi Democrat Party (the Regulars) refused to support the Party's presidential ticket in 1964 because it opposed the national Party's strong civil rights planks. Four years later, in preparation for the 1968 elections, Ramsay and other liberal Democrats in Mississippi formed the Loyalists to challenge the Regulars for control of the statewide Democratic Party. The Loyalists sought to create a bona fide Democratic Party in Mississippi, one that was loyal to the national Party's platform and candidates.

Ramsay's support of unions, civil rights, and the national Democrat Party put him at odds not only with Mississippi's ruling class, but with his own members. Local unions protested Ramsay's stance against segregation, his support for the national Democratic Party, and his alliance with civil rights groups by disaffiliating from the Mississippi AFL-CIO. When they walked out, they took their dues money with them. The Mississippi state council stayed afloat financially only because of subsidies it received from the AFL-CIO in Washington, DC. Even more discouraging for Ramsay were the inroads white supremacy groups, such as the Citizens' Councils, the Ku Klux Klan, and the John Birch Society, made among his members and the public denunciations of the Mississippi AFL-CIO that issued from them. Local unions and their members publicly repudiated Ramsay's leadership because of his outspoken support for black civil rights.

The 1960s were a decade of trial for Ramsay as Mississippi was consumed with making a last, desperate stand to defend segregation. Candidates endorsed by the Mississippi AFL-CIO lost repeatedly, and Mississippi AFL-CIO membership declined precipitously. The ordeal even extended into Ramsay's personal life as his family was harassed and his life threatened. He kept a shotgun in his car and let it be known that he was armed at all times in order to discourage would-be assassins.

As the tumult of the 1960s dissipated, Ramsay began to see results from his efforts to alter the political climate in Mississippi. At the 1968 Democratic national convention, an integrated group of Loyalist delegates from Mississippi were seated in place of the Regulars. Membership to the Mississippi AFL-CIO began to recover as local unions that had disaffiliated in protest to Ramsay's alliance with civil rights groups now rejoined. In addition, Ramsay's alliance

with blacks began to pay political dividends. The Mississippi AFL-CIO found political allies among increasing numbers of newly elected black legislators and newly enfranchised black voters.

Ramsay died on January 17, 1986, just one month after retiring as president of the Mississippi AFL-CIO, a post he held for 26 years. In an odd way, his funeral vindicated and symbolized the principles for which he had fought. Black leaders, who would have been denied entry into the funeral home previously, were now in attendance and walked by his casket garlanded in flowers that spelled out "AFL-CIO." Mississippi politicians who did not even bother to solicit the state council's endorsement when Ramsay took office in 1959 now sat in the pews to pay homage to labor's fallen leader. And newspapers in Mississippi that had excoriated him mercilessly for his civil rights activity in the past now hailed him as a prophet and acknowledged in their obituaries that Mississippi was a better place for his courageous efforts.

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RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP (1889-1979) President, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

Asa Philip Randolph was one of the most prominent black freedom fighters of the twentieth century. He became the editor of the *Messenger*, a black

Socialist weekly; a labor organizer; the president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first black labor union to be recognized by a major corporation; the head of the March on Washington Movement; and the convener of the historic 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Randolph was born in 1889 in Crescent City, Florida. His father was an ordained AME minister who, along with his wife, Elizabeth, also ran a tailoring business to help provide for his family. Asa was nurtured in the AME heritage. His father's ministry stressed a social gospel message, emphasizing racial justice. The Reverend James Randolph, Asa recalled, told his parishioners that the AME Church was a black independent institution whose mission, in part, was social. Along with stressing the social gospel, the elder Randolph also taught his son racial pride, informing him of the great black figures such as Nat Turner and Frederick Douglass. A. Philip Randolph was well acquainted with the religious teachings of the Bible. He noted that as a child he would sit and read the Bible, and his mother, Elizabeth, who was considered the disciplinarian in the Randolph household, was very devout. In fact, the church was the center of her world. All of her friends were members of the church, and all of her activities outside of the household were in the church. Thus, Randolph's parents had an important influence in shaping his religious beliefs. Although Randolph would later become critical of conventional religion and certain types of religious leaders, he would not abandon black church culture but incorporate its language in the battles he waged for social justice.

Labor Organizer and Socialist

When Randolph was very young, he and his family moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where the Rev. James Randolph became pastor of a local AME church. Asa and his older brother James would later attend Cookman Institute, one of the first high schools for blacks in Florida. Soon after graduating from Cookman Institute, Randolph worked at odd jobs, including selling insurance premiums and clerking in a grocery store. He eventually decided to migrate to New York City in 1911, seeking a career in acting. In New York, Randolph worked at several occupations, including working as a porter and a waiter on a steamboat. As a result of what he said was job exploitation, he attempted to organize the waiters and other workers on the steamboat. However, when management received wind of his activity, he was fired. He also created an Elevator and Switchboard Operators Union, thereby gaining early experience as a labor



Asa Philip Randolph seated with President Lyndon Johnson. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-104210].

organizer. Randolph also attended the City College of New York, where he took courses in political science, history, and economics, as well as other courses in the humanities and social sciences. It was at City College that Randolph first learned about Socialist and Marxist theory.

Randolph also received an education in politics on the streets of New York. There he heard “soapbox” orators such as Eugene V. Debs and the black Socialist Hubert Harrison preach the gospel of Socialism. Motivated by their class analysis, Randolph became convinced that there were numerous benefits for working-class African-Americans in industrial unionism. After meeting Chandler Owen and acquainting him with Socialism, both men became members of the Socialist Party, arguing that racism was rooted in capitalist exploitation and that Socialism was the best means of liberating the black masses.

In 1917, Randolph and Owen started the first black Socialist journal in the country, the *Messenger*. A number of Harlem radicals wrote for the *Messenger*, including the Rev. George Frazier Miller, the pastor of an Episcopalian church in Brooklyn, New York; W. A. Domingo and Lovett Fort-Whiteman, who would later be two of the first people of African origins to join the American Communist Party; and the journalist George Schuyler. During the early part of its existence, the *Messenger* celebrated the Russian

Revolution, supported Socialist candidates for office, pushed for industrial unionism, and advocated a Socialist solution to the race problem in America. One of the most controversial issues addressed by the *Messenger* was World War I. But after 1919, the *Messenger* became anticommunist in tone, indicating Randolph’s opposition to forces outside of the country attempting to give direction to the Socialist movement and his opinion that Communists were responsible for the schism within the Socialist Party.

Randolph and Owen opposed the war and used the pages of their magazine to publicize their opposition. They pointed to the hypocrisy of a country that claimed it was fighting to make the world safe for democracy but would not do anything to end the racial terror on its own shores. Randolph and Owen were both arrested for speaking out against the war and charged with violating the Espionage Act.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

During World War I, Randolph created the Brotherhood of Labor, an agency whose mission, in large part, was to educate new black migrants to New York City on the social, economic, and political conditions of the city. Randolph organized a number of

trade unions. However, despite his efforts in creating unions, these organizations did not have a long life. Because of his lack of success in creating and maintaining for any significant amount of time a labor organization, by 1924 Randolph decided to give up on labor organizing and instead dedicate his full attention to his magazine. However, he would change his mind about labor organizing when in 1925 he was asked to help the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) in their fight to win the right to collectively bargain with its employer, the Pullman Company.

The Pullman Palace Car Company was created by George Pullman in 1867. The luxurious sleeper train cars consisted of red carpet, wood ornaments, and silver-trimmed oil lamps. On each train, there was a buffet sleeping car, smoking room, chandelier, and other items to make readers feel like they were in a hotel on wheels. Of course, the most important components of Pullman's operations were the porters. Pullman recruited former slaves to perform the various services required on the train to make passengers comfortable. The services included accepting and discharging customers, taking care of luggage, making the beds, changing the linen, cleaning the cars, and waiting on passengers. Apparently, Pullman came to the conclusion that former slaves were the best people to perform these tasks because of their time spent in servitude. Hence, from the start of the Pullman's Company's incorporation, black men were relegated to the job of porter. By the 1920s, the Pullman Company was the largest employer of black men in the United States.

Porters were paid poorly, worked long hours, and were treated badly by management. In fact, a porter's monthly salary was less than a New York City factory worker's. The company expected blacks to be grateful, loyal, and obedient to their employer and management, and they were required to be polite to the passengers regardless of the circumstances. In fact, because they depended on tips to supplement their meager wages, porters dared not challenge rude and disrespectful customers. One of the worst aspects of the job was when porters were compelled into "dead-heading" and forced to "double out." Deadheading meant they had to work many hours a month without receiving wages for that time. Doubling out meant that when a porter returned from a long run, he could be ordered to go out on the next train without rest. These and other practices reduced the porters to menial servants. Although the first generation of porters did not express their displeasure about their working conditions, the more educated black men who replaced the former slaves were more willing to articulate their dissatisfaction with their treatment.

Randolph at first was reluctant to get involved in the Brotherhood's struggle to win recognition as the collective bargaining agency for Pullman porters, but after he investigated their grievances, he decided to help lead the campaign for recognition. Under his leadership, several chapters of the BSCP were organized, including New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Seattle, Omaha, Los Angeles, Washington DC, Denver, Boston, Buffalo, and Oakland. The fight to win recognition was a 12-year struggle between the union and the Pullman Company. The company employed a host of intimidating tactics including creating and using a spy network, firing workers, persuading religious leaders and many of the black middle class to publicly denounce the Brotherhood, and organizing a company union to undermine the Brotherhood's legitimacy. The union's membership, which had reached a high of nearly 7,000 in 1928, fell to around 770 by 1932.

However, Randolph and the organizers and members of the BSCP persevered. Randolph and the BSCP did not only turn to porters to win recognition but relied on support from community, labor, and civic organizations. In particular, Randolph requested and received support from many in the various black religious communities. A number of black pastors allowed Randolph to hold BSCP meetings in their churches. When he addressed meetings of porters, Randolph did not speak of Socialism but used the religious oratory with which many in the black community were acquainted.

Finally, in 1937, the union won recognition after the passage of an amendment to the Railway Labor Act in 1934 giving Pullman porters and dining car cooks and waiters the right to organize and collectively bargain. Eventually, the Railroad Mediation Board ordered an election for employee representatives for the porters, and the BSCP overwhelmingly won. By the summer of 1935, the Brotherhood began formal negotiations with the Pullman Company. But it should be noted that while it was because of the Emergency Railroad Transportation Act (ERTA) and the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) that the BSCP eventually received recognition, the fact that Randolph and the members of the BSCP "stayed the course" and did not fold led to the union's victory. Moreover, the BSCP should be seen as more than a labor organization. Randolph and the leaders of the organization interpreted their struggle as a civil rights one. Throughout his public career, Randolph argued that civil rights must be linked to the rights of working people, and in numerous speeches and letters, Randolph contended that the battle for recognition was to win dignity and respect for black people.

The National Negro Congress and the March on Washington Movement

Randolph remained active in the fight for labor and civil rights. In 1935, the National Negro Congress (NNC) was formed to help foster greater collaboration among black political, religious, and civic organizations. Some of the country's most important black leaders were involved in the new organization such as Lester Granger of the Urban League; Adam Clayton Powell Jr. of Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem; Alain Locke, a professor of philosophy at Howard University; and Randolph. Randolph was offered and accepted the presidency of the new organization. However, shortly after he accepted the leadership of the NNC, he became involved in a battle with the American Communist Party. The Party was an early supporter of the NNC and had sent a number of delegates to its opening convention. Randolph, in his first presidential address, warned against Communist attempts to take over the organization. Nevertheless, the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) was a major financial contributor to the NNC. In its determination to see that the NNC survive, the Communist Party also provided personnel, who moved into key positions. Eventually, Randolph resigned as president, citing many issues, including the Communist Party's influence over the Congress.

When Nazi Germany began invading and occupying countries in Europe, American industries began contracting with the government to increase production of ships, tanks, guns, and other items for defense. Despite the urgent need for tens of thousands of skilled workers to help in the production of these items, war production companies refused to hire blacks. Moreover, the federal government refused to take steps to end the racial discriminatory actions of these industries. In fact, the administration publicly announced that it would continue to segregate blacks and whites who enlisted in the armed services. In response to the blatant discrimination on the part of industry and the government, Randolph launched the March on Washington Movement (MOWM), which helped organized thousands of people of African origins in the United States to march on the nation's capital in 1941, demanding that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issue an executive order banning discrimination in the defense industry. The March on Washington Committee was organized and headed by Randolph and consisted of prominent black leaders such as Walter White of the NAACP and Lester Granger of the Urban League. Although Eleanor Roosevelt met with Randolph and White to convince them to call off the march, Randolph refused, insisting

that the president agree to ban discrimination in the defense industry. The threat of thousands of black people coming to Washington DC to protest convinced FDR to hold a meeting with Randolph and other march leaders in June 1941. Although the president attempted to convince Randolph to call off the march, he refused unless an executive order was issued. Eventually, FDR agreed, and his close ally, Mayor Fiorello La Guardia of New York, Randolph, and others associated with the White House worked out a compromise. The compromise was Executive Order 8802, which banned employment discrimination in the defense industry and the government. FDR also created a temporary Fair Employment Practice Committee to help ensure that defense manufacturers would not practice racial discrimination. Because of a major victory in forcing the government to take action against discrimination, the first time since Reconstruction, Randolph agreed to call off the march.

Banning Discrimination in the Armed Forces and the Second March on Washington

Randolph's confrontation with FDR would not be the last time he clashed with a U.S. president. He believed that President Harry S. Truman's 1947 call for a peacetime draft was an opportunity to demand an end to discrimination in the armed forces. The leader of the MOWM helped establish the League for Nonviolent Civil Disobedience Against Military Segregation. The group announced a campaign of civil disobedience to force the president to issue an executive order ending segregation in the military. Truman responded by calling a meeting of prominent black leaders, including Randolph; however, nothing was resolved at the meeting. Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee considering the draft bill, Randolph warned that if segregation was not ended in the armed services, blacks would refuse to serve. Under pressure from Randolph and other black leaders and fearing losing the black vote in a close election, Truman decided to issue Executive Order 9981 ending discrimination in the United States military.

Randolph's prominence as a civil rights leader faded by the time the modern civil rights movement emerged. New leaders and organizations such as Martin Luther King Jr., Fred Shuttlesworth, and Ralph Abernathy of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; James Farmer and Bayard Rustin of the Congress of Racial Equality; and John Lewis and Diane Nash of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee moved to the forefront in the fight for

racial justice. In addition, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam gained a great deal of attention, condemning white racism and calling for the separation of races as the solution to the race problem in America. However, Randolph remained a respected figure in the civil rights community. In 1962, Randolph and Bayard Rustin suggested that a march on Washington for Jobs and Freedom be organized. They met with black leaders, and Randolph was selected as the national director of the march while Rustin was chosen as the march's organizer. Civil rights groups, labor unions, civic organizations, and prominent individuals endorsed the endeavor. President Kennedy met with march organizers and expressed fear that violence was going to erupt in the streets, thereby harming the chances of his proposed civil rights bill of passing in Congress. Randolph responded to the president's concern by pointing out to him that blacks were already in the streets and that it would be better for them to come under the influence of civil rights leaders. Thus, the civil rights leaders did not back down from Kennedy.

To ensure a positive tone from speakers of the event, Randolph convinced John Lewis, the head of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, to alter his speech, which called for a scorched-earth policy to win civil rights. Despite Kennedy's reluctance, on August 28, 1963, 250,000 people came to the nation's capital, making the March on Washington one of the most memorable events in modern American history.

In 1964, Randolph created the A. Philip Randolph Institute to strengthen the ties between labor and civil rights organizations. He contended that the civil rights movement needed the help of labor to help advance economic justice for African-Americans. In 1965, the institute created the A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund to help establish a forum where people could discuss strategies for providing programs for social justice. The Fund was a think tank for the civil rights movement. Due to ill health, Randolph retired from his position as president of the BSCP and vice president of the AFL-CIO executive council. A. Philip Randolph died on May 16, 1979, at the age of 89.

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See also **A. Philip Randolph Institute; Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; March on Washington Movement; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); National Urban League**

RETAIL, WHOLESALE, AND DEPARTMENT STORE UNION

Since its establishment in 1937, the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union (RWDSU) was the primary Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) union organizing in the distributive industry. Unlike its American Federation of Labor (AFL) counterparts, it focused on department store, wholesale, and warehouse workers, as opposed to food store workers. The RWDSU formed from a split within the AFL's Retail Clerks International Protective Association (RCIPA). It was centered in major metropolitan areas in the United States and Canada, with its strongest locals in New York City. Many of those New York City locals had strong ties with the left and especially the Communist Party. These connections led to conflict within the RWDSU during the Second Red Scare of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Some scholars maintain that these conflicts hindered organized labor's ability to keep up with retail expansion in the suburbs following World War II. The RWDSU also spawned the National Health Care Workers Union, Local 1199, in the 1960s. In 1993, the RWDSU combined with the United Food and Commercial Workers, AFL-CIO, Central Labor Council (CLC).

The Founding of the Union

Two New York City locals of the RCIPA, Local 338 led by Samuel Wolchok and Local 1250 led by

Clarina Michelson, formed the center of what eventually became the RWDSU. Wolchok had a socialist background and was a noted anticommunist. In contrast, Local 1250's origins lay with the Office Worker's Union, supported by the Communist Party-backed Trade Union Unity League (TUUL). These locals, and others, were dissatisfied with the RCIPA's lack of militancy, lack of support for new organizing, and lack of democratic representation in the international. They viewed the RCIPA as failing to take a strong stand on key workplace issues, including the seasonality of employment, late closings, and unpaid overtime. In 1937, the dissenting locals formed the New Era Committee, which presented an opposition slate for RCIPA elections. When this action failed to bring about reform in the union, the New Era Committee applied for and received a charter with the CIO, forming the United Retail Employees of America (UREA). Shortly thereafter, Local 65, representing garment district wholesale and warehouse workers, joined as well. Wolchok served as president of the new union until 1948.

The CIO charter coincided with a wave of sit-down strikes at various retail and department store establishments in New York City, Philadelphia, Providence, and elsewhere. Key demands included union recognition, a 40-hour week, and minimum wage increases. In this context, the UREA administered the CIO's Department Store Organizing Committee (DSOC), originally led by Sidney Hillman. Local 1250 was instrumental in organizing other major New York City department stores, which were chartered as locals of the DSOC. Macy's nonselling staff became Local 1-S, Gimbels and Saks 34th Street were Local 2, Bloomingdale's was Local 3, and Stern's was Local 5. While the union had most of its success in New York City, it also organized major stores in Pittsburgh, Providence, Boston, and Chicago. St. Louis, Toledo, and Detroit also had significant membership in the wholesale, warehouse, and dairy sections. The DSOC was officially dissolved in 1940, and the UREA became the United Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Employees of America (URWDSEA). After World War II, the name was shortened to the RWDSU.

World War II

During World War II, like most unions, the RWDSU abided by the no-strike pledge. However, the union also saw during this period significant conflict, including a series of strikes, against Montgomery Ward & Co. The union had the support of both the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the War Labor

Board (WLB) in its disputes with Montgomery Ward. After a 13-day strike in 1944, President Franklin Roosevelt ordered Montgomery Ward to sign the contract proposed by the WLB. The company declined, so the United States Army took over the company's property and removed the company president. Despite the union's support from the government, the Montgomery Ward strikes divided the union on political grounds. Arthur Osman and 500 stewards from the very left-wing Local 65 publicly criticized the RWDSU leadership for allowing strikes to go forward in violation of the no-strike pledge.

The RWDSU expanded into Canada in 1945, organizing food processing and warehouse establishments in Ontario and Saskatchewan. It grew rapidly in the years following World War II, while Cold War politics weakened and divided the union in the United States.

The Second Red Scare

The New York City department store locals, Local 65, retail Local 830, drugstore employees' Local 1199, and displaymen's Local 144, formed a faction with close ties to the Communist Party in a largely anti-communist international. These political differences generated considerable conflict. This friction came to a head in 1948 when nine of the left-wing locals, which composed half of the RWDSU's membership, seceded from the international and formed their own independent union. The secession was sparked by those locals' refusal to submit the noncommunist affidavits required by the Taft-Hartley Act. In August 1948, Wolchok threatened to seize the noncomplying locals, beginning with Local 1-S (which was willing to comply). Local 1-S voted to secede, followed closely by Locals 2, 3, 5, 1250, 65, 830, 1199, and 144. All but Local 1-S and Local 830 then formed the Distributive Workers Union (DWU) in February 1950, led by Arthur Osman, who was the founder and president of Local 65. At the DWU's founding convention, Osman advocated compliance with the Taft-Hartley law and the filing of noncommunist affidavits. Officers who were members of the Communist Party resigned their memberships, signed and dated the resignations, and put them in vaults. They then filed the affidavits. Many of the leaders were subsequently accused of perjury in connection to the affidavits. A federal grand jury and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee both accused union officers of maintaining Communist ties subsequent to the filing. The DWU was short-lived. In October 1950, it merged with two left-wing unions that had been purged

from the CIO, the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied Workers and the United Office and Professional Workers of America, to form the Distributive, Processing, and Office Workers Union of America (DPOWA). Each major city merged its locals into one. Philadelphia had District 76. The New York City locals merged to form District 65, led by David Livingston. In 1954, the DPOWA joined the CIO, and dissident RWDSU locals rejoined the RWDSU.

During the 1950s, the move of department stores to the suburbs posed a major challenge to the RWDSU, now led by Max Greenberg until 1975. As major New York City department stores under union contract closed their doors, suburban branches of these same stores were on the rise. The suburban stores were not unionized. Through the 1950s and 1960s, the RWDSU attempted to bring suburban stores in the Northeast and the Midwest under contract. In this effort, the RWDSU anticipated broader efforts by the AFL-CIO decades later to organize large retailers not located in urban areas that were traditional union strongholds. The RWDSU drive focused on the particular benefits it could offer women workers, such as paid maternity leave and pension and retirement benefits. These efforts had some small successes, but the campaign was largely unsuccessful.

1960s to the Present

In the 1960s and 1970s, RWDSU Local 1199, led by Leon Davis, emerged as a new force in the labor movement. Starting in 1959 and continuing through the 1980s, Local 1199 organized hospital workers, first in New York City and then in other major cities, including Charleston and Philadelphia. 1199 became semi-independent from the RWDSU, constituting itself as the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees in 1973.

Factionalism affected the RWDSU again in 1969 when District 65 and 10 other locals in seven states that opposed the international's support for the Vietnam War seceded to form the Distributive Workers of America (DWA). The DWA, led by Cleveland Robinson, then joined the Alliance for Labor Action (ALA), a labor organization formed to challenge the AFL-CIO in 1969. The ALA disbanded in 1971.

Alvin Heaps led the RWDSU from 1976 to 1986. Under his leadership, the RWDSU attempted to reassert control over Local 1199 and re-absorb it wholly into the union. This attempt failed, and in 1984, the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, whose membership was predominantly

African-American and female, left the RWDSU and eventually merged with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Women had been an increasing proportion of the membership of the international since World War II, and a significant number of locals had a majority female membership. Women often served as shop stewards and local officers. Regardless, through the history of the union, women were underrepresented at the highest levels of leadership. Heaps's unexpected death resulted in the ascension of Lenore Miller to head the union, the first female president of the union.

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See also Alliance for Labor Action; Davis, Leon; Sit-Down Strikes (1937)

REUTHER, WALTER (1907–1970) President, United Auto Workers

Perhaps more than any other labor leader, Walter Philip Reuther embodied the hopes and limits of organized labor's golden moment. He began his career as a radical organizer in 1930s Detroit. In the mid-1940s, he assumed the presidency of the union he had helped to build, the United Auto Workers (UAW). A man of imposing intellect, boundless energy, and fierce ambition, Reuther used his position to push the boundaries of collective bargaining, strengthen labor's voice in American politics, and promote a host of progressive causes. Despite all his efforts, though, at the time of his death in 1970 the goal closest to his heart—the democratization of industry—remained a dream unfulfilled.

Walter Reuther was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, on September 1, 1907, the second son of German-born working-class parents. His mother,

Anna, was a devout Lutheran; his father, Valentine, a fervent unionist and socialist. Anna and Valentine ran their family like a socialist *Volksverein*, organizing family debates on social issues, stocking their small library with socialist pamphlets, and continually encouraging their children to work for the advancement of the working class. Walter and his siblings—older brother Ted, younger brothers Roy and Victor, and sister Christine—learned their lessons well. By the time they were teenagers, they, too, had become committed socialists, high-minded and moralistic in their commitment to social change.

While Valentine shaped his children's political consciousness, he also urged them to learn trades, the surest route to security for working-class Americans in the early twentieth century. Walter decided to become a tool and die maker. It was a telling choice. Tool and die workers were the most modern of craftsmen, responsible for making the molds and dies manufacturers used to mass-produce goods. To make his way in the trade, a young man had to have an intimate knowledge of the production process, an ability to conceptualize intricate designs, and the dedication to see those designs to completion. Walter loved it. At age 15, he left school to take up an apprenticeship at a Wheeling metal shop. The apprenticeship was supposed to last four years, but after just three, Reuther decided he had learned enough to test his skills on the open market. So he packed up his tools and headed for the world's most modern industrial center: Detroit.

It is hard to imagine a more audacious move. Detroit's auto factories were marvels of integrated manufacturing; up and down vast assembly lines, armies of workingmen and women pieced together thousands of perfectly machined parts, from engine blocks to rumble seats. To keep this complex system running, auto companies hired the best tool and die makers they could find, not untested teenagers fresh from West Virginia. But Reuther walked straight into the premier tool shop in the city, at Henry Ford's fabled Highland Park plant, and talked his way into one of the highest-paying jobs a blue-collar worker could find.

The wonders of mass production did not last long. Just two years after Reuther began working at Ford's, the national economy collapsed. The Great Depression hit the auto industry with particular force: by 1931, Detroit's unemployment rate had climbed to a cataclysmic 30%. Protected by his skill, Reuther held on to his job. But the widespread misery that surrounded him confirmed the political lessons his father had taught him. In the first few years of the 1930s, Walter immersed himself in socialist activities, rushing from meeting to meeting, rally to rally. In

1932, the Depression's worst year, he campaigned relentlessly for the Socialist Party presidential candidate, Norman Thomas. As soon as the election results were in, the Ford Motor Company informed Reuther that he was fired.

There is no firm evidence that Reuther lost job because of his political activity. But his sudden entry into the ranks of the unemployed certainly opened new avenues for his activism. With his younger brother Victor at his side, Walter embarked on a round-the-world educational tour, which culminated in an 18-month stint as a worker in the Soviet Union's Gorki auto plant. The Soviets' attempt to build a workers' state deeply impressed him. Though it is unlikely he ever joined the Communist Party, he and Victor returned to the United States in the spring of 1935 determined to bring a revolution to American industrial relations.

The moment was propitious. The previous year, a group of dissident union leaders broke from the nation's largest labor organization, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) with the intention of bringing unionization to the nation's core industries. Walter's brother Roy had already volunteered as a foot soldier in the campaign, working as an organizer among the autoworkers of Flint, a hard-scrabble industrial town 70 miles north of Detroit. Walter and Victor signed on, too, joining other radicals in a left-wing cadre within the fledgling United Auto Workers. With his typical alacrity, Walter launched himself into a leadership position. Within months of his arrival back in Detroit, Reuther had become the president of UAW Local 174 and a member of the union's executive board.

At first, these were largely empty appointments, since the UAW had virtually no members. Then the epic sit-down strikes of 1936–1937 forced two of the three largest automakers—General Motors and the Chrysler Corporation—to recognize the UAW as the representative of their workers. As the UAW's status skyrocketed, so did Reuther's standing. Almost overnight, the radical organizer became a labor leader, sharing responsibility for a 400,000-member union that, because of its strategic position, wielded enormous influence over the American economy.

Reuther used his new authority to advance his vision of a restructured economic order. It is impossible to say when he first encountered the ideas of Thorstein Veblen. He could have encountered them in his father's library. Or perhaps one of his socialist comrades had suggested a few titles to him. Whatever the source, Reuther found in Veblen's 1921 book, *The Engineers and the Price System*, a framework that would shape his thinking for the rest of his life.

Veblen argued that new technology made it possible for the economy to create unlimited abundance. But businesspersons refused to unleash technology's extraordinary abundance, Veblen said. Instead, they manipulated the price system to create scarcity and maximize profit. The key to prosperity, then, was to strip businesspersons of their control over the industrial system and hand it to experts who would serve the public interest.

It is not surprising that a former tool and die maker—steeped in the details of production, trained in the power of planning—would find these ideas appealing. Reuther's particular genius was finding ways to make them palatable to the American public. To that end, Reuther rejected Veblen's choice of ideal experts—engineers—and instead argued that the economic decision making should be shared by representatives of business, labor, and the government: a democratic reconstruction of economic affairs. Rather than call for the complete refashioning of private enterprise, moreover, Reuther proposed piecemeal change, which he invariably linked to an issue of pressing national concern. He first unveiled the strategy in 1941. That year, the Roosevelt administration was desperately preparing for war. But the major airplane manufacturers were refusing to mass-produce military aircraft. There was a simple way to break the bottleneck, Reuther said. Retool auto factories so that they begin making planes. And to make sure the job was done correctly, put the new operation under the joint control of the auto companies, the UAW, and the federal government. In no time at all, promised Reuther, the industry would be manufacturing "500 planes a day." Auto executives objected so strenuously that the proposal quickly died. Yet its originality and sheer audacity won Reuther a string of admirers among Washington's liberal elite. The plan even impressed Franklin Roosevelt, who took to calling Walter "my young, red-headed engineer."

As Reuther built a national reputation, he also embroiled himself in an increasingly fierce battle for control of the UAW. At the time of the sit-down strike, Reuther had allied himself with the union's small but influential communist faction. Shortly thereafter, the alliance shattered. Gradually, Reuther constructed around him a new bloc of supporters, expressly committed to purging the communists from the union. The UAW's left wing responded by charging that Reuther was trying to grab power at any cost. All through the early 1940s the conflict raged, both sides locked in endless rounds of charge and countercharge. As the nation slipped into the Cold War in 1946, the conflict finally tipped Reuther's way. In a bitterly contested campaign, he traded on the growing anticommunist hysteria to win the

UAW's presidency. His opponents claimed his victory was a triumph for the right wing. Reuther saw it differently. "We are the vanguard," he proclaimed in his inaugural speech. "We are the architects of the future, and we are going to fashion the weapons with which we will work and fight and build."

For the next 24 years, Reuther tried to uphold that pledge. Under his direction, the UAW moved collective bargaining far beyond the question of wages rates. Reuther forced auto manufacturers to provide their workers with comprehensive health care, retirement plans, paid vacations, cost-of-living allowances, and in perhaps his greatest coup, supplemental unemployment benefits, which gave autoworkers a substantial portion of their pay while they were laid off. These benefits did not vault UAW members into the middle class, as social commentators often claimed. But they did assure them a level of security unimaginable only a few decades earlier.

Reuther also dramatically increased the UAW's political power. From its founding, the union had worked with the Democratic Party. Reuther strengthened the ties. Thanks to the efforts of Walter's brother Roy, who directed the union's political department, the UAW came to dominate the Michigan Democratic Party, while union funds and personnel poured into the Democrats' national campaigns. In the mid-1950s, moreover, Reuther engineered the merger of the AFL and the CIO, thus creating a potential political bloc of 15 million members. Such efforts opened doors: from Harry Truman onward, Democratic presidents courted Reuther's support and welcomed his counsel. And on one occasion, Lyndon Johnson considered appointing him to a cabinet post.

The UAW president used his influence to promote a host of social reforms. He vigorously supported the extension of the welfare state, hoping he could bring to the United States the "cradle to grave" social provisions Western European nations provided their citizens. He dreamed of rebuilding American cities, replacing crumbling ghettos with gleaming modern homes that the poor could afford. Though he was a committed anticommunist, he favored negotiations with the Soviet Union and campaigned for nuclear disarmament. And he was a devoted ally of the post-war era's greatest social movement, the struggle for racial equality. UAW money helped to underwrite the southern civil rights movement. Union lobbyists fought relentlessly for civil rights legislation. And time and again Reuther lent the cause his voice, even when many white UAW members wanted him to remain silent.

As important as all those commitments were, however, they never displaced Reuther's dream of democratizing the American economy. Throughout his

presidency, he searched for ways to put Veblen's ideas into practice. He tried to use collective bargaining, most notably in 1946, when he demanded that General Motors give the UAW a say in setting automobile prices. He traded on national emergencies. When the United States went to war in Korea, for instance, he argued that the economic mobilization be managed by a combination of corporate, union, and government officials. And he dovetailed his proposals with other liberal initiatives, such as Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, which he said should be linked to national economic planning. Reuther made such proposals so often that one critic claimed that the UAW president was good for "500 plans a day."

No matter how he packaged them, Reuther's proposals made no headway. Businesspersons firmly rejected any encroachment on the right to manage their corporations as they saw fit. Politicians he considered his friends listened politely to his plans and then slipped them silently into file cabinets, never to be seen again. Even his fellow unionists rejected his ideas, no one more vigorously than the AFL-CIO president George Meany, who swept aside Reuther's ideas as impractical and unnecessary. Many other associates quietly agreed. Talk of democratizing the economy made sense in the depths of the Depression, when corporate America lay prostrate. In the heady economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s, though, such ideas seemed outmoded. The columnist Murray Kempton put the sentiment in print in a 1960s profile of the UAW. Reuther, he said, "seems a little obsolete."

But Reuther refused to see his agenda as a vestige of more radical times. On the contrary, as American public life began to swing to the right in the late 1960s, Walter stepped up his activism. In 1968, he withdrew the UAW from the AFL-CIO, claiming that the labor federation had grown too conservative. He promised to launch an aggressive organizing campaign to bring more workers into the union movement. He belatedly joined the anti-Vietnam War movement. And he renewed his call for democratic economic planning, arguing that the nation must be prepared for the challenges sure to come once the war in Southeast Asia ended.

The furious activities of those years came to a sudden end on May 9, 1970. That evening, Reuther boarded a small private plane for a quick trip to the UAW summer camp at Black Lake, Michigan, a few hours north of Detroit. The plane crashed just short of its landing, killing all aboard. In its obituary, the *New York Times* eulogized Reuther as "a crusader for a better world ... [who] challenged not only labor but the country ... to seek newer and broader horizons." The newspaper then recounted his many

accomplishments at the bargaining table and in public life. But it did not note that Reuther's greatest challenge to the status quo—his dream of an economic order made more democratic—remained unmet.

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REVOLUTION AND EARLY NATIONAL PERIODS

The working classes of Revolutionary and Early National America are not easy to define. There were three separate groups of workers that could be defined as working classes in the Revolutionary and Early National eras. Slaves and free African-Americans constitute the first sector, though the two groups had very different histories. Agricultural laborers, prior to purchase of a farmstead, if they did so, would be the second. The third sector, the one that would evolve into the modern working class and whose strikes, boycotts, and other labor actions would become the root of the American working classes' organization and tactics, was the urban craftsmen, particularly those in the major seaports. (Rural craftsmen tended to be small shop proprietors.)

About 350,000 slaves resided in the 13 colonies prior to the Revolution, 250,000 of which had been imported to the colonies in the eighteenth century. Slavery was legal in every colony prior to the American Revolution, but after the Revolution, it was ended by every state north of the Mason-Dixon Line by the end of the Early National era. In the South, on the other hand, slavery flourished, the slave population increasing to almost four million in 1860. Slaves earned no wages, held little if any private property, paid no rent, and were subject to the total control of the masters under the various slave codes of each state. In the North, most slaves acted as servants within the household and occasionally as workers on the farm or in the craft shop. In the South, where most were concentrated, they worked largely in the tobacco, rice, and (after the 1790s) the cotton fields. There they commonly worked in gang labor, marched to the fields at sunup, and were led to their quarters at

sundown. A number in the Deep South worked in a task system that allowed free time once they completed their assigned work, time enough to cultivate a small garden. Their living quarters, garments, and food were provided by masters who had total control over their hours of labor. During the American Revolution, slaves in the South fled by the hundreds to British lines where they were promised freedom. British promises were often broken, but about 20,000 sailed away after the war. In the North they more commonly fought on the side of the Americans, some earning their freedom that way. The free black population tended to be mulatto in the South, doing farm labor and occasionally owning small homesteads. In the North they tended to be isolated unskilled laborers who worked on the docks. A number were artisans, especially carpenters and hairdressers. But slaves are generally believed to be part of a rural precapitalist system of labor and as non-wage earners were peripheral to the development of the American working class.

Farm laborers made up a small percentage of those living in the rural areas of the country (at a time when less than 10% of the country lived in urban centers). For most, the work was temporary, and the realistic goal was to become a landowning farmer. Many farmers in early America were unable to hire free labor and forced to rely on their families, unless they could purchase indentured servants. Because of distance and outlook and scarcity there were few opportunities or incentives to organize, and there is little sense that any kind of collective consciousness or identity grew among free farm laborers. Nor were rural labor organizations or political movements formed until after the Civil War.

Skilled craftsmen lived in rural communities as well as in urban society. In rural communities, they were more likely to be a jack-of-all-trades artisan, such as a joiner who could fix a wheel, mend a coach, or build a chair. There were only a few craftsmen in any farming community, though occasional villages such as that of the Moravians in Rowan County, North Carolina, were known for their craftsmanship, male and female, in leather and textiles.

The core of working-class history in this era is to be found in the skilled and semiskilled urban artisans. American craftsmen were most heavily concentrated in towns and cities, especially the major seaports, where they constituted the largest sector of the population. They worked in a panoply of trades ranging from goldsmithing, silversmithing, and cabinetmaking at the top to baking, butchering, and carpentry in the middle to tailoring and shoemaking at the bottom. The most populous trades were the building crafts, particularly carpentry and masonry, which

might employ 40% of the city's craftsmen during the construction season. Tailoring and shoemaking followed in size.

Colonial Heritage

Mid-eighteenth-century artisans could be classified as either wage earners, the beginning of a working class, or master craftsmen, incipient bourgeois entrepreneurs, because in the course of a colonial career, they were often both. Normally, a lad of 13 or 14 would contract with a master craftsman to learn a trade. He boarded with his master, who was responsible for his rudimentary education and clothing as well as teaching the secrets of the trade. Learning the mysteries of the most demanding trades such as cabinetmaking or watchmaking took many hours at the hands of the ablest craftsmen, who passed down knowledge gained from centuries of craftsmanship. The more rudimentary trades, such as shoemaking, with awl and hammer skills, took less time to master. Following release from indentures at 21, he would be a wage earner or journeyman, often working in various cities for master craftsmen. If competent and savvy, he would open his own business. A master's dwelling commonly included a lower-story shop with his family living above.

While the vast majority of artisans in colonial America remained craftsmen throughout their lives, within the middling or lower-middling ranks of society, upward mobility was possible. Expert cabinetmakers, for example, participated directly in colonial trade, shipping thousands of Windsor chairs. Other highly skilled artisans worked closely with merchants in a nascent capitalist economy operating under the rules of British mercantilism. Within the poorest trades, mobility to master craftsman standing was not the rule. Moreover, even masters owning small shoemaker or tailoring shops often earned a subsistence living, with little security in times of personal crisis or economic recession. This was particularly true of Boston, a city ravaged by wars for empire, where many craftsmen sank to subsistence levels. The shoemaker George Robert Twelves Hewes, the last survivor of the Boston Tea Party, was imprisoned early in his career for small debts, such were the perils of his trade. Too, poorer artisans were prey to the scourge of epidemics, especially smallpox and yellow fever that periodically ravaged the nation's seaports.

English guild traditions that limited admission to a trade, controlled prices, supervised craft practice, built elegant headquarters, and provided artisans a respected place in their city's life did not survive the

transatlantic crossing. While a few trades established benevolent societies to provide social security and camaraderie for master craftsmen, and some traditions of apprenticeship indentures and workshop practices persisted, colonial America had no guild tradition, nor did it develop one. Artisans, possessing demanding skills and well-fashioned tools, were clearly above the level of laborers on the docks, indentured servants, and the slaves who made up 10% of the population of New York and Philadelphia and nearly half of Charleston. Wearing their noted leather aprons, they dressed in a common manner, kept common hours, and shared common social customs. Yet they were subject to a tradition that classified anyone who performed manual labor, however refined, as beneath the rank of a gentleman.

Lacking breeding, wealth, and education, they were expected to defer to their mercantile and professional betters, who regarded mechanics (as they were commonly known) with a measure of condescension. There were no guilds to mediate that pejorative standing.

On the other hand, the absence of guilds allowed for a more open society in which many artisans gained freemanship. As independent entrepreneurs who owned their shop, freemen were entitled to vote, making up an important part of the political mix of eighteenth-century urban politics. Though they seldom held office above that of constable during the colonial era, they became an important voice in Pennsylvania in the battle between the proprietary interests of the Penn family and those wanting to make Pennsylvania a royal colony, and in New York in the constant play of factions, especially between the Delancey and Livingston factions representing upstate and metropolitan mercantile interests. In the famous Zenger affair of the 1730s, in which the printer William Zenger was tried and acquitted for defaming Governor Cosby, artisans were active both as printers and as citizens. They attended rallies in the streets for Cosby's opponent, William Morris. In Boston, there were fierce political debates over paper money and British impressment with artisan participation.

American Revolution

Thus, by the time of the American Revolution, the largest sector of an emerging incipient working class worked in the cities as artisans and tradesmen. It had its own traditions, dress, and political awareness and was clearly separate from the mercantile and professional classes, as well as the slave and free black underclass. During the Revolution, the role of this

class was largely political, while after the Revolution, the political merged with economic strife to forge the origins of the modern working class.

The coming of the American Revolution brought urban artisans to a far more prominent political role than they had ever attained in colonial politics, and perhaps to as prominent a role as labor would achieve for many years. The major events leading to the Revolution—the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Townshend Act, and the Boston (and New York) Tea Party—brought in its wake widescale participation by artisans in every American seaport. This could be seen on the streets in the Sons of Liberty, crowds of artisans, including masters and journeymen, and unskilled laborers and a few small merchants, who gained near control of the cities. They demanded and received the resignation of every stamp collector who had accepted that position, some even having to resign more than once. They enforced the boycott of stamped products, requiring that both the courts and the ports be closed. No merchant dared ship against their will.

In Boston, they were led by the colorful shoemaker Ebenezer McIntosh, who spoke through a trumpet. There had been rival South and North End gangs that had competed with each other on Pope's Day (Guy Fawkes Day), and the events of 1765 saw these crowds become major political players. They were not averse to force, tearing down the warehouses of the stamp distributor Andrew Oliver and then turning upon Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson, known for years as a conservative, hard-money proponent. They took apart his expensive house brick by brick, stripping the walls and smashing the furniture. They were led in part by Sam Adams and John Hancock, but they were also showing their frustration at the increased poverty of many Bostonian workingmen and the contempt of the upper classes for those who worked with their hands, a contempt that was centuries old. Fears of class warfare turned some of Boston's leaders against the artisans, and McIntosh was arrested and then released. The rapid politicization of the artisans clearly demonstrated that craftsmen had their own concerns and that they were willing to resort to extreme measures. Events leading to Lexington and Concord were largely under the control of the city's elite, but the artisans were there to carry out measures when necessary, as they did most notably at the Boston Tea Party in 1773, when they threw hundreds of chests of the British East India Company's tea into Boston harbor rather than be forced to pay the tax levied on it.

It was, however, in New York and Philadelphia where the working class, represented by the artisans of these two cities, became part of the governing classes. In New York, the beginning was similar to

that of Boston, with the Sons of Liberty (Liberty Boys) forcing the resignation of the stamp collector John McHenry, placing a sign denouncing Governor Colden as the chief murderer of their rights and privileges, and destroying the home of Major Thomas James, commander of Fort George. Artisan politicization increased during the Townshend Act, a tax on imports, as craftsmen pressed for a policy of nonimportation and found themselves opposed by many of the city's merchants. Mechanics could gather in large numbers as they did in 1770 to protest the hiring of British sailors to do their work. They also put on their own tea party in 1773. In New York, when British control began to break down in 1774 and 1775, the artisans formed their own committee and demanded more radical action than the city's merchants, for years the political leadership, would agree to authorize. When it came to choosing delegates to the Continental Congress in 1774, the Mechanics Committee decided to put up its own slate of candidates. Ultimately, the economic power of the merchants forced a compromise favoring mercantile opinion, but even so, the city's delegation signed the Continental Association that would ultimately suspend trade with the mother country. In the following two years, artisans continued to have a major voice in the various committees that were formed to govern the city and state. With the former stay maker Tom Paine as a role model, the craftsmen took radical stands, petitioning the state assembly to ensure that the new state constitution was subject to popular ratification, the birthright of every man, and then urging New York's delegates to vote for independence well before the merchants were ready to take that momentous step (Force, pp. 895–898). During the war, New York was the headquarters of British occupation. Many of its residents fled, though some loyalists remained as did a number of slaves, who sought promised freedom within British lines and were carried off to Canada when the British evacuated the city in November 1783.

In Philadelphia, at first artisans were divided. They had been loyal to their patron Benjamin Franklin, a local hero who, though he strongly opposed the Stamp Act as a colonial agent in London, assumed it would be carried out and nominated his friend, the baker John Hughes, to be stamp collector. The result was that artisans were split over the resort to force, and two factions, one led by Joseph Galloway and composed of ship carpenters and other tradesmen (the White Oaks and the Hearts of Oak), stood in front of threatened houses to protect them. The conflict over the issue of royal government was raging with such strength that it divided opponents to the Stamp Act at first. By early November 1765, this had faded and the artisans united. Meanwhile, old

political alliances fell apart, Anglicans and Quakers withdrew or were displaced, and a new Presbyterian artisan-based party appeared in city politics as the pre-industrial working-class elements, similar to those in Boston and New York, claimed an even greater share of power in Philadelphia. By 1770, when they did not persuade merchants to maintain nonimportation, they turned away from mercantile leadership and began running their own artisan candidates for political positions. They won enough elections to force open public galleries in the Assembly and, like New York, when British control broke down, formed their own Committee of Mechanics to bargain with the city's elite. Indeed, it was in Philadelphia that artisans achieved the greatest sense of self-consciousness as an influential political body and the skills to act with political effectiveness. Working with small merchants, they took over the government during the American Revolution and were largely responsible for the radical Pennsylvania constitution that established a unicameral legislature, removed the property requirement for voting in the Commonwealth, and called for free public education. They were able to carry out a revolutionary agenda to an extent greater than any other group of workingmen.

During the War, artisans served as soldiers in the Continental Army, as members of local militia, and on board privateer ships. Many were killed or wounded. Though few attained officer rank, the experience left a strong sense of citizenship and ownership in the new republic that emerged. Egalitarianism replaced the traditions of deference for those who had wagered their lives in search of liberty.

Early Republic

The Early Republic was a golden age for the working classes who had skills. For slaves, free blacks who worked as unskilled laborers on the docks and as domestic servants, and the women who toiled as domestic servants and seamstresses, it was a time of subsistence, an everyday struggle for adequate shelter, firewood, and food, with a cold winter meaning possible famine. Often they had to depend on the charitable institutions of the cities and state as well as private philanthropy for survival.

But for the vanguard of the working class, the Early National era offered increasing opportunities for political involvement and a critical say in the direction of American electoral politics and the legacy of the American Revolution. Second, it gave birth to the American labor movement.

Artisans by and large favored the American Constitution. In New York, for example, they played a major part of the parade in July 1788 to encourage the delegates in Poughkeepsie to ratify the Constitution. They marched in formation by trade with various floats or displays of their craft. To them a strong federal government meant increased protection for American industries and greater trade and commerce, as well as support of a strong American nation.

At the outset of government under the new federal charter, most workingmen who could vote, urban artisans, having given their support to the Constitution and the nation it created, were Federalists. They were no longer elected to high office and no longer as involved in the day-to-day operation of government at the highest levels. However, analysis of voting records indicates that artisans did achieve offices in the cities. Ordinary workingmen were most likely to win election as constables, though men of greater wealth, but still working as master craftsmen, did win a number of seats as aldermen or assistant aldermen.

Most important, however, was the role played by artisans in the battle between Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians for the future direction of the American Republic in the 1790s and early 1800s. While the struggle played out in Philadelphia and Washington, the first American party system formed, as each side attempted to elect representatives either in support of a strong central government with a large national debt, a central bank, and a diverse economy or in favor of a weak central government, agrarianism, egalitarianism, and states' rights. Each assembly election turned into a battle over the Revolution's legacy, with the artisan classes, the largest sector of the city, as the pivotal bloc in urban elections. While artisans were attracted to the Federalist attempt to diversify the economy and protect manufactures, they were wary of Hamiltonian plans to institute English-style factories that they believed would eliminate artisan workshops. They were deeply moved by the Jeffersonian movement's emphasis on equality of citizenship regardless of economic worth or education or birthright versus the Federalist preference for deference to the better educated and well bred. In the 1790s, artisan support went back and forth between the two parties.

Local newspapers, artisans' most useful means of information and communication, and often edited by radical Irish émigrés such as William Duane and James Cheetham, were quick to expose cases in which craftsmen were offended by Federalist attempts to coerce their employees into voting for Federalists. These daily prints, together with stinging broadsides, described instances of insult and disrespect.

Federalist attempts to increase the military and stand up to foreign aggressors did attract the artisan electorate, though the Anglophile allegiances of Federalists lost the support of many artisans, who still regarded the British as the hated enemy. However, when the nation's major foe in the late 1790s became France, artisans were more inclined to give their support to the Federalists.

In the pivotal year of 1800, Jefferson would have to win votes in the Middle Atlantic states if he were to attain the presidency. They lay in Philadelphia, where he managed to win a share of the state's electoral votes. In New York, the Federalists had converted the election into a winner take all of electoral votes. The key to victory was New York City's single slate election. Led by Aaron Burr, the Republicans put together a ballot filled with Revolutionary heroes, and with the support of the artisan community, won the election (having lost in 1799) and gave Jefferson the state's electoral votes and with it, the White House. The switch of allegiance of the artisans, and especially the more numerous poorer artisans living in the city's outer wards, was the key to the Jeffersonians' victory. In the end, there was no way that the Federalists could match the egalitarian Jeffersonian appeal. Many artisans were Revolutionary War veterans. They believed with Jefferson that a ploughman and a professor (Jefferson, 12:15) shared equal capacities in choosing right from wrong, in choosing correct representatives. Federalist deferential expectations were impossible to hide and led to the ultimate demise of that party. Jefferson was also an able politician. While he early wrote disparagingly of the "mobs" of great cities as "sores" on the human body, he later showed gratitude to the urban working classes and won their widespread support (Jefferson, Q. XIX).

The Federalists, while never again winning back the White House, continued to compete for workingmen's votes, forming the Washington Benevolent Society to help them reach out. They were able to win a number of elections, especially during the hard economic times caused by the War of 1812. Many artisans along with sailors were hurt by Jefferson's Embargo of 1807–1808 and other measures restricting trade. War, of course, also cut off trade because of British naval superiority. Republicans appealed to the patriotism of the working classes, asking them to put their national pride above their pocketbook, while Federalists advocated an end to war and the establishment of trade, and with that, employment. The elections were close during those years, but most workingmen did, indeed, stick with the Anglophobe egalitarian Republicans.

Labor Movement

While most historians place the birth of the modern American labor movement in the Age of Jackson with its large unions and the rise of workingman's parties, it is clear that the Early National era, as well, played a significant role. The era saw citywide work stoppages in a number of cities and a large number of strikes, many of which are unrecorded. It also reveals the rise of many journeymen associations with their own constitutions that attempted to win and sustain gains in their wages and hours. The rise of the labor movement can be traced to the fast growth of the American economy in the 1790s and early nineteenth century, largely due to the increased trade and demand brought by the war between France and England and especially the long Napoleonic wars. Of further assistance in growth was the business revolution (Cochran), including improvements such as secure and regular information, insurance, and systematic incorporation procedures; per capita income in the United States rose from 55% to 62% between 1800 and 1840. The greater demand caused by increased population, wealth, and trade led to rapid expansion in a number of artisan trades, most notably shoemaking, cabinetmaking, tailoring, printing, carpentry, and masonry (construction). A cabinetmaker in New York, for example, filled a single order for five thousand Windsor chairs to the West Indies in 1795, all before industrialization.

In this world, employers, though many were master craftsmen, became more committed to the profit and loss of the enterprise than to the paternalistic, family-like craft enterprise. Capital costs increased markedly: printing presses, for example, were well beyond the reach of ordinary journeymen. Consequently, it became less and less common for journeymen to rise to master craftsman standing. Journeymen had to come to the realization that, barring some unlikely opportunity or exceptional ability, they would remain in that station for their entire lives.

Reacting to the situation of becoming a permanent wage-earning class, journeymen in the major American seaports formed associations that would enable them to compete in the marketplace and maintain adequate salaries and working conditions. Trade societies were known in the colonial period, but they were largely associations for fraternity and family benefits in the event of death or disability. They also occasionally lobbied for protective tariffs and participated in civic life. They were mostly composed of master craftsmen, though they may have been open to journeymen as well. The most venerable of these

societies, the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of New York City, remains in existence to this day.

The journeymen societies did have provisions for fraternity and for benefits when financially able. However, they had economic motives at heart. A number of constitutions survive. Following the republican spirit, they are very democratic, providing for election of officers and open meetings. They also have key provisions requiring, in the Cordwainers Society, for example, that no member work for a master who employed nonmembers and that all members work for an established wage. The New York Typographical Society had similar provisions: "No member of the society shall work for less than the wages which may be established; neither shall he engage in or continue in any office where there is a journeyman working for less than the established price" (Stevens, p. 42).

When they were strong enough, these journeymen societies would negotiate with the masters, who formed their own societies, and agree to either the price of piecework (cabinetmakers, tailors) or wages and hours (masons and carpenters). They could also appeal to the masters to stop practices that they considered harmful, such as the hiring of underage apprentices at cheap wages. This caused the Topographical Society to write letters to the master printers asking that they respect those working in "the noblest art with which the earth is blest" and pay a decent wage, and not hire "miserable botches" (foreigners willing to work for lower wages) (Barnett, pp. 162–163). They also made appeals to the public to boycott recalcitrant employers and used social ostracism against journeymen who would not join their societies or would work for lower wages.

When appeals and negotiations broke down, journeymen were willing to resort to more coercive methods. A number of journeymen in cabinetmaking and in tailoring formed their own stores where they offered the public their work. In 1819, employers of no less a figure than Duncan Phyle did that, as did 80 other cabinetmakers in New York in 1802. These were not commonly successful, however.

The most common tactic was the strike. Journeymen could walk out on either a particular master or, if necessary, would stage a citywide strike. Some years, disagreements became so common that it threatened construction work in the city as a whole. The most common reasons for the strikes were failure to come to agreement on wages, or, as in the Panic of 1819, attempts by employers to cut wages. Journeymen tailors also went on strike when employers used female labor to do a large share of their work at lower wages.

They argued that “women are incomplete” and unable to work up to the standards of men. Journeymen cordwainers went on a citywide strike in New York over the use of apprentices to replace journeymen ([New York] *Evening Post*, July 13, 1819).

Strikes and walkouts that took place within strong memory of the American Revolution inevitably had a republican flavor. This is spelled out in a strike manifesto by the carpenters of New York in 1809 ([New York] *American Citizen*, April 10, 1809):

Among the inalienable rights of man are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. By the social compact every class in society ought to be entitled to benefit in proportion to his qualifications. Among the duties which individuals owe to society are single men to marry and married men to educate their children. Among the duties which society owes individuals is to grant them just compensation not only for current expenses of livelihood, but to the formation of a fund for the support of that time of life when nature requires a cessation of work.

The American Revolution, in this context, demanded that the working class receive a wage that enabled them to live adequately and retire without the need of public assistance. Society owed a living wage to its workingmen.

Employers were not without weapons in fighting back. They were able to use a surplus of employees and apprentices who wanted to leave their indentures early, as well as Irish immigrants and, in the tailoring trades, female seamstresses, to find cheaper wage labor. In addition, the new marketplace often required the mass production of shoes and furniture at less than highly skilled level: slopwork sold at wholesale. Cheap, less skilled labor was often suitable to their needs. When threatened with a citywide strike against the masters, the master cordwainers (shoemakers) in Philadelphia (1806) and in New York (1810) took the journeymen to court and charged them with a conspiracy against nonmembers under English common law. While the conspiracy cases are open to various interpretations, the argument of the masters was that the attempt to a closed shop by requiring all journeymen to join the Journeymen’s Society if they wanted to find work (for no Society member would work for a master who employed a nonmember) was a conspiracy against the freedom of other individuals and the overall good of the community. The journeymen argued that they had the right to organize as any group in society and that that right was necessary as a countervailing force. If, indeed, they were now to be a permanent working class, then they had to be able to offer a strong defense against the strength of the masters. Eventually, in *Commonwealth vs. Hunt*, Judge Leander Shaw would rule that English common law did not apply.

The Revolutionary and Early National eras were critical in the formation of the country’s working classes. While relatively small in number, their political and economic struggles, their victories and defeats, would have a lasting impact.

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**RICE, MONSIGNOR CHARLES OWEN
(1908–2005)
United Steelworkers of America**

Finding inspiration from the papal encyclicals on social justice written by Leo XIII (*The Condition of Labor*, 1891) and Pius XI (*After Forty Years: Reconstructing the Social Order*, 1931), Monsignor Charles Owen Rice of Pittsburgh helped build the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC), later renamed the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). The SWOC president, Philip Murray, a devout Catholic and admirer of Leo XIII and Pius XI, found in Rice a friend who helped place the moral authority of the Church behind the union drive of the 1930s.

Born the son of Irish immigrants in New York City in 1908, Charles Owen Rice went to Ireland at the age of four to be raised by relatives following his mother's untimely death. The seven years he spent in Ireland exposed him to the nationalist and religious sectarian violence that culminated in the Easter 1916 rebellion against Great Britain. As the product of an interfaith marriage—his mother had been born Protestant but converted to Catholicism—Rice learned to dislike discrimination and to recoil from the tribal wars he saw in Europe. After his father found decent employment in the booming city of Pittsburgh, Rice returned to America in 1920. His Irish sojourn had drawn him close to the Catholic Church and helped determine his vocation. The influence of his Pittsburgh-based uncle, Joseph Rice, a labor organizer, drew him to the union cause.

Three years after his ordination in 1934, Rice, with the support of the Pittsburgh bishop Hugh Boyle, emerged as a clerical activist. During the late 1930s and 1940s, Rice fought communists in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and anti-union corporate executives with equal vigor. Rice, who would be featured in such national magazines as *Time* and *Look*, also helped found the anticommunist Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU) in 1937.

Following the line of reasoning advanced by Pope Pius XI, Rice regarded atheistic communism and laissez-faire capitalism as the bastard twins of secular humanism. Far from being opposite political and economic systems, Catholic reformers claimed that unfettered capitalism and communism threw aside God in the quest to place man at the center of the universe. Such quests, Rice and Pius XI believed, inevitably led to dictatorship and mass murder as communist and capitalist societies lost any sense of moral restraints.

In 1940, Rice championed Murray's ascension to the presidency of the CIO and criticized the CIO

founder, John L. Lewis, for his unwillingness to defend European democracies against Nazi aggression. Whatever the flaws of capitalist democracies such as Great Britain—and there were many, Rice noted—Nazi Germany was a pagan, totalitarian nation bent upon world conquest and had to be resisted. After World War II, Rice played a role in the expulsion of the communist-led United Electrical Workers (UE) from the CIO. Although Rice felt that many American communists were well-intentioned idealists, they still owed too much allegiance to a Soviet Union that did not differ all that much from a defeated Nazi Germany.

Beyond marching on union picket lines, speaking at CIO rallies, writing a labor column for the diocesan newspaper (the *Pittsburgh Catholic*), and conducting worker education classes, Rice operated the St. Joseph House of Hospitality in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. Thousands of dispossessed men seeking food and shelter went through the doors of this Catholic Worker Movement refuge, including a young Polish-American coal miner named Jock Yablonski. Rice filled Yablonski with a crusading zeal. Thirty years later, in 1970, Rice presided over Yablonski's funeral mass after the Mafia-connected United Mine Workers' president Tony Boyle ordered his assassination.

Rice's career as a "labor priest" came to an end following Murray's death in 1952 and the installation in 1950 of a new bishop, John Dearden, who was less tolerant than his predecessors of clerical activists. With the advent of a new Pittsburgh diocese bishop, John Wright, in 1959, Rice received permission to resume his political activism. Wright also transferred Rice to Holy Rosary parish in Homewood—a black ghetto neighborhood that has been chronicled by the novelist John Edgar Wideman.

In the mid-1950s, Rice began to have second thoughts about his anticommunist activism, thoughts that were deepened in the 1960s by the escalating war in Vietnam. As a "ghetto priest," Rice became immersed in the Black Power movement. His association with student antiwar activists, former Marxist foes, and black radicals alienated patriotic, socially conservative Catholics and steelworkers.

In his 1960s and 1970s articles for the *Pittsburgh Catholic*, *Commonweal*, and the *National Catholic Reporter*, Rice largely eschewed union issues to focus on U.S. foreign policy and race relations. When he did discuss unions, it was invariably to criticize the AFL-CIO president, George Meany. Since the merger of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) with the CIO in 1955, Rice felt that Meany had moved organized labor into blind anticommunist extremism while permitting the racially exclusive practices of the AFL's affiliates to continue unchecked.

By 1967, Rice's antiwar activism became consuming. He cochaired the National Mobilization Committee, which, with A. J. Muste and David Dellinger, sought to end U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. At the local level, Rice served as cochair of the Western Pennsylvania Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). Originally founded in 1947 to combat communist influence within the Democratic Party and the CIO, the ADA by 1968 had moved left. Rice, along with the Western Pennsylvania ADA chair Molly Yard, the future leader of the National Organization for Women (NOW), proved instrumental in re-orienting the ADA's politics. Both dismissed the defection of local and national AFL-CIO leaders from the ADA. In turn, steelworkers barred Rice from entering their union halls.

Rice's allies in the 1960s were largely college-educated professionals. Their influence within the Democratic Party at the local level was limited since working-class Catholics either chose to stay home in 1972 or supported Republican Richard Nixon, rather than vote for George McGovern, their party's antiwar presidential nominee. Such professionals, however, were destined to play major economic and political roles in postindustrial America and the national Democratic Party. In the 1970s, just as the social crisis of the 1960s appeared to have cooled down, Pittsburgh and other industrial cities experienced massive economic dislocation.

In the years before the demise of the Iron City and its rebirth as a center of software engineering and biotechnology, Rice had warned of the decline of the region's manufacturing base. His identification with 1960s-era activists, however, led the very working-class audience that would be the most harmed by economic restructuring to tune him out.

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See also **United Steelworkers of America**

RILEY, WILLIAM (MID-1850s–1910s) United Mine Workers of America

Historians know less than they would like about the life of William Riley, a black coal miner and union leader who became a significant local official of the nascent United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in the early 1890s. Born a slave in the mid 1850s in northeast Tennessee, Riley was elected to the post of UMWA's secretary-treasurer of District 19 (Kentucky Tennessee) in 1891. A product of the Jim Crow South, a world in which African-American literacy rates ranged between 10% and 20%, he, like both of his parents, his children, and his spouses, could read and write.

Prior to his election as secretary-treasurer of District 19, Riley had already achieved a position of prominence among the Newcomb-Jellico miners of Campbell County, having attained the role of checkweighman. Because mining companies paid their laborers by the coal tonnage that they mined, and then often sought to reduce wages by underestimating the tonnage, miners fought to hire their own checkweighman—someone who could independently verify the company weigher's records. When they gained this right, miners invariably elected a person they trusted and thought would stand up to the mining companies. Riley, his fellow miners believed, was such a man.

Riley sought not only to hold particular companies to account, but to improve the working conditions of black and white miners throughout District 19. As secretary-treasurer, he worked as a roving organizer who urged miners to join the UMWA, arranging contracts between coal companies and their employees, organizing and mediating strikes, settling disputes among the miners themselves, and on some occasions, holding the union accountable to its public commitments to inclusiveness. Riley joined the UMWA because of his fervent belief in organized labor and his faith in the interracialism of the UMWA—that all miners, irrespective of race and color, had a place within the UMWA's broad tent. Riley's insistence that black and white workers join forces in labor unions to fight for their rights as working people ran contrary to the philosophies of African-American race leaders around the turn of the twentieth century.

W. E. B. DuBois and his followers believed that leadership of the African-American community fell to the educated elite known as the “Talented Tenth.” Others, like Booker T. Washington, urged African-American workers in the South to place their trust in the South’s white elite. Following Washington’s admonishments, the Nashville black elite would eventually help white coal company owners suppress strikes by Tennessee’s black and white miners.

The faith that Riley placed in the interracialism of the UMWA reflected the paucity of alternative allies in the postbellum South. Deeply cognizant of failures of the Republican Party and the severe limitations of the Democratic Party, southern black workers had few places to turn to secure better working conditions. National unions like the UMWA offered black workers the possibility of better pay, safer working environments, and a modicum of protection from the vicissitudes of racial hostility from fellow white miners. But even these organizations were imperfect, as Riley himself acknowledged. On the local level, he found himself regularly confronting white miners who treated their black counterparts abysmally. Riley repeatedly found himself having to renegotiate agreements between white and African-American miners to share positions of authority, like mining supervisor or checkweighman. Miners would agree to share these positions in proportion to their respective numbers, but once a black miner’s turn came, white miners frequently reneged on their promises. In addition, as he traveled across District 19, Riley often found himself in difficult straits, finding few places that would give him a place to sleep at night. On the national level, Riley did his best to hold the UMWA to its interracial ideals, offering a motion at the 1892 convention to deny locals their charters if they discriminated against their African-American members. Riley failed in this endeavor, which must have pained him greatly. He knew the value of national oversight in the age of segregation, and when District 19 decided to withdraw from the UMWA and establish a separate southern mining union, Riley refused to stand for re-election as secretary-treasurer. Though he remained a checkweighman for a few more years and remained a labor rights activist, he left both the union and coal mining in 1895, after District 19 lost its charter. At that point, his letters to the *United Mine Workers Journal*, the major extant source of information about William Riley, ceased. At a time when Jim Crow legislation and segregationist mores became ever more entrenched, Riley sought solace and social uplift in the African-American church, becoming a preacher in Clinton, the county seat of Anderson County, Tennessee.

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RIVERA, DENNIS (1950–) President, 1199/SEIU: New York’s Health and Human Service Union

Dennis Rivera was born in Aibonito, Puerto Rico, on August 6, 1950. His father, Daniel Hickey, an Irish-American from Dunkirk, New York, went to Puerto Rico just after the end of World War II to set up a nonunion factory for a manufacturer of women’s undergarments. In December 1946, Hickey married Olga Rivera, whose mother supervised the orientation for new employees at the factory. As a youth, Dennis went to parochial school, played basketball and baseball, and attended but did not graduate from the Colegio Universitario de Cayey, affiliated with the University of Puerto Rico.

While he was a college student, Rivera became increasingly engaged in radical politics, especially in opposition to U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. He was elected president of the Aibonito chapter of the Independentista Party and ran, unsuccessfully, for city councilman. Drawn into the island’s labor movement, Rivera led a strike by an insurgent group of sanitation workers and helped found the National Union of Health Care Workers of Puerto Rico. In 1976, Rivera met Concha Mendoza, a medical student at Boston University who was engaged in community service work in San Juan hospitals. He followed her to Brooklyn, where she had accepted a residency at Kings County Hospital, and in June 1977, they married in Red Bank, New Jersey.

Soon after coming to New York, Rivera approached Local 1199, a militant union founded in the radical politics of the early 1930s, for a job. By 1977, 1199 had been organizing for two decades in New York City’s voluntary hospitals and had also grown into a national union of hospital and health-care workers representing some 100,000 members in 14 states and the District of Columbia. Rivera’s union experience in Puerto Rico convinced an 1199 vice president, Stephen Frankel, to hire him. In September

1977, Rivera went to work as an organizer at Albert Einstein Medical Center in the Bronx, New York.

Rivera joined 1199 at a time of significant transition for the union. In the late 1970s, hoping to more effectively organize health-care workers into a single union nationally, 1199's president, Leon Davis, had opened merger discussions with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). But Davis suffered a severe stroke in 1979 and had to retire in 1982. Because his successor, Doris Turner, was opposed to 1199's projected merger with the SEIU, an emotionally charged civil war developed within the union soon after she became president.

As the internal struggle heated up, Rivera, who by 1983 was both a Guild Division vice president and head of the union's Latin caucus, joined with other Davis-era union loyalists, in particular, with the executive secretary, Moe Foner, to oppose Turner and support the proposed merger with the SEIU. Rivera became a leader of the Save Our Union opposition and was eventually dismissed by Turner. A disputed union election in 1983, one that involved charges of ballot-box tampering, was followed by failed contract negotiations the next year. These upheavals led, in 1986, to Turner's defeat in union elections monitored by the U.S. Department of Labor and to Rivera's election as Local 1199's executive vice president. In 1989, 1199 members elected Rivera president of the New York union.

Left unsettled by Rivera's victory was 1199's status within the labor movement as well as its still sought-after merger with the SEIU. In 1996, Rivera secured 1199's re-admittance into the AFL-CIO; two years later, he successfully negotiated 1199's affiliation with the SEIU, which established 1199, the National Health and Human Service Employees Union, SEIU, AFL-CIO, as the largest union of health-care workers in the United States. Since Rivera became president, the ranks of 1199 in New York State have tripled, reaching more than 237,000 members. Rivera is also the president of the SEIU New York State Council and chairs the SEIU Health Care Division, leading some 750,000 members in local unions throughout the United States.

Rivera's tenure as president of 1199 has been marked by the same mix of socially conscious idealism and no-nonsense trade unionism or militant pragmatism that distinguished Leon Davis's leadership. Rivera has proved adept at negotiating New York's complex political terrain to secure contracts that not only provide concrete benefits for union members but also often improve the living standards of working people throughout the state. In 1998, 1199 united with the New York Greater Hospital Association, an agency representing hospital management, in an intense public relations effort that successfully lobbied

the state's political leaders to apply an increase in the cigarette tax to expand health coverage to one third of New York's 3.2 million uninsured residents. Then, in 2002, Rivera gained Governor George Pataki's agreement to apply the almost \$2 billion windfall the state would be receiving when Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield converted from a nonprofit insurer to a for-profit institution, as well as the money from another increase in the state's cigarette tax, to finance raises and job security for New York City's 55,000 home health aides and nursing home and hospital workers.

Understanding the direct connection between the ability of his union to win good contracts and the politics of health care, Rivera has made 1199 a more active power broker in both the city and state of New York. Since 1989, when 1199 helped David Dinkins in his successful bid for mayor of New York, politicians running for city or state office from either major party have sought 1199's endorsement. In 2002, after Pataki supported the union's plan to finance wage increases and protect members' jobs, 1199 endorsed the Republican governor's bid for re-election. Yet even while making 1199 a potent electoral force, Rivera has remained faithful to the union's tradition of political dissent. In 2001, he was arrested and jailed, along with Robert Kennedy Jr. and other activists, for peacefully protesting the U.S. Navy's continued use of the island of Vieques as a bomb test site. Under Rivera, 1199 has co-operated with environmental and other community-based groups to, as he puts it, "upgrade the opportunities" afforded working people in the United States. To be effective, a labor leader must, in his view, be active in politics and social change.

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ROBINS, MARGARET DREIER (SEPTEMBER 6, 1868–FEBRUARY 21, 1945) Women's Trade Union League

Margaret Dreier Robins, leader of the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL), brought working-class women and their middle-class allies together to work for labor concerns.

Robins was born in Brooklyn, New York, as the eldest of five children of German immigrant parents. Her father, Theodor Dreier, made a fortune importing iron, and her mother, Dorothea Adelheid Dreier, undoubtedly inspired her daughter's later activism by volunteering for a number of local charities. A fairly serious young woman, Robins had little interest in the parties and balls that typically occupied women of her position. After graduating from high school in 1885, Margaret—or Gretchen, as she was known to friends—joined the Women's Auxiliary at Brooklyn Hospital. For the next 15 years, the hospital remained her primary civic concern. It would introduce her to the conditions facing the poor.

Robins's path to the labor movement began when Josephine Shaw Lowell recruited her for the Woman's Municipal League (WML), New York's first women's civic committee. As head of the WML's legislative committee, Robins began investigating the relationship between organized prostitution and the city's employment agencies. She recruited Frances A. Kellor to investigate the city's employment agencies, an investigation that led to Kellor's publication *Out of Work* (1905). Kellor's research provided the documentation for a bill to regulate agencies, written by Robins's committee, that became law in 1904. It was Robins's first legislative effort, but her organizing and lobbying success brought her to public attention.

A deeply religious woman, Robins always saw her activism as an expression of her Congregationalist faith. Robins worked with the WML to protect women who were the most vulnerable to exploitation—job seekers, domestic workers, and immigrants. Many of these women were forced into prostitution. To assist them, Robins and Kellor founded the New York Association for Household Research (NYAHR) in 1904. However, Robins's interests quickly expanded. She joined the labor movement for the same protective reasons that drove her to become involved with the WML and the NYAHR.

Persuaded by friends, Robins joined the New York branch of the WTUL in December 1904 and immediately became treasurer. She became its president in March. As Robins's quick ascent indicates, the WTUL was a fairly weak organization at her arrival. It aimed to secure legislation that would better the working conditions, wages, and hours of working women. Robins made the WTUL into a force by recruiting women from the working class and by supporting strikes by women workers. At the same time, her social connections opened the wallets of upper-middle-class sympathizers and enabled the WTUL to become a pivotal player in women's organizations concerned with the problems of working women.

Like many women of her generation with great ambitions, Robins never planned to marry. However, she met and married Raymond Robins, a former Colorado lead miner turned lawyer, within a few months in 1905. The couple, now living in Chicago in the shadow of Jane Addams's Hull-House, saw themselves as a team working through different means for the same goals. While her husband focused on settlement work, Robins headed the Chicago WTUL from 1907 to 1913. Her first public action was to lead a protest parade of about 20,000 workingmen and workingwomen through Chicago to protest the arrest of the labor organizer Bill Haywood and his forced transfer from Colorado to Idaho to stand trial for the murder of a former governor of that state. Robins also served as member of the executive board of the Chicago Federation of Labor from 1908 to 1917. These ties, as well as her connections to Hull-House reformers, placed Robins in a position to enter the growing national discourse about women workers.

In 1907, Robins became the leader of the national WTUL. She would continue as its head until 1922, serving during the league's most influential years. Robins and the WTUL worked to carve out a home for workingwomen in labor institutions. She pushed the group to organize women in trade unions, to educate the public on issues concerning workingwomen, and to seek protective legislation, especially in regards to minimum wages and maximum hours for women workers. Robins herself did much of the publicizing. In 1911, she spent many early morning hours on Chicago street corners telling hotel and restaurant employees arriving for work about a recently enacted 10-hour maximum work law. Unlike many pioneers, she also had a gift for working with others. A notably inspirational woman, Robins mentored many young women unionists, including Agnes Nestor.

Under Robins's direction, the WTUL founded *Life and Labor*, a journal that Robins initially edited and that focused on women's issues. She was also primarily responsible for establishing the Training School for Women Workers, the WTUL's effort to train women workers for leadership in its labor organizations. When this educational experiment ended in 1926, about 40 young women had been prepared for local trade union leadership.

As president of the WTUL during the famed garment strikes of 1909–1911 in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, Robins worked with leaders such as New York's Rose Schneiderman to shape the organization into the nation's most effective agency for supporting the rights of working women. During the Hart, Schaffner, and Marx strike in 1910–1911, the Chicago WTUL, under Robins's direction, raised more than \$70,000 for the strikers, much of the

money coming from Robins's inheritance. Robins secured legal counsel, marched in picket lines, organized relief, worked tirelessly to inform the public about the true conditions of the workers, and recruited influential supporters. The arbitration procedures secured by Robins after the Hart, Schaffner, and Marx strike secured a measure of self-government for workers, eventually established the preferential shop, and later became a landmark in labor history. This success became her most treasured memory.

The male-dominated unions of this era, especially the large American Federation of Labor (AFL), did not generally welcome women workers and typically paid little attention to their concerns. The successes of Robins and the WTUL did not go unnoticed by male unionists, and the strains damaged the labor movement. In 1914, the Hart, Schaffner, and Marx workers belonging to the AFL's United Garment Workers joined the New York workers to form the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. The AFL and its leader, Samuel Gompers, blamed Robins and the WTUL for the treasonous actions of the clothing workers. Robins and Gompers, as well as the WTUL and the AFL, never worked well together after 1914.

Robins resigned from the WTUL in 1922 with the intention of focusing on the International Federation of Working Women. She was the prime mover behind the organization. Unfortunately, conflicts between Europeans and Americans over the direction and vision of the group prompted Robins to leave the Federation within a year. Searching about for a new project, Robins and her husband moved to a farm near Brooksville, Florida, with the aim of developing new farming strategies to combat poverty in the area. Unable to cut all ties with the WTUL, she became the chair of its committee on southern work in 1937.

Robins's political activism is typical of women social justice reformers of the early and mid-twentieth century. She supported women's suffrage as furthering democracy. Although she criticized suffragists who failed to take into account the interests of labor, she also joined the Leslie Woman Suffrage Commission to engage in nationwide lobbying for the vote. Robins opposed the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), as did most women's organizations and activist women before 1970, because of the negative effects of the proposed legislation on laws that protected women workers. She condemned proponents of the ERA as individualistic feminists.

By 1932, Robins had begun to ease her way out of public life in part because of the poor health of her husband. Robins died of pernicious anemia.

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See also **Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; American Federation of Labor; Gompers, Samuel; Haywood, William D. "Big Bill"; Nestor, Agnes; Schneiderman, Rose; Triangle Shirtwaist Fire**

ROCK SPRINGS, WYOMING, STRIKE OF 1885

The strike that Rock Springs, Wyoming, coal miners launched in September 1885 began in violence and ended in defeat. It occurred spontaneously after a clash between Chinese and white miners and played out against the backdrop of a national anti-Chinese movement that originated, and grew especially virulent, in the West. After the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, Rock Springs became the hub of the Union Pacific Railroad's coal-mining operations. Many of the Chinese workers who built the western leg of the transcontinental road subsequently found work in southern Wyoming as miners. The Chinese Massacre, which kindled the 1885 Rock Springs strike, began on September 2 with a dispute between two Chinese miners and two white miners over which pair had been assigned a particularly productive room in one of the mines. When the Chinese stood their ground, a group of white miners beat them and forced them from the mine. The incident sparked a full-scale riot aimed at expelling all Chinese laborers from southern Wyoming. By the end of the day, the mob had killed 28 Chinese, forced hundreds more to flee into the surrounding hills, and burned Rock Springs' Chinatown to the ground. White miners shut down the mines and, as a condition of returning to work, demanded that Union Pacific managers dismiss all Chinese.

The root of white miners' antipathy toward Chinese labor in Rock Springs stretched back to 1875. Jay Gould, then the driving force behind the Union Pacific Railroad, hired Chinese laborers to replace white miners who walked out when the company cut wages without lowering prices at its company stores. The company kept the mines running with Chinese labor and the strike collapsed. Over the next several years, the Union Pacific employed more Chinese miners, despite protests from Wyoming's citizens that its hiring practices displaced and angered white workers and might well lead to violence against the Chinese. By playing Chinese miners off

against white miners, Gould kept labor costs low and impeded labor unity.

During the early 1880s, western workers gained strength and began to unionize. In 1884, Union Pacific shopmen, aided by the Knights of Labor, carried out two successful strikes in response to proposed wage cuts. These victories led other Union Pacific employees, including two thirds of Rock Springs' white coal miners, to join the union. Between 1884 and 1885, western workers joined the Knights of Labor in unprecedented numbers. When Charles Francis Adams became president of the Union Pacific Railroad in June of 1884, the growth of the labor movement was his most pressing concern.

The strength of the Knights of Labor derived from its broad organizational base. The union joined unskilled and skilled workers, women and men, blacks and whites. Chinese laborers constituted the lone exception to the union's inclusiveness. The Knights of Labor promulgated race-based justifications for halting Chinese labor immigration that portrayed the Chinese as inherently inferior to whites and unfit for American citizenship. The union's primary motivation, however, was economic. As industrialists brought increasing numbers of Chinese contract laborers into the country and used them to break strikes and undercut white workers' wages, unionists' frustration with competition from Chinese labor mounted. Although expulsion was the strategy that white miners in Rock Springs settled on to combat Chinese labor competition, it was not the only strategy they considered. In testimony investigators gathered after the Chinese Massacre, Chinese miners acknowledged that whites had asked them to join strikes and that they had refused. Unable to speak English, completely dependent on the company's labor contractor for supplies to sustain them, the Chinese were in no position to strike. Moreover, the Chinese were well aware of whites' animosity toward them and hesitated to cast in their lot with those who vilified them. Nonetheless, the unwillingness of Chinese miners to strike fueled white miners' anger against them.

An 1884 coal strike in Wyoming and Colorado forged the final link in the chain of events that led to the 1885 showdown between the Union Pacific Railroad and white miners in Rock Springs. Miners in the company's all-white camp of Carbon, Wyoming, struck, but not those in Rock Springs, where the Union Pacific employed 331 Chinese workers and only 150 whites. Although white miners in Rock Springs sabotaged equipment to express solidarity with the strikers, the fact that the company could operate its Rock Springs mines entirely with Chinese labor kept white miners there from joining the strike. The strikers in

Carbon demanded that the company rescind a recent wage cut, abolish "ironclad contracts" that prohibited union membership, decrease prices at company stores, and dismiss all Chinese miners in Rock Springs. Continuing coal production in Rock Springs eventually weakened the strikers' position, and the strike ended on January 29, 1885, with the company agreeing only to arbitrate the wage issue. Within months, the company hired 40 new Chinese miners in Rock Springs and subsequently dismissed a small number of white miners. Coming on the heels of a strike that had called for an end to Chinese labor, the Union Pacific's decision to hire more Chinese miners posed a direct challenge to the union and amplified the fury that white miners unleashed on the Chinese on September 2, 1885.

After the Chinese Massacre, Union Pacific officials, backed by Wyoming's territorial governor, requested federal troops to restore order and escort unwilling Chinese miners back to Rock Springs. Adams aimed to re-open the mines with or without white miners, using only Chinese labor if need be. He knew, even relished, the response his actions would evoke from unionized whites. Predicting that the Union Pacific was about to have the largest strike it had ever seen, he declared that he wanted "to have it and have it now." Adams intended to portray the Knights of Labor as a radical, unprincipled organization that supported "the murderers and robbers" who had perpetrated the massacre in Rock Springs.

When the mines re-opened on September 21, only one quarter of the Chinese miners reported to work, and many of these retreated rather than run the gauntlet of whites gathered at the pit entrance to intimidate them. The Chinese, angry at being forced to return to Rock Springs, sent spokespersons to ask Union Pacific officials for train passes to California. When officials refused, they asked the company's labor contractor for back wages to buy their own tickets out of Rock Springs. Refused once again, they approached Knights of Labor members for help, hoping that those who most wanted them out of Rock Springs might pay for their departure. One union member suggested that the Chinese strike rather than leave. On the following day, Chinese miners stayed home. In order to force the Chinese back into the mines, the Rock Springs mine superintendent closed the company store, thereby cutting off supplies to Chinese workers, and threatened to turn them out of company housing. The Chinese called off their walkout and returned to work the next day.

With the Chinese back in the mines, only a general strike would have produced a victory for striking miners in Rock Springs. Union Pacific officials feared

that would be the union's next step, noting in correspondence that the strikers were receiving considerable encouragement from Knights of Labor officers in Denver and that workers' antipathy toward the company was intense all along the line. In order to discourage engineers, brakemen, firemen, and mechanics from launching a sympathy strike that would shut down the railroad, Union Pacific officials stated publicly that they would turn the line over to the federal government before negotiating with the strikers.

The national body of the Knights of Labor could not support the cause of white miners in Rock Springs without seeming to condone their violence against the Chinese. Events in Rock Springs revealed a major weakness of the union. Its local assemblies were largely autonomous and so could call and conduct strikes in response to local circumstances, without direction or discipline from the national organization. When a partisan grand jury in southern Wyoming claimed that not one white assailant could be identified and issued no indictments, national union officers distanced themselves further from the local assembly in Rock Springs. Terence Powderly, the union's leader, took both national politicians and industrialists to task for perpetuating "the Chinese evil," but he refused to support a general strike.

Although Adams never was able to spring the trap he laid for the Knights of Labor, his strategy prefigured the successful counterattack that capitalists mounted against the union after the Haymarket bombing in 1886. He reflected that, if the organization could have been compelled to stand "in direct alliance with murderers, desperadoes, and robbers, it would have been worth to us almost anything." If the Union Pacific's victory was not as sweet as Adams had hoped, it was victory nonetheless. By the end of October, coal production had risen to near normal in Rock Springs and the company employed twice as many Chinese as it had before the massacre. In mid-November, striking miners admitted defeat.

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See also **Knights of Labor**

RODGERS, ELIZABETH FLYNN **(AUGUST 25, 1847–AUGUST 27, 1939)** **Knights of Labor**

For almost two decades, from the early 1870s to 1887, Elizabeth Rodgers was one of the early women labor leaders in Chicago and among the first women officeholders in the Knights of Labor. Rodgers fought for the rights of women laborers in the workplace and within the union while also celebrating her role as wife and mother.

Throughout her youth, Rodgers was exposed to the hardships of workers and their efforts to organize. Born Elizabeth Flynn in Ireland in 1847, Rodgers was raised in London, Ontario, Canada, where there was a strong labor movement. As a young woman she married George Rodgers, a socialist and union organizer, and joined him in his agitations. Blacklisted by companies for their activism, the couple was forced to move several times during the 1860s. Rodgers took in boarders to provide for their growing family (which ultimately included 10 children) while her husband sought work as an iron molder.

The family settled in Chicago during the depression of the early 1870s, where Rodgers more directly joined her husband in the organized labor movement. Rodgers helped to organize primarily non-wage earning women and a few domestic servants and seamstresses into the Working Women's Union (WWU). She served as its presiding officer and together with its members, including Lucy Parsons, Lizzie Swank, and Alzina Stevens, met with local businesspersons and their employees to address conflicts over working conditions. Rodgers and the WWU also attempted to organize women workers. They held meetings to educate workers on their rights and protest strategies and joined the larger campaign for the eight-hour day. In 1877, in recognition of her efforts, Rodgers was elected delegate to the predominantly male state trades assembly in Illinois.

Rodgers was among the first women who joined the Knights of Labor when it opened its membership to female workers in 1881. Rodgers was comfortable with the organization's dual and disparate vision of women's role: a worker entitled to equal pay for equal work and a wife and mother responsible for developing moral character in the home and beyond. She took pride in doing her own housework and caring

for her children and stood up to those who argued that women labor activists were unsexed. Rodgers acted on her belief that women should be allowed to pursue whatever work she was able to do without restriction. For Rodgers, during the 1880s that meant holding elected and appointed offices within the Knights of Labor.

Rodgers was among the first women to hold a number of official positions for the Knights organization. After joining, she assisted in the transformation of the WWU into the one of the first all-woman local assemblies of the Knights of Labor, Number 1789. Rodgers was elected its master workman and represented her local in District Assembly No. 24, which comprised 50,000 members. In 1885, chartered by the Knights' general master Terence Powderly, Rodgers became a regular organizer. The following year, 1886, when the master workman for the District Assembly 24 died, Rodgers was named to fill the office, becoming the Knights' first woman to hold the position of a district master workman. She was also elected a delegate to the 1886 Knights of Labor national convention. Rodgers attended with her two-week-old daughter.

On May 3, 1886, when laborers rallied in Haymarket Square, Rodgers supported the cause but was critical of the anarchists' rhetoric. After the violence at the event, the Knights of Labor suffered a significant decline, and Rodgers was among those who left the labor movement. She pursued a career in the insurance field. She was among the founders and served as the high chief ranger of a women's auxiliary to the Catholic Order of Foresters (WCOF), a fraternal life insurance society. Rodgers held a salaried position with the WCOF from 1891 to 1908. During her tenure, she received criticism from women labor leaders in Chicago for failing to consider the needs and situation of workingwomen. Complaints included Rodgers's employment of a nonunion printing company to produce the WCOF journal and setting high enrollment fees that prohibited workingwomen from joining the Order. Women leaders within the Chicago Teachers Federation, including Margaret Haley and Catherine Gogin, were among those who ultimately forced Rodgers to leave her office in 1908.

Rodgers died in relative anonymity in 1939 at the age of 92. Though Rodgers's commitment to the labor movement did not extend throughout her life, during her involvement her colleagues recognized her for her contribution to the cause. For that period, Rodgers devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy to the labor movement, pioneering leadership roles for women within the Knights organization. During and beyond her involvement in the labor movement,

Rodgers consistently supported a woman's right to work and to earn equal pay for equal work, insisting that this work did not compromise her role as wife and mother.

GWEN HOERR JORDAN

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See also **Knights of Labor**

ROSIE THE RIVETER

After Europe went to war in 1939, American industries awakened from the Great Depression's doldrums. More men—and women—were called back to work or got new jobs in the revived factories, offices, retail outlets, and service industries. After Pearl Harbor, American men marched off to war, leaving a tremendous void in aircraft factories, munitions plants, shipyards, steel mills, and rubber works. Who would take the place of the men in these important defense industries? The answer was Rosie the Riveter.

There were really two Rosie the Riveters. The first was an image created by the War Advertising Council in 1942 as part of the Women in War Jobs/Industry campaign. The second was the real-life person—really millions of women—who worked in the aircraft factories, munitions plants, shipyards, steel mills, rubber works, and defense industries during World War II.

The image of Rosie the Riveter was designed to appeal to white, middle-class women. According to *Advertising and Selling Magazine*, advertisers needed to make a "heroine" out of the "lady of the assembly line." That "heroine" became Rosie the Riveter. Rosie was the embodiment of an American patriotic woman worker ready to do her part to win the war. She was a multimedia personality, appearing in newspapers, magazines, and film. She was the featured personality in advertising, feature stories, and music. Rosie the Riveter the media personality was attractive, white,

and energetic. After a long eight-hour shift, she went home to take care of her children and the household, or went out on a date, if she was single. Rosie never challenged her traditional, domestic role. Instead, she merely transferred her traditional skills and responsibilities to the workplace. According to the *Women's Home Companion*, a popular monthly magazine, "Any woman who can run a sewing machine can run almost any factory machine." A *Saturday Evening Post* advertiser emphasized, "Give them [women workers] a rivet gun for a needle, sheets of metal for material, and these war workers will stitch you an airplane wing in half the time it used to take." Moreover, because women had natural child-rearing tendencies, they were temperamentally suited for the endless routine of factory work. As one writer for *Advertising and Selling Magazine* observed, "Repetition, monotonous tasks fail to break down this care taking attitude."

The women who worked in the aircraft factories, munitions plants, shipyards, steel mills, rubber works, and other war-related industries found that the image of Rosie had little to do with the reality of work.

Between 1940 and 1945, the number of female workers—the real-life Rosie the Riveters—increased from 12 million to 18 million. The largest number of American women—19 million—worked in July 1944. The majority of these women had worked outside the home before the war, although not necessarily in manufacturing. Most worked in less lucrative jobs in the service industry, in retail, or as domestics. But when the men went off to war and war production demands continued (indeed accelerated), more and more women shifted over to lucrative manufacturing jobs. Between 1940 and 1944, the number of women employed in manufacturing increased by 141%; the number working as domestics declined by 20%.

During World War II, an additional 6 million women joined the workforce. Most were married; for the first time, married women outnumbered single women in the female labor force in America. One third of these women had children under the age of 14.

Women who worked in defense industries during the war held an array of jobs. A minority of women took jobs once held by men; under the provisions of the National War Labor Board, these women were paid the same or substantially the same as the men. Most women, however, held the lighter jobs, those not traditionally held by men. Whether holding men's jobs or the lighter jobs, the women who worked in the defense industries were paid well, better than they had ever been paid before.

But there was a downside to the real life of Rosie the Riveter. Work was hard, and she often found hostility at work and difficulty finding adequate day care. Nonetheless, most women wanted to keep their

jobs after the war. According to a Women's Bureau survey of 300 Baltimore women, the majority wanted to stay on their jobs, but few were given that option. Only about a third of the women kept their war jobs. Most shifted to other positions that paid less or remained unemployed.

The desires of women to stay on the job surprised many. The War Department, for example, never saw women as permanent replacements in industry. "A woman is a substitute, like plastic instead of metal," asserted one War Department brochure. That attitude was shared by industry. Women workers were the first casualties in reconversion cutbacks. In the summer of 1945, about 75% of the women employed in the aircraft and shipbuilding industries lost their jobs.

KATHLEEN ENDRES

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See also **World War II**

RUSTIN, BAYARD (1912–1987) **Peace and Civil Rights Activist**

Born into a working-class African-American family in West Chester, Pennsylvania, Rustin absorbed Quaker ideals of community service and social justice from his maternal grandmother. Moving to Harlem in 1937, he observed at close hand the militant class and racial politics of Depression-era New York and soon joined the Young Communist League. Though he broke with the Communist Party in 1941, Rustin always retained a belief that class was a fundamental

divide in American society and that issues of economic inequality were critical matters.

Between 1941 and 1965, Rustin's base of operations was the American peace movement, and he worked first for the Fellowship of Reconciliation under A. J. Muste, and then for the War Resisters League. He organized many protests against the nuclear arms race, particularly the civil defense program in the United States and the aboveground testing of nuclear weapons. Rustin developed close ties with pacifists in Europe and with leaders of anticolonial national liberation movements in Africa, and he planned multinational protests in both Europe and Africa.

Having adopted a Gandhian belief in militant non-violence, Rustin strove to insinuate the practice of nonviolent direct action into the African-American civil rights movement. In the 1940s, he worked closely with A. Philip Randolph in his March on Washington Movement and in efforts to desegregate the U.S. armed services. He also was among the founders of the Congress of Racial Equality, an interracial organization committed to nonviolent action to achieve racial justice. He was a leader of its Journey of Reconciliation, a 1947 effort to challenge bus segregation in interstate travel in the South. His efforts in both the pacifist and racial justice movements led to many arrests in these decades.

In 1956, Rustin traveled to Montgomery, Alabama, where he quickly formed a close relationship with the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Rustin provided King with critical mentoring in the theory and practice of Gandhian nonviolence. He drew up the plans for what became the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and for several years he was a key confidant of King. A steady refrain in his advice to King was the relevance of economic justice issues to the fight for racial equality.

Throughout these years, Rustin maintained ties with the labor movement, primarily, though not exclusively, through his relationship with A. Philip Randolph. A founder of the organization In Friendship, he worked to mobilize trade union support for the burgeoning civil rights movement in the South. He also used his ties with student groups to recruit volunteers in unionizing drives, such as the efforts of Local 1199 to organize hospital workers in New York City in the 1950s.

A controversial figure because of his Communist past and his homosexuality, Rustin was nonetheless chosen by A. Philip Randolph to be the chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, which became one of the signature events of the civil rights movement. The success of the March gave Rustin a public platform that he had never enjoyed before.

In the wake of the March, Rustin increasingly argued that the future of the civil rights movement lay in an alliance with other progressive forces, particularly the organized labor movement. His February 1965 article in *Commentary*, "From Protest to Politics," developed these ideas at length. He urged civil rights activists to shift away from a reliance on protest and instead focus on developing a majority electoral coalition. Rustin viewed organized labor as the key partner for the civil rights movement, and he believed that the black freedom struggle needed to move beyond civil rights toward advocacy of the economic justice measures that were essential for meaningful equality.

With the support of A. Philip Randolph, Rustin left the War Resisters League and in 1965 created a new organization, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, to build bridges between organized labor and the civil rights movement. Largely funded through contributions from individual trade unions and the AFL-CIO, the Institute remained his base of operations for the rest of his life. Through it, Rustin pushed civil rights organizations like the NAACP to lobby for a higher minimum wage and full employment measures, while prodding trade unions, particularly the crafts, to open their training and apprenticeship programs to African-Americans.

Rustin's commitment to a politics of coalition with labor put him at odds with many in the black freedom movement, especially as the movement became more militant in the late 1960s and turned toward black power and black nationalism. For instance, he sided with the United Federation of Teachers, led by Albert Shanker, in its bitter conflict with the Oceanhill-Brownsville community board and its ensuing strike against New York City's public schools. Rustin also dissented from calls for affirmative action as a remedy for racial discrimination, arguing that the key issue was an insufficient number of jobs that paid a living wage. Affirmative action, he often said, would only drive a wedge between the components of a potential majority coalition among progressives.

Rustin also lost much credibility among black and white radicals alike in the late 1960s because of his refusal to break with the Johnson administration over its escalation of the Vietnam War. Even though Rustin saw Johnson's Great Society programs as inadequate to the task of eliminating poverty, he saw them as a step in the right direction. He was unwilling to make the war a litmus test for political affiliation and to abandon access to administration officials. His critics, however, attributed his stance on the war to the dependence of the Randolph Institute on the AFL-CIO and its president, George Meany, staunch supporters of both Johnson and the war.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Rustin used the Randolph Institute to mobilize black trade unionists as a definable bloc, and especially encouraged massive voter registration drives. Increasingly focusing his energy on international human rights work, particularly the plight of refugees, he lobbied within the AFL-CIO to win its support for refugees from Southeast Asia to be admitted into the United States.

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See also **Communist Party; Muste, A. J.; Randolph, A. Philip**

RUTTENBERG, HAROLD (1914–1998) Steelworkers Activist

During the 1930s and 1940s, Harold Rutenberg helped steelworkers in their struggle for a union and then worked as a staffer in the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) and the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

Rutenberg became interested in the workers' struggle in 1933 and 1934 when he was a student at the University of Pittsburgh. The steelworkers' struggle was embodied by the "Rank and File" movement inside the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (the AA). That venerable union had a broad jurisdiction in the steel industry, but in practice, it consisted of a few thousand craft workers in odd niches of the industry. The AA's elected leadership under its president Mike Tighe was timid and afraid of being swamped by the thousands of new members from basic steel companies. The newly unionized workers were organized in union locals but had no national leadership of their own. The strange upshot was that four pro-union intellectuals began to play an informal leadership role for the Rank and File workers. The Big Four were Heber Blankenhorn, Stephen Raushenbush, Harvey O'Connor, and Rutenberg. The Rank and File leaders had a thankless task, for neither they nor their movement had many resources. While many steelworkers wanted to strike, the ad hoc leadership was afraid that a strike without resources or a sympathetic union leadership would be lost and would set back the union movement for years. In the

spring of 1934, the Rank and File leaders settled for a weak presidential commission. Many workers left the movement in disgust, while many of the remaining dissident lodges were expelled by Tighe.

When the Steel Workers Organizing Committee was formed in 1936, Rutenberg joined that effort. He helped to co-ordinate SWOC's campaign to win over leaders of the steel companies' employee representation programs.

Clinton Golden, SWOC's leader in the eastern states, soon had Rutenberg appointed to the post of research director. Rutenberg investigated conditions in the steel industry and the workforce. He was especially interested in the massive unemployment caused by the replacement of the old hand-style sheet mills by modern rolling mills.

In 1942, Rutenberg and Clinton Golden co-authored *The Dynamics of Industrial Democracy*. The book outlined a series of 37 ideas leading to productive relations between unions and managements. It was based on the idea that even strong unions could get only limited concessions from a company. The only way to get more was to improve the company's productivity. Therefore, provided that management accepted the union's role, the union had to cooperate with management for their mutual benefit. The result would be a laboristic order that benefited all. The authors made it clear that the union needed to control dissidents in its ranks. Industrial democracy did not imply union democracy.

Rutenberg worked as the assistant director of the steel division of the War Production Board in 1942 and 1943. In 1946, he left the USWA and became a business executive.

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See also **Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers; Industrial Democracy; United Steelworkers of America**

RYAN, JOSEPH (1884–1963) International Longshoremen's Association

Joseph Ryan became the head of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) in 1927, and in 1943 cemented his control by becoming international

president for life. Ryan had started work on New York's waterfront in 1910. An injury a few years later drove him from the docks, but not from the ILA. His speaking and organizational skills made Ryan an attractive prospect. He started out as financial secretary to Local 791, moved up to financial secretary of the ILA's powerful New York District Council, and finally to the position of president in 1927. He long remained a controversial figure both within the ILA and the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The infestation of gangsters in the ILA corresponded with Ryan's presidency. Just like his gangster allies throughout the New York City port, Ryan gained financially from his union position. Through a complex web of official and unofficial organizations, and union dinners, Ryan plundered ILA funds. Ryan was not circumspect in use of the position of president. He wore expensive suits and drove expensive automobiles, had golf club memberships, and enjoyed luxurious vacations around the world. Ryan also took bribes from stevedoring companies to maintain labor peace. Thus, he accumulated large sums of money from ILA funds and by shakedowns of employers.

As Irish and Italian criminal gangs began to dominate the New York waterfront, increasing numbers of gangsters obtained union positions. When questioned about the large numbers of criminals holding union office, Ryan replied that he was merely giving ex-convicts a second chance to rehabilitate. But there was another reason for hiring ex-convicts: they would maintain control over the men. Because of the widespread influence of gangsters throughout the ILA, longshoremen thought twice before challenging the rule of Ryan and other ILA officials.

Ryan's reputation as being friendly to notorious gangsters and accepting employer bribes encouraged West Coast longshoremen to break from the ILA. In 1934, a strike broke out on the West Coast. Led by Australian-born Harry Bridges, the strike pitted not just longshoremen against shippers and stevedores but also seamen, cooks, pilots, and oilers. Ryan visited the West Coast in May 1934. In his usual way of ignoring local sensibilities, he negotiated a settlement of the strike. Ryan, however, had misjudged the temper of the San Francisco men. In a noisy meeting, Ryan was yelled down and forced from the podium. Humiliated, Ryan shot back by dismissing Bridges from union office. But such a tactic could not forestall the militancy of West Coast longshoremen. In 1936, the West Coast longshoremen joined the fledgling CIO and formed a new union, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). Ryan's failure to control the West Coast men had culminated in the loss to the ILA of thousands of dues-paying members.

Perhaps Ryan might have been privately pleased to have rid himself of the troublesome West Coast men, but he also had to confront opposition back home in New York. A rank-and-file revolt was evident on the Brooklyn docks. Encouraged by Harry Bridges, thousands of New York longshoremen seemed to be ready to challenge Ryan's control. Pete Panto was the rank-and-file leader in Brooklyn. At last it appeared that an alternative to Ryan's rule was present. In 1939, Panto's threat was nullified after he went missing. Years later, his body was discovered in a lime pit in New Jersey. He had been murdered by Albert Anastasia, the reputed head of Murder Inc. The murder of Panto had a chilling effect on the challenge to Ryan. But after World War II, Ryan was forced once again to fight an insurgency within the ILA. A series of wildcat or unofficial strikes broke out in 1945, 1948, and 1951. Each time, a small cadre of ILA officials in New York rose up to challenge Ryan. Nurturing the confrontation was increasing dissatisfaction with Ryan's negotiating ability with stevedores and shippers. Ryan was perceived as a weak bargainer and was labeled with the nickname "nickel-and-dime Ryan." When compared to the wages and benefits of the West Coast longshoremen, this was plainly evident. Under the leadership of Harry Bridges, the ILWU negotiated wages and working conditions that the New York longshoremen could only dream of. Also influencing the ILA insurgents was World War II. Returning veterans to the industry were not so intimidated as before. There existed a keen sense of injustice and anger at the continuing loss of democracy within the ILA. Communist activity on the docks also fed this resistance, as did the efforts of labor priests, led by Father John Corridan.

The 1945, 1948, and 1951 strikes placed Ryan on the defensive. Just as problematic, stevedores and shippers lost confidence in Ryan's ability to deliver peace and accept relatively low wages. Following the 1951 strike, Ryan's control was fast eroding. Calls for a public investigation of the ILA heightened Ryan's anxiety. New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey created a Crime Commission to examine the labor relations and gangster control on the New York waterfront. A series of witnesses and union officials confirmed that the ILA was riven with gangsters, that corruption in the form of kickbacks was common, and that Ryan ruled this mixture of trade union and criminal enterprise. The Crime Commission findings at last pushed the AFL to kick out the ILA from the established labor movement.

Ryan's days as union leader were numbered. He was first indicted for bribery after taking money from stevedores and shippers. The ILA leaders decided that the symbolic removal of Ryan from the presidency

RYAN, JOSEPH

could help quieten calls for a new union to be formed. Correspondingly, Ryan accepted the inevitable and announced his retirement from the ILA in November 1953. His troubles were not over, however. He was convicted of taking bribes and fined \$2,500 and sentenced to six months in jail. He appealed the case to the U.S. Supreme Court but lost. He paid the fine but managed to avoid jail time because of ill health. He continued to battle illness until June 26, 1963, when he died of cancer.

COLIN DAVIS

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See also **International Longshoremen's Association**

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SACCO AND VANZETTI

When Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were arrested on June 1920, they were virtual unknowns, destined, in Vanzetti's words, to "die, unmarked, unknown, a failure." Charged with the April 15 robbery of a South Braintree, Massachusetts, shoe factory payroll that left two security guards dead, the two Italian immigrant anarchists faced hostility based on their identity and their political beliefs that ignited worldwide indignation. When they were executed 7 years later after a trial marked by a level of injustice that remains its central legacy, they were, in one journalist's words, "the two most famous prisoners in all the world."

***Galleanisti* and the Red Scare**

The postwar Red Scare, the seismic reaction to the perceived threat of imminent revolution, imperiled the two anarchists. Sacco and Vanzetti were caught in a dragnet designed by a police chief named Michael Stewart who was certain that the robbery was the work of revolutionaries. Both men were armed when arrested, and convinced they were being held because of their politics, lied repeatedly under questioning.

They had ample reason to be fearful. Sacco and Vanzetti were followers of Luigi Galleani, the fiercely anti-organizational anarchist who led a small but passionately dedicated group of fellow radicals. Galleanisti believed that all institutions, even labor unions, were hopelessly corrupt and that true freedom

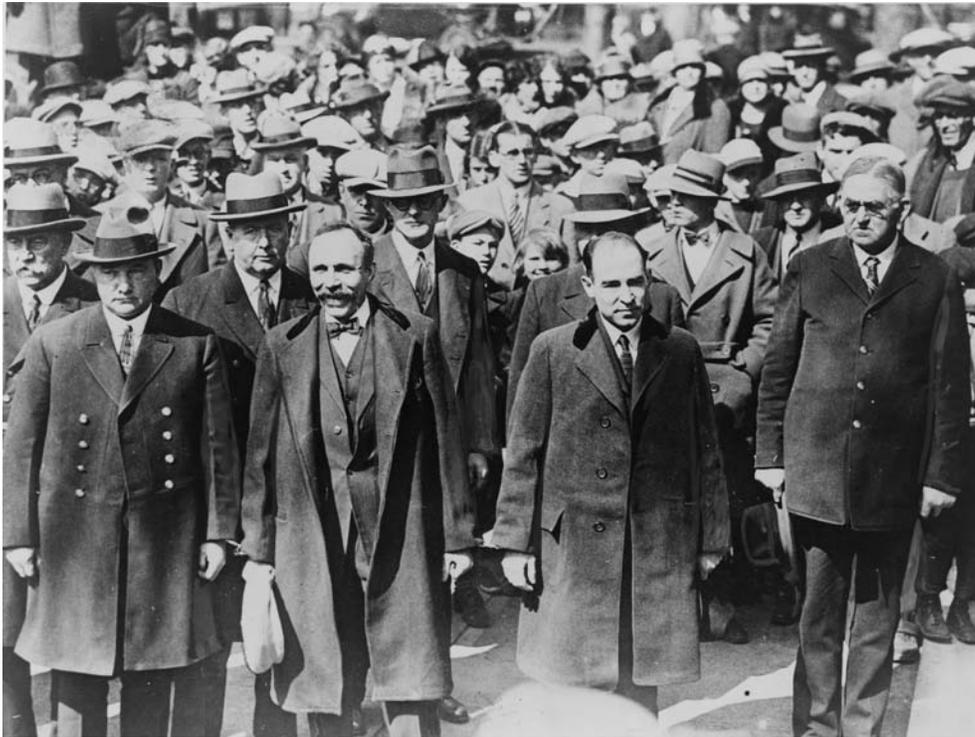
would come only through wholesale destruction of existing political and economic structures. Galleani broadcast his ideas in his weekly *Cronaca Sovversiva* and published a pamphlet on manufacturing bombs.

Many of their defenders portrayed Sacco and Vanzetti as pastoral anarchists, gentle men with innocent ideals. To an extent this was true. Vanzetti's neighbors spoke glowingly of him, and the son of one of his landlords described him as a father figure. Sacco was a dedicated family man whose employer trusted him with the keys to his factory. But there was another side to them as well.

To them "the Idea"—their belief in anarchism—was not simply a philosophical stance. Considerable evidence points to Galleanisti's involvement in a series of bombings in May and June 1920, as well as other explosions before and after. Sacco and Vanzetti may not have been involved—the evidence is circumstantial at best—but clearly they had comrades who were. They eventually asserted that the night they were arrested, they were attempting to move incendiary literature; it may have been dynamite.

The Trial

The indictment for the crime was delayed by Vanzetti's trial for an attempted robbery in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, on Christmas Eve, 1919. His trial—Sacco was not charged because he was at work that night—was defined by contempt for Italian immigrants and a Red Scare mentality. Prosecutor



Bartolomeo Vanzetti (left) and Nicola Sacco, manacled together surrounded by heavy guard and onlookers, about to enter the courthouse at Dedham, Massachusetts where they will receive the death sentence for murder they committed seven years ago. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, NYWT & S Collection [LC-USZ62-124547].

Frederick Katzmann mocked and confounded defense witnesses as they struggled to testify in Italian. One young eyewitness identified Vanzetti by claiming, “The way he ran I could tell he was a foreigner.” The judge, Webster Thayer, stated openly that he regarded anarchists to be capable of any criminal act. Despite weak evidence against Vanzetti, and indisputable proof the jury tampered with evidence, Thayer gave the anarchist an unusually harsh 12–15 years. More important—the reason he had been tried first for this crime—the scant evidence against him in the South Braintree case was now less important than the fact that he was now a convicted felon.

Over the course of the trial, which lasted from May 31 to July 14, little of the evidence should have stuck to either defendant. More than 50 people witnessed the crime. Only seven claimed to have seen Sacco, and just four identified Vanzetti at the trial. In every instance their testimony was faulty or manipulated or both. The material evidence broke down as well. The police claimed that they found Sacco’s cap next to one of the murdered security guards, but the prosecution struggled to establish either that Sacco owned the cap or that it had been found at the crime scene. The police also claimed the gun they took from Vanzetti the night he was arrested

had belonged to one of the guards. But the prosecution could not prove the guard even had his gun the day of the crime—much less that Vanzetti had picked it up as the guard lay dying. In fact police records unsealed in the 1970s revealed that the police and prosecutor Katzmann knew they had the wrong gun and suppressed this evidence. Ballistics testimony was also suspect at best. Of the six bullets extracted from the security guards, Bullet 3 was the only one prosecutors even attempted to tie to the defendants. Though they claimed the bullet came from Sacco’s gun, neither of their ballistics witnesses could argue this definitively. One—Massachusetts State Police Captain William Proctor—later filed a deposition admitting that he had prepared intentionally vague and misleading testimony with the prosecution.

Ultimately this case was defined not by the evidence, but by the misconduct of the prosecutor and the judge and by the dire presence of the anarchists’ political beliefs in the courtroom. As in Vanzetti’s first trial, the prosecutor was Frederick Katzmann and the judge—who made a special request to be assigned this trial—was Webster Thayer. Thayer, anxious to prove his mettle to the elite Boston Brahmin community, was openly hostile to the defendants and to Sacco’s lawyer, a maverick defender of radical causes named

Fred Moore. The judge repeatedly committed judicial misconduct by attacking Sacco and Vanzetti outside his courtroom. Having rejected four appeals in one day, he boasted to a friend, “Did you see what I did to those Anarchist bastards the other day?” The anarchists’ politics became a central focus in the courtroom as well. Much of Katzmann’s case hinged on the defendants’ “consciousness of guilt”; he argued the two had lied when they were arrested because they were guilty. This forced Sacco and Vanzetti to explain that they lied because they feared political persecution. Katzmann leapt at this opening, and Thayer provided him with remarkable leeway as he attacked the defendants for their political beliefs.

Katzmann also had help from the Department of Justice, which assisted the prosecution in numerous ways. For example it placed spies in a cell next to Sacco and on the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee and tried to get one into Sacco’s wife’s house. It tracked anarchist groups’ finances, trying—unsuccessfully—to uncover large infusions of cash. Its extensive involvement in the case, like Katzmann’s prosecutorial interrogations and Thayer’s comments outside of court, raised the question of exactly what the defendants were being tried for.

The Appeals

A quick verdict in the trial initiated the lengthy appeals process. After 6 long weeks, the jury took part of the afternoon of July 14, 1921 to convict Sacco and Vanzetti. Over 6 years, the defendants’ various lawyers filed seven appeals. Vanzetti was represented first by local lawyers Jeremiah and Thomas McAnarney, Sacco by William Callahan and the flamboyant Moore. In late October 1924, William Thompson, a highly respected Boston lawyer, took over the defense; he was joined a year later by Herbert Ehrmann, who dedicated the next 40 years to vindicating his clients. In the last weeks of Sacco and Vanzetti’s lives in August 1927, attorney Arthur Hill took over their case.

Because of byzantine legal codes in Massachusetts, later changed as a result of this trial, the judge sitting in the case heard all appeals. This rendered successful appeals all but impossible. Thayer quickly rejected four appeals that asserted tainted witnesses’ testimony and a prejudiced jury foreman—and one based on his own judicial misconduct. The most heart-rending appeal came from a prison cell confession by a young Portuguese immigrant named Celestino Madeiros. Madeiros implicated a criminal gang operating out of Providence, Rhode Island. Ehrmann argued he

provided new and telling details about the crime. But because Madeiros, drunk and afraid, hid on the floor of the getaway car, he missed obvious details about the crime. Thayer rejected this appeal in October 1926, labeling Madeiros an unreliable criminal.

The Final Months: Protest, the Lowell Committee, and the Executions

By this time, protests against the proceedings had grown increasingly loud and persistent. They began slowly, confined to the Italian immigrant Left community. Anarchosyndicalist Carlo Tresca brought the case to a broader audience, urging his compatriot Elizabeth Gurley Flynn to use her influence in American Left and liberal organizations. Moore also did all he could to publicize the trial. Both Nicola and Rosa Sacco ended up furious at him, convinced he had misused defense funds. But Moore helped make their case an international issue, working largely through increasingly powerful Communist parties worldwide. As the defense campaign grew, organized principally around the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, it attracted prominent Boston Brahmin women like Elizabeth Glendower Evans, who sent Sacco and Vanzetti food and flowers, and tutored them in English. Poets Dorothy Parker and Edna St. Vincent Millay, hardly known as political activists, were arrested for protesting. Writer John Dos Passos marched and published a volume describing the injustice of the trial. Finally when future Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote a scathing expose of the trial and the conservative *Boston Herald* questioned the proceedings, the governor of Massachusetts took the unusual step of establishing a committee to review the case.

The committee, led by Harvard President A. Lawrence Lowell, appeared to conduct an exhaustive investigation. Its review took longer than the trial itself, but committee members had made up their minds before their work began. Lowell drafted the committee’s findings before they heard closing arguments from the attorneys. Governor Fuller conducted his own investigation—it too tainted by his obvious bias—but had declared he would abide by the decision of the Lowell committee. When it issued its report on July 27, 1927, little stood between Sacco and Vanzetti and the electric chair.

By this point support for Sacco and Vanzetti had reached a fevered pitch. Governor Fuller received a petition with over half a million signatures collected worldwide. A wide array of renowned intellectuals and political leaders—among them H. G. Wells,

Marie Curie, Albert Einstein, John Dewey, H. L. Mencken, and Jane Addams—raised increasingly angry voices. Another appeal came from Alfred Dreyfus, who had endured a trial for espionage in a profoundly anti-Semitic atmosphere in France in 1894. Protests wracked cities around the world. There were protests and strikes in Boston and New York City, and in towns like Rochester, Indianapolis, Baltimore, Scranton, and Tampa. Workers led rallies and general strikes in every major city in Europe, in Japan, China, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Panama and across North and South Africa.

It was all to no avail. When appeals to the most liberal Supreme Court justices to issue a stay of execution failed, Sacco and Vanzetti were doomed. Both calmly wrote letters and received visitors in their final hours. Sacco exclaimed, “*Vive Anarcismo!*” and “farewell, Mother” as the electricity surged through him. Vanzetti pointedly forgave “some of the people” who had sent him to his death and thanked the warden for caring for him during his internment. Both men were dead by a few minutes after midnight on August 23, 1927.

The Legacy of the Sacco and Vanzetti Case

The building of their legacy began immediately. The injustice of the case has provoked an outpouring of novels, poems, plays, and even operas. While artistic productions have shared an outraged certainty of their innocence, the case has been heatedly debated among scholars and on myriad websites. Broad early debates on the evidence, the judge and the attorneys, and the impact of the protest movement have funneled down to one bullet. Bullet 3 is the only piece of material evidence that has not fallen apart. Sacco and Vanzetti’s detractors argue that ballistics tests over the years implicate Sacco’s gun. Their defenders counter that the police lied about Vanzetti’s gun and may have planted bullet three as well.

While the question of their guilt or innocence will probably never be resolved, the unfairness of their trial remains indisputable. In 1977, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis acknowledged as much, declaring that because of the anti-immigrant and anti-radical fervor of the time, it had been impossible for Sacco and Vanzetti to receive a fair trial.

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See also Communist Party; Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley; Immigration Restriction; Italians

SADLOWSKI, ED (1938–) United Steelworkers of America

Ed Sadlowski, the son of a Polish steelworker, once served as president of the United Steelworkers of America’s (USWA) largest local union. Sadlowski was the subject of feature stories in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Rolling Stone*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Penthouse* magazines and appeared on the *60 Minutes* television program. Famed economist John Kenneth Galbraith even penned a very rare union-leader tribute in the pages of *Commentary*. The man many union members called Oilcan Eddie because of his working-class character was also a successful defendant in a Federal Department of Justice lawsuit and even had a U.S. Supreme Court case named after him, *Sadlowski v. United Steelworkers*, 1982.

Sadlowski earned his glossy props by being the lead player in one of the most important union election dramas in modern American history. In 1977 Eddie ran for the presidency of the one-million strong USWA. The campaign embodied the hopes and aspirations of thousands of union and political progressives. Sadlowski’s candidacy rubbed raw the wounds of blue-collar workers from Buffalo to California and inspired college students and environmentalists seriously to consider that the labor movement could be an agent for social change. It was a heady expectation to project on the person of a rather young, self-educated Chicago steelworker, but Sadlowski had an impatient quality that fast-tracked him for union leadership.

Sadlowski was born in 1938 in a southeastern Chicago neighborhood. His grandfather participated in the big steel strike in 1909, and his father was a union organizer. In 1956, at the age of 18 Sadlowski

began working at megagiant steel maker U.S. Steel's Chicago South Works. Three years later he was elected shop steward, and incredibly in 1962 at the tender age of 24, Sadlowski managed to craft together a multicultural leadership group to govern USWA Local 65. The South Works was not only the largest employer in Chicago, but one of the biggest steel mills in the country. The 8,000-strong membership of Local 65 was a polyglot of multiethnic and multiracial groupings. Sadlowski won the presidency of Local 65 by building a union coalition with the local's large number of Mexican-American workers. Once in office the brash Sadlowski quickly began to build a reputation for democratic and militant leadership. After only 6 years as local president, Sadlowski accepted a 1968 appointment as a representative to the District 31 staff. But 5 years later Eddie decided to leverage his nearly 20 years of toil in a steel mill to run for the USWA District 31 director post. His decision startled and offended the union's established bureaucracy.

Sadlowski's move to become the highest ranking officer in the union's largest district representing over 110,000 workers contradicted the accepted process of allowing the incumbent leadership to anoint the heir apparent. Samuel Evett was the candidate backed by the union's hierarchy and after a very tumultuous campaign appeared to have fended off the brash challenger by only 1,800 votes. District 65 was now safely once again under the control of a safe, career functionary. But appearances proved deceiving, because the Sadlowski campaign charged Evett and other district officials with massive vote fraud. A federal court agreed with the challenger and in 1974 ordered the election to be rerun. With over 300 federal investigators monitoring voting throughout the Chicago-Gary, Indiana, area, Sadlowski stomped the union's favorite son by nearly a 2-to-1 margin.

Sadlowski was now the elected leader of the largest district of workers within the nation's biggest union. The USWA represented over 1.4 million workers and in conjunction with the autoworkers union had set the national pattern for collective-bargaining agreements for millions of manufacturing workers since 1946. Economists, industrial relations experts, and national politicians had considered the steel industry the country's most important manufacturing sector. By the 1960s, steel companies were making money, and the quality of life for steelworkers had dramatically improved. All the economic indicators however were not so upbeat. Markets at home for steel products had been threatened by foreign steel imports, and prices for most steel products had not fairly represented consumer demand. In addition a persistent 3-year cycle of work stoppages had created a management

and union perception that the industry suffered economic loss each time a new round of contract talks began. In response to threats allegedly caused by strikes, the international union leadership, under I. W. Abel, agreed in 1974 to a very controversial Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA). In brief the ENA prohibited national strikes in exchange for a guaranteed 3% annual wage increase.

The ENA existed for two rounds of bargaining (1974 and 1977), and its benefits were widely disputed. But the economic effects of ENA aside, it was the way the deal was struck that most rankled union members. In accordance with the USWA Constitution, Abel signed the agreement without a rank-and-file ratification vote. To union leaders like Sadlowski, forfeiting the members' right-to-strike was an act of labor treason. In his and the eyes of other workers, the USWA had now come to exemplify "country club unionism where union executives feel more at home playing golf with corporate executives than they do talking to and working for workers" (Sadlowski letter, undated). Angered by the ENA, the loss of the strike weapon, and the erosion of contract rights and backed by a group of self-proclaimed union reformers organized as Steelworkers Fight Back, in 1977 Sadlowski ran for the international presidency of the USWA.

In 1976, Abel stepped down as union president, and after a tussle within the executive board, Lloyd McBride emerged as the Abel loyalists' choice to be the USWA's fourth international leader. Sadlowski had only been a district director for 2 years, but at age 38 he already spent a lifetime in steel mills and steel town bars. Campaigning on a platform of sweeping and visionary principles, he portrayed McBride as a "fat cat" union leader and pilloried what he believed was the prevailing notion that the union leadership was "comfortable partners with top corporate management." Depending on the work of about a dozen paid staffers and scores of volunteers, Sadlowski had significant support from basic steelworkers in California, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Youngstown, Cleveland, and Chicago. His efforts were supported by nickel-and-dime and pass-the-hat contributions from workers in dingy union halls and fat donor checks from national figures like Jane Fonda, John Kenneth Galbraith, Ralph Nader, and Studs Terkel. Sadlowski also drew the enmity of the entire USWA officialdom, including Abel and AFL-CIO President George Meany. Frightened by his progressive political philosophy and critique of American capitalism, Sadlowski was attacked openly by McBride supporters as a Communist.

Sadlowski was also subject to a scurrilous charge from the union hierarchy that he would allow thousands of mill jobs to be eliminated. McBride

took advantage of a freewheeling interview that Sadlowski did for *Penthouse Magazine* to mischaracterize badly the south Chicago firebrand as endorsing the use of technology to reduce the need for manpower in the steel mills. The selected use of words taken out of context appeared to represent a candidate for union president who was indifferent to job loss (E. Kelley, *Penthouse*, 1977).

Some commentators described the contest as a pivotal point for organized and unorganized labor. If McBride were to win, the nation's largest industrial union would likely continue to function in a bureaucratic, nonadversarial, and concessionary manner. But if Sadlowski grabbed the top post, then one of the nation's most important unions would become more democratic, militant, and less conciliatory toward the mill owners. It was as if organized labor and the politics of work were held in the balance. In the end Sadlowski fell short of victory, receiving only 43.1% of the 578,141 votes cast. But a breakdown of the actual votes by locals revealed that Sadlowski won a majority of union votes from large basic steel locals (1,000 or more members) in the country. McBride however swept Canadian and southern locals and nearly all the small nonsteel producing units within the union.

Sadlowski's unsuccessful charge for the union leadership was a serious confrontation of conflicting views of unionism. The steelworkers, like other manufacturing union members in the 1970s, had experienced a creeping loss of economic security. Union ranks had grown agitated and impatient over corporate and union indifference to changing economic realities. McBride, rightly or wrongly represented appeasement and more-of-the-same. Sadlowski on the other hand was the "man of steel," perceived as confrontational and unorthodox. In retrospect perhaps the campaign was an historical moment when just as the country's right-wing political forces were about to assume dominance, organized labor in the United States could have embraced a more class-conscious, assertive form of unionism. But the philosophy, rhetoric, and campaign of Oilcan Eddie mostly add up to a question of what might have been. After all when he ran for president, he had been district director for only a brief time and had never negotiated a major contract, taken any initiatives on organizing, or proposed any dramatic health and safety measures. And while it took a bit longer to take form, the USWA did in the late 1980s construct an effective strategy for saving steelworker jobs and protecting negotiated benefits.

Following the McBride-Sadlowski race, the USWA in 1978 amended its constitution, imposing a blanket prohibition on financial campaign contributions from

persons other than union members. The objection to outsider funding was instituted to avoid the type of insurgent political challenge that Sadlowski had constructed. The rule also marked the first attempt by a labor union to restrict financial support for candidates for union office. Charging that the edict restricts the free speech and associational rights of union members, Sadlowski sued the USWA in 1981. After winning at the federal, district, and appellate levels, Sadlowski faced a final test in front of the Supreme Court. But in 1982, the High Court found in a 5-4 decision that the union's new provision was legal and reasonable. As a result of the ruling, many other unions rushed to adopt constitutional bars that forbade candidates for union office from receiving financial campaign contributions.

After his 1977 race Sadlowski continued to serve on the union staff but never again ran for any union office. He retired in 1995. But in retirement Sadlowski remains a strong advocate for unionism. Sadlowski was appointed in 1995 to the Illinois Labor Relations Board by Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley. His rich appreciation and knowledge of Chicago labor history led to his becoming active in the South-East Historical Society, promoting the preservation of a steel-industry culture on the city's southeast side. Sadlowski has also served as an occasional guest lecturer in the Labor Studies Program at Indiana University's Northwest Campus and as an instructor for the USWA. He currently continues to reside in the neighborhood he was raised in on the southeast side.

In the 1970s, Sadlowski was one of the Midwest's most notable and accessible labor union leaders, projecting an intoxicating and hopeful working-class spirit. At a time when U.S. labor too often kept an arms' length from social movements and such progressive struggles as civil rights, anti-Vietnam War resistance, women's rights, and environmental issues, Sadlowski's unionism embraced these social conflicts as part of a broad working-class fight for social justice.

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SAILORS' UNION OF THE PACIFIC

Union legend states that the Sailors' Union of the Pacific (SUP) began on San Francisco's Folsom Street lumber wharves on March 6, 1885. Approximately 300 sailors gathered that night to discuss the problems they faced: Poor food, low wages, inadequate quarters, and the abusive practices conducted by labor brokers, known as "crimps." Representatives from the Steamshipmen's Protective Association, the International Workmen's Association, and the Knights of Labor led the meeting. Scandinavian and German sailors, engaged in trade on North America's Pacific Coast and influenced by Europe's socialist rhetoric, constituted the majority of attendees. The meeting ended with 222 sailors creating the Coast Seamen's Union (CSU), the precursor to the SUP.

While the CSU's leadership tended toward socialist ideologies, non-Socialists quickly filled the union's ranks, which led to struggles over the organization's course that continued into the twentieth century. This struggle first showed itself in regard to the place that Chinese sailors would assume in the union. While Socialists argued that Chinese sailors should join the union, the non-Socialist rank-and-file resented the Chinese's unfair competition and refused to consider them sailors or potential union members. Rank-and-file members rose to leadership positions early in the CSU's history, and men like Andrew Furuseh established increasingly conservative craft union attitudes to the labor organization. Union conservatism led to a close relationship between the CSU and later the SUP and the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

In 1886, the CSU participated in its first strike when the Ship Owner's Association created the "grade book" policy. This policy required sailors to present grade books containing an employment history and a list of qualifications to potential employers, but in order to obtain a grade book, sailors had to relinquish their union books.

The ship owners refused to abandon the policy and hired strike breakers, who quickly defeated the strike and forced union members to seek work elsewhere. The 1886 strike exposed the union's weaknesses, and in 1891 the CSU and the Steamship Sailors' Protective Union, founded in 1886, united to create the SUP. The new union included both coastal and deepwater Pacific sailors and strengthened the seamen's cause. The SUP supported the 1895 McGuire Act, which targeted the

worst abuses against seamen, such as punishment for desertion and wage advancements and allotments, and while abuses continued, sailors had made progress. In the early twentieth century, the SUP joined the International Seamen's Union (ISU), an antimilitant craft union that maintained tight control over 19 maritime unions across the United States.

Under Furuseh's leadership, the SUP joined the City Front Federation in 1900–1901, along with San Francisco teamsters, longshoremen, engineers, marine firemen, freight handlers, and lumbermen, when employers locked the teamsters out after the teamsters refused to handle nonunion baggage. Over 26,000 men had walked off their jobs from July to October, but the strike ended in a stalemate after California Governor Henry T. Gage declared the lockout and strike over, and both sides agreed to end the struggle. The SUP broke with the City Front Federation in 1906 when the union confederation refused to support longshoremen during a lockout.

The SUP made considerable progress in 1915 when Congress passed the 1915 Seamen's Act. Senator Robert M. LaFollette pushed the bill through Congress, building on the McGuire Act's minor successes. The act included abolishing punishment for desertion in foreign ports, crews' rights to demand safety inspections on their vessels, and allowed sailors to collect damages for officer and owner neglect.

The SUP opposed U.S. entry into World War I, but the union and sailors benefited from the increase in shipping and the desperate need for more sailors to man the trans-Atlantic supply and troop convoys. After the war, Socialists, Communists, and members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) gained some influence among sailors even as the postwar backlash against leftist radicals increased. These groups proved inept at securing the union's leadership however, and moderates continued to dominate the SUP. Division among sailors and employers' increasing attacks on labor in the antileftist environment caused the SUP to lose ground during the 1920s as owners used lockouts and blacklists to weaken the union.

The SUP entered the 1930s divided and broken, due largely to antiradicalism and ISU interference, but Franklin Delano Roosevelt's apparent pro-unionism inspired greater militancy among union sailors. In 1934, the SUP joined in the longshoremen's strike in San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland. On July 5, San Francisco police attempted to force open the ports, and fighting broke out in the streets. Workers burned several freight cars, and police used tear gas and guns, killing two strikers. California Governor Frank Merriam called out the National Guard to quell the strike and return order to the city. Angered

by police violence and the National Guard's presence in the city, workers called a 3-day general strike in San Francisco. The strike ended on July 31 after both sides agreed to arbitration. The SUP participated in several small strikes after 1934, the most important being the 1936–1937 off-dock hiring strike. During the AFL's struggles with the CIO, the SUP leadership sided with the more conservative AFL in 1937. In 1937, the SUP was also expelled from the ISU for joining the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast, which united officers, seamen, longshoremen, and radio operators. Rank-and-file seamen across the nation grew weary of the ISU officials' tight control over their unions, and in the 1937–1938 labor board elections they supported the National Maritime Union (NMW), which sought to eliminate craft and regional divisions. After the labor board elections, the ISU virtually disappeared. Interunion rivalries however took a backseat after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

During World War II, SUP members served in the navy and armed merchant marine, often with distinction. As with the First World War, the Second World War proved an economic and political boon for the SUP and its members. The Cold War also proved ultimately detrimental to left-wing activists, since it created another bout of overt antiradicalism, and leftist leaders and members were purged from the SUP.

After participating in the Oakland general strike in 1946 and the Wall Street employees strike in 1948, the SUP's largest postwar action occurred in 1962 when it joined with the Marine Firemen and the Cooks and Stewards in a successful strike against the Pacific Maritime Association in order to secure better benefits. Led by such activists as Harry Lundeborg, the SUP made great strides from 1950 to 1980 in securing better wages, obtaining comforts for men aboard ship (such as individual crew quarters, heating and ventilation, laundry services, and recreational facilities) and ensuring that employers followed the McGuire and 1915 Seamen's acts to the letter. Despite setbacks during Ronald Reagan's anti-union administration, the SUP's history is one of success and progress. During the 1980s, the SUP began working toward global unionization by cooperating with sailors from Asia and other Pacific Rim nations. This new global trend proved increasingly important after the Soviet Union's collapse and the ever-increasing interconnectedness of the world's markets. The SUP entered the twenty-first century poised to ensure that as trade increased and employer profits rose, the men and women who worked aboard seagoing vessels would reap the benefits of their labors.

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McGuire Act
Seamen's Act

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COTTON STRIKE (1933)

In October 1933, thousands of cotton workers, predominantly Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, walked off their jobs on cotton plantations across the San Joaquin Valley. A violent 27-day strike followed, which ended in the final days of October with higher wages for the workers mandated by the federal government in what became an important test case of the New Deal's policies toward agricultural labor.

The San Joaquin Valley cotton strike was actually the largest single part of a longer strike wave that spread across California in 1933. Beginning in April in the fruit groves of the Santa Clara Valley and continuing through December, a total of 37 strikes involving 50,000 workers extended across the state into fruit, sugar beet, lettuce, grape, and cotton production, crippling large parts of California's massive agricultural industry. As the strikes continued to spread, it was apparent that migrant workers, predominantly Mexican and Mexican-American, were carrying the strike with them. Also increasingly important was the organizational work of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union (CAWIU).

Work was first disrupted in the San Joaquin Valley in August when workers went on strike at the Tagus Ranch, one of the largest agricultural operations in the area, for higher wages during the peach harvest. Other growers in the area, fearful that this was the beginning of a general strike in the San Joaquin Valley, raised their wages and eventually pressured

Tagus to do the same, ending the strike and forcing the state of California and the growers to raise prevailing wages. Still this signaled the beginning of labor upheaval, and it solidified the position of the CAWIU and its locals throughout the valley.

By the time the cotton harvest began in early October, word of the strikes had spread among migrant workers who were ready to extend the walkout into the cotton fields. When wage rates were announced for the season, workers left the fields, and the union declared a strike on October 4. While workers walked off the job throughout the valley, the primary targets of the strike were the largest growers, who were able to pressure smaller operations into altering their wage scales.

In retaliation for the walkout, the large growers evicted migrant workers from their camps, hoping to starve them back to work, but the action had the opposite effect. Instead of pushing the workers back into the fields, this only strengthened the strike and left the growers with no one to pick their crops. The growers tried to import workers from Southern California and Texas but were unsuccessful in attracting sufficient numbers. Since cotton is a perishable item, this meant that the longer the strike lasted, the threat of losing all or most of a year's crop grew. As their attempts to recruit workers failed and the strike continued to spread, the growers turned instead to intimidation to combat the walkout. Vigilante groups were organized all across the valley to force the union out and to end the strike. With armed bands of growers now spread across the valley, workers also began to arm themselves, making a confrontation almost inevitable.

The confrontation came on October 10, when a group of these vigilantes arrived in the small town of Pixley to break up a union meeting. Seeing the shotguns held by the vigilantes, the crowd of workers began to cross the street to seek safety in the union hall. One of the vigilantes fired, leading to a scuffle in which one of the strikers was thrown to the ground and killed. The growers then opened fire on the crowd as they hurried into the union hall. When it was all over, three Mexican nationals were dead. With this escalation of the strike to open warfare, strike-breakers abandoned the fields, leaving the growers without even the skeleton crew they were forced to work with before October 10. In addition the federal governments of the United States and Mexico moved in to try and find solutions to the escalating tension and violence.

In 1933, the New Deal was still in its infancy and policy makers had yet to determine the extent to which they would deal with issues of agricultural workers. Rural labor had been left out of the National

Industrial Recovery Act, and would also be ignored by subsequent legislation, such as the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) in 1935. But in 1933, the federal government acted to bring an end to the strike by making the growers compromise with the workers and the union. George Creel, the western administrator of the National Recovery Administration, stepped in and threatened to withhold crop loans and payments from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) if the growers refused to negotiate in good faith. With federal pressure and the ever-looming threat of losing an entire cotton harvest, the growers agreed to increase wages to 75 cents an hour. When the union balked at this agreement, wanting to hold out for more concessions from the growers, Creel ended federal relief to the workers and threatened to send one thousand workers from Southern California, leading the workers to accept the offer, thus ending the strike.

While the federal government never recognized the collective-bargaining rights of the CAWIU or the agriculture workers they represented, in this instance George Creel gave the union unofficial recognition that forced the growers to arbitrate. It is now clear that the San Joaquin Valley cotton strike marked the federal government's most sustained and successful effort to alter labor relations within agriculture. The San Joaquin Valley strike served to redouble the efforts of the organized agricultural interests to keep the federal government out of their relations with labor.

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See also Agricultural Adjustment Act; California; Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union; Immigration Restriction; Mexican and Mexican-American Workers; Migrant Farmworkers; National Industrial Recovery Act; National Labor Relations Board

SCHNEIDERMAN, ROSE (1882–1972)

Only 4 feet 9 inches tall, with flaming red hair, this diminutive Polish-Jewish immigrant was one of the most important figures in the history of the American labor movement. “The woman worker needs bread,” Schneiderman (1882–1972) famously said in 1911. “But she needs roses too.” Shortened to bread and roses, Schneiderman’s best-known line became the rallying cry for the early twentieth century labor movement, symbolizing the desire of millions of industrial workers both for the basics—decent wages, safe working conditions, and reasonable hours—and for the extras that make life worth living, such as books, theater, art, and recreation. For more than half a century—as an officer of the United Cap and Hat Makers’ Union, president of both the New York and National Women’s Trade Union Leagues (NYWTUL), and as an official in state and federal agencies—Schneiderman worked tirelessly to improve the lives of working people.

Schneiderman possessed legendary skill as an orator. From 1904 through the 1950s, the militant trade unionist and women’s rights advocate spoke on street corners from atop soapboxes, in lecture halls, and over the radio, impressing and persuading many who did not initially share her political views. In an age when political oratory was a leading form of entertainment, many described her as the most moving and effective speaker they had ever heard. Her powers as a speaker did not earn her universal acclaim. In the years after World War I, when the United States was in the grip of a national backlash against radicalism, enemies warned of her potential influence on the masses, dubbing her “the Red Rose of anarchy.” Still Schneiderman’s warmth and ability to persuade listeners would ultimately provide her entree into the highest circles of political power.

A close friend and advisor to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, Schneiderman taught them much of what they knew about working people. Roosevelt’s Labor Secretary Frances Perkins would later say that it was as a result of FDR’s long conversations with Rose Schneiderman that he could plausibly present himself as someone who knew and understood the living and working conditions of America’s industrial laborers. The only woman on FDR’s National Recovery Administration Labor Advisory Board, Schneiderman played a key role in shaping the landmark legislation of the New Deal: the National Labor Relations Act, the Social Security Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act. As president of the New York Women’s Trade Union League from 1917–1949, and as New York State secretary of labor from 1937–1943, Schneiderman also helped make New York State a

laboratory for progressive labor and social welfare legislation.

Schneiderman identified strongly with Jewish causes throughout her career. Her speeches and letter-writing campaigns mobilized the resources of the labor movement and of famous refugees of Nazism, among them Albert Einstein, to help Jews escape from Europe during the 1930s and 1940s. During this period she also helped to raise funds to establish the Leon Blum Colony, a labor-Zionist settlement in pre-1948 Palestine.

Rose Schneiderman was born on April 16, 1882, into an observant Jewish family in Saven, Poland. Her father Samuel was a tailor. Her mother Deborah, like so many Jewish housewives in Eastern Europe during those years, did whatever she could to help support her little family. She took in sewing, baked *challah*, sewed uniforms for the Russian Army, treated the sick with herbal medicines she made herself, and tended bar at a local inn. Both of Schneiderman’s parents were strong believers in educating girls. When Rose was four, her parents caused a stir in town by enrolling her in a *kheydr* (religious school). At six they moved to the city of Chelm so that Rose could attend a public school.

Rose was nine when the family immigrated to New York in 1890. She was 11 when her father died of meningitis, leaving Deborah pregnant and with three children to support. The bereft mother did the best she could, taking in boarders, sewing, and washing for neighbors and even working as a building superintendent—doing repairs in exchange for a free apartment for her family. For a time she was forced to place her three children in an orphanage. Still when she had saved enough to take them back home to live with her, Deborah Schneiderman insisted that her children stay in school rather than finding jobs themselves. She worked nights so that Rose could attend school during the days. But in 1895, when Deborah Schneiderman lost her night job, 13-year-old Rose was forced to leave school for good to help support her siblings.

Deborah Schneiderman wanted Rose to find a respectable job at a department store. She feared that factory work would sully her daughter’s reputation and make it difficult for Rose to find a decent husband. The single mother who at times was forced to feed her children on charity food baskets was determined to see her four children make it into the middle class. Perhaps self-conscious about a childhood that was poor even by Lower East Side standards, Rose Schneiderman would latch onto her mother’s obsession with respectability. That preoccupation lasted throughout her life, shaping her political choices,

and ultimately drawing her away from immigrant socialism to an alliance with the Democratic party.

But respectability did not pay the rent. Then as now blue-collar jobs paid better than pink-collar retail work. After 3 years as a salesgirl, Schneiderman asked a friend to train her as a cap maker. Though her wages improved dramatically, Schneiderman chafed at the gender hierarchy she found in the garment industry. The best-paying, highest skilled positions were reserved for men, while women were concentrated in the worst-paying, least-satisfying jobs. When she complained several older women in the shop began to tutor her in the fundamentals of socialist trade unionism. They and the increasingly militant young Schneiderman interpreted that ideology through a decidedly feminist lens.

At 21 Schneiderman organized her first union local, convincing the women in her shop to join the fledgling United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers' Union. The leadership of the union, mostly East European Jewish immigrant men, were at first skeptical of the ability of young women to organize. But in spite of themselves they were impressed by Schneiderman. Within a year they and the shop-floor cap makers Schneiderman had organized made her the first woman elected to national office in an American labor union.

In 1905, Schneiderman organized a general strike of New York's cap makers. This brought her to the attention of the leaders of the NYWTUL, an alliance of middle-class reformers created to provide support to female workers attempting to unionize.

Schneiderman's talents as an organizer and speaker won her election as vice-president of the NYWTUL. German-Jewish philanthropist Irene Lewisohn offered to pay for Schneiderman to attend college, but reluctantly the young cap maker declined, saying that she could not in good conscience accept a privilege afforded to so few working women. She did however gladly accept Lewisohn's offer to pay her salary as an organizer. In 1908, Schneiderman became chief organizer for the NYWTUL, over the next few years helping to galvanize a wave of unrest and strikes among female workers that by the end of World War I brought 40% of all women in the garment industry into trade unions.

She began with a furious burst of organizing in Manhattan garment shops that laid the groundwork for the 1909 uprising of New York shirtwaist makers, the largest strike of female workers to that time. That strike, galvanized and led largely by East European Jewish women, breathed life into the tiny International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILWGU) and gave the NYWTUL a national reputation. But it also generated tensions between working-class Jews

like Schneiderman and her fellow organizer Pauline Newman and the middle-class Christian women, who in those years still dominated the league. League Secretary Helen Marot described Jewish women as too fervent, too militant, and too demanding and urged the league board to devote their resources toward American girls. In the years leading up to World War I, Schneiderman would resign and rejoin the league numerous times.

From 1914 to 1916, Schneiderman worked as general organizer for the ILGWU. However Schneiderman felt that the male leadership distrusted and undermined her efforts, and in 1917, she resigned that job as well to become chair of the Industrial Section of the New York Woman Suffrage party.

Schneiderman had begun working for female suffrage as early as 1907, speaking at rallies for the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women, whose membership was largely made up of professional women. In 1911, Schneiderman helped found the Wage Earners' League for Woman Suffrage—the first suffrage organization made up primarily of industrial laborers. In 1912, she embarked on a speaking tour through the Midwest to promote state-based suffrage referenda. Her campaign on behalf of the Industrial Section of the Woman Suffrage party in 1917 was instrumental in helping secure the vote for New York women that year.

By the time the United States entered World War I, Schneiderman was a nationally known figure in labor, feminist, and socialist politics. In 1917, Schneiderman was elected president of the New York WTUL, a post she would hold for 32 years. In 1920, she ran for the U.S. Senate on the Labor party ticket. Although she did not win (and had not expected to), Schneiderman used the campaign to articulate an industrial feminist agenda. Her broad platform called for the construction of nonprofit housing for workers, improved neighborhood schools, publicly owned power utilities and staple food markets, and publicly funded health and unemployment insurance for all Americans. During the late 1910s and early 1920s, Schneiderman was labeled a subversive by conservative politicians and was investigated both by New York State and federal agencies.

In 1921, as part of her foray into reform politics, Eleanor Roosevelt joined the New York WTUL. The immensely privileged society lady took an immediate liking to the sharp-tongued league president, and the two began a lifelong friendship. By the mid-1920s, Schneiderman was a regular guest both at Eleanor Roosevelt's New York apartment and at Franklin's Hyde Park estate. In 1926, Schneiderman was elected president of the National WTUL (she ran the league

until her retirement in 1950). When FDR became New York governor in 1928, the immigrant labor activist became a close advisor.

In 1933, FDR brought Schneiderman to Washington as part of his National Recovery Administration. Four years later she became secretary of labor for New York State. In both posts Schneiderman fought race-based inequities in minimum wage legislation, pushed to extend social security benefits to domestic workers, and lobbied for equal pay and comparable worth laws to erase the gap in pay between men and women in the workforce. Still active in the WTUL, Schneiderman also tried to use state legislation to aid union drives among hotel maids, beauty parlor workers, and waitresses. During those same years, Schneiderman threw herself into efforts to rescue European Jews and to resettle them in either the United States or Palestine.

Schneiderman retired from public life in 1950, but she remained close with the women of the WTUL circle who had been both her professional and personal network throughout her life. Her partner of two decades, Irish immigrant labor activist Maud Swartz, died in 1937. Schneiderman never again entered into a long-term relationship. Schneiderman died on August 11, 1972, at the age of 90.

For more than 50 years, Schneiderman organized women to fight not just for economic independence, but also for the right to have meaning and beauty in their lives. Long before the women's movement of the 1970s declared that the "personal is political," Schneiderman's life and work embodied that philosophy. She attacked sex segregation in the workplace, tried to organize domestic and service workers as well as industrial laborers, and called for state regulation of food and housing prices as well as wages and hours. Recognizing that women's responsibilities to home and family were, and should be seen as, an inextricable part of the working-class struggle, Schneiderman called both for comparable-worth laws and government-subsidized day care, for workers' health care and health insurance for all mothers.

Schneiderman died just as the 1970s' women's movement was gaining strength. But many of her ideas were taken up by that movement, and they are still being debated in courtrooms, legislatures, and classrooms today. Those ideas and dreams, as much as the government protections that millions of American workers have enjoyed since the mid-1930s, are the legacy of Schneiderman.

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See also **International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Newman, Pauline M.; Women's Trade Union League**

SCOTTSBORO CASE

One of the most infamous and celebrated racial spectacles of the 1930s, the Scottsboro case, began on March 25, 1931, with a brawl between black and white hoboes on a freight train moving through northern Alabama. The blacks prevailed, expelling a number of whites from the train. One of the whites reported the incident to the stationmaster in Stevenson, Alabama, who contacted authorities further down the line in Scottsboro, Alabama, but the train had just left. The word reached the next town of Paint Rock, where a posse was deputized and ordered to apprehend all the African-Americans on the train and bring them back to Scottsboro. The deputized men searched the train and discovered nine young African-American men; they also discovered a white man and—to their considerable surprise—two young white women, Victoria Price and Ruby Bates, dressed in men's clothing, a mode of dress often adopted by women who rode the trains during the Depression.

Of the nine young men who quickly became known as the Scottsboro boys, four of them—Roy and Andy Wright, Eugene Williams, and Heywood Patterson—knew each other from their home town of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Clarence Norris, Ozie Powell, Charlie Weems, Olen Montgomery, and Willie Roberson had come from different towns in Georgia and were thrown together on the train by circumstances. Olen Montgomery was completely blind in one eye and had very poor vision in the other; Willie Roberson was so debilitated by untreated venereal diseases that he could walk only with the assistance of a cane. Nonetheless within hours of their arrest, all nine of them were charged with rape.

Two weeks later on April 9, 1931, after four separate trials conducted in rapid succession before four separate all-white juries in the mountain Alabama town of Scottsboro, eight of the Scottsboro boys were found guilty as charged; presiding judge Alfred E. Hawkins immediately sentenced them to death.

The ninth defendant, 13-year-old Roy Wright, was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The Communist party USA, which had begun its first serious effort to organize in the Deep South in early 1930, had monitored the Scottsboro case from the beginning. From their base in Chattanooga, Tennessee, James Allen and Helen Marcy, editors of the Communist party's *Southern Worker*, alerted the New York office of the International Labor Defense (ILD). Communist party and ILD organizers attended the pretrial hearings and the trials. Seeking to mobilize public opinion, they sent pre-emptive telegrams to Judge Hawkins and the governor of Alabama, warning them against "legal lynching" and demanding that the defendants be protected from lynch mobs. Immediately after the verdicts were issued, the Communist party USA published a lengthy statement in support of the Scottsboro defendants in the *Daily Worker*; simultaneously, the ILD voted to defend them.

In the meantime the Chattanooga Minister's Alliance had appealed to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for assistance, but the NAACP responded cautiously, seeking more information before proceeding. Right after the Scottsboro verdicts, there were demonstrations of outrage in the United States and abroad. The ILD sprang into action by locating the families of the defendants, offering legal support, and other assistance. The NAACP officially entered the case in early May 1931, when Walter White, executive director of the organization, visited the Scottsboro boys at Kilby prison, trying to convince them that the NAACP should take the responsibility for their defense. These events set the stage for a bitter, acrimonious, and divisive public struggle between the ILD and the Communist party and the NAACP for the control of the case, with the ILD and the Communist party castigating the NAACP for its reformist ideology and legalistic tactics, and the NAACP accusing the ILD and the Communist party of recklessly endangering the lives of the Scottsboro boys by their emphasis on mass demonstrations and other extrajudicial measures in their efforts to free them. The bitterness engendered by this conflict decisively marked the early years of the Scottsboro campaign and would shape accounts of the case for many years to come.

Having persuaded the Scottsboro boys and their families to accept their support, the Communist party and the ILD launched a two-pronged offensive on their behalf. The ILD assigned Communist party and ILD lawyer Joseph Brodsky the task of pursuing its legal strategy in the early years of the campaign, filing for a stay of execution, pending appeals to the Alabama Supreme Court. Although the Alabama Supreme Court affirmed the convictions of seven of

the Scottsboro defendants in March 1932, it reversed the conviction of Eugene Williams on the grounds that he was a juvenile at the time of his conviction. In May 1932, the Supreme Court agreed to review the Scottsboro convictions, thus setting the stage for its historic reversal of them in its November 1932 decision *Powell v. Alabama*, ruling that the Scottsboro boys had been denied counsel and therefore had suffered a clear violation of due process. *Powell v. Alabama* set the stage for the second round of Scottsboro trials in Decatur, Alabama, in March 1933.

In addition to their legal strategies, the ILD and the Communist party vigorously pursued the defense of the Scottsboro boys on the world stage, with street marches, large protest meetings, letter-writing campaigns, postcards and telegrams. Not only community leaders and union organizers joined the campaign, but many well-known artists, musicians, writers, and scholars as well. The Scottsboro mothers were enlisted to travel on national speaking tours on behalf of their sons. One of them, Ada Wright, the mother of two of the Scottsboro defendants, Roy and Andy Wright, toured Europe with J. Louis Engdahl, the national secretary of the ILD, on the eve of the Nazi take-over of Germany. News about the Scottsboro case outpaced European coverage of other events in the United States during the early years of the case. Images of the incarcerated Scottsboro boys circulated throughout the world, and they were the frequent subjects of songs, poetry, plays, fiction, political cartoons, and works of art.

For the March 1933 Scottsboro trials, the ILD secured the services of one of the most renowned lawyers in the country, Samuel S. Leibowitz. Buttressed by the dramatic repudiation of the rape charges by one of the two female accusers, Ruby Bates, Leibowitz relentlessly and aggressively sought to discredit the claims of Victoria Price. Nonetheless the all-white jury quickly found Heywood Patterson, the first of the Scottsboro boys to be retried, guilty and sentenced him to death. The presiding judge, James E. Horton, suspended Patterson's sentence in view of Joseph Brodsky's motion for a retrial however, then suspended the remaining trials indefinitely. Several months later in a dramatic and unexpected ruling, Judge Horton overturned Heywood Patterson's conviction and ordered a new trial—an act for which he subsequently lost his re-election bid for the judgeship he held.

A second Decatur trial began in November 1933, concluding with another conviction and death sentence for Heywood Patterson and a second conviction for Clarence Norris. The Alabama Supreme Court affirmed both convictions in June 1934. Several months later a major rift developed between Samuel

SCOTTSBORO CASE

Leibowitz and the ILD when Leibowitz learned that two lawyers associated with the ILD had attempted to bribe Victoria Price. Leibowitz subsequently formed the American Scottsboro Committee, with the support of established black leaders and some white liberals and clergymen, in 1934.

In 1935, the United States Supreme Court agreed to review the convictions of Patterson and Norris, paving the way for the second major decision involving the Scottsboro case: In April 1935, *Norris v. Alabama* reversed the conviction of Norris (and effectively of Patterson), ruling that the exclusion of African-Americans from jury duty in Alabama deprived black defendants of the equal protection guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

In November 1935, the Jackson County, Alabama, grand jury, augmented by one black member, re-indicted the Scottsboro boys. One month later in the spirit of the “popular front” that now characterized the political outlook of the Communist party, it joined with representatives of the NAACP. The American Civil Liberties Union, the League for Industrial Democracy, and the Methodist Federation for Social Service came together to form the Scottsboro Defense Committee—an organization that agreed on legal means, as opposed to mass organization, as the primary means to achieve freedom for the Scottsboro boys.

Meanwhile the State of Alabama pressed ahead with its determination to prosecute the Scottsboro boys. In January 1936, Heywood Patterson was tried for the fourth time and found guilty; this time however his sentence was 75 years. During the same month another Scottsboro defendant, Ozie Powell, slashed the neck of a deputy sheriff while being transported from the Decatur courthouse to the Birmingham jail. Powell was shot in the head; he survived, but suffered permanent brain damage.

In January 1937, the Alabama Supreme Court affirmed Patterson’s most recent conviction. In July 1937, Clarence Norris was tried for the third time, convicted, and sentenced to death. Andy Wright was convicted for the second time and sentenced to 99 years; Charlie Weems was convicted for the second time and sentenced to 75 years. Ozie Powell was convicted of assaulting the deputy sheriff and sentenced to 20 years. In a dramatic turnabout however, the Alabama authorities worked out an arrangement with the Scottsboro Defense Committee that led to the release of Eugene Williams, Olen Montgomery, Willie Roberson, and Roy Wright.

The remaining five Scottsboro defendants languished in prison, as the Scottsboro case periodically floated up and receded in public consciousness during the late 1930s and the 1940s. Charlie Weems was

released in 1943, Ozie Powell in 1946. Clarence Norris and Andy Wright finally gained their freedom in 1944; Haywood Patterson escaped from Kilby prison in 1948. Taken together, the Scottsboro boys served a total of 130 years in prison, and their lives were destroyed by it.

Still the campaign to free the Scottsboro boys must be seen as a watershed moment in twentieth-century racial politics. As a campaign organized and orchestrated by the international Communist movement, it touched the lives of countless people, spanning the British Empire, Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the African continent. It placed the issue of racial injustice on the national and international agenda in ways that were unprecedented in the twentieth century. In the context of the United States, the sharp debates about the strategies and tactics necessary to confront effectively the legacy of racism in the United States, the appeal of the Scottsboro campaign to the ideals of interracial empathy and solidarity, and the insistence on mass organizing across racial lines all laid the groundwork for what would become the modern civil rights movement—as did the two landmark Supreme Court decisions that were a direct result of the Scottsboro case.

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SELLINS, FANNIE (1865?–1919) President, United Garment Workers of America Local 67

Fannie Sellins is perhaps most widely known and celebrated because of the manner in which she died.

From 1909 to 1919, however, her life was dedicated to the cause of labor organization, a cause that carried her across the United States and placed her in the center of the turmoil that was American labor relations for that decade.

Little is known of Sellins's early life. In the 1910 census, she is listed as living in St. Louis, Missouri, a 45-year-old, widowed head-of-household with four children, three of them living at home. A dressmaker by trade, Sellins worked in her rented home in a St. Louis working-class neighborhood. She also served as president of the United Garment Workers of America (UGWA) Local 67, which had approximately 400 female workers.

On September 13, 1909, the clothing company of Marx and Haas locked out 1,000 of its employees, members of UGWA Locals 23 and 67. The company was possibly seeking to institute an open shop. The UGWA declared a national boycott of Marx and Haas, and Sellins began to make local, and then nationwide, tours to publicize the boycott and seek support for the striking workers. Highlights of the early part of the tour included visits to Chicago, where Sellins and a companion were assisted by Jane Addams of Hull-House in Chicago, and before the annual convention of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in Des Moines, Iowa. In October 1911, the UGWA and the company of Marx and Haas signed a closed-shop agreement with wage issues to be settled by negotiations.

Shortly thereafter in December 1911, the UGWA local attempted to organize the workers of the Schwab Clothing Company and again, Sellins went on a national speaking tour to urge the boycott of Schwab Company products. Seeking support at the 1912 convention of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in Indianapolis, Indiana, Sellins made a plea that prefigured her involvement with mine workers, appealing for "a bond of sympathy" between mine and garment workers.

The labor confrontation between Schwab and the UGWA local intensified in the summer of 1912. In July 1912, UGWA Local 67 removed Sellins from its presidency in what one newspaper described as a "little family row." The Schwab strike and boycott were not supported by the national leadership of the UGWA because the federal court system had ruled union-organized boycotts as illegal. In August 1912, the UGWA reversed the decision of Local 67 and reinstated Sellins as president of the union, and the incoming general executive board appointed her organizer and labor promoter. Sellins's victory was bittersweet however, as she later remarked, "I have no home. My home was broke up during the big strike in St. Louis."

Sellins was to remain in St. Louis for another year, during which she entered the political arena. In the spring of 1913, the Socialist party of St. Louis nominated her for a seat on the board of education, along with Kate Richards O'Hare, the well-known socialist lecturer and organizer. Sellins received 6,826 votes, slightly less than the 6,896 received by O'Hare, and about 550 more than the socialist candidate for mayor.

Sometime in the late summer of 1913, while lobbying for the garment workers in West Virginia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Sellins's attention shifted to coal miners. In September 1913, she joined the effort of the UMWA to organize the West Virginia-Pittsburgh Company mine at Colliers, West Virginia. Sellins's activities with the striking miners were one of social welfare, the provision of clothing and food, and providing nursing services to the stricken families of miners. Her reasons for doing so were obscure. Sellins noted that "I couldn't tell you how I come to be among them (the miners)... I don't know myself."

The West Virginia-Pittsburgh Company mine in Colliers was located near the Hitchman Coal and Coke Company Mine, near Wheeling, West Virginia. In 1907, Judge Alston G. Dayton, of the U.S. Circuit Court for northern West Virginia, issued a restraining order preventing the UMWA from organizing the Hitchman mines. In January 1913, under this injunction, Dayton found the UMWA guilty of interfering with the Hitchman Company's individual employment contracts requiring its employees not to join a union and declared that the UMWA was an unlawful organization in restraint of trade. On September 14, 1913, the UMWA initiated a strike against the West-Virginia Coal Company mine at Colliers. The company also maintained that its individual employment contracts prohibited employees from joining the UMWA.

On September 29, Dayton issued a restraining order, repeating nearly verbatim his Hitchman injunction. After a mine guard was shot during a confrontation in October, Dayton issued a temporary injunction to replace the restraining order on December 1 and issued a contempt of court citation against 11 UMWA defendants, including UMWA organizer James Oates and Sellins. Dayton sentenced the defendants to up to 60 days in jail and personally chastised Sellins "...not to emulate Mother Jones."

On December 3, the UMWA held a rally in Wellsburg, West Virginia. At the rally Sellins defiantly displayed her oratorical skills, noting the poverty of the striking families in Colliers, and speaking of the children, "...that if it be wrong to put shoes upon those little feet, then I will continue to do wrong as long as I have hands and feet to crawl to Colliers."

On March 17, 1914, Sellins and the other strike leaders were found guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to 6 months in jail. Shortly thereafter the Fourth Federal Circuit Court of Appeals reversed Dayton's Hitchman injunction of January 1913. The appeals court also remanded the Colliers case to Dayton.

As a partial result of the Hitchman case being overruled, the West Virginia–Pittsburgh Coal Company and the UMWA reached a settlement in June 1914, but it did not include a contract for the UMWA. Bond was raised for the defendants, and they were released in July 1914, but Dayton again found the defendants guilty of inciting violence in April 1915. The court of appeals affirmed Dayton's decision in May 1916, and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case. In December 1916, based on an appeal from the defendants, President Woodrow Wilson commuted the sentences of the defendants to time served.

On December 10, 1917, a divided U.S. Supreme Court issued its *Hitchman Coal and Coke Company v. Mitchell* (John Mitchell, president of the UMWA) decision. The decision ruled that the Hitchman contract was valid and that injunctions were proper in preventing third-party interference in the contractual relationship between owners and employees. Until 1932, and the passage of the Norris-La Guardia Act, this ruling was part of established labor law.

After receiving President Wilson's clemency, Sellins in 1917 continued her organizing work in the Allegheny and Kiskiminetas River valleys in western Pennsylvania, known as the Alle-Kiske, near Pittsburgh and not far from Colliers. No longer just providing assistance to the families of striking miners, she was active in the front of the picket lines and was known for convincing potential strikebreakers not to work as replacements.

The entry of the United States into World War I and a subsequent mobilization brought a year-and-a-half of peace to the region, during which the bituminous coal operators signed a basic national agreement with the UMWA. With the Armistice of November 1918, however, came increased tension between coal operators and miners as the operators sought to escape government labor controls and end recognition of the UMWA and miners sought permanent recognition of the UMWA and increases in pay. In the spring of 1919, operators abrogated the 1917 agreement. Sellins again stepped into the fray taking place in western Pennsylvania.

On July 21, 1919, employees of Allegheny Coal and Coke Company, a subsidiary mine owned by the Allegheny Steel Company of Brackenridge, Pennsylvania, walked out on strike. Despite Sellins's efforts the company was able to hire other strikebreakers. Sellins

continued to work toward preventing the collapse of the strike and also tried to organize unskilled workers in local steel mills.

On August 26, Sellins witnessed the beating of a miner by a deputy. Having photographs taken of the deputy who beat the miner, Sellins and a group of miners, women, and children moved toward Brackenridge to file a complaint. As the group began to move, a fight ensued between a miner, Joseph Starzelski, and deputies. The miner was killed, and Sellins, trying to get beyond a fence bordering the road, was gunned down, a bullet entering the left side of her face, and coming out her forehead. An Allegheny County Coroner's Jury ruled in September 1919 that Sellins' death was justifiable homicide. Both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Conciliation Service investigated the circumstances of Sellins's death, but it was considered beyond the purview of the federal government. In June 1924, three deputies were indicted for the killing but were acquitted.

Sellins and Starzelski were buried in Union Cemetery on August 29, 1919. An allegorical statue marks the grave. During the steel strike of 1919, small stickers of a postmortem photo of Sellins were distributed among steel workers. On seeing one of the stickers, Mother Jones commented, "I often wonder it wasn't me they got. Whenever I look at a picture of her I wonder it's not me lying on the ground."

Perhaps Mother Jones's comment was more than an acknowledgement of the dangers of the work of a labor organizer but instead a comment on the hardship of life as an organizer in early twentieth-century America. For Sellins was not always successful in her organizing activities, and at the same time, she lost her home in St. Louis, her freedom in West Virginia, and her life in Pennsylvania. To the end however, she was dedicated to her work as labor organizer.

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SERVICE EMPLOYEES' INTERNATIONAL UNION

Having more than doubled its membership since 1980, the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU) is the fastest growing union in the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). In its four divisions—health care (the largest division, with 870,000 members), public employees, building service, and industrial and allied—the SEIU represents some 1.8 million working people across the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. Members of the SEIU work for public and private employers as, for example, nurses, doctors, building cleaners, police and corrections officers, librarians, social workers, and ballpark employees. From the union's earliest days, the SEIU has had a diverse membership. Today women are in the majority and some 20% of union members are African-American.

Early Days

The SEIU's origins go back to 1902 when janitors working in Chicago's apartment houses and downtown office buildings successfully organized a union. Three years later this first effort collapsed due to internal dissension and intense employer opposition. William F. Quesse, one of the union's early founders, led a second organizing campaign in 1912, launching Federal Union 14332, which represented Chicago's apartment, or flat, janitors. By 1917, the Chicago Flat Janitors' local had grown into a multiracial union with 6,000 members and had signed a citywide contract. Small locals among janitors in cities including Philadelphia, Boston, Seattle, and San Francisco had also been established. In April 1921, the Chicago union became Local 1 of the AFL-chartered Building Service Employees' International Union (BSEIU) and Quesse became the new union's first president. Most of the BSEIU's seven founding locals had fewer than 150 members, leaving Local 1 dominant.

Also in April 1921, Quesse and nine members of Local 1 were indicted in Chicago's circuit court on charges of conspiracy, extortion, bombing, and malicious mischief. Their trial ended in a hung jury, but a second trial resulted in guilty verdicts mainly on the conspiracy charge. It was not uncommon in the 1920s for union leaders to be convicted of criminal conspiracy for engaging in legitimate organizing and strike actions. Eventually a well-organized petition campaign that included some 60 letters from members of Chicago's real estate board, as well as strong support from Mayor William Hale Thompson, the city's Republican political boss and a union ally, resulted in a

pardon from the governor of Illinois. Quesse died in 1927 and was temporarily replaced as BSEIU president by Oscar Nelson, president of Local 1. At the international's next convention in March 1928, Nelson gave way to Jerry Horan, who had replaced him as president of Local 1. On the eve of the Great Depression, the BSEIU numbered some 7,000 members in 20 small locals across the nation.

Growing up in the 1930s

With the nation engulfed in hard times, many BSEIU locals failed, and even those that survived were forced to accept pay cuts as nonunion workers flooded the labor market. In 1929, to promote greater cooperation and unity among union locals, the international began publishing a journal, *Public Safety*. Despite the economic despair, international union membership rose by 10,000 during the Hoover administration. Nevertheless for the BSEIU and for the labor movement in general, the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt as president in 1932 resulted in a fundamental turnaround in their fortunes. During Roosevelt's first term, the BSEIU doubled in size to reach a membership of 40,000. At the center of the international union's growth during these years was the emergence of a militant building trades union movement in New York City, spearheaded by the formation in 1934 of Local 32B.

By 1933, conditions among New York's building trades workers had reached bottom. Janitors had no paid holidays, vacations, life insurance, hospitalization, or other benefits. Yet even though labor was weak, the firing in March 1934 of Tom Young, a native West Indian elevator operator active in an independent union, stirred his 25 fellow workers to go on strike. Aided by James J. Bambrick, an organizer for the Typographers' Union, the strikers secured Young's reinstatement, and Young, using the momentum gained by this victory, helped establish Local 32B. Bambrick was elected the union's first president and Young its vice-president.

On November 1, 1934, Bambrick led 32B members out on strike against owners of buildings in New York's garment center. Three days later Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia helped negotiate a temporary agreement that granted the union's demand for a closed shop; all other basic issues were to be arbitrated. The Curran award issued in February 1935 maintained the closed shop, improved wage scales, and instituted maximum hours. The next year contract negotiations stalled after employers refused to meet with the union's negotiating committee. A 17-day

strike marked by violence led the mayor to again intervene. An arbitrated settlement was reached that increased minimum wages but left hours the same. By 1936, although the number of building-service locals in New York had grown to include a 32K, most of the city's BSEIU members belonged to 32B.

The BSEIU's spectacular growth in the 1930s appears to have attracted the interest of organized crime. George Scalise, a former president of a Teamsters garage washers' local was appointed the BSEIU's fifth vice-president in 1935 by BSEIU President Jerry Horan. When Horan died unexpectedly in 1937, Scalise was chosen to replace him as president. Within the BSEIU Charles Hardy, Local 9's president, led the West Coast unions in opposition to Scalise. For his efforts Hardy faced suspension from office and an attempt to take control of his local. In April 1940, after a series of newspaper articles by the syndicated journalist Westbrook Pegler drew nationwide attention to Scalise's ties to organized crime, New York Attorney General Thomas E. Dewey's racket bureau indicted the BSEIU president. Convicted of embezzlement and forgery, Scalise was sentenced to from 10–20 years in prison.

Modernization

Two weeks after Scalise's indictment, the BSEIU annual convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, elected William McFetridge, a flat janitor since 1923 and Quesse's nephew, to lead the union. To McFetridge the crisis confronting the union resulted from its weak internal controls and loose administration. McFetridge believed that New Deal legislation like the National Labor Relations Act not only helped sustain the labor movement but also imposed responsibilities on unions to adopt more businesslike practices. To this end McFetridge set out to modernize the administrative structure of the BSEIU.

Union leaders began by upgrading record keeping. The same 1940 convention that elected McFetridge president amended the BSEIU constitution to require the international to send quarterly financial reports to all unions. Local unions were mandated to send in membership lists and to report when new members paid their per capita dues. In 1942, McFetridge replaced *Public Safety* with *Building Service Employee*, a larger monthly publication that would be produced by the union's research department, itself newly created to provide the necessary wage, hours, and other information required by the War Labor Board. McFetridge also moved to distance the BSEIU from identification with organized crime by

suspending any local that appeared to be involved with racketeers.

Looking to professionalize union organizing, the BSEIU also developed regionally based "joint councils" that by providing trained, skilled people, and pooling resources both assisted and extended the international's influence over local unions. As technological advances displaced some BSEIU workers—self-service elevators did not require manual operators—the union added new members among airport workers, atomic plant workers, nonacademic school employees, and hospital employees. Having grown steadily through the 1930s, the BSEIU added an average of 10,000 members each year to reach a total of some 275,000 members by the end of McFetridge's 20-year presidency.

Although a longtime Democrat, McFetridge became the only labor leader to endorse the Republican candidate, New York's governor, Thomas Dewey, in the 1948 presidential election and was regarded as favoring the Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower in his two presidential campaigns. Although the records are silent on his reasons for endorsing Dewey, McFetridge may have encountered the presidential candidate when Dewey was prosecuting former BSEIU President Scalise. Dewey also seems likely to have solicited McFetridge's support in the election. In 1950, McFetridge became the thirteenth vice-president of the AFL and his union's first member on the federation's executive council, a position he retained after the AFL and the CIO merged in 1955. The *New York Times* characterized McFetridge as one of the more conservative leaders of the labor movement in the 1950s, and *Business Week* regarded him as the prototype of the modern union leader.

In 1960, McFetridge retired, and David Sullivan, who since 1941 had been the president of 32B, was his handpicked successor. Unlike the conservative McFetridge, Sullivan was a New Frontier and Great Society, liberal Democrat. Under his leadership the union became involved for the first time with the Committee on Political Education (COPE), the AFL-CIO's political action committee. In 1965, the BSEIU established a department on civil rights to promote the inclusion of nondiscrimination clauses in local union contracts; the international also required each local to establish a permanent civil rights committee. In 1963, Sullivan oversaw the relocation of BSEIU national headquarters from Chicago to Washington, DC. This change not only placed the international in the nation's political capital, but also reflecting Sullivan's desire to strengthen BSEIU ties with the labor federation moved it closer to the AFL-CIO's headquarters.

Under Sullivan the BSEIU moved more aggressively to organize employees in the public sector.

In 1961, the union's efforts were significantly bolstered when President John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 10988, guaranteeing federal workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. The following year Milton Murray, former director of the CIO's Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee, led the BSEIU's initial organizing campaign at Veterans Administration (VA) hospitals in Buffalo, New York. Successful after some initial difficulties, and having learned the importance of local contacts to organizing in new areas, the BSEIU, by 1965, represented VA employees in cities including Albany, Syracuse, Chicago, Milwaukee, and several on the West Coast, as well as in Buffalo. Reflecting the ongoing changes in the composition of the union's membership, the international at its convention in 1968, dropped "building" from its name to become the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU).

Moving Forward

By 1971, when George Hardy, who had been an international union vice-president since his father Charles died in 1948, replaced the retiring Sullivan, the SEIU had more than 430,000 members, an increase over the previous decade of more than 50%. Like Sullivan Hardy emphasized organizing and union growth. In his opening address to the 1972 SEIU convention, Hardy called for doubling the union's membership by organizing a half-million workers as soon as possible. To achieve this goal, he added 1 million dollars to the union's organizing budget. Hardy personally led a series of 35 weeklong organizing workshops that added 1,500 local and 70 international organizers to the ranks. To counter the increasingly sophisticated anti-union tactics employed by corporate consultants, the SEIU, under Hardy's leadership, produced a new organizing guide, its first stewards' handbook, and a strike manual.

Hardy made the SEIU a more active player in the growing field of health care organizing. Although its interest in health care organizing dates back to the union's earliest days, its first breakthrough came in 1941 when Local 250 signed a master agreement with San Francisco General Hospital. Through the 1950s and 1960s, Hardy and the BSEIU built on these efforts. By 1968, the second, third, and fourth largest locals in the international union were largely composed of health care workers. In 1974, the SEIU and 1199 National Union of Hospital and Health Care Workers cooperated to win a change in federal law that extended protection under national labor laws to workers in not-for-profit, voluntary hospitals. The

SEIU participated in more than 500 hospital elections during the next 5 years, adding over 30,000 health care workers to the union's membership. By the end of the decade, the leaders of the SEIU and 1199 agreed that the goal of organizing the health care industry nationwide would be better served by a united effort. However the proposed merger led to an internal war in 1199 after Leon Davis, its president, retired in 1982, and this delayed the unification of the two unions for 20 years.

The 1970s also saw the SEIU pay more attention to meeting the needs of female workers. In 1973, Karen Nussbaum, an office worker at Harvard University, started Nine to Five as an insurgent group of clerical workers. The new organization issued an "Office Workers' Bill of Rights" that among other basic reforms demanded equal pay and promotion opportunities, maternity benefits, and the right to refuse to do personal errands for the employer. In 1975, Nussbaum joined with the SEIU to charter Local 925. Although Nine to Five continued to function as a separate organization, Local 925 helped bridge the gap between organized labor and the women's movement. Focusing on organizing office workers in the Boston area, Local 925 had about 350 members by 1979.

In 1978, Nussbaum helped start Working Women—National Association of Office Workers. Concentrating on the banking industry, Working Women's efforts led the federal government to investigate sex discrimination in the nation's banks. But Working Women was not a union. Using Local 925 as the model, Nussbaum in 1981 again joined forces with the SEIU, this time launching District 925 to bring union representation and collective bargaining to an estimated 20 million office and clerical workers in the United States. District 925 contracts improved wages and working conditions for telephone operators in Boston after a 9-month strike in 1983; in 1994, after a 10-year campaign, District 925 won full collective-bargaining rights at the University of Washington. In 2001, the SEIU restructured District 925 into state organizations, while chapters of Nine to Five, National Association of Working Women, remained active across the United States.

Hardy retired in 1980, and John Sweeney, who had risen in the ranks to lead 32B in New York, was elected to replace him as president of the SEIU. One way that the SEIU expanded its membership under Sweeney was through the acquisition of independent public-employee unions, such as the 80,000-member California State Employees' Association in 1984. Two years earlier the SEIU joined with the United Food and Commercial Workers' (UFCW) Union to mount a corporate campaign against Beverly Enterprises, a company that operated nursing homes throughout

the United States. Adopting a strategy that the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union had recently used against the textile manufacturer J. P. Stevens and Co., the SEIU and the UFCW attacked Beverly Enterprises by publishing studies assailing the quality of patient care at its nursing homes and by engaging in shareholder actions at the annual meetings of large Beverly stockholders like Chase Manhattan Bank. In March 1984, the SEIU and the UFCW agreed to abandon their corporate campaign in return for Beverly's permitting union elections free from company intimidation. Although a promising start, more than 20 years of failed negotiations, court suits, strikes, and other militant confrontations passed before, in February 2004, Beverly Enterprises and 1199P, the statewide SEIU health care workers' union, signed a contract covering 1,500 workers in 24 nursing homes in Pennsylvania. Beverly management's change of heart seems to have resulted from the SEIU's offer to use its political muscle in the state's legislature to oppose aid cuts to nursing homes. Nevertheless the breakthrough in Pennsylvania still left Beverly operating over 400 nursing homes without a union in 25 states and Washington, DC.

In 1985, in a return to its roots the SEIU launched Justice for Janitors, a campaign to organize office cleaners and custodians. First in Denver and Pittsburgh, and then spreading to other cities, including Los Angeles and Boston, the SEIU's Justice campaign won wage and benefit concessions for workforces that consisted mainly of non-English-speaking immigrants. The campaign in Los Angeles exemplified the SEIU's now more confrontational approach. As multinational contractors in the early 1980s began to exercise greater control over the building service industry in the City of Angels, that industry became largely nonunion. Building services were essentially outsourced to major contract cleaning-service firms. Seeking to keep their labor costs low, these firms hired immigrant Latinos for wages at or close to the minimum. To overcome the daunting obstacles of organizing among a scattered and highly vulnerable workforce, the SEIU reached out to rank-and-file leaders, many of whom had been involved in left-wing or union activities in their home countries. On June 15, 1990, the Los Angeles police attacked a peaceful march of Justice for Janitors strikers and supporters. Recorded on videotape the attack caused public outrage and brought pressure from Mayor Tom Bradley on the contractors resulting in an agreement. Each year since 1990, the SEIU joins with community activists to stage visible events on or around June 15. In 2002, an American Dream Tour began in Washington, DC, with a rally and a march

on the Justice Department to protest Attorney General John Ashcroft's harsh immigration policies; the tour ended 3 days later in Boston just as contract talks covering more than 10,000 area janitors began between the cleaning contractors and the SEIU.

In the mid-1990s, Sweeney led an internal revolt within the AFL-CIO that resulted in the retirement of Lane Kirkland, the labor federation's longtime president. After Sweeney was elected in October 1995 to replace Kirkland as head of the AFL-CIO, he named Richard W. Cordtz interim president of the SEIU. Andrew Stern, a former social worker in Pennsylvania whom Sweeney had recruited to oversee the SEIU's organizing and field-service programs, successfully challenged Cordtz at the SEIU's next convention and was elected president. During his presidency Stern has continued Sweeney's emphasis on organizing, grassroots activities, and progressive politics. Yet in the new century, the SEIU president has also emerged as a leader of dissident unions (the Teamsters, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Laborers' International Union of North America, and Unite Here) within the AFL-CIO that have challenged Sweeney's leadership of the labor federation. Representing more than one-third of the AFL-CIO membership, Stern and the other insurgents fault Sweeney for not getting union leaders to agree to spend up to half of the federation's budget on recruiting new members through field organizing, especially in the South and the West. Stern also proposes merging, for the purpose of consolidating their power, the current 58 AFL-CIO unions into 20, each devoted to a single sector of the economy. Moreover Stern insists that the only way for labor to counter the challenge posed by the globalization of capital is to build a multinational labor movement. In June 2005, the five dissident unions agreed to form the Change to Win Coalition to pursue their reform agenda. The following month the SEIU and the Teamsters withdrew from the AFL-CIO just before the labor federation began its fiftieth-anniversary convention. Meeting in St. Louis in September 2005, six other unions joined with the SEIU to found the Change to Win Federation. Announcing that "Organizing is our core principle," SEIU secretary-treasurer Anna Burger was chosen to be chairwoman of the new federation. Despite concern that dual federations would splinter an already weakened labor movement, the two groups have been able to find ways to work together. The SEIU and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees have signed a 2-year pact not to raid each other's memberships and have agreed to organize jointly some 25,000 California home health aides. For its part in one of

the biggest unionization drives in the South in decades, the SEIU in November 2005 successfully organized 5,000 janitors in Houston, Texas. Nevertheless the concern remains that the split between the two labor federations will lead to wasted resources and an ugly struggle within the labor movement.

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See also American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Feminist activists in Ithaca, New York, coined the term sexual harassment in 1975, in response to the case of Carmita Wood, a 44-year-old administrative assistant who had quit her job with a Cornell University physicist after becoming ill from the stress of fighting off his advances. When Wood's application for unemployment benefits was denied because she had willingly quit her job, she approached Cornell's Human Affairs Program. Lin Farley, Karen Sauvigne, and Susan Meyer, feminists on staff there, gave Wood's problem a name—sexual harassment—and formed Working Women United, the first grassroots organization devoted to publicizing and researching the issue. The first speak-out on sexual harassment was held in Ithaca in May 1975. An article on the speak-out appeared in the *New York Times* in August 1975; by the end of the decade, stories about sexual harassment had appeared in a broad range of national and local newspapers and magazines. A 1976 article in the women's magazine, *Redbook*, reported on the results of a survey of nine thousand readers and described the problem as pandemic, affecting women whether they worked in corporate offices or on

assembly lines. Another organization devoted to the problem, Alliance against Sexual Coercion, formed in Boston in 1976.

The feminist movement against sexual harassment reflected both liberal feminists' concern with employment discrimination and radical feminists' opposition to violence against women. Sexual harassment was understood to be a significant barrier to women's equality, both a cause and consequence of women's segregation in the labor force. Because of women's inferior employment positions, women were vulnerable to harassment while at the same time such harassment led women to change jobs or resulted in poor performance and absenteeism, which ensured that women stayed in lesser situations. If sexual harassment worked to keep women down in traditional jobs, it was also a way of keeping women out of nontraditional jobs, where harassment was especially virulent and pervasive. Building on their work in the antirape movement, radical feminists saw harassment as a similar form of violence against women, another expression of male dominance, and not as an individual man's expression of sexual interest. Sexual harassment was often described as economic rape, a term that highlighted the connections between patriarchy and capitalism.

Social recognition of sexual harassment as a widespread social problem increased in the second-half of the 1970s, but the search for legal remedies to sexually exploitative behavior in the workplace began even before the phrase sexual harassment existed. Legal theorists ultimately focused on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited sex discrimination in employment, as the most viable approach. In 1976, in *Williams v. Saxbe*, a case involving a woman who was fired after repeatedly resisting her supervisor's sexual advances, a federal district court ruled that sexual harassment was a form of sex discrimination.

The legal theories of Catharine MacKinnon were the most influential in establishing sexual harassment as a violation of Title VII. MacKinnon argued that such behavior was not just an injury to an individual woman, but a form of sex discrimination, since it reinforced all women's subordinate status in the workplace. MacKinnon identified two types of harassment: *Quid pro quo* and condition-of-work (later called hostile environment). In the former a woman must submit sexually or forego employment or an employment benefit. In the latter a woman is not promised or denied a benefit, but harassment is such a significant part of the work environment that her job becomes unbearable. In 1980, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency charged with investigating claims that employers have violated

Title VII, adopted MacKinnon's argument and description of the two different forms of harassment as part of their guidelines on what constituted sex discrimination.

In 1986, the Supreme Court held in *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson* that both the *quid pro quo* and hostile-environment forms of sexual harassment were forms of sex discrimination that violated Title VII. Feminists saw the court's recognition of the hostile environment claim as especially significant, since it is more pervasive and less clear-cut than *quid pro quo*. However feminists and scholars were disturbed by some aspects of the decision that addressed claims of hostile-environment harassment. First the decision failed to adopt the same standard of employer liability as for *quid pro quo*. Second the court determined that evidence of a woman's speech, clothing, and conduct were admissible. Finally a plaintiff would need to prove that the behavior was unwelcome and so "severe or pervasive" that it altered the conditions of her employment. This last qualification proved divisive as courts struggled to determine the degree of severity needed to be an actionable claim. Here the issue centered on men's and women's varying interpretations of what constituted harassing behavior. In acknowledging this difference, some commentators have argued for a subjective standard, generally known as the reasonable-woman standard, though this is a controversial position that subsequent Supreme Court decisions have not adopted.

Since *Meritor* sexual harassment law has continued to evolve. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 for example allows plaintiffs to receive punitive damages, while the decision in *Harris v. Forklift* (1993) held that it is not necessary to prove that one suffered severe psychological injury in order to make a hostile-environment claim.

A number of events in the 1990s drew national attention to the issue, while at the same time conservatives and civil libertarians began to criticize hostile-environment law as unduly restricting free speech and as a politically correct form of censorship. Many Americans first learned of sexual harassment during the nationally televised confirmation hearings of Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas in 1991. Anita Hill testified that Thomas had made unwelcome sexual advances to her when she worked for him. The hearings sparked heated and divisive discussion about the issue, including in the African-American community, where Hill's accusations raised issues of persistent racism, loyalty to the race, and the historic sexual exploitation of women of color. In the wake of the hearings, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) saw a dramatic increase in the number of sexual-harassment complaints, and

commentators suggest that women voters who were angered by the way congressmen treated Hill contributed to the victories of many women in the congressional elections of 1992. The navy's Tailhook scandal in 1991, the 1995 resignation of Senator Bob Packwood over numerous allegations of sexual harassment, and media coverage of President Bill Clinton's relations with Paula Jones and Monica Lewinsky all kept the issue in the public's eye. The year 1998 saw the largest (as of this writing) sex discrimination settlement when the Japanese automaker Mitsubishi agreed to pay 34 million dollars to more than 450 women who maintained they were groped and subjected to lewd behavior at the Normal, Illinois, plant.

Although there is widespread support for legislation against *quid pro quo* harassment, the increased visibility has led some critics to assert that too much attention has been paid to the issue, transforming trivial, everyday occurrences into social outrages. Some commentators, including some feminists, feel that the focus on sexually hostile workplaces casts women as delicate, asexual, and in need of protection, a view that they believe encourages a victim mentality and trivializes actual sexual assault by comparing it to behavior that merely offends.

Historians and the History of Sexual Harassment

The behaviors we now associate with sexual harassment existed before such behavior was named and declared a form of illegal discrimination. Early scholarship on the history of women's experience in the labor force—whether as enslaved women, workers in factories, offices, stores, or as domestics in private homes—documented examples of unwanted pressure for sexual activity, demands for sexual acts to maintain employment, and work environments that were overtly sexualized, where suggestive comments and uninvited touching were an ordinary occurrence. In these works harassment was portrayed as an ahistorical phenomenon, an ever-present and largely unchanging reality of women's work, common to all women regardless of the nature of the work. More recently scholars have begun to examine how the experience of sexual harassment is historically specific, focusing especially on how the resistance to, and function of, harassment changes in different environments and historic moments. Historians have examined how harassment made work not only uncomfortable or unbearable for some women, but how men used it to protect their place in the labor hierarchy. Sexual intimidation and coercion reinforced

gender differences and contributed to gender segregation in the labor force, thereby maintaining men's power and their status as skilled workers, leaders, and higher wage earners. While men used harassment as a way of shoring up cultural ideals of masculinity, women also used ideas about gender to resist unwanted sexual attentions. Women in offices and factories in the early twentieth century, for example, asserted that they were ladies even if they were working outside of their homes for wages. As ladies these women demanded to be treated with respect by their male coworkers and bosses. The continuing emphasis on gender history will no doubt lead to further study of the history of sexual harassment.

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- Williams v. Saxbe*, 413 F. Supp. 654 (D.D.C. 1976), *rev'd in part and vacated in part*, 587 F/2d 1240 (D.C. Cir. 1978)

See also **Gender**

SHANKER, ALBERT (SEPTEMBER 14, 1928–FEBRUARY 22, 1997) President, American Federation of Teachers

Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) from 1974 to 1997, was one of the most important labor leaders in the United States in the late twentieth century. He played a prominent role in the upsurge in public-sector unionism during the 1960s and 1970s. He also came to symbolize the split between the old and new left for his leadership of the New York City teachers' union during the infamous Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes of 1968. Thanks to that strike, and his famous "Where We Stand" articles, Shanker rose to national prominence. In addition to his role as a labor leader, Shanker became a leading figure in the movement for school reform during the 1980s and 1990s. Central to his concerns throughout his career was his desire to empower teachers, both economically and professionally.

Albert was born in New York City to parents Morris and Mamie Shanker, Jewish immigrants from Russia. Like many New York Jews of his generation, he was exposed to organized labor and left-wing politics at an early age. His mother for instance was a member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. While still in high school, he subscribed to *Partisan Review*, and he became an active member of the Student League for Industrial Democracy while attending Columbia University, and belonged to the Trotskyite Young People's Socialist League.

After obtaining a bachelor's degree in 1949 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Shanker entered graduate school at Columbia University. By 1952, after having pursued a doctorate in philosophy for 3 years, he had run out of patience and money. In order to support himself, he began teaching math in the New York City public school system as a permanent substitute. He then joined the Teachers' Guild, one of dozens of organizations representing New York City schoolteachers at the time. He soon became a member of the union's executive board, and in 1958 David Selden, future president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), would offer him a full-time position on the union staff as an organizer.

In 1960, the Teachers' Guild merged with the Secondary School Teachers' Association to become the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). That same year, 1960, would also see the UFT's first strike. In order to force the school board into holding a representation election as a prelude to collective bargaining, the UFT staged a 1-day walkout on November 7, 1960. The school board, under heavy political pressure, capitulated. In the election that followed, the

UFT won exclusive bargaining rights for all New York City teachers. Then when negotiations over a contract faltered, the UFT staged another 1-day strike on April 11, 1962. Again the strike resulted in a stunning victory for the UFT. Two years after helping negotiate its first contract, Shanker became president of the UFT in 1964 and remained its president until 1986. The local became the largest teachers' union in the United States and would be the basis for Shanker's power in the AFT.

These victories by the UFT played a key role in the great surge of union organization among governmental employees during the 1960s and 1970s. From 1961, when Shanker's union first won collective-bargaining rights in New York City, to his death in 1997, membership in the AFT swelled from 71,000 to almost 1 million. More than just helping to expand his own organization however, the success of the AFT in gaining bargaining rights in New York and other cities in the early 1960s inspired unionization efforts by other governmental employees across the nation. Most directly the challenge presented by the AFT to the National Education Association (NEA) forced that organization, which had previously eschewed collective bargaining as being unprofessional, to transform itself into a full-fledged union. Today with over 2 million members, the NEA is the nation's largest union, and teaching has become the most heavily unionized occupation in the United States. Even more broadly the pressure of teacher strikes and militancy in combination with the example of President Kennedy's Executive Order 10988, which was issued in 1962 and which granted collective-bargaining rights to federal employees, would prompt a majority of the states to enact collective-bargaining laws for state, county, and municipal employees in the 1960s. This would result in a dramatic expansion of public-employee unionism from about 5% of public workers in the early 1960s to about 36% in 2004. By 2004, about 4% of all union members in the United States would be public-sector workers. As private-sector unionization rates plummeted in the late twentieth century, the expansion of public-sector unionism would represent the sole bright spot in an otherwise bleak picture for organized labor. While the sheer number of new union members added to organized labor's ranks by public-sector unions was in itself impressive, equally striking was the type of workers: For the first time white-collar employees were joining unions in large numbers.

The most dramatic and for many observers defining moment of Shanker's career came in 1968 during the Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes. Like the rest of the AFT leadership, Shanker had actively supported the civil rights movement during the early 1960s.

For instance he participated in the March on Washington in 1963 as well as marches in Selma and Montgomery. As the integrationist goals of the early civil rights movement gave way to racial separatism and Black Power in the later 1960s however, Shanker's ideology and the interests of his union began to diverge sharply from those of the more radical civil rights leaders.

Dissatisfied with the slow pace of integration in New York City, and increasingly disillusioned with the assimilationist ideas of the mainstream, black activists advanced the idea of community control. They argued that the blacks should exercise greater authority over the schools where their children went, setting the curriculum, and establishing the standards for who would work in the schools. Community control ran directly counter to Shanker's ideas about professionalism. Not only did he believe that teachers should receive professional salaries, but that they should also have a, if not the, decisive say in how they performed their job and that professionals, not untrained laymen, should determine who was qualified to be a teacher.

In May of 1968, the board of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville demonstration school district dismissed 17 white teachers for allegedly being unsympathetic to the board's goals. Not only did this go against Shanker's ideas about professionalism, it violated the union's contract with the city and its responsibility to its members. In response to the firings, Shanker ordered the UFT out in a series of strikes in order to force the teachers' reinstatement. The strikes were marked by a number of racial incidents that pitted black New Yorkers against the predominantly Jewish UFT. This incident heralded a divorce between the Jewish and African-American communities and more broadly between the old Left, which was oriented toward class issues, and the new Left, which was more focused on issues of identity, whether that of race, gender, or sexual orientation.

Shanker's reputation as a liberal was badly damaged if not destroyed by the Ocean Hill-Brownsville strikes. Many on the Left viewed him as racially insensitive at best, a closet racist at worst. It was in response to such criticism that Shanker began writing the "Where We Stand" articles that first appeared as paid advertisements in the *New York Times* in 1970. In spite of this criticism, Shanker would continue to oppose racial quotas and preferences. For instance the AFT filed an *amicus* brief in the *Bakke* case in 1978 opposing racial quotas.

Shanker's support for U.S. involvement in Vietnam further alienated him from the Left. In fact it was his support for the war that elevated him to the executive board of the AFL-CIO in 1973 when then AFT

President David Selden refused the position because of his opposition to the war. Shanker became a strong supporter of George Meany and his anti-Communist foreign policy.

After Shanker became president of the AFT in 1974, he worked to make the union the pre-eminent spokesman for the teaching profession. He secured his place as a leader in school reform in 1983 when he endorsed the report of the President's Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk*, which deplored the state of America's public schools. While the National Education Association (NEA) worried that setting national standards for teacher competency and student achievement would have a disparate impact on minorities, Shanker endorsed the concept of high-stakes testing. In keeping with his ideas about professionalism, Shanker felt that teachers should be held to high standards. This was essential, he believed, in order for teachers to claim the prerogative of having the determining voice in how they performed their jobs. He also popularized the idea of charter schools, although he opposed school vouchers, both because of his ideological commitment to public education and the interests of his union. The idea of national standards in education has now become official government policy, in part due to Shanker's work.

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See also **American Federation of Teachers; National Education Association; Ocean Hill-Brownsville Strikes (1968)**

SHARE CROPPERS' UNION (1930s)

The Share Croppers' Union (SCU), sometimes referred to as the Alabama Share Croppers Union, was a predominantly African-American organization composed of sharecroppers, agricultural workers, and tenant farmers. It was the largest Communist-led mass organization in the South. The SCU was founded in 1931 and disbanded in 1937, transferring its workers to other labor unions. At its peak the SCU claimed to have over 10,000 members.

Sharecropping

It is important to recognize the context in which the SCU was founded. Sharecropping is a system of farming in which laborers contract to farm a tract of land they do not own in return for a fraction of the profits generated by the tract's crops. Sharecropping was a major feature of the South during the Reconstruction Era (1865–1876) and is still used in many poor, rural areas of the world, including India.

Sharecropping developed in response to the emancipation of African-American slaves in the Deep South. Plantation farms relied on slave labor, while slaves relied on plantation owners for shelter, food, and basic necessities. After the Thirteenth Amendment abolished the institution of slavery, sharecropping enabled both sides to maintain their dependent relationship. However because the terms of sharecropping were very difficult and clearly in the plantation owners' favor, the arrangement cemented the subordinate status of African-Americans in the South. That is, sharecroppers were required to buy seed and farming implements from the plantation owner, generally at exorbitant prices or rates of credit, while receiving only a small share of the crop to sell. In short it was extremely difficult for sharecroppers to generate any profit, so they remained almost completely dependent on the plantation owners, just as they were as slaves. Because sharecroppers often had a difficult timing paying their debts, they lived under constant threat of eviction from white landowners.

Communist Party Influence

In 1928, at the Sixth World Congress of the Communist Internationale in Moscow, representatives recognized the "Negro nation" that existed in the South and drafted a resolution to encourage self-determination of laborers in the Black Belt of the South. The Communists wanted to liberate African-American farm laborers by seizing land from white owners and distributing it to landless peasants and to unite laborers all across the South. A group of advanced African-Americans would be trained to organize other poor southerners, both black and white, in a common struggle against white landowners.

The Communists' organizing efforts began in Alabama. In 1930, the American Communist party opened its southern headquarters in Birmingham and began organizing industrial workers (primarily in the steel and iron industry), publishing the *Southern Worker* newsletter, and supporting candidates for state and local offices. A decade-long agricultural



Sharecropper plowing. Montgomery County, Alabama.

depression that resulted in extremely low cotton prices made the sharecroppers especially fertile ground for the Communist organizers.

The Founding of the SCU

Ralph and Tommy Gray, African-American tenant farmers in Tallapoosa County, Alabama, organized a small group of black sharecroppers and tenant farmers in spring 1931. In response to their request for assistance, the Communist party sent Mack Coad, an African-American steelworker from Charleston. Coad became the first secretary of the fledgling union, which gathered nearly 800 members in its early months. In addition to the broader goals of the Communist leadership, the SCU sought to demand better wages and working conditions, abolish sharecropping, and garner voting rights for blacks.

Fearing economic upheaval white landowners and government officials tried to prevent sharecroppers

from joining and met the new union with violence. Several violent conflicts ensued. Two night police raids of union meetings in Camp Hill, Alabama, where officials confiscated union literature and membership lists culminated in a violent shootout between union members and a sheriff. The conflict left Ralph Gray dead and his house torched, forced many tenant farmers into hiding, and impelled Coad to leave Alabama. The union soon regrouped, led by Eula Gray, Tommy Gray's teenage daughter and an activist in the Young Communist League, and officially adopted the SCU name.

Growth of the SCU

By the summer of 1932, the SCU included over 600 members despite continued violent opposition from the police and lynch mobs. Al Murphy, an African-American Communist activist, took over the union and transformed it into an underground organization

that met secretly. In December 1932, another wave of violence, instigated by SCU members fighting the seizure of a member's livestock by creditors, left three SCU members dead and several wounded, and five others imprisoned. Despite the violence, sharecroppers and farm laborers continued to join the union, especially after landowners took advantage of certain New Deal policies to evict sharecroppers on a mass scale. In summer 1933, the union claimed 2,000 members and by fall 1934, nearly 8,000. At this point the membership was still entirely African-American.

In winter 1934, Clyde Johnson, a white Communist and Minnesota native with extensive organizing experience, took over the SCU. Johnson steered the union away from its underground status and began working to make it a legitimate agricultural labor union. He edited and published the *Union Leader: A Voice of the White and Negro Farm Toilers of the South*, the SCU's first newsletter. The union was active in many ways, leading strikes by cotton pickers in three Alabama counties and organizing local committees, women's auxiliaries, and youth groups. The SCU continued to face violent opposition—a cotton workers' strike in 1935 left several strikers killed and dozens of union members assaulted and jailed. Around this time the SCU sought a merger with the newly formed Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, but their leadership declined because of the SCU's Communist influences.

By 1936, the SCU grew to over 10,000 members, spread from Alabama into neighboring Mississippi and Louisiana, and opened a public headquarters in New Orleans. By now the SCU was fighting not just the repression of the southern ruling class, but also the fast-occurring changes in the agricultural South, the most important being the increasing mechanization of cotton farming. With these rapid changes in sharecropping leading to the SCU's increasing irrelevance as a stand-alone body and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union continuing to be uninterested in merging, Johnson led the effort to disband the SCU in 1937. Sharecroppers and tenant farmers were transferred to the National Farmers' Union, agricultural wage laborers to the Agricultural Workers' Union, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). However some SCU local groups remained in existence and continued to function into the period of World War II.

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See also African-Americans; Sharecropping and Tenancy; South

SHARECROPPING AND TENANCY

The sharecropping and tenancy system arose in the South in the years immediately following the Civil War and emancipation. At first however planters employed the contract labor system, and Freedmen's Bureau officials often acted as the brokers in the arrangement. But neither freedmen nor planters were satisfied with the contract system. Freedmen were unhappy with the fact that they were required to work under the close supervision of planters or their representatives, often laboring in gangs just as they had as slaves. Planters preferred to regulate closely their laborers, but the contract system worked another kind of hardship on them. As cotton prices declined in the years after the Civil War, planters found it increasingly difficult to pay wages. It was in this context that the sharecropping and tenancy system arose: as a compromise. Planters no longer had to part with cash, and freedmen were able to move away from the old slave quarters and on to 25–40 acre slots. In some circumstances they were even free of the close supervision of the planters for whom they worked. Many freedmen withdrew their wives from the fields, something that planters resented but were unable to control, given their need for labor.

Much confusion surrounds the terms sharecropping and tenancy. When linked as two alternative forms of plantation labor, they both referred to working for shares of the crop. A more appropriate definition would be sharecropping and share tenancy (although the latter was also sometimes also known as a share renter), and they differed in important respects from a third category of tenancy, cash tenancy (sometimes called the fixed renter). Cash tenancy was for good reason considered separately, for in this circumstance, the farmer made a cash payment to rent land from the owner. Sharecropping and share tenancy however involved men (and on rare occasions women) of modest or no means. While sharecroppers typically had no more than their labor to bring to the bargaining table, share tenant farmers owned mules and implements. Because of these differences in material conditions, the law came to recognize the share tenant as having some legal standing in court.

SHARECROPPING AND TENANCY

The sharecropper was regarded as little more than a wage laborer who was paid a half of the cotton and corn crops he grew in exchange for his labor. The share tenant farmer however technically owned the crop he grew and paid a share of it—typically one-fourth of the corn and one-third cotton crops—to the planter in exchange for the use of the land. Even though the courts recognized the tenant farmer as owning the crop and thus having some standing in court, few tenant farmers actually took disputes to court, probably because they understood that planters had greater influence and the likelihood of winning a court contest with them was remote.

One other important difference existed between sharecropping and share tenant. Many white farmers in the years after the Civil War lost their farms and turned to tenant farming as an alternative. Because they had some means, they were more likely than freedmen to have mules and implements. Freedmen, who came out of enslavement with little more than the clothes on their backs, found it impossible to acquire property under the sharecropping arrangement and thus despite the myth of the agricultural ladder (whereby one was supposed to be able to move from sharecropping to tenancy to landowning), they remained sharecroppers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the overwhelming number of sharecroppers were black. Share tenant farmers on the other hand tended to be white.

Economists Richard Sutch and Roger Ransom suggest in *One Kind of Freedom* that sharecropping might have served the purposes of freedmen, might have allowed them to prosper but for the emergence of the commissary system and the institutionalization of debt peonage. Because returns on the crop were realized only once a year when they marketed their crop at the end of harvest, sharecroppers and share tenants both came to depend on advances from the planters for whom they worked. Planters charged exorbitant interests—sometimes as much as 50%–75%—for all such advances. When the crop was harvested in the fall and the debts were subtracted, many sharecroppers and share tenants found themselves barely able—or unable—to pay debts, and thus required yet another advance in order to make it through the next crop year. Some sharecroppers and tenants found themselves locked in an almost hopeless cycle of indebtedness. One thing that further complicated the situation for both tenants and sharecroppers was the emergence of laws that circumscribed the movement of tenants and sharecroppers who owed a debt to planters. Planters would send local law enforcement officials after sharecroppers and share tenants who departed owing a debt. Pete Daniel, in *The Shadow of Slavery*, calls this just another kind of slavery.

African-Americans meanwhile endured a number of other legal sanctions that grew more onerous as time went on, and these measures tended to reinforce their economic dependence on planters. In the years immediately following the Civil War, in the period when planters briefly regained power before the emergence of congressional Reconstruction, freedmen were required to carry a pass if not on the plantation. They were discouraged from seeking alternative forms of employment, and vagrancy laws further inhibited their movement from the plantations to towns and cities. The Ku Klux Klan, at least in its earliest incarnation, was oriented to the task of forcing freedmen to remain in place, working for planters. During congressional Reconstruction when blacks gained the ballot, the Klan's focus shifted to preventing freedmen (and white Republicans) from exercising their right to vote or hold office. In fact by the end of the century, the implementation of various disfranchisement measures further circumscribed the opportunities open to African-Americans and together with segregation, drove a wedge between black and white plantation laborers. To make matters worse, the racist rhetoric employed by white Democrats to champion disfranchisement and segregation statutes gave rise to a virulent racism that led to an increase in lynchings and night-riding activities against African-Americans. In this context it was unwise for black sharecroppers to challenge planters' assessment of what was owing to them at the end of the crop year. Ironically planters had to defend the right of African-American sharecroppers to remain on the plantations when landless white men began in the 1890s to try to drive them off so that they could gain a share tenancy. One courageous federal judge in the eastern district of Arkansas convicted white night riders of violating the Thirteenth Amendment right of African-Americans to employment, but the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Hodges v. U.S.* ruled that there was no such right guaranteed by the amendment. That ruling stood unchallenged until 1968. In the interim southern states passed night-riding laws, but it is impossible to determine whether they were enforced. Nevertheless by the beginning of the twentieth century, the options open to African-Americans were severely limited, and those who remained in the South were principally employed as sharecroppers.

Historians and economists debate the extent to which mobility was reduced as a result of debt peonage. There is clear evidence that those working for honest planters tended to remain in place voluntarily, but those employed by unscrupulous ones who were still able to break even at the end of the crop year, moved on seeking better opportunities elsewhere. Many African-American and white farmers moved

from the older South (of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama) to the South on the western fringe, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas, as new lands there were coming into cultivation. Labor agents, hired by planters opening up new plantations there, enticed landless men with promises of opportunities on the abundant and fertile land. However most of these migrants found themselves once again engaged in sharecropping or share tenancy and rarely able to ascend the mythical agricultural ladder. Thus whenever they could pay out of debt at the end of the year, they continued to move, ever on the search for a better opportunity.

The sharecropping and share tenancy system persisted until after the mechanization of the cotton crop and the emergence of a scientific agriculture in the post-World War II period. Scientific agriculture typically means the use of chemicals to cut down on the need to weed the cotton in the summer months, one of the two labor-intensive aspects of premechanization cotton farming. In fact the sharecropping and share tenancy system began to erode in the 1930s when New Deal programs began to pay farmers to reduce production of certain crops. Cotton was one of the crops that farmers could elect to reduce acreage on, but they were allowed to put the land that would have grown cotton to other uses. Planters in the South began to move toward the cultivation of soybeans, a fully mechanized crop, and thus had little need for excess sharecroppers and share tenants. Many were evicted from plantations during the 1930s and made their way to southern, northern, or western cities, looking for work. The post-World War II period merely witnessed an acceleration of a process that had already begun. By 1960, the printed census of agriculture no longer even listed sharecropper as a separate category. Share tenancy still exists, but most tenants today pay a cash rent and are not regarded as agricultural laborers.

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SHEFFIELD, HORACE (1914–1977) United Auto Workers

Horace Sheffield, one of the first blacks to serve as an international representative for the United Auto Workers (UAW), played a major role in mobilizing support in the black community of Detroit for the strike against Ford Motor Company at the River Rouge plant in 1941. He also helped open up black representation on the International Executive Board (IEB) of the UAW and was a founding member of the Trade Union Leadership Council (TULC) in 1957. Although Sheffield identified with the moderate wing within the UAW—represented by Walter Reuther and

his supporters—he presented a significant challenge to the Reuther coalition when they refused to add an African-American to the executive board.

Born in Vienna, Georgia, in 1914, Sheffield moved with his parents to Detroit, Michigan, 1 year later. After attending Detroit public schools, Sheffield got a job at Midland Steel when he was 17 years old. When he was laid off by Midland, he landed a job as a sander at the River Rouge plant on December 23, 1934. For several years he worked during the day and attended Wayne State and the Detroit Institute of Technology at night. By the time of the UAW organizing drive during the late thirties, Sheffield, imbued with youthful idealism, changed his career path. Although he had planned to enroll at the Detroit College of Law, he signed on as a volunteer organizer for the UAW in late 1940. His decision, opposed by his father, a foreman at the Ford Motor Company, led to a familial split and Sheffield's moving out of his father's house.

After the successful strike in 1941, Sheffield was elected a UAW committeeman at the Rouge foundry. Initially he was an inspector, then education director of the foundry, and finally he was assigned to monitor discrimination in the Ford employment office. Despite the fact that the vast majority of black leaders within the UAW identified with what was known as the left-wing caucus, Sheffield supported the Reuther faction, which was regarded as the right-wing caucus within the UAW. In November 1942, Sheffield became one of half-a-dozen black staff members on the international staff.

At the UAW Convention in Buffalo in 1943, black union leaders—those in the left-wing and those in the right-wing of the UAW—agreed the time was right to make the issue of a black board member a major topic of discussion. Initially the caucus of black delegates endorsed a resolution proposing the creation of a minorities' department headed by an elected black board member. When that proposal was rejected by the Reuther camp, the original proposal (known as the Tappes resolution because it was submitted by Shelton Tappes) was watered down to appeal to moderate white workers. Sheffield abandoned the Tappes proposal and the wishes of the majority of the black caucus, sided with Reuther's faction, and declared that the altered version of the Tappes resolution entailed dividing power unequally, giving a black board member less weight than a white board member. The convention rejected the Tappes proposal.

Sheffield spent the remainder of the forties and a good part of the fifties working within the Reuther circle and challenging the power of Communist-oriented black workers in Local 600. He helped

shape and interpret the needs of the black community for UAW officials and leaders. But on the issue of black representation on the UAW's executive board, Sheffield had no success. The question of black representation on the UAW's executive board was raised regularly at UAW annual meetings, but it was not until the late 1950s that serious pressure was placed on Reuther to open up the all-white board to African-Americans. The challenge came from the Trade Union Leadership Council (TULC), organized largely by black activists, such as Sheffield, who had learned union politics inside Reuther's tent. Reuther therefore was not prepared when Sheffield charged him with hypocrisy on the issue of his civil rights practices. Although Reuther and international UAW unions had maintained a good record in the public arena, Sheffield exposed Reuther's resistance to all efforts to change the all-white board of directors, highlighting the UAW's contradictory civil rights practices.

The TULC brought the issue of black representation on the union's executive board to a head at the 1959 UAW convention. Reuther announced, as he had on many previous occasions, that he could not entertain a "black position" because that would amount to practicing Jim Crow in reverse. Moreover, he added, the time will arrive when a black would be qualified for such a position, implying that was surely not yet the case. Sheffield, along with other black unionists, could hardly contain his anger. Later he recalled that he decided the line had been drawn by 1959, and he was determined not to let anyone stop him. During a later interview, he declared that he was prepared to ignore even Jesus if he had tried to keep him from speaking up at the convention. As the cavernous convention hall fell silent, Sheffield reminded the audience that since 1943—for 16 years—black workers in the UAW had been promised representation on the international executive board. Black Americans, he told the crowd, were sick and tired of the issue of qualifications. Looking at the board members, he noted that he thought it was fairly obvious that one does not have to be a Rhodes Scholar to sit on the International Executive Board.

Sheffield, with the backing of the TULC, had thrown down the gauntlet. For the next several months, Reuther and his advisers prepared the way for the nomination of an African-American to the executive board of the UAW, which took place at the convention in 1962. Although Nelson Jack Edwards, not Sheffield, was the choice of the executive board, Edwards chose Sheffield as his administrative assistant. Sheffield spent the last years of his life operating as a political moderate, tempering the more militant

voices coming from black autoworkers in the late sixties. He continued to be active in the TULC and was also one of the founders of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists in 1972.

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See also **Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Tappes, Shelton**

SHERMAN ANTI-TRUST ACT

The Sherman Anti-Trust Act was the first government action taken to limit trust companies, which often monopolized certain industries and therefore segments of the economy. Passed in 1890, it was named after Senator John Sherman of Ohio, and made "every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy, in restraint of trade or commerce among the several States, or with foreign nations... illegal." The Sherman Anti-Trust Act also placed a burden of responsibility on district courts and government attorneys to investigate possible trust violations and elucidated the possible consequences to violators. Due to the original wording of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, which did not specifically refer to monopolies or trusts, the act was sometimes applied to stop striking. This provoked controversy and an assessment as to whether the Sherman Anti-Trust Act was actually antilabor.

Changes in manufacturing practices contributed to the act's passage. Starting in the late nineteenth century, large corporations integrated horizontally and vertically to form oligopolies and monopolies in their respective areas of industry. Some of the trusts that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were Standard Oil, American Sugar Refining Company, American Tobacco Company, and United States Steel. However due to adverse court rulings, the Sherman Anti-Trust Act failed to regulate trusts until Theodore Roosevelt's presidency.

Roosevelt undertook a trust-busting campaign and overcame the Supreme Court ruling in *United States*

v. E. C. Knight (1895), which impaired the enforcement of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by exempting manufacturing corporations from the act's authority. However in 1904, the Supreme Court consented that Northern Securities Company, a railroad monopoly, should be dissolved because it dealt with interstate transportation. President Roosevelt continued to pursue antitrust suits, initiating more than 40 antitrust proceedings. Roosevelt's successor, William Howard Taft, also supported trust-busting. Under Taft's presidency there were twice as many antitrust suits as during his predecessor's terms.

The Sherman Anti-Trust Act was also used against labor movements. By including all organizations in its original wording, the act could be used against labor unions during strikes by claiming they unlawfully interfered with commerce. One of the most famous of such cases was the 1894 Pullman strike near Chicago, Illinois. Employees paid high rent for company-owned housing within the model town of Pullman and suffered from reduced wages simultaneously. Those conditions among others caused the workers at the Pullman Palace Car Company, a luxury sleeper railcar manufacturer, to strike. In doing so the strikers asked the American Railway Union (ARU) to boycott Pullman cars and to disconnect them from every train and depart without them. Once the ARU agreed, the General Managers' Association (GMA), formed by 24 railway companies to help combat the increasing power of labor unions, claimed only railway managers could determine which cars made up the trains and that they would fire any worker supporting the boycott. These actions resulted in 150,000 ARU members striking, causing rail traffic to halt and the intervention of the federal government on the side of the GMA. United States Attorney General Richard Olney obtained an injunction against the strikers, claiming the strike prevented mail delivery and violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by restricting commerce. Persuaded by Olney and fearful of violence, President Grover Cleveland authorized the use of U.S. marshals and federal troops to protect the trains operated by strikebreakers. Violence increased with the arrival of the troops; railroad property was attacked and burned, and fights broke out in the streets of Chicago between the authorities and strikers. The strike, which had started May 12, ended July 8, with the death of 34 people. The use of the injunction made striking illegal, seriously curtailing the powers of trade and labor unions.

Judicial rulings also limited workers' organizations. In *Loewe v. Lawlor*, also known as the Danbury Hatters' Case, the Supreme Court issued a 1908 ruling against unions. The Court, upholding the ideology

SHERMAN ANTI-TRUST ACT

that labor unions could be subject to antitrust laws, banned secondary strikes (strikes or boycotts performed in support of another strike), claiming they were conspiracies and violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. *Loewe v. Lawlor* enabled triple damages to be assessed against the unions and also held individuals accountable for monetary damages. This ruling among others asserted unions' subjectivity to antitrust laws.

In the *Buck's Stove and Range* cases, the Supreme Court ruled against the American Federation of Labor (AFL); its president, Samuel Gompers; and two other men associated with the AFL, John Mitchell and Frank Morrison. These cases resulted from an AFL boycott against *Buck's Stove and Range Company*. The AFL was supporting a strike that was already occurring at *Buck's Stove and Range Company*. The *American Federationist*, the AFL's periodical, called the company unfair and stated, "We Don't Patronize," resulting in damages to *Buck's Stove and Range*. The company, claiming the defendants had plotted a conspiracy to limit *Buck's Stove and Range Company's* interstate commerce, obtained an injunction against the AFL's boycott and also against verbal or written discussion of the strike. However the AFL violated the order, which resulted in Gompers, Mitchell, and Morrison being held in contempt of court and their imprisonment. The Supreme Court issued a 1908 ruling that upheld broad uses of injunctions against labor, debilitating organized labor's tactics of boycotts and strikes.

Such uses of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act resulted in criticism from organized labor, the People's party, and liberals in the legal domain. In 1914, during Woodrow Wilson's presidency, the Sherman Anti-Trust Act was amended through the passage of the Clayton Anti-Trust Act. The latter act banned such practices as price fixing but also exempted unions and farmers' organizations from prosecution under antitrust laws. This act, too, had organized labor critics. Since 1914, the United States Congress passed additional legislation aimed to strengthen the Sherman Anti-Trust Act's effectiveness, such as the Robinson-Patman Act of 1936 and the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976. In June 2004, President George W. Bush signed into law the Criminal Antitrust Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act, which increased the maximum Sherman Anti-Trust Act penalties for corporations to \$100 million, for individuals to \$1 million, and for jail terms to 10 years. This most recent act also heightened incentives for corporations to self-report criminal activity and aims to enhance the antimonopoly policy.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Boycotts; Gompers, Samuel; Pullman, George Morimer; Pullman Strike and Boycott

SHOEMAKING

The nineteenth-century process of industrialization in the making of boots and shoes is a classic story of artisans turning into industrial workers. Based on the European guild system, the artisan shoemaker in the British North American colonies, whose patron was St. Crispin, practiced his skills, oversaw journeymen, and taught apprentices in a small shop adjacent to his household. In this shop in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the master shoemaker cut out his own leather, shaped and sewed the cut pieces to size, and attached the sole. Sometimes the shoes and boots were made to order. More often in the late eighteenth century, the shoemaker sold the completed shoes to a merchant or took them by horseback to a marketplace. The master artisan owned his product, enjoyed a sense of economic independence, and expected to be treated as a respected and valued member of colonial society. His political rights established in the War of the American Revolution ensured—or so he believed—that independence.

As the new republic expanded geographically and cities and towns grew, artisan shoemaking faced the challenges of supplying new markets. Store merchants in towns found it profitable to lend shoemakers leather and guarantee a sale. Aside from custom-made riding boots, most shoes were durable work brogans or lighter shoes and slippers for women and children. But in taking leather from the merchant, the artisan lost ownership of the shoes he made. Paid for his skilled labor, masters and journeymen became dependent on their labor and on the wages it commanded. Markets and prices fluctuated, as did wages. The artisan sense of economic independence was eroding.

One solution might be to expand production in the artisan shop. At some point probably within the family of a shoemaker in Lynn, Massachusetts, a daughter or a wife was recruited to hand sew or bind the top of the shoe, called an upper. When completed the shoe binder passed the uppers to her husband or father working along with journeymen and apprentices in the shoe shop. In an effort to promote family economic well-being, a sexual division of labor was introduced into shoemaking, which lasted throughout the nineteenth century despite mechanization and centralization of production. In order to ensure a ready supply of bound uppers, merchants hired women in rural and town households to bind the cut leather as homework for very low wages. Shoemakers rarely bound their own uppers unless they had no alternative. The shoe merchant who was often called a shoe boss coordinated all of the steps in a central shop: The handing out of cut leather to shoe binders and delivering them to artisan shops.

Under supervision skilled men carefully cut the merchants' leather in those central shops located in towns. Here the merchants with capital to buy leather and market shoes decided on the wages for shoemaking and shoe binding. Many of the cheapest kinds of work shoes were sold to be worn by slaves in the cotton South. During the depression of 1837 when wages fell sharply and in the 1840s, organized protests by male and female workers arose against merchant control over the economic well-being of shoemaking families. The artisan's independence was fast disappearing. But none of the processes of shoemaking had yet been mechanized or put into a factory. The invention of the sewing machine and its adaptation to leather in 1852 was the first step toward centralization of production. Sewing machines, either hand-cranked or run by foot treadles, sewed the lighter leather of uppers. Shoe binders either rented sewing machines or their daughters moved into centralized shops as stitchers where sewing machines were run by steam power. The sexual division of labor begun in the shoemaker's family shifted to the shoe factory.

Meanwhile in order to expand production of shoes and control shoemakers' wages, merchant capitalists hired shoemakers in rural areas far away from the established centers of production, such as Lynn and Natick in eastern Massachusetts. Cut leather and machine-sewn uppers were delivered by wagons over rural roads. Wages continued to fall, especially during the hard times of the 1850s. Organized protest against low wages erupted in Lynn during the Great Shoe Strike of 1860, but home workers and former artisans battled unsuccessfully against the developing efficiencies of centralized, mechanized production, while shoe bosses cited the natural laws of supply and demand to justify their control over production and wages.

After the Civil War, during which boot and shoemaking centers in the Northeast flourished from Union Army contracts, more steps in the making of shoes were centralized and mechanized, drawing male workers away from their artisan shops into industry. For a time these men worked as teams "bottoming shoes." But each process became subdivided and as quickly as possible, mechanized and powered by steam engines. By late 1860s, the McKay stitcher was used—a sewing machine mounted above a moveable horn over which the sewn upper, inner sole, and outer sole were positioned after hand lasting by male "lasters" to the correct size. A curved needle penetrated and firmly sewed together all the layers of leather. Beating-out machines then leveled the sole. When the work of bottomers became mechanized in the 1870s, machines for trimming, edge setting, heeling, buffing, burnishing, and finishing replaced skilled men. As each machine was introduced, piece rates were cut.

As a result of intensified investment in factories and machinery, Lynn became the national center for the production of the popular lady's high-buttoned shoe. Competition over style and finish created skilled work and high wages for experienced women's shoe stitchers, especially in the fancy stitching on the vamp or on the button holes of the upper where perfection determined the value of the product. Similarly other towns in New England became known for the production of men's shoes and boots and of children's shoes. National markets for specific products were being subdivided.

Seasonal demand for different shoe styles created busy seasons of intense activity. Shoe workers faced furiously busy months, followed by weeks of idleness. All activity was governed by piece rates paid for each process finished. The negotiation over piece rates became the center of labor disputes. Shoe workers turned first to the Knights and Daughters of St. Crispin, then to the Knights of Labor (KOL) in

defense of their rights and wages. Lowering piece rates meant far more intense effort to maintain a living wage for families or individuals. New systems of marketing shoes featured traveling salesmen called drummers who carried samples for display to buyers, then telegraphed the orders back to the factories. The depressions of the 1870s and the 1890s created pressure on piece rates and wages, while the development of competition in Philadelphia, in the cities of northern New York, in Ohio, and Missouri challenged the older centers of shoemaking to set national standards for quality and low-cost production.

In 1889, the final, exacting hand process of lasting, the hand shaping or “pulling over” the upper to fit the sole, by male lasters faced mechanization. A machine using moving, fingerlike metal pincers drew the upper smoothly over the molded last while another mechanism drove tacks in automatically. The lasters reported that machines seemed to whisper, “I’ve got your job.” Leather cutters used metal dies to stamp out leather pieces, while skilled fancy stitchers used double-needled sewing machines for work on uppers. Desperate to produce novelties during the depression years, shoe manufacturers marketed shoes for both men’s and women’s wear with an extremely narrow needle or “razor” toe. Stitchers and lasters complained that this extreme style resulted in broken needles and ruined stock, delays that reduced their wages and caused them great physical strain. In addition the hard times during the depression of the 1890s convinced shoe workers throughout the Northeast to organize trade unions in the federated Boot and Shoe Workers’ Union. Former artisans, who had once worked by hand, such as the lasters, had unmistakably become industrial workers.

New immigrant groups crowded a labor market formerly dominated by Yankees and Irish Americans. By 1910, migrants from the Middle East and from southern and central Europe where men controlled leatherwork filled American shoe factories and replaced women as fancy stitchers. Protective legislation that did not permit women to work at night or more than 54 hours a week did not apply to foreign-born men during the busy seasons. Style changes to low-cut oxfords for women’s wear, which lowered the costs of production in Lynn. The production in the 1920s of novelty shoes with a maximum of style at a minimal price to be bought in the new department stores encouraged even more intensive competition and lowered wages. The 1930s depression and the reciprocal trade agreements of the New Deal dealt a serious blow to domestic manufacturing, while imported shoes, first from Europe and in the late twentieth century from Asia and Latin America, finished the American leather dress shoe industry. Other

nations, notably Italy and Spain, had preserved their artisan traditions to become the leaders of high-quality footwear in the twentieth century.

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See also **Artisans; Knights of Labor; Knights of St. Crispin and the Daughters of St. Crispin**

SIGNIFICANT GAINS AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: 1950s AND 1960s

Beginning in 1950, organized labor in the United States faced a paradox it would fail to resolve over the course of the next two decades. More than any other period in United States history, the 1950s and 1960s marked the golden age of unionism, in which organized labor held unprecedented economic and political power and organizational stability. Workers, both union and nonunion, made significant material gains and won important rights and protections on the job, while millions of Americans benefited from the expansion of the liberal welfare state that organized labor supported. Yet at the same time, labor seemed to be constantly frustrated and on the defensive. During the 1950s and 1960s, organized labor failed to consolidate its political power and was unable to pass significant labor law reforms or expand its membership past its World War II peak. Organized labor was also out of step with the decades’ great social movements—civil rights, youth counterculture, antiwar, and feminism—and increasingly allied with a liberal establishment in crisis. In addition not all workers shared in the postwar affluence, which was unevenly distributed across various regions and occupational sectors. Labor proved unable to respond effectively either to structural changes in the economy and managerial strategies that weakened labor’s influence and undermined its greatest postwar achievement, collective bargaining in the economy’s primary industrial and manufacturing sector.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, organized labor established long-term collective-bargaining relationships with employers in the mass-production sector, including such major industries as automobiles, steel, rubber manufacturing, and electrical consumer parts and products. In May 1950, the United Automobile Workers (UAW), the nation’s largest industrial union, and General Motors (GM), its largest corporation, signed a landmark 5-year contract, which *Fortune*, a leading business magazine, hailed as the “Treaty of Detroit” because it signified that big business had conceded organized labor’s right to exist. The contract not only promised GM 5 years of industrial stability, but gave UAW members a wage

increase and a host of fringe benefits, including a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), a pension, and a health insurance plan. Through the rest of the decade, Ford and Chrysler, the other two members of the automobile industry's big three, along with major companies in basic industry, signed similar agreements with industrial unions. Such contracts not only included improvements in wages and benefits, but also explicitly defined workers' rights on the job and specific grievance and arbitration procedures to remedy any violations of those rights. The protection of these rights through collective bargaining, what one historian has termed "workplace contractualism," marked a major achievement for unionized workers who could now expect management to observe a binding "rule of law" in the workplace. Industrial relations experts welcomed collective-bargaining contracts in basic industry as an indication of the maturing relationship between capital and labor and the permanent solution to the labor question—the chronic class conflict that had plagued the United States since the beginning of the industrial revolution. These experts were convinced that industrial stability based on an expanding postwar economy and collective bargaining was destined to become the norm in all industries for decades to come.

Such optimism over the eventual triumph of collective bargaining supports the common assumption that the 1950s and 1960s marked a unique period of class accommodation, later termed the postwar accord. But what appeared to be a class compromise can best be viewed as a stalemate that reflected the prevailing balance of forces between capital and labor. Collective bargaining in basic industry attested less to management's acceptance of collective bargaining than to the strength of industrial unions in the postwar era. Industrial unions in basic industry had their roots in the rank-and-file insurgency in the mid-1930s that was bolstered by favorable New Deal labor legislation, most notably the 1935 Wagner Act, which declared workers' right to form unions free of employer interference. The Wagner Act also established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to monitor union elections and investigate and penalize employers who engaged in "unfair labor practices," such as blacklisting union members or failing to negotiate in good faith with unions. Membership in labor unions increased from the 1930s through World War II, when compulsory union membership became government policy for military contractors. By 1945, the year the war ended, union membership peaked at more than 14 million members, representing 35% of the nonagricultural labor force.

In the immediate postwar years, management was determined to roll back labor's gains and squared off

with labor in a massive postwar strike wave. Although forced to settle with unions, management successfully protected its control over production and pricing decisions. Employers, particularly those in competitive sector industries who belonged to the conservative National Association of Manufacturers, also turned to political activity to curb labor's power. Taking advantage of the Republican party's control of both houses of the U.S. Congress in 1947 and 1948, management secured the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act over Democratic President Harry Truman's veto. Taft-Hartley, a complex revision of the Wagner Act, placed severe restrictions on unions, including prohibitions on union picketing and boycott tactics, the right to intervene in union certification elections, and two provisions that would define labor politics in the late 1940s and 1950s: Section 14(b) that outlawed the closed shop and allowed states to pass so-called "right-to-work" laws that prohibited compulsory union membership. Within a year after the passage of Taft-Hartley in June 1947, 14 states enacted right-to-work laws; and in the early 1950s, three more states followed with similar legislation, making a total of 17 states that outlawed union security provisions. These right-to-work states were located in the South, the Western Plains, and intermountain West; all had politically weak labor movements; and all had relatively low levels of industrialization and union density when compared to other regions.

Another important Taft-Hartley provision, Section 9(h), required all union officials to sign affidavits declaring that they were not members of the Communist party or believed in any organization that advocated the overthrow of the United States government by force or illegal methods. Unions whose officials refused to sign the affidavits risked losing NLRB protections and left themselves open to raids on their membership by rival unions. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) leaders initially labeled Taft-Hartley a "slave labor" act and pledged to work for its repeal. Although union leaders also initially vowed not to sign the non-Communist affidavits, they eventually relented, ostensibly to preserve access to NLRB protections. By that time labor leaders in the CIO were ousting Communists from the ranks of organized labor.

As the federation of industrial unions that had spearheaded labor's rise in the 1930s and 1940s, the CIO was split between its liberal unions and its left-led unions, which contained Communist party members in its top leadership and a small but significant number of Communists among its rank-and-file. As union activists Communists had played an important role in organizing unions during the CIO's formative

years, but their presence proved much more troublesome during the Cold War era. The Communists' presence provided antilabor employers and politicians with an easy target to taint the entire labor movement as subversives beholden to the Soviet party line and willing to wage political strikes to weaken the United States. When the mainstream union movement grew increasingly closer to the Democratic party and its Cold War containment policy, liberals viewed the Communist-led unions as an expendable liability. During the 1948 election, the CIO threw its support behind the Democrats, but left-wingers either stayed neutral or endorsed insurgent Progressive party candidate Henry Wallace. When Truman won a narrow election victory and the Democrats regained Congress, the CIO moved decisively against its left wing.

In several unions the campaign against Communists gave liberals the opportunity to prevail in long-standing feuds over leadership and strategy. Such was the case in the UAW, in which a center-right coalition led by former-Socialist-turned-anti-Communist liberal Walter Reuther ousted Communists from the union's top leadership in 1946. The Communist question also reflected internecine disputes in state and local union councils, where anti-Communists used red-baiting to dispense of their rivals. In several cases, such as the United Transit Workers' Mike Quill and National Maritime Union's Joseph Curran, leaders renounced their ties to the Communist party, expelled Communists, and remained at the head of their unions.

In 1949 and 1950, the CIO's top leadership, led by its president Phillip Murray, an anti-Communist Catholic, and the UAW's Reuther, expelled or forced out 11 unions that they accused of Communist domination. The purge of the CIO's left-wing solidified the federation's political direction, but it would have profound consequences for the labor movement as a whole. While a small number of expelled left-led unions survived the purge, it fatally weakened most of the left-led unions, which became open targets for raids on their membership by rival CIO and AFL unions. The purge also committed the labor movement to a more moderate stance on civil rights. Left-wing unions, such as the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied Workers (FTA), which enjoyed support among black tobacco workers in the South, became easy targets for red-baiting once they were ousted from the CIO. The late 1940s and early 1950s marked a missed opportunity for the large labor federations to champion an agenda that addressed the merged union and civil rights issues, particularly in the southern states, which had the lowest level of union density of any region.

The CIO's purge of left-led unions also put the labor movement firmly behind U.S. Cold War foreign

policy. In 1950, the CIO left the left-wing World Federation of Trade Unions to join AFL in the anti-Communist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Both unions would work secretly with the federal government's Central Intelligence Agency to provide organizational and financial support for anti-Communist trade unions, first in Europe, and then throughout the globe.

The CIO's purge of left-wing unionists cleared the way for the reunification of the rival AFL and CIO, which combined represented over 12 million of the nation's 15 million union members. The two federations made tentative moves toward reconciliation as early as the late 1930s, but continual disputes over jurisdictional authority and deep-seated differences between the two federations' leaders prevented a formal reconciliation. One obstacle was removed when John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers and founder of the CIO, pulled out of that federation in 1942, and later joined the AFL, only to pull out of that federation in 1947. With Lewis out of the way, the two federations grew closer politically. The AFL began endorsing the prolabor Democrats in the late 1940s, and both federations worked together during the Korean War to shape national wage policy in labor's favor.

By 1950, the two federations made the first overtures toward formal reconciliation. The movement stalled until November 1952, when Republican Dwight Eisenhower won the presidency, convincing leaders of both federations that a merger was necessary to strengthen labor's political clout, a need that became more apparent when Eisenhower staffed the NLRB with anti-union appointees. Also clearing the way for the merger was the death of each federation's president, the AFL's William Green and the CIO's Murray, within weeks of each other in November 1952. Their successors, George Meany, a New York plumber who worked his way up to secretary-treasurer of the AFL, and Reuther, the head of the UAW who narrowly won the CIO presidency, would eventually complete the merger, although not before clearing up questions of jurisdiction and corruption. The two federations cleared up the first questions when most of their unions signed a no-raiding pact in 1953. The second question, concerning corruption, reflected Reuther's opposition to a number of AFL unions that had ties to known gangsters, particularly the racket-ridden East Coast International Longshoreman's Association (ILA). In a bold move Meany overturned the AFL's tradition of local autonomy and expelled the ILA, paving the way for eventual reconciliation. Although additional questions over racial discrimination in the AFL craft unions remained, the two sides agreed to address this issue

later, opting for what they termed the “short approach” to unity. In December 1955, the two federations officially agreed to a merger, with Meany, reflecting the AFL’s superior numbers, assuming the role of presidency of the reunited AFL-CIO and Reuther assuming a secondary position as head of its new Industrial Union Department.

The AFL-CIO merger marked the beginning of what both critics and supporters of the labor movement would term the era of big labor. With its headquarters in Washington DC, the reunited AFL-CIO embarked on an aggressive lobbying campaign through its newly created legislative department, which pursued a prolabor agenda in Congress, almost always in concert with the liberal wing of the Democratic party, whose ties with organized labor grew stronger during the decade. The AFL-CIO played a role in state and local politics through its Committee on Political Education (COPE) that mobilized union members for elections, registered voters, endorsed local and state candidates, and collected voluntary campaign contributions from union members. Through its political activity, the AFL-CIO sought to protect and extend labor rights won in the New Deal era and to promote liberal welfare-state policies. Although the AFL-CIO had little success in strengthening union protections, it helped expand Social Security legislation and secure an increase in the minimum wage during the 1950s.

While the AFL-CIO merger certainly strengthened the labor movement by resolving chronic jurisdictional disputes between the two federations, it contained several important weaknesses that would become apparent by the mid-1960s. The reunited AFL-CIO reflected in many ways the personality of its president, Meany, a product of AFL-style business unionism who boasted that he had never called a strike or walked a picket line when he served as a union official in the New York plumbers’ union. Meany represented a new style of labor bureaucrat: The industrial statesman, comfortable with power and content to pursue welfare-state reform while uncritically backing the U.S. Cold War foreign policy. In line with liberal Keynesian economists of the day, Meany was convinced that organized labor’s goal was the achievement of higher wages and better contracts in an expanding postwar economy.

Meany’s supporters praised his skills as an administrator and lauded the bureaucratic organization and stability he brought to the labor movement. Meany also upheld the ethical standards he first demonstrated when he expelled the Longshoremen, when in 1957, he ousted the Teamsters’ union, which had supplanted the UAW as the nation’s largest union, after revelations of criminal behavior on the part of

its leaders. In many ways Meany’s leadership reflected the goals and aspirations of the union rank-and-file, mostly white men in manufacturing, processing, and transportation industries who shared his moderate liberal politics, support for Cold War containment, and interest in material improvement.

Meany’s critics, such as prominent labor journalist Daniel Bell, blamed him for what Bell termed labor’s “loss of *élan*” and for its general failure to fulfill its role as a social movement. Led by aged bureaucrats or money-hungry racketeers, the labor movement was in danger of losing public favor and slipping into irrelevance. While Bell believed that Reuther was the only major labor leader capable of redirecting the labor movement as a social movement, by this time Reuther had shed his earlier quest for transforming the United States into a European social democracy and opted for a pragmatic approach in which he hoped that employers would eventually tire of matching union demands and turn over many welfare functions to the state. While Reuther would continue to worry that the labor movement had abandoned its political idealism, his plan never came to fruition and instead, as his critics would point out, the United States featured a two-tiered system, consisting of a generous set of benefits for workers in unionized, private industries and a relatively weak set of benefits from the public welfare system. The two-tiered system often undercut sympathy for organized labor because unionized firms passed on labor costs to consumers. Nonunion workers in effect subsidized union workers’ increased wages and benefit packages by paying higher prices for union-made goods.

In addition neither Meany nor Reuther could ever figure out how to increase the number of well-paid unionized, blue-collar jobs, many of which would eventually fall victim to automation or plant relocation. Not only were corporations leaving the unionized Northeast and midwestern states for right-to-work states in the Sun Belt, but increasingly moving to low-wage, nonunion Asian and Latin American countries. By the 1960s, American foreign investment abroad was increasing at a rate of 12% annually, with capital funds directed toward new *maquiladoras*, no-tariff zones in Mexico and the Philippines that were first established in 1968. By the early 1970s, some of the largest firms, such as Ford, Kodak, and Procter and Gamble, employed up to one-third of their workforce in regions outside the United States, which contained a significant segment of the consumer goods and electrical-parts industries.

Organized labor’s failure to expand its organizational frontiers in the face of such structural transformation of the U.S. economy constituted the primary complaint against the Meany-era AFL-CIO. Under

Meany's leadership the AFL-CIO unions remained strong in the construction trades, transportation, and mass-production industries that its constituent unions had organized during the 1930s and 1940s, but by the mid-1950s organized labor's membership peaked at 35% of the nonagricultural workforce. From that point organized labor would increase its membership, but because of a postwar job expansion, the percentage of union members would slowly decline to 27% over the next 15 years.

Much of the AFL-CIO's failure to expand its organizational frontiers can be attributed to management's postwar campaign against unions. By the 1950s, management had launched massive ideological campaign that touted the "free-enterprise" system as a patriotic alternative to unions. In concert with the free-enterprise campaign, a key source of employer resistance came from modern welfare capitalist firms, such as Eastman Kodak, Sears Roebuck, and IBM, which competed against unions for their workers' loyalties by promoting paternalism and a corporate communal ideal as an alternative to unionism. These modern manors tended to be stable, profitable corporations with progressive employment and benefits policies that followed closely the hiring, seniority, and promotional patterns found in unionized counterparts. Even unionized companies in basic industry began to compete with unions for workers' loyalties through a strategy called Boulwarism, named after General Electric Personnel Director Lemuel Boulware, which was designed to undercut collective bargaining by making a single take-it-or-leave-it offer, and then publicizing the reasonableness of the offer directly to the rank-and-file. Even large manufacturing firms that accepted unions were engaged in constant strikes with industrial unions over wages and work rules. During the 1950s and 1960s, the number of strikes reached their highest recorded levels, averaging from 285–350 per year. Most major industries experienced a strike during contract renewals, and other smaller industries were constant targets for work stoppages. The steel industry was shut down five times between the end of World War II and 1960, including a 116-day strike in 1959, in which steelworkers' militancy prevented management from weakening job protections in local contracts.

The number of strikes attested to both workers' determination to protect the collective-bargaining system but also to a renewed vigor on management's part to weaken organized labor. Some of the most fervent anti-union firms were found in the southern region of the United States. All southern states, with the exception of Louisiana, passed right-to-work legislation, and the region had the lowest level of union

density and lowest wages in the nation. This regional wage differential threatened labor's wage scale in the North, particularly when textile plants began relocating to the South after World War II. Both the AFL and CIO failed to organize much of the region's textile industry in highly publicized campaigns, and the disastrous 1950 General Textile Strike damaged what little unions were left in textiles. Although unions made inroads in the southern lumber, paper, and oil industries, the textile industry's low union rate and the region's relatively large number of agricultural workers who lacked collective-bargaining rights ensured that the South remained hostile to unions throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Workers who did display militancy often encountered employers and their political supporters who used such crude tactics, as intimidation of union activists, injunctions, state troopers, and appeals to white workers' racism to break strikes. By the 1950s, southern boosters, touting the region's low union density and open-shop legal environment, were successfully luring numerous northern and foreign firms to the region to escape unions back home.

Another challenge to organized labor's power came from smaller, competitive sector employers who bitterly fought to rid their plants of labor unions. These employers sought to slash labor costs to compete with rivals and usually made producers' goods and unlike oligopolistic sectors, could not pass increased labor costs on to consumers. The most violent strikes of the 1950s occurred in this sector when anti-union employers moved to rid their plants of unions with classic union-busting tactics that harkened back to earlier bloody periods in United States labor history. In addition to fighting for their institutional existence in the competitive sectors, unions made few inroads into the expanding clerical and retail sectors of the economy. While the absolute number of workers in unions increased through the 1950s and 1960s from over 14 million in 1950 to over 19 million in 1973, the percentage of union workers fell from 31% to 27% over the same period.

Part of labor's failure to expand its organizational reach could be attributed to its declining public image, which suffered from public hearings conducted by the United States Senate's McClellan Committee, known by its nickname the Labor Rackets Committee, which lasted from 1957 to 1960. The McClellan Committee held a series of high-profile hearings that uncovered criminal activity among national and local officials of the Teamsters, Bakers, and other AFL trade unions. The hearings titillated the public with a dark portrait of organized labor that reinforced the sinister image depicted in 1950s labor *noir* films, such as *On the Waterfront* (1954) and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* (1957), and in Lester Velie's lurid articles in

Reader's Digest. The committee failed however to pin any charges of malfeasance on the mainstream labor movement and particularly Reuther and the UAW, the special targets of the committee's anti-union members, notably Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater.

The McClellan Committee succeeded in turning public attention to Jimmy Hoffa, then an obscure Teamster vice-president. Along with Meany and Reuther, Hoffa became one of the most recognizable union figures of this period and a symbol of blue-collar toughness. After he became the Teamster president in 1957, Hoffa spurned Reuther's idealism and Meany's industrial statesmanship and opted instead for a law-of-the-jungle approach that made improved contracts for Teamster members his sole concern. Possessing little regard for rank-and-file democracy or the union's tradition of local autonomy, Hoffa transformed the Teamsters into an effective centralized bureaucracy. He not only made the Teamsters the largest U.S. union by organizing workers in occupations outside the trucking and shipping industry, he took full advantage of the Interstate Commerce Commission's regulation of interstate trucking rates, which encouraged unionization by limiting price competition among shippers, and his own innovative picketing tactics to gain national contracts for his members. These contracts included increased wages, benefits, and provisions for job security, a primary concern for many truckers. Despite his achievements and the support among many Teamster members, Hoffa's questionable loans to mobsters from the Teamster pension fund and his willingness to overlook gangster-controlled Teamster locals made him a constant target for federal investigators, who eventually sent him to prison in 1967 for jury tampering.

A host of anti-union ideologues joined the crusade against organized labor, which they claimed was simultaneously infested with gangsters and Red officials who secretly served as agents for the Soviet Union. The campaign began in the late 1940s when right-wing propagandists for the shadowy Committee for Constitutional Government joined with such syndicated newspaper columnists as Westbrook Pegler to rail against the union shop, which these critics condemned as compulsory unionism and the first step toward a socialist state. The right-wing campaign against unions crested in 1957 with the publication of ex-New Dealer Donald Richberg's pulp paperback, *Labor Union Monopoly*, in which Richberg accused powerful and aggressive labor union leaders and their goons of waging "warfare on a competitive free economy" and thus "preparing the way for communism more effectively than the Communists themselves" (Richberg, *Labor Union Monopoly*, 175).

The right-wing assault on unions coupled with the McClellan Committee hearings gave congressional Republicans and conservative Democrats leverage to pass the 1959 Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (commonly known as the Landrum-Griffin Act for its congressional sponsors), the only major labor legislation during the 1950s. Landrum-Griffin reflected the right-wing's obsession with unions as corrupt, undemocratic organizations that needed tighter federal regulation. Landrum-Griffin bolstered Taft-Hartley's restrictions on union strike tactics and required unions to hold regular and democratic elections with a secret ballot, to keep accurate financial records, and disclose these records to the public. Landrum-Griffin also contained a bill of rights for workers putatively designed to protect workers from what the bill's authors assumed were dictatorial labor bosses, but it lacked any provision to protect black workers or women from discrimination by labor unions or from anti-union employers.

Despite organized labor's legislative failures, workers, and particularly white male workers in unionized mass-production industries, posted solid gains through the 1950s and 1960s, a testament to both the strength of organized labor and the expanding postwar economy. Beginning in 1947, a surging economy provided millions of jobs, boosted by a combination of a dynamic consumer sector, relatively little foreign competition, and rising military spending. From 1948 to 1972, when adjusted for inflation, the economy grew at an annual rate of 7%. Although the top-tenth of the population still held 40% of all wealth, the economic pie was getting bigger as total GNP increased 165% while population grew by only 66%. As a result of the postwar economic boom, real wages climbed steadily upward. From 1939–1959, workers in manufacturing industries saw their real income rise 62% from \$39 to \$64 per week, or \$2,000 to \$3,300 per year (in 1947 dollars). Unionized steelworkers for example wrested real wage increases of 110% from 1936 to 1959. More importantly for all workers these wage increases came as workers labored fewer days and fewer hours per week. By the 1960s, the 5-day, 40-hour week became standard throughout almost all sectors of the economy. Thanks to rising wages, the highest paid craft and industrial workers were able to purchase homes, automobiles, and such consumer durable goods as home appliances and television sets; and smaller segment even had enough discretionary income to take vacations, send their children to college, and to retire without fear of slipping into poverty because of union pensions, health insurance, and federal social security payments. Workers' rising standard of living led mainstream publications to proclaim that postwar affluence had

eliminated the economic basis of class stratification and as a result, the United States had become a middle-class society.

Despite such pronouncements, workers' gains in the postwar era should not be exaggerated. Lacking guaranteed salaries, workers' earnings could fluctuate from year-to-year, and many lived in fear of lay-offs and strikes, which could quickly erode their hard-earned savings. Even the best-paid union workers lived amid some material instability. In 1952, the federal government determined that a "modest but adequate budget for a family of four" was 79 dollars per week at a time when the average steelworker was still earning only 78 dollars per week. In most cases workers supported middle-class consumption patterns through credit or time purchases or because both husband and wife worked for wages outside the home.

While workers made some significant material gains during the 1950s, they also began registering high rates of dissatisfaction, or alienation in the sociological parlance of the day. Studies in the 1950s showed that many factory workers hated their jobs and desired independence from the monotony of mass-production work. According to sociologist Eli Chinoy, except for a small group of union officials, many autoworkers looked forward to getting out of the factory and owning their own small business. Such problems persisted through the 1960s and early 1970s when they came to light in a famous study conducted by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, published in 1973, which concluded that "significant numbers of American workers are dissatisfied with the quality of their working lives. Dull, repetitive, seemingly meaningless tasks, offering little challenge or autonomy, are causing discontent among workers at all occupational levels" (*Work in America*, 1973). Given these findings it was not surprising that only 22% of blue-collar workers would recommend their job to their children. By the 1960s, increased educational and economic status for many working-class Americans meant that an interesting job was as important as a job that paid well.

For a significant number of workers, a job that paid well would have constituted an improvement. These workers who failed to benefit from the postwar boom were overwhelmingly black or Hispanic, and female, and concentrated in sectors of the economy—agriculture, public and domestic service—that were unprotected by federal labor or wage-and-hour laws. In his best-selling *The Other America* (1962), Michael Harrington estimated that as many as 50 million workers lived in conditions of "painful poverty" and family instability. These workers lived in areas experiencing industrial decline, such as Appalachia, or urban or rural migrant ghettos. More often poor

workers, such as black agricultural and service workers in the South, were victims of racism that barred their entry into higher paid industrial jobs. Harrington's book launched liberals' discovery of poverty in the 1960s, and inspired President Kennedy and his successor, Lyndon Johnson, to launch the War on Poverty—supported by the AFL-CIO—that included a host of government programs designed to solve, with mixed success, what later came to be known as the underclass problem. Liberals and labor leaders also placed their faith in an expanding economy, which they hoped would open job opportunities for the poor and underemployed while expanding organized labor's membership base

As the 1960s opened however, union growth had stagnated in the industrial sector, but workers in other sectors of the economy would embrace the union ideal during the decade. Some of these workers were such elite labor aristocrats as airline pilots and professional athletes who converted their ineffective employee associations into strong labor unions. But the most dramatic growth in unionism came from public-sector employees at the federal, state, county, and municipal levels. The growth of public-sector unionism reflected the expansion of the postwar state, which grew to over 14 million jobs and accounted for over 19% of the nonagricultural workforce by the mid-1970s. The rise of public-service unionism was also remarkable given the numerous obstacles faced by public workers who desired unions; federal and most state labor laws refused to recognize the right of public workers to bargain collectively or to strike.

The rise in public-sector unionism reflected a change in public workers' consciousness, with many public workers rejecting the prevailing view that government work by its very nature constituted a low-paying form of civic service and instead viewed their jobs as work that deserved the same pay and benefits as similar employment in the private sector. The upsurge in public-sector unionism also testified to organized labor's political power during the 1960s. Public-sector unions received crucial support from liberal politicians dependent on union workers' votes in the urban centers and union-dense states outside of the Deep South. At the federal level, government workers in particular benefited from labor's support for Democratic John Kennedy in his narrow 1960 presidential election victory. In 1961, Kennedy issued Executive Order 10988, which legalized collective bargaining for federal employees and fostered a favorable environment for nonfederal public employees. While nonfederal employees belonged to a variety of trade associations, unaffiliated unions, and established AFL-CIO unions, the leading union to emerge

among nonfederal workers in the postwar years was the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), an AFL-CIO affiliate. Starting in the 1950s with less than 100,000 members, AFSCME waged a vigorous campaign to gain collective-bargaining status. In 1958, AFSCME's efforts paid off when New York City Mayor Robert Wagner signed an executive order that granted collective-bargaining rights to the city's public-employee unions. Similar laws in other states and municipalities followed, allowing AFSCME to increase its membership, and by the early 1970s, it claimed over 600,000 members.

The most unexpected group to unionize during the 1960s was elementary and secondary schoolteachers, who also became the most militant of public-sector employees. Teachers' unions had their roots in early twentieth century occupational associations, but few of these associations engaged in collective bargaining until the 1960s. The transformation of teacher unionism benefited from the competition for members between the National Education Association (NEA), the largest teachers' union, which also included school administrators, and the smaller American Federation of Teachers (AFT), an AFL affiliate dedicated to collective bargaining and traditional trade union activity. By the end of the 1960s, thanks to the rivalry, the combined membership of the NEA and AFT stood at two million members.

The rise of teachers' unions also reflected the outlook of a new generation of teachers, including many feminists and college graduates radicalized by their campus experience. These teachers rejected the public-service model and instead viewed teaching as a legitimate middle-class career. Members of this new generation turned to unions to improve their pay, benefits, and working conditions. Unionized teachers also demanded better classroom conditions because of the increased burdens placed on them by middle-class parents who expected public schools to prepare their children for college and by administrators in urban areas, where teachers were expected to educate children in less than ideal circumstances. Teachers demonstrated a willingness to strike to achieve their demands, often defying state and municipal ordinances against such action. By 1967, public schools would witness almost 90 strikes involving 96,000 workers, a rate that exceeded any other public-service sector.

The drive for unions by workers at voluntary non-profit private hospitals paralleled the public workers as another group that experienced increased unionization from the late 1950s through the 1960s. As with public workers, hospital workers were excluded from federal and state labor laws and were likewise

limited by a service ideology. Hospital workers were overwhelmingly members of those groups, African-American women and Hispanic men and women, situated on the margins of the postwar economy where they worked long hours for wages below the minimum wage. Organizational efforts in this sector melded the left-wing idealism of labor's upsurge in the 1930s with the burgeoning civil rights movement. In the late 1950s, left-wing organizers in New York's Retail Druggists' Local 1199 launched a drive to organize hospital workers that used strikes to win collective-bargaining contracts. As a key to its success, Local 1199 merged trade union demands with a civil rights consciousness, linking its demands for better wages and working conditions to black and Hispanic workers' drive for legal rights and dignity that stood at the center of the modern civil rights movement.

For most black workers the post-World War period opened with promise but ended with pessimism. During the early 1950s, black unemployment reached its lowest levels as black male workers claimed industrial jobs during the Korean War military expansion. In the postwar recession year of 1954, black unemployment rose to twice that of white unemployment, a common pattern during the postwar decades. Black workers faced several obstacles. Those who lived or migrated to the North encountered a shrinking job market, and many lacked the training to fill the skilled occupations. In turn trade unions openly discriminated against those blacks who possessed necessary skills or who sought entry to apprenticeship training. For the most part black women were excluded from all but the lowest paying jobs. Black workers who achieved some measure of affluence were those who had gained seniority in sectors organized by industrial unions or who labored in certain sectors of the South, such as the unionized lumber and paper industry and only then in families with at least two wage earners.

The rise of the modern civil rights movement promised to revive the civil rights unionism of the late 1940s. During the 1950s and 1960s, the AFL-CIO's official policy supported civil rights legislation and successfully lobbied in support of the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. But except for the UAW, which helped sponsor the celebrated 1963 March on Washington and the United Packinghouse Workers and consistently championed black workers' concerns, the AFL-CIO's leadership failed to grasp black workers' frustration and instead relied on the expanding postwar economy to provide opportunities for black workers. The AFL-CIO also did little to move its constituent unions toward racial equality; many craft unions still barred blacks from membership; others maintained *de facto* black unions, or in the case of more liberal former CIO unions that contained

large number of African-American members, failed to promote blacks to leadership positions.

To address their lack of representation in labor's upper echelon, black union officials and activists, led by A. Philip Randolph, formed the Negro American Labor Council in 1960 but were rebuffed by Meany as dual unionists who did not speak for black rank-and-file. By the late 1960s, some black unionists, influenced by the growing militancy of the civil rights movement and increasing unemployment, established a series of "revolutionary union movements" centered on the Detroit automobile industry. Although the movements failed to attract a large number of supporters, they highlighted the growing discontent of black unionists with lack of progress and representation in union leadership positions. The same sense of frustration over the persistence of racial inequality led civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., to address the problems of poverty and unemployment. In the 2 years before his death, King began working more closely with such unions as Local 1199 that merged collective bargaining with civil rights consciousness. His assassination in 1968 came during a campaign on behalf of striking Memphis sanitation workers; black public-sector employees who won a union contract after King's death brought public scrutiny to their cause.

Despite the AFL-CIO's lack of urgency on racial discrimination, most black workers in unionized sectors remained loyal to their unions and used legal action to break down racial barriers. Black workers benefited from the 1964 Civil Rights Act's Title IV provision that barred discrimination by both employers and unions. In several industries, most notably the southern paper and textile industries, black workers filed a series of Title VII lawsuits that ended segregated, Jim Crow unions and discriminatory promotion and seniority policies. By the close of the 1960s, black workers had made inroads into previously white-only occupations and unions, and black unemployment dropped below 4% nationally. Despite these gains black unemployment stood in double digits in northern manufacturing cities, which had previously provided high-wage entry-level jobs but were now losing plants to the Sun Belt or to foreign countries. The success of the civil rights movement underscored the most confounding paradox of the 1950s and 1960s. While workers were able to achieve legal protection against employment discrimination, neither their unions nor liberal politicians could find a way to increase the number of high-paying entry-level jobs. By the 1970s, despite the achievements of the civil rights movement, black unemployment had risen sharply, and black upward mobility began to ebb.

Hispanic workers also benefited from the civil-rights-conscious unionism of the 1960s. In the Southwest Mexican-American workers who labored in the region's nonferrous mining industry benefited from union campaigns in the 1940s, when the left-led Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers combined trade unionism with an assault on discrimination in the company towns of New Mexico and Arizona. During the 1950s and early 1960s, these workers stayed loyal to Mine Mill even after its ouster from the CIO and continued to benefit from union contracts. Outside of mining most Mexican-American workers labored in the region's poorly paid service and agricultural sectors amid the worst job and living conditions in the United States. The plight of Mexican-American and Filipino farmworkers in California's Central Valley during the 1960s became the site of the decade's most high-profile organizing campaign spearheaded by the United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee (UFW). Led by the charismatic Cesar Chavez, who combined devout Catholicism and community outreach with trade unionism, the UFW united militant Filipino and Mexican-American farmworkers to improve conditions in the California agricultural fields. The UFW's campaign was unique because it attracted the support of Chicano activists, campus radicals, and liberals such as Robert Kennedy and Reuther, who saw the farmworkers' campaign as an opportunity for labor to renew its social activism while increasing its organizational scope. The campaign was most notable for the national grape boycott, the most novel strike tactic of the postwar era devised during the UFW's struggle against grape growers in Delano, California. Enthusiastic consumer response to the grape boycott helped the UFW win the first union contract in the California fields and eventually to gain legal protection for collective bargaining from the state of California. Much like the paradox faced by black workers, the UFW's campaign on behalf of farmworkers would stall in the 1970s, when it faced more determined resistance from employers and their political allies.

The 1950s and 1960s witnessed the increasing feminization of the workforce. During these two decades, women's participation increased from 24% to 42% of the total workforce, and the number of female workers doubled from 18 to over 30 million workers. By the 1970s, over half of all women were engaged in paid employment, with almost two-thirds working in full-time positions. Women's increased participation reflected the demand for labor in the burgeoning service sector and the rise in the number of women—single, married, or divorced—who needed to earn a living to support themselves or their families.

The demand for women's labor undercut the post-war domestic ideology that celebrated women's role as a wife, mother, and homemaker. Over half of the mothers with children were working by the end of the 1960s, and the same percentage of two-parent families had wives who contributed at least one-fourth of the total family income. Women's increased workforce participation also reflected the rise of second-wave feminism among women who came of age in the 1960s. Determined to pursue careers outside of the home, women began bearing fewer children, attaining higher education levels, and marrying husbands with more favorable attitudes toward working wives.

The major problem with women's work was that most women were concentrated in sex-segregated occupations—typists, telephone operators, secretaries, waitresses, maids, and hair stylists—which paid less than traditional male jobs. Few women had access to more lucrative jobs because craft unions barred women from apprenticeship programs or because supervisors in both public and private employment barred women from promotions to higher-level positions. Because more women were clustered in low-wage pink-collar jobs, their rate of pay relative to men's actually declined from the beginning of the 1950s to the 1970s from 64% to 59%. Women also faced gender-specific grievances and different job criteria than men, such as physical attractiveness, and different requirements, such as possessing so-called domestic skills. Unlike men women also faced the pressures of sexual harassment and doing double duty as housewives, which usually entailed an extra 30 hours per week of work.

During the 1960s, most women used individual strategies to address their grievances by moving off and on the labor market in response to family and personal considerations. But a significant number worked within unions to remedy their concerns. By 1954, women constituted a sizeable minority—three million or one-fifth—of all union members. A small percentage of women unionists worked in manufacturing industries and held membership in various industrial, garment, or textile unions, but most female union members were concentrated in the service unions, such as the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, or Communication Workers of America. As union members women pushed for equal pay, fair job rates, and the end to sex-based discrimination in hiring while lobbying for a higher minimum wage. Female union members were split on the question of eliminating all gender distinctions on the job. Many opted for an approach that one historian has termed “labor feminism,” which urged the elimination of

sex-based policies on wages and promotions but favored those measures, such as maternity leave and opting out of certain shifts to take care of their children, that were specific to their position as women and homemakers.

Workingwomen drew on the example of the civil rights movement and turned to politics for government solutions. In the early 1960s, President Kennedy prohibited sex discrimination in the federal civil service and in 1963 signed the Equal Pay Act, which mandated equal pay for equal work. A year later Title VII of the Civil Rights Act barred sex discrimination by unions and firms with 15 or more employees and gave women access to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to file complaints against employers and unions. By the beginning of the 1970s, the National Organization for Women and other feminist organizations were directing women's political agenda away from labor feminism and toward sex-neutral policies, assuming that women would make more progress through measures that ensured fair competition within a strict meritocracy. By the beginning of the 1970s, these organizations gained two-thirds majorities in both houses of Congress for the Equal Rights Amendment, which barred all discrimination based on sex and was expected to achieve rapid ratification by two-thirds of the states. Although the Equal Rights Amendment would eventually fail, women posted impressive gains in the 1960s and the decade that followed. But as was the case with other rights-consciousness campaigns, women failed to close the wage gap, reach equity with men in higher-paying occupations, or eliminate gender-specific grievances.

As the 1960s came to a close, labor was stuck in the paradox that plagued it since the end of World War II. Unions still wielded impressive political power and could boast material improvements for its members. Bolstered by union gains and the expanding economy, the national poverty rate fell to an all-time low of 11% of the population by the mid-1960s. Through its support of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs, organized labor could also point to some concrete legislative achievements, from national medical care for the elderly and the poor to increases in the minimum wage and social security and the establishment of the Model Cities Urban-Renewal Program.

But organized labor also faced serious political setbacks, best illustrated in its failure to repeal Taft-Hartley's Section 14(b) in 1965, a year in which pro-labor Democrats made up majorities in both houses of Congress. Although the repeal effort passed the House of Representatives by an 18-vote margin in July 1965, a filibuster led by Illinois Senator Everett

Dirksen, leader of the Senate's Republican minority, and backed by a coalition of conservative Republicans and southern Democrats twice prevented a full Senate vote on the repeal bill in October 1965 and February 1966. The defeat of several prolabor Senators in the 1966 midterm elections closed any repeal effort for the remainder of the decade.

The politics of the Vietnam War also presented organized labor with a dilemma. By uncritically backing the Johnson administration's escalation of the Vietnam War beginning in 1965, the AFL-CIO had committed itself to supporting a liberal Democratic administration waging an increasingly unpopular war. The AFL-CIO President Meany proved intransigently committed to the Vietnam War and continued to back the war through the late 1960s even as public opinion turned against the war. Meany's stance also pitted the AFL-CIO against the growing number of antiwar liberals, rank-and-file members, and intellectuals, who dismissed organized labor as a reactionary bureaucracy irresponsive to concerns over the war, but also opened the union to questions of racial and gender equality and the lack of democracy in AFL-CIO unions.

By the late 1960s, even the most established unions were split by internal dissension over the lack of democratic institutions and corruption, as was the case in the United Mine Workers and Teamsters. Similar dissension also split the AFL-CIO. In 1968, Reuther, frustrated with the AFL-CIO's uncritical support for the Democratic party's foreign policy, its failure to increase organizational efforts, and its lack of "social vision" on race and poverty, pulled the UAW out of the AFL-CIO to chart a course as an unaffiliated independent union, which represented more a valiant gesture than an effective strategy to direct the labor movement toward a more progressive course.

The dissension within labor's ranks reflected widespread political polarization during the second-half of the 1960s. Early in the decade organized labor had worked closely with young radicals in the emerging New Left, but by supporting the Vietnam War, and not pushing hard enough for civil rights and other social justice movements, labor lost the support of New Left youth and campus radicals, who increasingly viewed organized labor as part of the establishment wedded to a corrupt status quo. The AFL-CIO also lost support from a significant number of white union members who resented what they viewed as the excesses of the welfare state and the Warren Court, the youth counterculture and antiwar movement, and the radicalism of the civil rights movement, feminist and other group-liberation efforts. The white backlash against labor and liberalism posed problems

for organized labor at the ballot box when enough working-class voters abandoned the Democratic party to deny Hubert Humphrey the presidency in 1968. Most southern white working-class voters cast their ballots instead for former Alabama governor and arch-segregationist, George Wallace, who ran as an independent candidate on an antiliberal, populist platform, while a number of northern backlash votes went to the eventual winner, Republican party candidate Richard Nixon. While Nixon had neither the political power nor intention of dismantling the welfare state or weakening existing labor law, a new breed of right-wing Republicans (many of them southern ex-Democrats) would first emerge, determined to curb unions' power by championing free-market policies. Economic expansion kept this New Right at bay during the late-1960s, but it would gain strength during the 1970s when the postwar boom ended.

During the 1970s, the combination of inflation, unemployment, and higher energy prices signaled the end of postwar expansion, and by the end of the decade, the AFL-CIO would begin waging a defensive action to preserve the gains it made during the boom years. However this outcome is clear only in retrospect, and it would be a mistake to view labor's eventual decline as inevitable. During the 1970s, organized labor would continue to exert its political influence; strengthen existing welfare-state provisions; and maintain collective-bargaining relationships in basic industry, the construction and building trades, and other unionized sectors of the economy. Even as the postwar boom ebbed, unionized workers showed their willingness to strike to maintain their share of national wealth, and new workers in government and the public sector would continue to join unions. Organized labor would have many of the same strengths and weaknesses in the 1970s that it possessed since the mid-1950s, but it would be these weaknesses that anti-union politicians and employers would exploit during the 1980s to bring the era of big labor to a close.

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See also Affirmative Action; American Federation of Government Employees; American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; American Federation of Teachers; American Postal Workers' Union; Anticommunism; Beck, David; Black Lung Associations; Civil Rights Act of 1964/ Title VII; Cold War; Collective Bargaining; Communist Party; Davis, Leon; Delano Grape Strike; Equal Pay Act of 1962; Foner, Moe; GI Bill; Hoffa, James P.; Hoffa, James R.; House Un-American Activities Committee/Dies Committee; Huerta, Dolores C.; Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; March on Washington Movement; McCarran-Walter Act (1952); McClellan Committee Hearings; Meany, George; Memphis Sanitation Strike (1968); Miners for Democracy; National Education Association; National Federation of Federal Employees; National Right to Work Committee; New Left; Operation Dixie; Service Employees' International Union; Shanker, Albert; Slichter, Sumner; Steel Strike (longest and largest) 1959; Taft-Hartley; Teamsters for a Democratic Union (1976); United Mine Workers of America; Waitressing and Waiting/Food Service

SINGLE TAX

The single tax was the brainchild of social reformer Henry George, and it became one of the most popular, if unconventional, reforms for the inequalities of

SINGLE TAX

American capitalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many workingmen flocked to the banner of the single tax, as did a host of middle-class reformers. This ability of the single tax to bridge often antagonistic political opponents was one of its strengths, as well as one of the reasons for its ultimate decline by World War I.

Born in Philadelphia in 1839, George ended up in California during the 1860s. Rather than finding economic opportunity on the frontier however, George personally experienced great deprivation. A printer by trade, he became politically active in anticorporate agitation and ultimately came to the conclusion that powerful economic interests were monopolizing land, destroying economic opportunities for ordinary people. George first formulated his single-tax philosophy in an 1871 pamphlet, which he followed with his 1879 masterpiece, *Progress and Poverty*. A blend of Jeffersonian democracy, evangelical Protestantism, and populist economics, that book became one of the greatest bestsellers in the nineteenth-century United States.

Even during the late nineteenth century, when complicated issues of taxation and government finance were much more matters of public discussion than they are today, the single tax was fairly esoteric. While proponents formulated different specific, pragmatic ways of putting the single tax into effect, the basic goal was always the same: To end the unjust land monopoly supposedly at the root of economic inequality. Single taxers for example pointed to land owners who bought a block in a developing city, and then watched the property value of that block skyrocket through the rise of population and the general development of the economy—not through any effort of the owner.

This economic windfall should therefore, single taxers argued, belong not to the land's owner, but to the community as a whole. Complete confiscatory taxation of increased land value would eliminate unjust gains in real estate speculation and force the broad sale of land held by monopolists, thus encouraging industry and providing all male households with the opportunity to own a homestead. The proposed tax was single because, its advocates proclaimed, it would provide all the money needed for government coffers. And in any case single taxers argued that all other taxes (including income and inheritance) were immoral and unproductive because they took money and property away from the workers and business owners who had earned them through their own labor.

During the late nineteenth century, George and his allies forged a potent set of alliances to fight for the single tax. The most pitched battle occurred when

George ran for mayor of New York City in 1886. While not all supporters of George were single-tax devotees, many of the workingmen who formed the foundation of his campaign were Irish immigrants for whom the single tax provided a potent appeal in its invocation of land for the hungry masses. George finished a close second in that race, behind Democrat Abram Hewitt but ahead of Republican Theodore Roosevelt.

George died in 1897, and much of the punch of the single-tax movement died with him (even though his son, Henry George, Jr., was elected to Congress from New York City in 1910 and 1912). Yet agitation did not cease, with many cities and states continuing to be convulsed with battles for the single tax. With strong labor support, a single-tax mayor took office in Seattle in 1912; the Georgeites obtained victory in Pueblo, Colorado, in 1913; and the Industrial Workers of the World stronghold of Everett, Washington, witnessed two single-tax electoral triumphs during the teens. The most powerful labor movement in the country, in San Francisco, proudly advocated the single tax, as did the nation's most powerful socialist movement, in Oklahoma.

The most significant movement for the single tax during the early twentieth century arose in Oregon. A powerful combination of American Federation of Labor (AFL) unionists and radicals sympathetic to the cause of small business joined forces to advocate various shades of Georgeism. Using the initiative of the direct-democracy device that allowed voters to propose and vote on laws and newly enshrined in Oregon, such single taxers as William U'Ren put their question to citizens in every election from 1908 to 1916. Yet only one election could be viewed as even a partial victory for the single tax. Despite significant support for the reform in plebeian Portland neighborhoods, these radical measures generally went down to increasingly bigger defeats. Oregon labor leaders continued to advocate the single tax through the 1920s, but they no longer viewed it as the backbone of their campaign to eliminate "disemployment" and promote greater economic equality.

Single taxers were always part of an eclectic world of reform politics, with especially strong roots in the movements opposing imperialism and racial inequality. Many proponents went on to mainstream political success; pro-union Cleveland Mayor Tom Johnson was a devoted Georgeist, as was Louis Post, assistant secretary of labor in the administration of Woodrow Wilson. Yet the mass of politicized workers became increasingly disenchanted with the reform during the course of the Progressive Era. Leaders of the AFL became much more likely to withdraw support for the utopian single tax in favor of the pragmatic income

tax, while Socialists—always, at best, grudging in their acceptance of *petit bourgeois* Georgeism—became more uniform in their hostility. In an era that saw the simultaneous rise of polarized class politics and mass consumerism, a reform that promised to bring together working-class and middle-class producers seemed increasingly anachronistic.

The single tax may today appear to be at best confusing and at worst a dangerous panacea. Yet the basic impulse behind the reform—to prevent the immoral accumulation of wealth—resonated powerfully with Americans of various social classes during the tumultuous period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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See also **George, Henry**

SIT-DOWN STRIKES (1937)

After the National Labor Relations Act was passed by Congress in July 1935, unions anticipated a more congenial atmosphere for organizing workers. These expectations were raised even higher by the landslide win by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the election of 1936—a victory that labor had helped to achieve and from which labor organizers benefited by telling reluctant workers “the President wants you to join the union.” Businessmen on the other hand hoped that the Supreme Court would overturn the act, as they had the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA). Many unorganized workers during this era were reluctant to join unions largely because of the precarious situation that many of these new labor unions caused by the lack of recognition of these unions as bargaining agents for their members; this meant that union members often had less job security than nonunion workers, since union activists were often targeted for harassment and dismissal by company representatives. The sit-down strikes that took place in 1937 inspired workers to overcome these

doubts and join unions—particularly those unions under the umbrella of the new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—in unprecedented numbers.

A strike is by definition the withholding of labor by workers, usually characterized by workers leaving their place of work and forming a picket line at the entrances to discourage other workers from entering the place of work until grievances are satisfactorily settled. A sit-down strike on the other hand is characterized by worker occupation of the workplace, usually to prevent the replacement of strikers by other workers. The sit-down strike tactic allows strikers to ensure that production is halted in the factory. The tactic also allows a small number of militant strikers to ensure that production is halted—an important consideration when many workers are reluctant to join unions and even more reluctant to go out on strike. The United States Supreme Court, in *NLRB v. Fansteel Metallurgical Corp.* in 1939, ruled sit-down strikes illegal; the sit-down strike by that time had largely been abandoned by labor unions and so had little effect.

The first use of a sit-down strike in the United States happened in 1906 during an Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) strike against Westinghouse. The sit-down strikes of 1937 were the result of the success that rubber workers in Akron, Ohio, experienced in using the tactic in 1936. In January of that year, workers at the Firestone plant halted work after a union activist was suspended for a week without pay. The strike quickly spread to both the B. F. Goodrich and the Goodyear facilities in Akron; Firestone management relented and reinstated the activist with back pay for the time he was off. This led to a larger job action in February 1936, when Goodyear discharged 137 tire builders who had engaged in a quickie sit-down strike (that is, a strike engaged in by a relatively small number of workers intended to force management to settle a shopfloor dispute immediately). The rubber workers responded on a massive scale; 5,000 pickets faced down the Akron police force sent to re-open the plant despite an injunction forbidding mass picketing. The effectiveness of the strike eventually led Goodyear to accept terms favorable to the union—including re-instating those workers discharged, agreeing to limit the company’s discretion on increasing hours, and other concessions. The success of this tactic in Akron resulted in more than 50 subsequent sit-down strikes in the city’s rubber plants before the end of 1936.

The most famous of the 1937 strikes actually began in the final days of 1936. Workers at the Cleveland Fisher Body plant, in response to General Motors’ (GM’s) decision not to bargain with the then-president of the UAW, Homer Martin, seized control

SIT-DOWN STRIKES (1937)



Sit-down strikers in the Fisher Body plant factory number three. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-040027-D].

of the plant on December 28, 1936. The UAW officials in Flint feared that workers in Cleveland “had jumped the gun,” and attempted to wait in calling members out on strike until after the first of the year, when a new, union-friendly governor—Frank Murphy, elected in November 1936—was sworn into office on the first day of 1937. In order to stay in control of the membership, and to prevent General Motors from removing important dies used to make car bodies to a safer location, union officials found that they had to jump the gun a bit themselves and gave the go-ahead for the planned seizure of the plant. The Flint sit-down strike began on December 30, 1936, when a small group of union activists shut down the assembly line at the Fisher Body Plant Number 1. The infant United Auto Workers (UAW) had been working intensively to organize workers in Flint, first under the direction of Wyndham Mortimer, the former president of UAW Local 9 at the White Motor Company in Cleveland, and later under Robert Travis, who helped organize and lead UAW Local 14, which had successfully struck GM’s Chevrolet Transmission Plant in Toledo, Ohio, in April 1935. The Toledo walkout resulted in a small gain in the hourly rate paid workers, but more importantly for workers was the fact that GM had recognized and bargained with the union. These gains were negated later in the year however when GM moved a substantial amount of machine tools out of the factory

in Toledo, and into a solidly nonunion plant in Saginaw, Michigan. Despite this setback, Local 14 continued to represent workers at GM’s Toledo facility—but it made it readily apparent that the continued viability of the union could be ensured only by organizing workers in the company’s two Michigan strongholds, Flint and Detroit.

The sit-down strike tactic allowed for a relatively small number of strikers to shut down production at the two plants in Flint. Many workers chose to stay home and wait out the struggle—not an unwise decision in a town where the local government and largest employer were as closely intertwined as was the case in Flint. The relatively small number of active strikers gave the forces arrayed against them the impression that the strikers could be removed by force if the occasion warranted it, particularly at Fisher Plant Number 2, which was held by approximately 100 strikers. Such an attempt was made on January 11, 1937, and it was defeated by the strikers at Fisher Number 2—assisted by UAW picketers and the members of the Women’s Emergency Brigade—in an altercation that has entered union lore as “the Battle of the Running Bulls” (bulls being a slang term for police in this era). This battle prompted city and county officials, corporate representatives, and union officials to call on newly elected Governor Frank Murphy to bring in the Michigan National Guard to restore

order, which was done on the following day. Significantly the guard was not used to break the strike but to keep order in the streets around the two plants. The stalemate between the corporation and the union continued until February 1, when the union was able to seize another plant in Flint, Chevrolet Plant Number 6, after fooling the company and city officials into believing that another plant would be the target by planting misinformation with a suspected company spy within the union. Another week-and-a-half passed before GM grudgingly accepted the UAW as the sole bargaining agent for its “employees who were members of the union.”

The effect of this seemingly limited victory by a fledgling member of a fledgling labor organization—the CIO—was momentous. The UAW was able quickly to organize most of the rest of the GM factories as well as those of the Chrysler Corporation. The effects of the strike were felt outside of the automobile industry as well. United States Steel granted recognition to the Steel Workers’ Organizing Committee, which was the predecessor of the United Steel Workers. The successful sit-down strike against the largest corporation in the world also inspired workers in Woolworth stores, pencil makers, sailors, tobacco workers, janitors, rug weavers, pie bakers, hotel and restaurant workers, garbage collectors, newspaper pressmen, and opticians to sit-down to get their own grievances addressed. There were 477 sit-down strikes in the United States in 1937; 279 called by CIO affiliates, 100 by AFL affiliates, and the remainder called by workers or unions unaffiliated with either body. The textile industry witnessed the largest number of sit-down strikes, with 80; the automobile industry by comparison, had only 45. Sit-down strikes were widely supported by the general public in January and February of 1937. As they became increasingly popular with workers as a way to address grievances however, this public support eroded. Sit-down strikes also became less popular with workers during the year, so that by the month of December there were only four sit-down strikes. The sit-down strike was not only popular in the United States however; it was also used in the 1930s in France, where Indian textile workers seized a mill in Pondicherry, as did tobacco workers in Greece; miners in Wales, Scotland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, and Spain all stayed underground during the decade.

Although the sit-down strike was increasingly unpopular with workers in the United States during the second-half of 1937, it was still a tactic in the arsenal of unions until the *NLRB v. Fansteel* Supreme Court decision in 1939, when a majority of the justices decided that the tactic was “out of bounds” and an illegal usurpation of private property. Despite this

ruling however, workers through the years have used elements of the sit-down in quickie strikes over shopfloor disputes.

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SKIDMORE, THOMAS (1790–1832) Working Men’s Parties

Thomas Skidmore was one of the leading figures of the Jacksonian era Working Men’s parties, which were organized in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and 70 other locations in the late 1820s. Born in Newton, Connecticut, in 1790, Skidmore was a precocious learner and began a 5-year teaching career at his local school at the age of 13. In 1819, Skidmore settled down in New York City as a machinist. He maintained an active interest in practical science and worked on several projects and inventions. In 1829, Skidmore began a career of political activism and became a driving force in the New York City Working Men’s party. Despite some initial electoral success under his stewardship, Skidmore lost a series of faction fights and was forced out of the party. He died at the age of 42 in the cholera epidemic of 1832.

The primary thrust of Skidmore’s political activity lay in his advocacy of the abolition of inheritance and the complete equalization of property. He also fought those who, in his view, were attempting to water down the Working Men’s party’s program or like Robert Dale Owen, were pushing ideas and proposals that were not strictly related to the interests of working people. Skidmore’s redistributionist ideas dominated the Working Men’s platform in the 1829 local elections, in which the movement garnered 31% of the vote and elected two state legislators. Despite this initial success, politicians Noah Cook and Henry

Guyon, assisted by Owen, accused Skidmore of being too radical and forced him and his followers out of the party in late 1829. Not long after Cook and Guyon expelled Owen as well. Skidmore attempted to lead a dissident group, but the movement wrecked on the shoals of factionalism.

Aside from his political leadership during the tumultuous second-half of 1829, Skidmore's chief contribution to labor was intellectual. He wrote three books, *The Rights of Man to Property*, *Moral Physiology Exposed and Refuted*, and *Political Essays*. The latter merely recapitulated the ideas of his first work, while *Moral Physiology Exposed* was an attack on Robert Dale Owen's work, *Moral Physiology*. The issues that tore the New York Working Men's party apart were several, but among them were Skidmore's proposal to equalize all property and Owen's advocacy of free love and contraception. Owen considered Skidmore's ideas far too radical, while Skidmore, in *Moral Physiology Exposed*, attacked Owen for wanting to destroy the family with his support for free love, contraception, and compulsory boarding schools for children.

The Rights of Man to Property! is Skidmore's most important work, and its title underscores Skidmore's intention to transcend the intellectual limits of his hero, *Rights of Man* author Thomas Paine. Paine, along with Thomas Jefferson, had been one of the leading English speaking theoreticians and revolutionaries of eighteenth-century radicalism. Skidmore confronted the radical legacy more directly than did most of his contemporaries and attempted to transcend its categories and formulate a new basis for radical social analysis.

Skidmore contended that Jefferson's understanding of natural rights remained fundamentally flawed by its failure to recognize the importance of the right to property. Criticizing Jefferson for his use in the Declaration of Independence of the phrase "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," Skidmore argued that "man's natural right to life or liberty, is not more sacred or unalienable, than his right to property." Indeed, Skidmore insisted, the right to property is "essential and indispensable in the pursuit of happiness." Skidmore's argument for the recognition of the rights of man to property rested largely on his contention that political equality cannot exist in conjunction with social injustice. Pointing to the power granted by great wealth, Skidmore asserted that "he who commands the property of a State, or even an inordinate portion of it, . . . can feed me, or starve me; give me employment, or bid me wander about in idleness; is my master; and it is the utmost folly for me to boast of being anything but a slave" (T. Skidmore, *The Rights of Man to Property*, 1829).

Ironically for one who so valued property rights, Skidmore's conceptual framework was oriented toward a critique of private property and a set of proposals that included state expropriation of all property. Skidmore called for a constitutional convention that would abolish all debts and assume ownership of all property, real and personal, in the name of the newly reconstituted state. This was the first step in what Skidmore called the "general division." The government was to inventory all this property, assign it value, and total these values. Each adult citizen (male and female, regardless of race) would then be credited an equal share, or dividend, of this total, and with this share buy property back from the state at an enormous auction. The general division would thus be complete; and all adult citizens would possess equal amounts of property. To ensure the permanence of this equality, Skidmore proposed that inheritance be eliminated and the property of the deceased be distributed annually in the form of a patrimony to all those who attained the age of majority in a given year. The patrimony would prevent the accumulation of wealth over generations, and each would be assured an equal opportunity to attain wealth and comfort. Skidmore also advocated the establishment of state funding for child raising and the abolition of banks, corporate charters, and private charity. The well off, Skidmore reasoned, could use the latter to circumvent the abolition of inheritance by disposing of their property to their children shortly prior to death.

Skidmore's work represents the first American synthesis of egalitarian and producerist ideas, that is, that strand of ideas proceeding from the proposition that the producer of wealth is entitled to the whole of that wealth rather than the portion that wage labor represented. He synthesized the two by fusing the artisanal hostility to accumulated, unearned wealth with the egalitarian impulse to equalize property holdings. The terms of this synthesis formed the framework for the type of socialism that animated farmer and worker movements in nineteenth-century America. He provided an urban version of agrarian radicalism and thus brought to the struggles of artisans and laborers the vitality of a tradition that had its roots in the English revolution. The feeling that the abundance of land in the United States might somehow serve as part of the solution to the social question remained never far from view in nineteenth-century radical movements. The first of these movements was the Working Men's Movement, and it was Skidmore who provided early leadership and provocative ideas to that movement.

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SLAVE CODES

See *Slavery*

SLAVE REBELLIONS

Demographic realities and power relationships in the mainland British colonies and later, following independence, in the United States, militated against the type of large-scale slave revolts and conspiracies that erupted in South America and the Caribbean. The presence of a heavily armed white majority in every state except South Carolina (and, toward the very end of the antebellum period, Mississippi), the lack of an impregnable hinterland in which to create Maroon colonies from which runaways could besiege plantations, the relatively dispersed nature and small size of slaveholding, and the fact that the landlord class was in residence (not absentee) combined to make massive slave rebellions far less common than day-to-day resistance or individual acts of violence. In the years after the American Revolution, as harsher forms of colonial patriarchy began to metamorphose into paternalism—a complex and ongoing process of negotiation and brutality that many scholars regrettably reduce to a simplistic model of accommodation—slaves achieved enough living space to build stable families and rich spiritual communities. Given the odds against success, it is hardly surprising that the handful of slaves bold enough to rise for their freedom found their rebellions reduced to unsuccessful

conspiracies and their fellows doomed to die in combat or on the gallows.

Despite persistence by historians to force a uniformity of vision and goals on rebel leaders, insurgent slaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries differed from one another fully as much as white revolutionaries in the same era. Jemmy, an Angolan who led an agrarian uprising near Stono River, South Carolina, tried to hasten his African followers across the border into Spanish Florida. Caesar Varick, who only 2 years later conspired to burn New York City, lived in one of North America's largest urban centers with a common-law Irish wife. Gabriel, a young, secular rebel who had turned away from African traditions, hoped to remain and work in a more egalitarian Virginia. Denmark Vesey, an aged free black who bought his freedom the year before Gabriel died, expected to achieve a limited exodus for his family and followers out of Charleston to Haiti. Vesey and his chief lieutenant, "Gullah" Jack Pritchard, an East African priest, fused African theology with the Old Testament God of wrath and justice, whereas Nat Turner relied on Christian millennial themes and hoped to bring on the day of jubilee for black Virginians. Beyond their obvious abilities as leaders and their equally obvious desire to breathe free, bond rebels in the United States fit no simple pattern.

If slave rebellions in North America correspond to any one model, it is that they proliferated during times when the white majority was divided against itself in crippling ways. Colonial insurgents in South Carolina and New York City turned to violence at a time when their masters were at war with France and Spain. Gabriel, the most politicized of all the slave rebels, formulated his plans during the divisive election of 1800, when Federalists and Republicans threatened to take up arms against one another. The rebels in the Tidewater area of Virginia, despite the memory of the repression that followed Gabriel's death, began to organize again during the chaos of the War of 1812. Having read of the Missouri debates in Charleston newspapers, Vesey prayed that northern whites would prove tardy in riding to the rescue of their estranged southern brethren. Slaves near Natchez, Mississippi, began to plan for their freedom in 1861, following the outbreak of the Civil War.

Most of all enslaved rebels, who well knew what they were up against and rarely contemplated suicidal ventures, plotted for their freedom only when safer avenues had been closed to them. For most of the seventeenth century for example, when the high death rate in the southern colonies made inexpensive white indentured servants far more numerous than costly African slaves, enterprising bond persons relied more on self-purchase than the sword. The economic

SLAVE REBELLIONS

possibilities in early Virginia produced more runaways than rebels; the practice of buying one's own body even produced several black entrepreneurs—such as Anthony Johnson, a former slave who became a wealthy planter and who named his estate Angola after the land of his birth. It was only after landless whites and hard-used white indentured workers under the command of Nathaniel Bacon burned Jamestown in 1676 that southern planters made a concerted effort to replace white servants with African slaves. The comprehensive Virginia Slave Code of 1705, the first of its kind on the English colonial mainland, crushed the hope of industrious slaves that they might be upwardly mobile. Only then as North American racial walls rapidly hardened did desperate slaves turn to physically hazardous paths toward freedom. During the last days of Queen Anne's War in April 1712, a determined band of 25 Africans and Native Americans burned several buildings in New York City and killed nine whites. (Unfree labor had been legalized in New York by the Duke's Law of 1665.) Having made a commitment to unfree labor, equally determined whites revenged themselves on the rebels. Several rebels committed suicide before they could be captured, but those taken alive were broken on the wheel and hanged in chains as a warning to future rebels.

In the early eighteenth century, even though the constant threat of war between Britain and its continental neighbors provided endless opportunities for daring slaves, mainland revolts rarely posed much real danger to the slaveholding regime. Because the Atlantic slave trade was at its peak, every colony included large numbers of native Africans who sought to escape from bondage by building isolated Maroon communities. Most runaways fled into the hinterland, where they established Maroon colonies and tried to recreate the African communities they had lost. Even the two most significant rebellions of the period—that of Stono, South Carolina, in 1739 and the subsequent attempt to burn New York City in 1741—were led by Africans who dreamed only of ending their own bondage, not of ending unfree labor in general. Aware of Spanish promises of freedom in colonial Florida, enslaved soldiers under Jemmy, many of them Christians from the Kingdom of Kongo, tried to escape across the border. To the north, New York City bondmen planned to torch the wooden city and flee to French Canada, which was then at war with the rebels' masters. The price of failure was high. New York authorities ordered Caesar Varick and 12 of his followers burned alive; 18 others were hanged—two of them in chains—and 70 more bondmen were banished from the colony.

The American Revolution alternately discouraged and stimulated slave rebellions. Although the British

invasion and the animosity between patriots and Tories presented slaves with a unique opportunity to organize, most slaves chose instead to take advantage of the dislocation of war to escape with their families into the growing cities or behind British lines. (The Revolution was the one time in North American history when as many female slaves as males ran away.) Because the aggressive bondmen who cast their lots with the military forces of King George were precisely the sort of bold, determined slaves who normally tended to organize slave conspiracies, the bloody fighting in the southern states after 1778 actually diminished the prospect that a mainland counterpart of Toussaint Louverture would rise out of the tobacco and rice plantations.

Nonetheless, as Eugene D. Genovese suggests in his influential study, *From Rebellion to Revolution* (1979), the age of revolution, and especially the slave revolt in Saint Domingue in 1791, marked a change in patterns in black resistance. The Caribbean rebels under the leadership of Boukman and Louverture sought not only to destroy the power of their Parisian absentee masters, but also to join the societies in which they lived on equal terms. For black Americans determined to realize the egalitarian promise of the American Revolution, the news from the Caribbean reminded them that if they dared, the end of slavery might be within their reach. Whereas Jemmy and his African recruits hoped only to escape the chains of colonial South Carolina, the slave Gabriel of Virginia, born in the year 1776, wanted to join political society on equal terms. Gabriel and his lieutenants, who instigated the most extensive plot in Virginia history, hoped to force the white patriot elite to live up to its stated ideal: That all men were created free and equal. Leading a small army of slaves in Henrico County, the young blacksmith planned to march into Richmond under a banner emblazoned with the words death or liberty. He assured one supporter that poor white people, who had no more political power than the slaves, would also join them in the struggle for equality. Although trial testimony makes little mention of events in Saint Domingue, white authorities, like Governor James Monroe, harbored no doubts that Louverture's victories had an enormous "effect on all the peoples of colour" in the early national South.

In several cases bondmen who had been carried from revolutionary Saint Domingue by their masters participated in North American slave revolts. In 1792, slaves on Virginia's eastern shore proposed to "blow up the magazine in Norfolk and massacre its inhabitants." Norfolk County had a white majority, but Northampton and Elizabeth City counties, just across the Chesapeake Bay, had an enslaved majority. Although the rebel leader Caleb, a favored servant

and driver, was evidently American-born, several of his recruits were Haitian refugees, and all—according to the trial testimony—had been inspired by the example of Saint Domingue. Two decades later in 1811, one of the most extensive conspiracies in the history of the United States erupted in southern Louisiana, only a few miles upriver from New Orleans. Slaves led by a mulatto driver named Charles Deslondes announced their intention of marching on the city “to kill whites.” Contrary to myth Deslondes was not Haitian-born, but many of his recruits were. Reliable eyewitness accounts placed the number of rebels at 180 to 500.

The limited evidence available from slave trials also indicates that rebellion was the occupation of skilled slaves and men who understood the power of cash. Field hands of course could be found tangled up in the court proceedings that followed slave conspiracies, but they rarely were the instigators of the plots. When the occupational status of enslaved rebels can be obtained, it is clear that skilled slaves found their way into courts in numbers that far exceeded their statistical ratio in the overall slave community. Of the 135 slaves and free blacks put to trial by Charleston magistrates in 1822, occupations may be had for 41 of the defendants. Four were carpenters, four were coopers, two were blacksmiths, and five were rope makers. The others were painters, cooks, stone masons, wheelwrights, ship caulkers, and draymen; not a single man, so far as the extant evidence indicates, waded Carolina’s rice fields. Similarly enslaved artisans took the lead in organizing rebellions across the Americas. In the fall of 1736 in British Antigua, two black carpenters orchestrated an islandwide conspiracy. Among the rebels executed were 13 carpenters, eight coopers, two masons, three domestics, and even three fiddlers, but of the 49 men banished from the island, only six were unskilled field workers.

After Gabriel’s execution and the death of 25 of his followers in the fall of 1800, slave rebellions on the eastern seaboard became both less common and less politically conscious. Slaves who worked along the rivers in southern Virginia and Halifax County, North Carolina, under the leadership of Sancho, a ferryman, formed a highly decentralized scheme to rise on Easter Monday of 1802. But Sancho, despite having been involved in Gabriel’s plot, shared little of Gabriel’s dream of a multiracial republic. The lack of an ideological dimension appeared even when the dislocation brought on by the War of 1812 and a second British invasion of the Chesapeake once more gave bondmen in Virginia an opportunity to rise for their liberty. Gloucester County authorities jailed 10 slaves in March 1813, and the following month found rebels in Lancaster County and

Williamsburg “condemned on a charge of conspiracy & insurrection.” By the late summer and early fall, rumors of revolt unnerved inhabitants of Norfolk and Richmond as well.

If the relative ease with which white authorities crushed these isolated rebellions did not extinguish the desire for freedom, it nonetheless reminded leaders in the slave community that the determined white majority in the American South presented insurgents with a formidable obstacle. Vesey of Charleston, perhaps the most pragmatic of all the rebel leaders, realized that Gabriel’s dream of forcing mainland elites to accommodate blacks’ aspirations for freedom and economic justice was impossible. Vesey plotted therefore not to end slavery in South Carolina, but instead to lead a mass escape from Charleston to the Caribbean, where he had lived and worked as a boy. Hoping to take control of the city on the night of July 14, 1822, Vesey’s recruits—many of them Africans—intended to slaughter the inhabitants of the city and seize bank reserves before fleeing to Haiti, an embattled black republic sorely in need of capital and skilled labor. If Vesey, a prosperous free man, doomed those who remained behind to renewed repression by whites, he can scarcely be faulted: He understood that his followers had virtually no hope of bringing down the peculiar institution in South Carolina.

Even Vesey’s unsuccessful exodus, which may be regarded more as mass flight than a revolution, indicated the difficulties of planning an effective strategy amid large numbers of ever-vigilant whites. Like virtually all rebel leaders in the United States, Vesey recognized the danger of openly recruiting in the countryside. Word of the Charleston plot probably reached several thousand slaves—which is not to say that even half that number committed themselves to the struggle—and there was always a danger that a black Judas would hear the whispers and inform the master class. White authorities had long ago perfected the art of dividing the slave community by offering a tempting reward—freedom—to those who would turn their coats. Like Jemmy and Gabriel before him, Vesey, whose army had more officers than soldiers, planned to rise quickly and present the low-country black majority with a *fait accompli*. The victorious armies would not be recruited nor armed in advance but raised by the captains as they marched.

Ironically the bloodiest slave revolt in the United States took place in the decade after Vesey’s failure, at a time when rebellion—as opposed to other forms of resistance—had become virtually suicidal. The slaves in Southampton County, Virginia, who rose with Turner in 1831 shared neither Gabriel’s trust in a second American Revolution nor Vesey’s hope of

fleeing to the Caribbean. Although Turner may have hoped to establish a Maroon colony in the vast Dismal Swamp, his plot gave little evidence of planning or rational preparation. Most likely the messianic Turner hoped that God would protect and guide his army as the Lord had guided the Israelites. At least 57 whites perished in the revolt, but local militiamen easily routed the ill-equipped rebels; three companies of federal artillery together with seamen from two warships in the Chesapeake reached Southampton only 3 days after the insurrection began.

Although the secession of the southern states in the winter of 1860–1861 presented militant blacks with precisely the sort of division that rebel leaders typically tried to take advantage of, the Civil War channeled black resistance into patterns acceptable to the politicians of the free states. During the first year of the conflict, as Confederate soldiers repulsed northern invasions, militant slaves across the cotton-growing South saw few options but to pull down the rebel government from within. The plot in Natchez, Mississippi, still shrouded in mystery, stands as but one example of collective resistance during the months before the Confederate debacle at Antietam Creek. Rumors of black resistance spread in New Orleans and Columbia, South Carolina. Seven slaves swung from the gibbet in Charleston in April 1861. The Confederate Brigadier General R. F. Floyd urged the governor of Florida to declare martial law in the hope of eradicating a “nest of traitors and lawless negroes.”

Most slaves however, understood, as Herbert Aptheker suggested in his definitive work, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943), that “the Army of Lincoln was to be the Army of Liberation.” Aged slaves with long memories counseled patience and waited for the arrival of northern forces. Following the Emancipation Proclamation, northern freemen and southern runaways, eager and willing to fight, donned blue uniforms in the name of liberty for blacks. Despite the Confederates’ threat to execute black soldiers as slave insurgents, thousands of bondmen fled the countryside, planning to return and liberate their families. By the end of the war, 180,000 African-Americans (one out of every five males in the republic) had served in Union forces. Those former slaves who marched back toward the plantations of their birth singing “General Gabriel’s Jig” rightly understood themselves to be a part of the largest slave rebellion in the history of the United States.

In recent years it has become fashionable for scholars to dismiss black rebelliousness as white paranoia or even Machiavellian attempts on the part of white authorities to advance their political careers, shut down troublesome black churches, or unite whites across class lines. One historian has argued that a

series of slave plots—New York City in 1741, Antigua in 1736, and the Chesapeake in the 1790s—more approximated “witchcraft scares than slave revolts,” while another, severed white heads notwithstanding, suggests that “evidence cannot sustain a credible interpretation that the Stono Revolt was a slave rebellion.” Even conceding the problematical nature of testimony extracted from incarcerated bondmen by vengeful whites however, such denials ultimately silence too many black voices and memories. In later years men who knew Vesey, from enslaved carpenter Robert Nesbitt to Minister Morris Brown to black abolitionist Thomas Brown, discussed their memories of 1822, often from the safety of the free north, far from the reach of vengeful authorities. Perhaps then this debate is not about the evidence but rather about what modern historians wish to read into the evidence; the explanation for these theories lies not so much in a determination to make Vesey go away, but instead to make any evidence of black rebelliousness disappear.

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SLAVE TRADE

Interest in the history of the Atlantic slave trade to the United States has been stimulated in recent years by the availability of new digitalized data sets and by a revival of debates about African cultures and identities. These discussions have moved beyond prior discussions of African survivals and acculturation to

new discussions of the process of creolization and cultural exchange. A prominent role has been played by historians trained in the history of Africa, whose findings have been welcomed in some cases and challenged in others by historians working within the tradition of slave studies in the United States. Both groups of historians have emphasized the history of slavery in the eighteenth century, long neglected in favor of the antebellum period. Beyond the Atlantic slave trade, there has also been a new focus on the internal slave trade within the United States in the antebellum period, which was linked to the emergence of the cotton kingdom and provided powerful ammunition to the anti-slavery movement in the decades preceding the civil war.

In light of these developments in the recent historiography, this article focuses on three main themes. The first is the new possibilities to map and analyze the slave trade to what became the United States on the basis of shipping data and what it can tell us about the Africans imported as slaves. The second theme is the debate about African and later African-American identities and their relationship to the slave trade and new debates about African contributions to agrarian systems and the process of creolization. The rice-growing region of the Carolinas plays a prominent role in these discussions. Finally recent research on the internal slave trade adds a dynamic element to antebellum slavery by focusing on the expansion of the cotton frontier after 1790. The internal slave trade also played a key role in political debates about slavery and strongly shaped abolitionist discourse in the final decades of American slavery.

Patterns of the Atlantic Slave Trade

The availability of detailed shipping records permits historians to examine the connections between the main slave-importing regions of the United States and specific African regions. Historians have more or less agreed on a total slave trade from Africa of about 12 million, with the future United States accounting for 5%–7% of total imports, or in round numbers around 600,000–700,000 slaves, including imports from the Caribbean. Out of this total we have more detailed shipping records of around 300,000 slaves imported from Africa, with indications of regional African origins for 215,000. What we can say about this last group is the focus of some recent debates about the African impact on the United States. The slave trade to the Chesapeake, a tobacco-exporting region, and the low country of the Carolinas and Georgia, a region of rice plantations, accounted for

the vast majority of slave imports. In the past one predominant idea was that slave cargoes consisted of randomized crowds of Africans from diverse tribal backgrounds and that the horrors of the middle passage further stripped these victims of any meaningful connection with their African homelands and their cultural identity. Their sale and dispersion to plantations completed the process and delivered atomized workers ripe for acculturation to their new masters. Data from shipping records does not support these generalizations, which have also been criticized for their misleading assumptions about the extreme diversity and isolation of African cultures. Most slave ships purchased their entire cargoes in one or two ports in one African region and delivered hundreds of slaves with similar material cultures, speaking related languages and sharing many general beliefs. Secondly slave-importing regions drew on commercial networks that led them to import slaves from the same African region time after time.

For the United States as a whole, certain patterns stand out when slave imports by region are compared to the overall patterns of the Atlantic slave trade. The African regions from Senegambia to the Gold Coast were privileged in the slave trade to the United States in that the percentages imported from these regions significantly exceed those predicted by their share in the slave trade as a whole. At the same time west central Africa, centered on the Congo River basin, was the single largest source of slaves, even though the percentages imported were lower than that region's overall role in the slave trade. The most likely explanations for these patterns are geographical proximity, with a preference for the shorter routes from West Africa to the United States, and the patterns of British African commerce. But regional preferences cannot be excluded when slave imports are broken down by exporting or importing regions.

Senegambia is the most striking example, since imports to the United States are four times larger than the share of Senegambia in the slave trade as a whole. This may reflect a preference for slaves from the Gambia River, the main British supply region in Senegambia, who were valued in the rice plantation regions of the Carolinas. The same over-representation in imports to the United States applies to a lesser degree to Sierra Leone, the Windward Coast, and the Gold Coast. There are also clear regional preferences within importing regions in the United States. Two-thirds of all slaves imported from the Bight of Biafra (in what is today southeastern Nigeria) went to Virginia, with the result that one-in-four slaves imported into Virginia came from that region. The Carolinas imported 80% of the slaves from Sierra Leone and 83% of the slaves from west central Africa. Because of

the large number of slaves from west central Africa overall, this meant that about one in every three slaves in the Carolinas came from this African region, whose languages and cultures were closely related. Cultural connections between slaves may have played a greater role in resistance and rebellion than the literature has allowed to this point.

These patterns give credibility to the exploration of links between such events as the Stono rebellion of 1738 in South Carolina and the import of thousands of Kongolese slaves, as argued by John Thornton, or the search for West African influences in the shouts of Afro-Baptism or west central African patterns in slave burial sites, as presented in works by Robert Farris Thompson and others. In the world of work, it means that enslaved Africans would have found it easier to forge links across the cultural divides in the slave population as three or four groups rather than as a randomized crowd. This suggests that Africans could draw on common understandings of the rights of bondsmen and slaves in their own societies in their struggles with their masters. The constant battle of slaves to gain rights over provision grounds and time to work for themselves is a good example. While this can be seen in purely economic terms as a trade-off, with the master supplying all provisions or allowing slaves some time off in exchange for lower costs, the cultural expectations of slaves played a role. Planters showed a consistent preference for centralized control but gave ground on this issue time and again. The paternalism of masters may have been forged as much by the expectations of slaves as by any other factor.

From Creolization to Cultural Exchange

Sidney Mintz and Richard Price's influential study, *The Birth of African-American Culture*, first published in 1976, argued that slave cultures, however tied to Africa, were essentially Creole, born in the New World in the crucible of slavery. Because no single African culture could survive under the conditions of plantation slavery, slaves combined cultural elements from various African societies at the same time as they adopted new languages and adapted to the conditions imposed by slavery. The results were hybrid, syncretic cultures that were African-American. Their interpretation inspired considerable research and bypassed previous debates about African survivals and acculturation by seeming to reconcile key points from both schools. Because their formulation suggested that creolization began immediately and reflected the harsh conditions imposed by slavery, it echoed arguments about the stripping away of African culture. At the

same time such African-derived features of religions as Santería in Cuba or Vodun in Haiti were highlighted, as was syncretism with Catholicism.

Creole cultures and religions seemed much more evident in Brazil and the Caribbean when compared to the United States. This was explained in a number of ways: by the different demographic balance between black and white; by the relatively small size of American plantations and the slave communities that resided on them; by the austere culture of Protestantism compared to Catholicism, with no saints to identify with African spirits, few visual representations, and little ritual; and by the early ending of the slave trade from Africa to the United States, especially when compared to Brazil or Cuba. Whatever the merits of these arguments, recent research has shown that the difference between the United States and other slave regions was one of degree, not of kind. The creolization thesis, as formulated by Mintz and Price, has also been criticized for its assumption that creolization began almost immediately. James Sweet's research on Brazil has shown that specific African religious practices were transplanted to the Americas and survived for generations before giving way to syncretic African ones, a step that preceded their gradual fusion with Brazilian Catholicism. The whole process took centuries. While nothing quite comparable occurred within the boundaries of the United States, slaves' reluctance to embrace Christianity until late in the eighteenth century and their self-identification as African point to similar trends. Further research on the process of conversion and slave religion may reveal that the exceptionalism of the United States reflects lack of scholarly attention to African cultures more than a true divergence from other regions. Recent research on Islam in the Low Country has already moved in this direction.

The rice-growing regions of the Carolinas and Georgia have been the focus of most research that argues for significant African influence based on a cultural exchange that brought not just labor but African technologies and agricultural know-how to the rice plantations. This region has attracted scholarly attention for multiple reasons, many of which point to a strong African imprint. The rice plantations were distinctive for the task system of labor management that granted slaves more autonomy from absentee planters and their agents. Culturally the region is marked by the distinct Gullah dialect, a rich folklore, the early presence of Islam, and by a distinctive Afro-Baptism. As Peter Wood pointed out in a pioneering study of the region, the Low Country was also demographically the most African region in the United States. At the root of all of this, many scholars have pointed to what they have identified as West

African systems of water management (dykes and drainage systems), African tools for processing and winnowing rice (mortar and pestles, fanner baskets), all parts of a larger agrarian system brought from the rice coast of West Africa to plantation America. Scholars have pointed to the preference of South Carolina rice planters for slaves from the Gambia and Sierra Leone and to the fact that 80% of Sierra Leonean and 60% of Senegambian slaves (where shipping records permit identification) went to the Carolinas. Since the Carolinas also imported a high percentage of west central African slaves (where rice was not a crop), the arguments that are most convincing are based on an analysis of agrarian practices. Planters in the Carolinas may have later improved on the West African technologies brought by West African slaves, but the foundation of rice cultivation was built on an African base.

There is no consensus in the literature on whether the task system reflected the bargaining power of African slaves, whose knowledge and skills gave them leverage, or the fear of absentee whites and their agents of the deadly fevers that raged in the Low Country during the planting season. In either case an African exchange is central to the explanation based as much on labor negotiations by slaves and ecology as by a preference for slaves who brought knowledge of rice cultivation, always a minority. Arguments about African rice cultivation need to avoid the pitfalls of studying the survival and transmission of specific traits or even a rice complex divorced from the history of slavery and disease. The fevers feared by European on the Carolina coast were strains of malaria and yellow fever imported with slaves when mosquito larvae traveled as stowaways in water casks from the African coast and combined with the blood-borne parasites brought to the Low Country by African slaves. The absenteeism of the task system imposed a hybrid agricultural system, neither African nor European, but one controlled by slave owners. European self-interest promoted a physical separation from the fields and swamps, where masters pampered by their house slaves sent poorer whites to oversee their plantations on the coast. The task system was forged by disease, by accommodations between masters and slaves over tasks and provision grounds, and by the geographic separation of masters and slaves into white towns and black Low Country.

The Internal Slave Trade

The slave trade within the boundaries of the United States has attracted considerable attention in recent

discussions of American slavery. While the United States is notable for the relatively small size of the direct slave trade with Africa, compared to Brazil or the Caribbean, the internal slave trade was the largest of any slave society in the Americas. In the period from 1790 to 1860, it is estimated at somewhere from 800,000 to a million slaves. It reached a peak in the decades from 1820–1860, when over 200,000 slaves were transferred from the upper South and the Low Country to what became known as the Deep South or the cotton kingdom and frontier regions further west. Ira Berlin has aptly called the internal slave trade a second middle passage, a term that focuses attention on the human suffering of slaves and on the political ramifications of the internal slave trade.

The broad outlines of the internal slave trade are well-known. The first region to become a major exporter of surplus slaves was the tobacco-growing region of the upper South, which was faced by declining profits, a shift to wheat cultivation and mixed farming, and the natural growth of its slave population. The Low Country entered the slave trade as an exporter somewhat later. The internal slave trade was greatly stimulated by the emergence of cotton as a new cash crop in the period after 1790, fueled by the adoption of new strains of cotton, new technologies (cotton gin), and the enormous demand for cotton in the industrializing textile industry led by Great Britain. The cotton frontier in the Deep South was the destination for the vast majority of slaves. The emergence of sugar plantations in Louisiana also fueled the demand for slaves. The slave system of the antebellum South, long the central focus of studies of American slavery, was built on this vast trade in slaves from the old plantation regions to the cotton belt and the sugar fields.

The internal slave trade played a central role in political debates about slavery in the antebellum period and strongly shaped abolitionist discourse about the evils of slavery. The expansion of the cotton kingdom into new territories in the West sparked heated debates about the future of slavery, whose fate was tied to the settlement of the frontier. The expansionism of southern planters and their political and legal victories, most notoriously the Fugitive Slave Law and Dred Scott, united diverse groups in opposition to slavery. Antislavery won new converts among native whites and immigrants who had little interest in the plight of southern slaves but wanted to save the West for free, white settlement. In abolitionist circles the most powerful moral and religious arguments against slavery focused on the slave trade. An earlier generation of English abolitionists had turned the middle passage into a symbol, using it to focus on the buying and selling of human flesh, the separation

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of families, and the horrors of human degradation. The internal slave trade provided some of the most powerful ammunition against apologists for slavery. The forced march of thousands of slaves overland, the separation of children from fathers and mothers, and the indignities of the slave auction, made a mockery of planters' paternalism and their claims that slaves were part of a larger family. In many ways the domestic slave trade was an even more powerful symbol than the middle passage from Africa. The victims of the second middle passage were American-born and Christian, with deep roots in the country. Their sale and shipment to the Deep South broke up slave communities with ties to the land and to kin that had been built up over generations. Fear of sale contributed to the resistance of runaways and the slave rebellions of Nat Turner and Denmark Vesey. The horrors of the second middle passage became the bread-and-butter of the radical abolitionists, who denounced slavery as a sinful evil and a stain on the nation's honor.

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See also **African-Americans**

SLAVE TRADE, DOMESTIC

In many respects the story of the domestic slave trade, or the buying and selling of enslaved American workers, is also the story of the early United States, and it is quite difficult to understand the growth of the latter without appreciating the significance of the former. While the buying and selling of human slaves had always been a part of American society, the nature of this traffic changed over time. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most slaves sold in British North America were imported from Africa or the West Indies, although by the mid-eighteenth century a small, locally based domestic trade had also developed. Following the American Revolution, this changed. The slave trade became an indigenous operation, annually transporting thousands of enslaved men and women from the upper South to the lower South and transferring an even greater number locally from one owner to another. Some of the reasons for this transformation were ironic outgrowths of the Revolution itself, such as the closing of the African slave trade in 1808. Others, like the invention of the cotton gin in the 1790s, simply coincided with these events. What is important is that the emergence of this new trade went hand-in-hand with the birth of American liberty.

The impact that this new traffic in human commodities had on the southern states and on the early American economy cannot be overemphasized. For one thing the magnitude of this trade made it a common form of commerce. From 1790–1860, Americans transported from the upper South to the lower South more than 1 million African-American slaves, approximately two-thirds of whom arrived there as a result of sale. Twice as many individuals were sold locally. During this period slave sales occurred in every southern city and village, and "coffles" of slaves (gangs held together in chains) could be found on every southern highway, waterway, and railroad. The domestic slave trade, in all of its components, was very much the lifeblood of the southern slave system, and without it, the institution would have ceased to exist.

This important new trade proved essential for the creation of the cotton kingdom. Primarily it transferred slave labor from those parts of the South where there was deemed to be excess to those areas

where slaves were most in demand. Changes in agricultural production during the mid-eighteenth century meant that most southern slave owners, especially those in the Chesapeake, found themselves with a surplus of human property. Not only did this lead to a drop in slave prices, but following the Revolution, it also made many in the upper South question the future of the institution of slavery itself. By the early nineteenth century, this changed with the explosion in the international demand for cotton. As more and more land was opened up or turned over to the production of cotton, an almost insatiable demand for enslaved workers developed in the new cotton states of the old Southwest. And because the nation had closed off all outside sources of supply in 1808, this demand could be met only through a redistribution of the existing slave population. Recognizing that planters in the new cotton states were willing to pay hundreds of dollars more per slave than were owners in the older states, thousands of southern speculators transported hundreds of thousands of bonds people from the upper South and seaboard states to the markets of the Southwest.

In addition to fueling southern expansion, the domestic trade also solidified the region's commitment to the institution of chattel slavery. Because the demand for slaves was always greater in the lower South than elsewhere, planters there drove up the price of slaves throughout the South. In other words the market value of an enslaved worker in a place like Richmond was no longer dependent on local demand, but on what someone in New Orleans was willing to pay. As a result from 1800–1860, the price of enslaved workers throughout the South more than tripled. While this rise in slave prices made it increasingly difficult for those who wished to purchase, it played a crucial role in the economy of the upper South. What was formerly seen by those in Virginia, for example, as excess property now became a major source of capital that could be mortgaged to produce even more wealth. And it also became the upper South's most infamous export. By linking the South's two main subregions in a common economic concern, the interregional trade raised the value of slave property for everyone who owned it and put to rest any doubts that white southerners in the upper South may have had about the future of the institution. Even more important, it turned slave property into one of the most valuable forms of investment in the country, second only to land.

Yet while the domestic slave trade brought great wealth to those who held human property, and to the nation itself, it had a devastating impact on those southern workers who found themselves being bought and sold like things. For these individuals the

domestic trade was not just an economic transaction. For the enslaved each sale was an action with potentially devastating and lifelong consequences. Millions of working men, women, and children found themselves torn from their families and friends against their will through sale or having those they loved taken from them by this process. Many African-Americans vividly remembered the traumatic effect that this trade had on their lives decades later. Even for those who were never sold, the threat of sale was pervasive, and they never knew for sure whether or not they, too, would one day be sold and forcibly taken away from their loved ones and homes. For most American slaves, little could be done to prevent the threat and actuality of sale. Yet many did resist. Even those who had never struck out against slavery before fought back when sale forced them to confront the reality of being torn away from family and loved ones.

While most were unsuccessful in their attempts to prevent a sale, their collective efforts to resist the trade did make the system run less smoothly than slave owners would have liked. Moreover for years white southerners had argued that their "peculiar institution" was based on a nonmarket relationship, radically different from that between a factory owner and his employees. Unlike the free-labor North, where the bond between an employer and employee was simply commercial and workers could be abandoned at will, they argued that in the South a special relationship existed between an owner and a slave and the workers were supposedly taken care of for life. For self-proclaimed masters, this meant looking after their charges, or their people, as they liked to call them. Not only did they have to provide them with a lifetime of food and shelter, but they also cared for their personal lives. In return the supposedly grateful slaves would perform whatever labor their beloved masters required. The extraordinary efforts to which enslaved workers went to resist the domestic slave trade however, be it through violence, flight, manipulation, or memory, were some of the most telling pieces of evidence for anyone who wished to notice that the paternalistic fantasy that the slaveholders had created was all just one big lie. The ramifications of that lie and of the trade that sustained it can still be felt in American society today.

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See also **African-Americans; Civil War and Reconstruction; Slave Trade; Slavery**

SLAVERY

Slavery, the historian Kenneth Stampp has written, “was above all a system of labor” (K. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 1956). Although it became a means for one people to dominate another and begat an ideology of racism, the purpose of slavery from its origins during the seventeenth century until its demise during the Civil War was to produce staple crops and other goods for the benefit of slaveholders. The organization of slave labor varied widely from place to place and over time in colonial North America and the United States and shaped the contours of slave society.

Africans lived in North America nearly a century before English settlers established slavery as the solution to the labor problem in colonial Virginia. To be sure Elizabethan England entertained harsh notions about Africans from the outset of colonization. Travelers to Africa returned to spread word that the inhabitants were uncivilized strangers to proper government and the Christian God. One writer condemned Africans in the mid-1550s as “a people of beatly lyvyng, without a god, law, religion, or common wealth.” Yet partisans of this view had to contend with a strong crosscurrent of opinion that imagined Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans living in harmony in the New World, one sheepfold, as the Reverend Samuel Purchas wrote in 1614, “without any more distinction of Colour, Nation, Language, Sex, Condition” (B. Wood, *The Origins of American Slavery*, 1997). In the early 1600s, when the English began colonizing North America, a clear conception of racism was still over 150 years in the future.

Until the last-quarter of the seventeenth century, the status of Africans in the colonies was varied. Many were slaves. A census of Virginia in 1619 recorded 32 African-Americans, although their status is unknown (B. Wood, 1997). In August some 20 more Africans arrived from Angola as slaves, captured from

a Portuguese slave ship by Dutch and English privateers preying on ships in Spanish America, where the slaves were headed for sale. Delivered to Virginia instead, the slaves were likely put to work growing tobacco, which English settlers had begun to grow for export 2 years previously.

Tobacco required constant tending and created a steady demand for laborers in Virginia and Maryland. It took several months merely to get the crop properly planted, beginning in winter when field laborers hoed the soil into beds, planted them with seeds, then hoed the beds into hills 3 feet apart. Seeding the beds, to take just one task for example, was back-breaking labor, requiring men and women to bend over as many as 6,000 times a day to drill a hole in the soil with a stick or finger. In summer work gangs went over the fields again and again to hoe and plow the soil to keep it loose and allow roots to spread, then to pick worms off the plants, and to trim the plants down to eight hardy leaves. Harvest began in the fall when field laborers knocked down the stalks, piled them up to wither a few days in the sun, then stripped the leaves, and hung them in the tobacco house to cure. The leaves were then tied into bundles and pressed into barrels, or hogsheads, weighing up to 1,300 pounds, which slaves then rolled to a creek or cart and hoisted onto a wagon or boat for transport to market for sale.

Other Africans labored in indentured servitude, an exacting form of bondage in its own right. Servants were bought and sold, whipped, and worked for no pay. Until the 1680s, most laborers in the Chesapeake were indentured servants, English colonists in the main who had their passage paid to the New World in return for several years of unpaid labor. Slaves and servants, African as well as English, were in much the same condition, often made common cause, and ran away together. Once servants completed their indenture however, they gained their freedom. Indentured servitude was a way station to freedom for Europeans and many Africans.

The free African population grew through the middle of the seventeenth century. Slaves leveraged the demand for labor to negotiate favorable arrangements—to work on their own account for example and eventually bought their freedom. In 1651, Francis Payne paid for his freedom by giving his owner 1,650 pounds of tobacco and two English indentured servants. In 1668, 29% of all African-Americans in Northampton County, Virginia, on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay were free (T. Breen et al., *“Myne Owne Ground”*: *Race and Freedom on Virginia’s Eastern Shore*, 1980). Some were prosperous small tobacco planters, owners of substantial property in slaves, indentured servants, and land.

By the turn of the century however, slavery was becoming the predominant system of labor in the Chesapeake and the exclusive condition of Africans. In the mid-1660s, Virginia finally adopted laws to define the status of slaves as a life-long condition, imposed exclusively on people of African descent, inherited from generation to generation. Subsequent statutes, consolidated in slave codes of 1705, closed off most avenues to freedom for bond people, and stripped them of means of resistance.

African slavery had several advantages from the planters' standpoint over other solutions to the colonial labor problem. Virginia planters could not extend servants' terms of indenture indefinitely, for servants had legal standing to invoke the much-vaunted "rights of Englishmen." Colonists enslaved thousands of Native Americans although the precise number is unknown. Yet native people, familiar with the American terrain, in close proximity to their countrymen, formidable adversaries in warfare, were difficult to keep in slavery. Africans, wrenched from their homelands across the Atlantic Ocean, lacked the legal rights or formidable allies to resist enslavement on foreign terrain. African slaves rapidly replaced English indentured servants on the plantations of the Chesapeake after 1680. The population of African descent in the region grew from 4,000 that year to 31,000 in 1710 (42% of all Virginians) (B. Wood, 1997).

Meanwhile African slavery grew apace in low-country Carolina, conceived as a haven for planters from Barbados and the only colony in British North America founded with legal provisions for slavery. Carolina's *Fundamental Constitutions*, written in 1669 by the philosopher John Locke with idealistic provisions for religious tolerance and representative government, also granted land to colonists who brought slaves to the colony. Settlers, guaranteed the right to property in man, eagerly imported African slaves.

Colonists resorted to slavery early and employed it extensively in the North, although not on so vast a scale as in the South. Indeed the first laws on slavery in North America were enacted in the "Massachusetts Body of Liberties" in 1641. In the countryside most slaves worked on small farms, often side-by-side with their owners, in iron furnaces, tanneries, and other manufacturing enterprises, as well as on large agricultural estates. Towns and port cities also had large concentrations of slaves who worked for artisans, merchants, and other prosperous colonists as maritime, domestic, and craft laborers, one-seventh (14.4%) of the population in New York by 1703 and one-sixth in Philadelphia by 1710 (Nash, *Many Thousands Gone*, 1998). Urban elites deployed their people as emblems

of status and wealth, fitting out their carriages for example with a livery of lavishly attired Africans.

In the Low Country Carolinians experimented with cattle raising, cotton, and coffee before seizing on rice by 1730 as a viable staple with a ready market, mainly to feed slaves producing sugar in the West Indies. By the mid-eighteenth century, rice plantations extended from Cape Fear, North Carolina, 35 miles inland and south to the St. Johns River in Florida. Knowledge and skill in the methods of rice cultivation by slaves from the Grain Coast of West Africa—Senegambia, Sierra Leone, and Liberia—were crucial to a shift, beginning in the 1750s, from inland swamps to tidal rivers that transformed the Low Country into the wealthiest region in colonial North America, the so-called rice kingdom.

Rice plantations, described by one observer as a "huge hydraulic machine," were places of heavy labor. Slaves dug ditches, trenches, 6-foot banks, and canals 15 feet wide to connect plantations to the tidal rivers that bisected the Low Country, rising and falling as much as 3 feet daily, to flood and drain the rice fields. At the beginning of the crop year in February, slaves extended and repaired the network of earthworks, gates, and sluices. In March and April laborers broke ground in the fields, hoeing, digging trenches, and sowing seeds. As the rice plants matured, slaves returned to the fields with hoes repeatedly between floodings. They opened the floodgates, first in mid-May, and again in July. At harvest slaves cut the plants with sickles, bound them into bundles, took them to barns, threshed the rice with flails, removed the husk, sifted the grains, and packed them.

African-Americans transferred rice-growing practices from the Grain Coast to the Low Country. Slaves sowed seeds with a protective casing of mud, covered them with a step of the heel, separated the hull from the grain by grinding it with mortar and pestle and winnowing it in fanner baskets. They reproduced tools from West African material culture, such as short- and long-handled hoes and reconstituted a familiar sexual division of labor, where men dug earthworks and women hoed the fields and processed the harvested rice.

Labor-intensive rice production made the Low Country the seat of the largest plantations in North America. It required a large force of slaves to maintain the latticework of waterways and to produce enough rice to make the outlay in capital pay. The slave population grew with the rice crop. Slaves were a majority of the population in South Carolina as early as 1708, 60% by 1720 (P. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 1998). During the 1740s, when about one-half of Virginia slaves lived on units with 10 bond

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people or less, over half in South Carolina lived on plantations with at least 30 (P. Morgan, 1998).

Colonial North America relied on the trans-Atlantic slave trade during the eighteenth century. A majority of slaves came from Africa to Carolina and Virginia by 1700, to the North by midcentury. Of all the slaves imported to South Carolina from 1749–1765, fully 54% came from Senegambia and Sierra Leone on the Grain Coast (D. Richardson, *Slavery and Abolition*, 1991). Charleston was the largest port of entry for Africans to North America, while the leading ports of embarkation in the African trade were in New England.

Slavery was thus deeply entrenched in every region of colonial North America by the beginning of the eighteenth century. The slave population in North America increased 10-fold from a mere 7,000 in 1680 to 70,000 in 1720 and to 246,000 in 1750 (I. Berlin, 1998). Colonists had committed themselves to the African trade to obtain slaves, lucrative staple crops for them to produce, and laws to protect the rights of slaveholders. To be sure slave labor varied from place to place sufficiently to distinguish the character of slavery in different regions. Slavery in the mid-Atlantic and New England colonies was extensive, but not the predominant system of labor. The Low Country and the Chesapeake by contrast were *bona fide* slave societies, dependent primarily on slave labor, which left its mark on every aspect of social organization and became the lens through which people—free and enslaved—saw themselves and their society.

In the Low Country the terms of slave labor laid the foundation for the most independent slave culture on the North American mainland. Here slaves tended the staple on the basis of task labor. In contrast to gangs, where slaves worked owners' crops sunup to sundown, slaves in Carolina worked until they completed an assigned task at their own pace. Neither owners nor overseers nor drivers were free to define what amounted to a day's work at will because the daily task for a particular job—a quarter of an acre for hoeing, half an acre for digging trenches—was customary regionwide and changed little over time. Men and women working deliberately could complete their task by midafternoon. The division between the time field laborers owed owners and what belonged to themselves afforded field laborers a rare control over their work.

Bond people devoted much of their own time to working on their own account. Families worked garden plots to grow rice, potatoes, cabbages, and other garden truck, which they used to supplement their diets as well as to trade and accumulate property. Women performed much of the labor in garden patches, although men did their part here, and fished,

hunted, and produced baskets, pipes, and other handicrafts.

The relative independence of slave labor in the Low Country also laid the foundation for a distinctly African slave culture. A steady stream of Africans met the pressing need for workers in the rice fields, where they persisted as a majority in the slave population until the 1740s. Over the course of the eighteenth century, slaves developed their own Creole language, Gullah, which combined the grammar, syntax, and lexicon of several West African languages as well as English. Low Country slaves forged a similar synthesis of African and Anglo-American religious practices as well. Low Country people shared African beliefs that a dead person's spirit would harass the living if his/her death were not properly observed. Funerals therefore included many rites to propitiate the spirits, such as leaving food, water, and various personal effects on a fresh grave to tide over the deceased on the journey to the spirit world. Of all the regions of mainland North America, the Low Country most resembled the slave societies of the West Indies and South America in its large plantations, a majority slave population, Creole language, and profoundly African ways.

Although the North was not a slave society, labor shaped slave culture nonetheless. Slaves' employment as farmhands, artisans, and domestic servants on smallholdings concentrated in cities, towns, and fertile rural areas gave a particular geography to their collective life. Its focal point was public spaces—grog shops, taverns, town squares, and graveyards—and public occasions—holidays, elections, and funerals—where slaves could gather in numbers. Black New Englanders in towns like Newport, Rhode Island, Hartford, Connecticut, and Boston, Massachusetts, made an annual rite of colonial election days and held a canvass to select their own king or governor, who appointed a retinue of sheriffs, justices of the peace, among other lieutenants. Festivities were announced with beating drums, complete with speeches, lobbying, processions of men and women decked out in powdered wigs, cocked hats, and fine dresses, accompanied by banjos, fiddles, and tambourines. In New Jersey and New York, slaves appropriated Pinkster, a celebration of the Christian holiday Pentecost, for the election of an African-American monarch.

Even here in the northern colonies, the enslaved population grew and moved toward the center of production during the mid-eighteenth century. As late as the 1740s, slaves comprised 15% of all workmen in Philadelphia, 30% in New York City (I. Berlin, 1998; G. Nash, *Urban Crucible*, 1979). Artisans owned an increasing proportion of urban slaves, who worked as rope spinners, sail makers,

bricklayers, tailors, carpenters, and blacksmiths. As urban slavery shifted from domestic service in the households of the mercantile elite to the workshops of craft laborers, a growing proportion of all slaves worked in the countryside, especially on farms along rivers that formed the sinews of commerce in the diverse northern economy, the Connecticut River valley in New England, the Hudson in New York, and the Delaware in Pennsylvania, where about one in every 10 families in Chester County southwest of Philadelphia owned slaves.

Slavery was shaken during the American Revolution, but its foundations ultimately emerged in the new republic stronger than ever at their keystones of law and ideology. Slavery was a profound contradiction in the patriot's enterprise. Slaveholders stood out prominently among the foremost revolutionaries, including Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, James Madison, George Mason, Henry Laurens, even Ben Franklin. "How is it," asked Samuel Johnson, the London man of letters, "that we hear the loudest *yelps* for liberty among the drivers of negroes?" (D. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*, 1975). It was the labor of slaves, the widespread ownership of human property, and the shared experience of mastery, with all its struggles and perquisites, that enabled colonial planters to conceive of Americans as distinct and independent and as a nation of equals.

Yet many slaves gained their liberty during the revolution. Some gained their freedom by military service in the Revolutionary War, to the patriot army in the North, mainly the British army in the South. In 1777, Connecticut accepted slaves in its revolutionary regiments, and Rhode Island offered bond people freedom in return for military service. In 1775, some 800 slaves enlisted in a Tory Ethiopian Regiment, organized by colonial governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, and served with the slogan, "liberty to slaves," emblazoned across their chests. In the South as well, slaves served the patriot army as spies, guides; built fortifications and performed other military labor. Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware all authorized the enlistment of slaves in patriot ranks by the end of the war. According to the best estimates, from 18,000–25,000 slaves seized on the disorder of the Revolutionary War to leave their owners and seek their freedom behind British army lines. Many of these men and women, perhaps up to 50% or 60%, died of disease or wounds or were captured and re-enslaved. The rest evacuated with the British at the end of the war in 1782–1783, resettling elsewhere in British America and England or insinuated themselves into the free black population of the new republic.

Many Americans resolved the contradiction between slavery and liberty in favor of freedom after independence. The northern states enacted laws for gradual emancipation—Pennsylvania in 1780, Connecticut and Rhode Island in 1784, New York in 1799, and New Jersey in 1794. These measures freed no one enslaved at the time the statute was enacted and applied exclusively to slaves born after the date the emancipation law was adopted, who gained their freedom well into adulthood, at age 28 in Pennsylvania, for example. Even in Massachusetts, where in 1783 the state supreme court declared slavery contrary to the new state constitution, it took many years for slaves to gain their freedom in practice. Thus under the niggardly terms of northern emancipation, this was a long, slow process designed to last 20 years or more. Yet slaves hastened gradual emancipation mightily by compelling owners to free them ahead of legislative timetables in hard bargaining, often initiated by runaways who made the negotiations a condition of their return. Many bond people agreed to work for some period of years or on their own account to accumulate the means to purchase their freedom.

In the Chesapeake thousands of slaves gained their freedom by manumission. Some slaveholders, their scruples about the contradiction between slavery and revolutionary liberty sharpened by a revival of religious piety, the Great Awakening, freed their own bond people. Yet even these slaves gained their freedom at masters' convenience, gradually, often on an owner's death. Robert Carter III freed some 500 slaves over the course of 20 years, manumitting his bond people by the dozens annually starting in 1791 (L. Morton, *Robert Carter of Nomini Hall*, 1941). Despite the limitations of the emancipatory impulse during the revolutionary era, a new class of free black people grew dramatically from 59,000 to 183,000, about 9 out of 10 living in the North and upper South (I. Berlin, 1998).

Yet the Revolution also gave impetus to another resolution of the contradiction between liberty and slavery, a new ideology of racism. The question of how a nation devoted to the proposition that all men are equal, as the Declaration of Independence would have it, could practice slavery cried out for an answer, and Thomas Jefferson provided it: Perhaps Africans were not men at all. Instead, he suggested in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, they fit somewhere in the scheme of creation between white people and "orangootans." Jefferson argued in effect that all men are created equal, but some people are not men. Jefferson's notion bordered on heresy, for it was conventional wisdom in the Anglo-American world that in "the great chain of being," all the peoples of humankind were

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equally good, and to say otherwise cast aspersions on God's creation. Racism, a belief in the immutable inferiority of some peoples to others, has origins in the liberal principles of the American Revolution.

The Constitution moreover laid a new legal foundation under slavery in the new republic. Although several delegates expressed their misgivings about human bondage to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787, planters, South Carolinians especially, forced a compromise and gained four clauses recognizing slavery. Southern states increased their power in the federal government from a clause in Article I, Section 2 counting slaves as three-fifths of a person for purposes of apportioning seats in the House of Representatives. The three-fifths clause thus inflated slaveholders' influence in the House, where the size of each state's delegation depended on the size of its population; and in the Electoral College, where the selection of the president was decided and the number of votes cast by each state was equal to the size of its delegation in Congress. Other clauses prohibited Congress from abolishing the African slave trade before 1808 (Article I, Section 9), provided for the return of fugitive slaves who crossed state lines (Article IV, Section 2). Perhaps the strongest buttress the founders erected for slavery was the restriction on Congress solely to exercise those powers "enumerated" in the Constitution, which prohibited the House and Senate from subsequently claiming the authority to abolish slavery. The founders' unease over slavery was implicit in their refusal to introduce the word slavery into the Constitution, preferring instead such euphemisms as persons "held to Service or Labor" (D. Nieman, *Promises to Keep*, 1991).

Over the next seven decades, slavery expanded explosively across the United States. Slaves carved plantations out of the wilderness across a belt of black loam soil from central Georgia, west across Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, to east Texas. Some of the largest slaveholdings in the black belt were along the banks of major rivers, which facilitated the marketing of staple crops—the Tombigbee River along the border of Alabama and Mississippi, the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Memphis, and the Red River in Southern Louisiana. As many as one million slaves migrated to the Deep South in a second middle passage, larger than the first middle passage from West Africa to North America. The number of slaves leaving the upper South waxed and waned with the fortunes of the staple economy.

Slave labor in the burgeoning cotton kingdom was inextricably bound up with the rise of industrial capitalism, as southern slaves became the leading

producers of the raw material for textile factories in the North and England. Cotton, requiring 200 days without frost and the modest equipment of hoe, plow, and seeds, could grow on small upcountry farms as well as large black belt plantations. King cotton was a harsh taskmaster. The annual routine began in winter, when slaves prepared the ground for planting, knocked down the stalks from last year's crop, and turned the soil to pile up into rounded beds. In April slaves began to plant, plowing the crests of the beds, drilling seeds into the dirt, and covering them by drawing a harrow or small plow over the bed. Through July slaves went over each row with their hoes, digging up some of the new plants until only two remained every few feet, chopping out weeds and grass with hoes and plows. When the blossoms began hatching into bolls, cultivation ended, and the crop was "laid by." Cotton stained if it fell to the ground or was strafed by heavy rain, so slaves went into the fields as soon as the bolls opened, usually in late August and early September. An adult slave was expected to pick up to 200 pounds each day, every day from September to Christmas. Cotton rose to become the leading staple in the South in tandem with a shift in production to the old Southwest. By 1834, three states that entered the Union after 1790—Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama—accounted for over half the cotton produced in the South.

Slaves produced a range of other crops during these years. Slaveholders, planters with 20 bondmen or more as well as yeomen, strived to protect themselves from the vagaries of the market by raising their own food crops. Indeed slaves planted more acreage in corn than cotton. Different regions moreover specialized in different staples—tobacco in middle Tennessee and Kentucky, hemp in Kentucky and Virginia, and sugar in southern Louisiana.

Sugar production required the most demanding work routine of any crop in the Americas because it combined agricultural and factory labor. Slaves had to grow the sugar cane, then refine it, extracting the juice from the cane and turning it into granulated sugar. Raising cane was especially arduous in the United States, where it required compressing a 15-month growing season into just 9 months. The fieldwork began in January when slaves set fire to the fields to burn the dregs of the previous crop. Slaves prepared beds in the bare earth with deep-running plows, pulled by six-mule teams, then planted two small stalks every 4 inches or so and went back over the rows, hoeing dirt over the stalks 3 inches deep. The canes shot up quickly after the sprouts broke through the ground. Slaves hoed around the stalks, chopping out grass and weeds, three times before

cutting the cane. Men and women entered the rows three abreast, wielding 15-inch knives tapered at the ends and wide in the middle like a new moon and cut each cane with three swift blows, severing the leaves from the stalk, the green tops from the cane, then the cane at the root.

The factory labor took place in sugar mills, hulking buildings, some 50 feet wide and 100 feet long. Inside rows of rollers stretched past towering boilers. Mill workers had to process the cane quickly to maximize the quantity and quality of sugar. They pushed cane onto wooden belts moved by metal chains into iron rollers over a brick pier to crush the stalks into a thick juice. The juice slithered down into filters, removing impurities, and turning the liquid clear before it was piped into the iron boilers and into coolers. When the sugar met the air, clear liquid suddenly jelled into pure white grains. Keeping the mills going into the night required a small army of slaves to perform a variety of tasks and develop a range of skills, from the children who toted the cane into the mill, the men who cut wood to keep the fires lit under the boilers, to the sugar master who chose the precise moment to strike or quicken, the sugar. Coordination—between the laborers supplying the cane and wood to the mill and those tending the sophisticated equipment inside—was the hallmark of sugar production.

Slaves also reconstituted their prerogatives to work on their own account across the South during the antebellum period. Low Country bond people, building on colonial foundations and with the advantage of task labor, established independent production on the best terms in the South and a widespread progression in the accumulation of property. Families used their earnings from vegetable produce and handicrafts to acquire and trade poultry, eggs, and pigs, and then parlayed trade in these goods into more valuable livestock, such as horses and mules, which slaves used to increase their volume and control of independent production. Although planters struggled to assert control over this commerce, slaves, especially slave women, were a formidable presence in urban markets in Charleston and Savannah.

Elsewhere in the South ownership of livestock and other productive property was limited mainly to slaves who hired their own time and to artisans, drivers, and other slaves who worked outside the fields. Nonetheless field laborers on many farms and plantations cultivated garden patches, raised poultry, and produced handicrafts. Slaves also contended for payment for work on Sundays to trade in town and buy what they pleased, while owners struggled to keep their people from raising staple crops, trading off the home place, and the slaves' enterprise in

general within confines consistent with good order. Despite these pressing constraints, slaves made and traded goods extensively, brightened their wardrobes, meals, and celebrations, and forged networks of work and exchange that undergirded family ties.

The destruction of slavery during the Civil War built on wartime transformations in the terms of work. Relations of labor changed from the outset of the conflict as slaveholding men enlisted in the Confederate army and field slaves came under the supervision of slaveholding women, elderly men, and young boys. The South's strategy of provoking British recognition of the Confederate States of America by withholding cotton from the international market prompted a gradual shift from staple to food crops and a reduction in field labor. Slaves increased the volume of their production and trade on their own account in 1861 and 1862. The terms of independent production improved further still wherever the Union army advanced, as African-Americans found a ready market for their goods and services in Union troops.

Slaves' withdrawal of their labor was critical to turning the Civil War into a war for emancipation. As early as May 1861, within weeks of President Abraham Lincoln's Inaugural Address, confining northern war aims to restoring the Union, slaves began making their way to Union outposts. Slaves demanding freedom met the Union army wherever it advanced throughout the war. By taking this step slave men and women forced Union authorities to choose between returning bond people to their owners, who were bound to employ them in the Confederate war effort, or employ them in the Union cause. Federal authorities adopted a policy declaring fugitive slaves contraband of war and put these so-called contrabands to work building fortifications, digging trenches, transporting supplies. Finally on September 22, 1862, President Lincoln announced his intention to issue an Emancipation Proclamation. Although it applied solely to areas not under Union occupation, thus freeing slaves where the North lacked the power to enforce the edict and exempting areas under federal control, Lincoln had turned the Civil War into a war against slavery.

The final proclamation, issued New Year's Day 1863, included a new provision to enlist slaves in the Union army. By the end of the war, 179,000 African-Americans enlisted, including 79% in slave states, and comprising 21% of all black men of military age. Another 17,000 black men served in the Union Navy, including about 65% from the slave states, approximately 20% of the navy's total manpower (J. Reidy, *Prologue*, 2001). They proved their mettle in battle with dispatch in three pitched battles in

1863—in Louisiana at Port Hudson on May 2 and Milliken's Bend on June 7, in South Carolina at Fort Wagner on July 18. Black men, organized into separate regiments, fought in over 400 engagements, including such legendary battles as the Wilderness, Cold Harbor, the Crater, and marched victorious into South Carolina and Richmond. The North, eagerly putting black soldiers to work in the Union war effort, compelled them to struggle to serve the army on equal terms however. They were excluded from the ranks of commissioned officers (lieutenant or above), assigned more than their fair share of military labor, and paid a mere \$7 monthly, which was well below the \$13 received by white troops and put their pay on a par with military laborers. The latter included thousands of other men who built fortifications, transported supplies by mule team, tended the sick in army hospitals, among other employments, and a relatively small number of women who also worked as nurses, cooks, as well as laundresses.

The shift from slavery to free labor also began in earnest during the Civil War under the auspices of the Union Army. The largest wartime experiment in free labor was the least promising from the freed people's point of view. In the Mississippi Valley, 750,000 field workers toiled away on plantations under army regulations providing for wages of just \$2 per month in southern Louisiana and \$7 in Mississippi and Tennessee. At Davis Bend, the plantations of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his brother on the Mississippi River, freed people worked land collectively in companies and colonies and gained a modicum of self-government in a court presided over by judges elected from their own ranks. In the Low Country, General William T. Sherman issued Field Order 15 on January 16, 1865, setting aside the Sea Islands off the coast and a stretch of plantations south of Charleston 30 miles inland for the settlement of freedmen and according every family's "possessory title" to 40-acre plots. Forty thousand freed people raised food crops instead of commercial staples on the so-called Sherman Reserve, seeking independence from the market and for their communities, before the land was ordered returned to its original owners by President Andrew Johnson in October 1865. By the end of the Civil War, former slaves had begun an epoch-making transition to wage labor.

ANTHONY KAYE

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See also **Abolitionism; African-Americans; Civil Rights; Emancipation and Reconstruction; Slave Rebellions; Slave Trade; Slave Trade, Domestic; South**

SLICHTER, SUMNER (1892–1959) Economist

Sumner Huber Slichter was a renowned economist who served on the staff of the Commission on Industrial Relations (1913–1915), taught at Princeton University (1919–1920) and Cornell University (1920–1930) but spent the bulk of his career at Harvard University (1930 until his death). Originally recruited by the Harvard Business School, he subsequently joined their Economics Department and the Littauer School of Public Administration when it was founded. Slichter worked in the tradition of institutional economics, offering courses on collective bargaining, problems of industrial relations, problems of economic balance, and the economic aspects of public administration. In 1940, he was named the Lamont University Professor, one of the most prestigious posts on the Harvard faculty. He was the first member of the faculty to receive that honor.

There are few if any professors who had greater impact on industrial relations than Slichter at the peak of his career, although he is seldom read or even cited by labor historians today—except for a 1948 article in which he declared that the United States was becoming a “laboristic” state, a contention he subsequently disavowed.

While George W. Taylor, William H. Davis, and former members of the second National War Labor Board’s staff, such as John T. Dunlop and Clark Kerr, served as the principal arbitrators for corporations and unions in the mid-twentieth century, it was Slichter who provided the benefits of collective bargaining for unions, management, and the public, while nonetheless critiquing the system. “Slichter was our guru,” Kerr remarked in a 1992 interview with this author.

In three major works published in 1921, 1941, and 1960, Slichter explored the ways in which managerial policies in such areas as hiring, seniority, wages, unions, and grievances hurt or benefited corporations. In 1941, he founded the Harvard Trade Union Program. It offered midlevel trade unionists, principally from the building trades and the railroad brotherhoods, an entire year to live in Harvard dormitories (or houses) with undergraduates and graduate students and take classes not only on collective bargaining but also in the liberal arts. A much-abbreviated version of the program continues to this day. In 1946, Slichter was selected by the governor of Massachusetts to chair a tripartite committee on labor-management relations in the state. The committee unanimously recommended that Massachusetts recognize public employees’ right to join unions but prevent strikes

and lockouts through arbitration. The Slichter Commission, as it was called, laid the groundwork for similar programs by other states and municipalities in later years.

As early as 1928, Slichter began to publish articles in the *New Republic* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. After his magnum opus, *Union Policies and Industrial Management*, a distillation of 20 years of research on trade unions’ practices and co-operation in the railroad and garment industries, appeared in 1941, he began publishing articles on industrial relations and the U.S. economy virtually every month in the *New York Times Magazine*, *Saturday Review*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *Nation’s Business*, *Fortune*, *Harvard Business Review*, the *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, and the *New Republic* while also publishing in the *Quarterly Review of Economics*, the *American Economic Review*, and other scholarly journals. From November 1952 until his death, he sent his personal analysis of the business outlook in the United States every month to the *Nihol Keizai Shimbun*, Japan’s major business newspaper, and 300 prominent figures in American business, finance, economics, and government. During the latter 1940s, Slichter also gave lectures on collective bargaining and the future of the U.S. economy at universities and to business and union organizations, which were collected and published in book form by major commercial publishers. In 1940, he was elected president of the American Economic Association. Thus he had a wide audience, an extraordinary accomplishment for a man who was neither a compelling speaker nor a theoretician. Indeed he suffered from a speech impediment early in his career.

Unlike John R. Commons, with whom he studied at the University of Wisconsin, or Richard Ely, Slichter was never inspired by the social gospel, a popular agitator, or devoted to social reform. Rather he approached economics from the perspective of science and business. Born and raised in Madison, Wisconsin, when that city was the citadel of the Progressive movement, Slichter was the son of a noted mathematician who became dean of the University of Wisconsin’s Graduate School and did consulting work for the U.S. Geological Survey and the railroads on the flow of underground waters. One of his brothers became director of Geophysics at the University of California; another went into chemical engineering and then business; the third, into geology and then owned a steel foundry. Both of Slichter’s sons also became professors of science.

Viewing himself as an expert who could benefit the general public through research, Slichter devoted

his career to investigating trends over time in wages, the labor force, productivity, prices, sales, profits, company and union practices, and related matters. He reached conclusions quite different from many of his contemporaries. For example while the majority of professional economists (like the American people generally) believed that the United States had reached maturity by 1929, Slichter felt absolutely certain that the American economy would grow rapidly after the depression of the 1930s. The depression would not have continued so long, he believed, if the Roosevelt administration had recognized the needs of corporations, particularly their need for venture capital. Similarly while many of his contemporaries, like most other Americans, feared that depression would resume after Japan and Germany surrendered, Slichter offered evidence to prove that the U.S. economy would boom after the war.

In a 1941 essay entitled "The Development of National Labor Policy," Slichter warned of a disjunction between the Wagner Act and other recently enacted labor laws and actual practices of unions. He publicly advised union and corporate leaders to alter their behavior lest the federal and state governments intervene. None took his admonition. Instead the U.S. Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, and state governments had competed with each other to offer similar acts restricting unions.

An expert on trade unions and the U.S. economy who was supportive of collective bargaining yet friendly to business and financial leaders, Slichter acquired clearer insight into union-management relations and their place in the political economy than other experts of his time or many of the labor historians who have studied those subjects.

In at least one area however, he erred significantly. That was his predictions about inflation. Throughout the 1950s, Slichter repeatedly criticized conservative politicians and economists who were anxious about rising wages and prices. He argued that steady but moderate wage and price increases were not only inescapable but desirable in modern industrialized societies. There is no need to worry about "creeping inflation," he declared often. Even if Slichter was correct in the short run, the history of the U.S. economy during the 1970s, when wages and prices exploded and productivity stagnated, demonstrated the falsity of that contention.

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Taft-Hartley Act
Wagner Act

SMITH-CONNALLY ACT

The Smith-Connally Act, or the War Labor Disputes Act of 1943, was a piece of temporary labor legislation passed during World War II over the veto of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which limited the right of workers in key industries to strike and authorized the president to take control of firms in the event of strikes that threatened the war effort. The bill was primarily a response to a spring 1943 strike by John L. Lewis's United Mine Workers of America (UMWAA) that violated the labor movement's wartime no-strike pledge. In addition to its provisions relating to wartime strikes, the Smith-Connally Act also included the first legislative prohibition on campaign contributions by labor unions.

Lewis and the UMWAA had generated considerable popular hostility when the union struck twice after the outbreak of World War II, first in 1939 and again in 1941. Nevertheless the striking coal miners returned to work on 7 December 1941, immediately after Pearl Harbor. Indeed the UMWA joined practically all labor unions in agreeing to a no-strike pledge after the U.S. entry into the war. But the UMWA's acceptance of the no-strike pledge was a short-lived affair. The notoriously volatile Lewis was a staunch isolationist who grew increasingly hostile to Roosevelt during the 1940s. And in the spring of 1943, Lewis led the miner's union out on strike again.

By 1943, the UMWA's agreements with bituminous coal mine owners had expired, and Lewis demanded a 2-dollar wage increase to compensate workers for the time it took them to travel from the entrance of the mine to the work site, travel time for which they had not previously received any pay. The matter was referred to the War Labor Board, but Lewis refused to appear before the board, and the union went out on strike. President Roosevelt responded by seizing the coal mines and attempting to force the UMWA and the mine owners to come to an agreement. No agreement was reached however, and Lewis led the miners out on strike a second time on 11 June 1943, this time against the federal government, who were at that point running the mines. Roosevelt responded by threatening to ask Congress for the ability to draft striking miners. This temporarily ended the strike, but UMWA walked out again in October. This time an agreement was reached, and the coal miners received a wage increase of \$1.50.

While Lewis did succeed in winning a wage increase for the miners, his actions also led to the passage of the Smith-Connally Act, which greatly limited the ability of workers in key wartime industries to strike. The War Labor Disputes Act was passed by Congress on 25 June 1943, immediately after the second time Lewis led the miners out on strike. President Roosevelt vetoed the law, but Congress overrode his veto. This can be accounted for largely because of the great popular hostility that erupted in the wake of UMWA's violation of the no-strike pledge. A Gallup poll in 1943 showed that Lewis was one of the most unpopular men in America, with 87% of respondents reporting an unfavorable view of the labor leader.

While the Smith-Connally Act was a temporary wartime measure that expired 6 months after the end of hostilities, it set a precedent for future labor legislation in two important respects. First, the act included an unprecedented legislative restriction on unions' campaign contributions. Smith-Connally prohibited unions from making any direct campaign contributions to candidates for any political office. This restriction had applied to corporations after the passage of the Tillman Act in 1907, but it had not previously covered unions. This was also the only provision of the Smith-Connally Act that was retained after the end of the war, and it was eventually incorporated into the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act. And second, Lewis's role in the passage of the War Labor Disputes Act would be repeated 4 years later in the run up to Taft-Hartley. Both acts were largely responses to strikes by the UMWA against coalmines that had been seized by the federal government, and both are generally seen as having hurt labor despite the success of the strikes that inspired them.

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Smith-Connally Act
Taft-Hartley Act
Tillman Act

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Socialist Labor party (SLP) is the longest surviving Marxian socialist party in the United States. Founded approximately 130 years ago, the roots of the SLP can be traced back to the second convention of the Workingmen's party, held in Newark (New Jersey) in 1876. At this gathering the organization definitively threw its support behind increased political activity, renounced those militants who believed that socialism could be obtained only through trade union work, and changed its name to the Socialistic Labor party of North America, which was later shortened to the Socialist Labor party. During the first 2 years of its existence, the group experienced substantial success with the launching of 24 newspapers that provided either direct or indirect support to the party. With SLP-backed candidates obtaining approximately 100,000 votes in the local elections of 1877 and 1878, three representatives and one senator were elected to the Illinois State House of Representatives and aldermen obtained seats on the Chicago and St. Louis city councils in the latter of the 2 years. By the beginning of 1880, the SLP had declined dramatically, with members engaged in rampant factionalism between moderate and anarcho-internationalist groups during much of the following decade. The moderates believed that the socialist revolution should not be hastened but would gradually emerge over time while the anarcho-internationalist position was that the SLP should do everything that it could to encourage the revolution during the immediate present.

The major ideological influence in the SLP was and still is (through the present day) that of Daniel DeLeon, a rigid, dogmatic, and sectarian Marxist. Joining the party in 1890, he was already a seasoned Socialist who became immediately active in the SLP's educational wing before becoming the permanent editor of the *People*, the party newspaper, in February 1892. Assuming the paper's editorship launched DeLeon into a leadership role that he never relinquished. Using an authoritarian style, he sought to remake the SLP through Americanizing the party, promoting the party press, establishing a party-controlled trade union arm, resolving the financial difficulties facing the party, and unifying and controlling the faction-ridden SLP. Of these five objectives, DeLeon was able to achieve only a modicum



Morris Hillquit. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ggbain-18322].

of success with the last one, basically through the expulsion of political opponents who refused to toe the DeLeonist line.

As a Marxist party, the SLP sought to become active in the established trade union federations, specifically the Knights of Labor (KOL) and the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The SLP was able to obtain control of New York City's District Assembly 49, the largest in the KOL, in 1884, and the national organization for a period of time in 1886. In addition the party combined with Western delegates to elect James R. Sovereign as KOL president in 1893. However by 1895, with the loss of control of District Assembly 49 and differences emerging between DeLeon and Sovereign, SLP influence had been dramatically weakened in the KOL. Although the party wielded significant influence at the 1893 and 1894 AFL conventions, as indicated by delegate support for planks advocating the municipal ownership and the nationalization of key industries as well as the collective ownership of the means of production, at the 1895 convention, the SLP's influence in the AFL was on

the wane. At this time DeLeon was engaged in the creation of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance (STLA), the party's trade union arm.

With the establishment of the STLA on December 13, 1895, at a mass meeting held in New York City's Cooper Union, many labor unions joined the new combination with the alliance's strength residing in District Assembly 49 and the four bodies of the New York City United Central Labor Federations, an unaffiliated union, formed by the SLP in 1889. Refusing to recognize the legitimacy of the KOL and the AFL unions, the new federation sought to form dual unions in already organized industries. Concentrating its recruitment efforts in the manufacturing and mining industries, the STLA's organizational structure mirrored that of the KOL in allowing trade, mixed local, or district assemblies within the combination.

Although formally endorsing SLP electoral tickets and candidates as well as the creation of a socialist cooperative commonwealth, the STLA's major activities—engaging in strikes and boycotts—were strikingly similar to that of the AFL unions. While the organization claimed a membership of 30,000 at the time of its July 1898 convention, due to internal dissension within the alliance over the next few years, by the time of its absorption into the revolutionary syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World in 1905, only 1,450 members remained.

By the late 1890s, the SLP was experiencing a rampant factionalism that would eventually lead to an organizational split. The controversy largely focused on what the party's relationship should be to Eugene V. Debs's group, Social Democracy, and his Social Democratic party (SDP) after it was formed in 1898. DeLeon's opposition, known as the Kangaroos, was made up of party sections sympathetic toward working with the SDP. Comprising approximately 50% of the SLP membership, suspension of these dissident sections began in the summer of 1899. Since these expelled members still considered themselves to be Socialist Laborites, they began to publish a newspaper also titled the *People*. Holding its own SLP national convention in late January 1900, the expellees nominated its electoral ticket—Job Harriman for president and Max Hayes for vice-president—and formed a Committee of Nine, with veteran New York socialist Morris Hillquit as leader, to confer with the SDP.

At the SDP convention held in Indianapolis, beginning on March 6, 1900, Debs was nominated for president and Harriman for vice-president, a ticket that was immediately accepted by Hillquit's committee. Shortly thereafter a meeting of the two groups' Committee of Nine resulted in the SDP and the Hillquit-led SLP merging to form the Socialist party

of America (SPA). Within several years, the SPA eclipsed the fading DeLeonite SLP in both membership and support, becoming the leading socialist party in the United States during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The subsequent success of the SPA indicates that a more flexible tactical approach toward promoting socialism—advocating both reform and revolution—could appeal to significant segments of farmers and industrial workers in the early twentieth-century United States. However the SLP's disdain for advocating reforms under capitalism was probably not the primary reason for its lack of long-term success. Rather it was the centralization of authority in the DeLeonite-controlled national office that was the major obstacle toward building a broader based socialist movement.

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See also **DeLeon, Daniel**

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AMERICA

Founded in 1901, the Socialist party of America (SPA) represented an influential political expression of homegrown, working-class radicalism. In its heyday the party's vision of dismantling capitalism at the ballot box and at the point of production gained a significant foothold within the ranks of organized labor and through the appeal of third-party politics. The resultant movement culture of the SPA would serve to spark a number of electoral and grassroots successes while shaping the reform impulses of the Progressive Era.

The birth of the SPA can be traced to an amalgam of native-born and immigrant Socialists, small-craft

and industrial workers, members of the American Railway Union (ARU), Social Democracy of America, the Socialist Labor party (SLP), and former Populists and Gilded Age radicals. With Eugene V. Debs as the party's standardbearer, the SPA ran colorful campaigns in every presidential election from 1904 to 1920, when Debs received close to a million votes while running from his prison cell in Atlanta, Georgia. The 1910s represented the high watermark for the party in both national elections, as Debs received 6% of the popular vote and in state and municipal campaigns, as Victor Berger of Wisconsin and Meyer London of New York's Lower East Side were each elected to Congress in 1910 and 1914, respectively. At its peak the party counted some 118,000 members who found a voice through a socialist press that included well over 300 English and foreign language daily, weekly, and monthly publications, such as the *Appeal to Reason*, the *International Socialist Review*, the *National Rip Saw*, and the *Jewish Daily Forward*. Frequent contributors included Clarence Darrow, Carl Sandburg, Upton Sinclair, and Jack London.

Despite a generation-long project among labor and social historians to expand our understanding of political and cultural movements, the concept of failure has been central to most accounts of the socialist movement in the United States. Scholars both sympathetic and hostile have generally accepted the failure of socialism in the United States as a given. In this debate organized resistance to capitalism has been characterized either as foreign to the nation's liberal consensus or the victim of state-orchestrated repression. Unfortunately, neither explanation affords an accurate understanding of the imprint socialist ideology—and SPA activity in particular—left on the lives of its believers and detractors, as well as on institutional politics.

While the SPA ultimately failed to secure a permanent place in national political life, it did enjoy electoral success in hundreds of communities and exerted considerable influence in national, state, and local trade union bodies. By 1912, over 1,200 Socialists held public office. The party dominated municipal government in Milwaukee for close to 30 years and influenced and shaped local political life in such disparate cities as Schenectady (New York), Bridgeport (Connecticut), Reading (Pennsylvania), and Girard (Alabama). In 1914, Oklahoma elected five Socialists to the state assembly, one to the state senate, and more than 130 county and township officials; and in 1918, voters in the state of Wisconsin sent 22 Socialists to the state legislature. In Florida the party counted one state legislator, citrus farmer A. J. Pettigrew from Manatee, and at various junctures assumed majority control

of the municipal governments of St. Augustine, Lakeworth, and Gulfport.

In several instances American socialism animated the regional character much more than standard portrayals or assumptions have long suggested. While the party's intellectual base was located in New York and the Northeast generally, the SPA made significant strides in the Midwest, Far West, and Deep South, where economic diversity, complex ethnic and racial composition, and political and cultural traditions helped shape distinct regional identities of the party. In Milwaukee, in the logging and mining camps of the West, or among immigrant workers in the urban Northeast, SPA organizers appealed to regional codes and cultural variants while building the party and the movement.

In the American Southwest, collective protest took the form of an agrarian radicalism informed by socialist rhetoric of class struggle rather than old populist and Farmer's Alliance appeals to property rights, reduced freight rates, and a fair price. The party would exert significant influence in the heartland, particularly in Oklahoma, building on the region's populist heritage while appealing to farmers and tenants not to defect to the Democratic party. Similarly in Louisiana, a radical agrarian tradition yielded to limited socialist influences in the northern section of the state where People's party strongholds existed in the 1890s. Elsewhere in the state, an alliance between farmers and laborers broadened the base of party support and created an atmosphere that gave birth to the Brotherhood of Timber Workers (BTW), a biracial union in the state's pine region, and aided the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Throughout the South, particularly among unions of carpenters, machinists, and miners and in the central labor unions and trade federations of Tampa, Birmingham, Jacksonville, Augusta, Chattanooga, and Atlanta, socialist organizers were active. On the heels of intensified racial and class disfranchisement, anti-democratic terror, and single-party rule that marked the post-Populist era, the southern wing of the Socialist party accomplished in the trade union movement what it largely could not achieve through traditional political avenues. From 1903–1918, southern party members captured over 30 leadership positions in national, state, and local American Federation of Labor (AFL) bodies.

The Socialist party's construction of an alternative political culture found its greatest success in the trade union movement, and by the turn of the century, workers in several important occupations embraced the SPA as a vehicle for industrial and political deliverance. For many craft workers, the espousal of socialism seemed consistent and complementary with

membership in an AFL trade union. Indeed SPA members controlled the state federation of labor in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Georgia at various junctures in the years 1912–1919. Through these bodies party activists routinely urged greater cooperation between labor and farmers, supported the organization of workers across race and ethnic lines and advocated municipal ownership.

Socialists' ability to push for industrial unionism within the AFL however was long complicated by a pronounced right-and-left split in the party over whether to radicalize and transform the AFL through a strategy of "boring from within" or break ranks and embrace the IWW's industrial philosophy of "one big union." Debs, a proponent of industrial unionism since his experience in the Pullman Strike of 1894, consistently sided with the vision of the IWW, but other prominent and influential members of the national party resisted any break from the entrenched, politically connected, and numerically superior AFL. Some, led by Max Hayes, editor of the *Cleveland Citizen*, sought to radicalize the traditionally conservative federation by challenging Samuel Gompers's presidency at the 1912 AFL convention, reasoning that if leadership positions could be captured by Socialists, the policies and ideology of the AFL might be changed without dividing workers. As a result the right wing of the party used a tactic of boring from within in its effort to capture the AFL for socialism. Ultimately this tactical split led to a mass expulsion of the party's left wing in 1912 and anticipated the bitter factionalism of the postwar years.

But it was the Socialist party's almost singular political opposition to the war in Europe that posed the greatest challenge to the party as massive repression from the federal government and vigilante forces in the form of "true Americanism" were unleashed. Using the Espionage and Sedition Act, the Justice Department imprisoned party workers (including Debs, for an antiwar speech he delivered in Canton, Ohio), shut down socialist publications, and indicted Victor Berger as he campaigned for the U.S. Senate in the state of Wisconsin. Similarly vigilante activity cast a dark mood over party activity in the Midwest and South. In the end federal suppression and red-baiting in the face of the Bolshevik revolution would combine with bitter ideological disputes within the Socialist party to render it a shell of its prewar strength. In 1919, the party split into three, resulting in the formation of the Communist Party of America and the Communist Labor party.

The SPA would enjoy a brief resurgence in the early 1930s under the leadership of Norman Thomas. Responding to a range of frustrations sharecroppers

held toward President Roosevelt's Agricultural Adjustment Act, the SPA attempted to broaden its organizing reach by embracing the biracial organizing efforts of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU). By the late 1930s, many in the party ranks however began to drift into New Deal politics and industrial unionism of the emergent Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The subsequent outbreak of war in Europe, the fight against fascism, and the postwar red scare combined to recalibrate dramatically left political life in the United States and cast the party into something of its wilderness years. Ultimately with the advent of the New Left, the SPA ceased to be a significant vehicle of American radicalism, save for Michael Harrington's short-lived efforts in the 1970s to push socialist principals within the Democratic party through the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

Prominent members of the party included IWW leader Big Bill Haywood, civil rights leader and founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters A. Philip Randolph, poet Carl Sandburg, birth control advocate Margaret Sanger, and disability rights activist and author Helen Keller.

BRAD PAUL

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See also Berger, Victor L.; Debs, Eugene V.; **Industrial Workers of the World**

SOCIALIST TRADE AND LABOR ALLIANCE

The Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance (STLA), founded in December 1895, was a union movement attached to the Socialist Labor party (SLP). The SLP was the successor of the first Marxist group in the United States. In the 1880s and early 1890s, it attracted a significant following among German and Jewish immigrants, particularly in New York City. In the period before 1896, the SLP made various attempts to work within both the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Knights of Labor. In 1894, members of the SLP successfully sponsored a number of socialist planks at the AFL convention and helped get Samuel Gompers replaced by John McBride of the miners as the main leader of the AFL for one year. In 1895, the SLP gained control of Knights of Labor District Assembly 49 from New York. When in 1895, District Assembly 49 was barred from entry into the Knights of Labor General Assembly and the AFL reelected Gompers and turned resolutely toward bread-and-butter unionism, the SLP became increasingly dissatisfied with the strategy of working within existing unions.

Shortly after it was rejected by the Knights of Labor, District Assembly 49 became the backbone of the new Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance (STLA). According to the SLP's figures, the new federation brought the majority of the remaining Knights of Labor with them. The new assembly began with about a hundred locals in the New York area in 1896, and by July of 1898, the STLA claimed to have issued 228 charters and to have about 15,000 members. It had grown out from the New York area into Pennsylvania,

SOCIALIST TRADE AND LABOR ALLIANCE

New England, and elsewhere. Although the STLA was not officially endorsed by the SLP until July of 1896 at its convention, that party formed the nucleus of the STLA from the beginning and encouraged its members to join. However the STLA also attracted many workers not affiliated with the SLP.

Like the AFL the STLA was not an industrial union, and it organized workers by trade. Despite this similarity Gompers and the AFL attacked the STLA from the beginning as a dual union and a divisive force within the workers' movement. The STLA replied that the AFL was hopelessly corrupt and was useless to the working class while it stood for cooperation between labor and capital. The STLA's official position was that workers could not win any real gains under capitalism and that they really needed to organize to elect SLP candidates. In order to attract workers however, the STLA had to fight for immediate gains, and it led a number of relatively important strikes.

In July of 1898, Daniel De Leon, the main leader of the SLP, charged the two main officials of the Central Labor Federation with corruption for accepting advertising for Republican and Democratic candidates. In response the Central Labor Federation withdrew from the STLA. Up to that point the alliance had extended its influence and membership well beyond the SLP, and while its basic political orientation was determined by the SLP, many of its leaders were not in the SLP. As a result while SLP members formed its core, its newspapers sometimes expressed different views from those of the SLP. After the Central Labor Federation withdrew, the STLA's membership and influence declined rapidly, and it became essentially an arm of the SLP, with the bulk of its members and all of its policies decided by that organization.

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See also **DeLeon, Daniel; Dual Unionism; Socialist Labor Party**

SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY

The Socialist Workers' party (SWP) was for many years the largest and most influential Trotskyist organization in the United States. Founded in 1938, the

SWP was the outgrowth of 10 years of splits and mergers between left-wing organizations. The earliest Trotskyist organization in the United States, the Communist League of America, had been founded in 1928 by expelled members of the Communist Party USA, including James P. Cannon and Max Schachtman. During the early 1930s, the Communist League merged with A. J. Muste's American Workers' party, and then in 1936, the membership of the Communist League joined the Socialist party *en masse*. This union with Norman Thomas's Socialists was short lived however, and the Trotskyists withdrew only 2 years later, forming the SWP in the process.

Most of the SWP's history has been consumed with ideological disagreements and the frequent splintering of the party. The earliest split occurred only 2 years after the party's founding, when Schachtman led almost half of the membership out of the organization after a dispute over the nature of the Soviet Union. Another major split in the early 1950s, along with the outbreak of the Cold War and the rise in anti-Communist sentiment, reduced the SWP to a small shell of a few hundred members.

The SWP remained a marginal party of the Left, although some scholars have argued that the party played an important role during the New Left period. Pointing to SWP involvement in the black liberation, women's liberation, and antiwar activities, these scholars hold that the SWP was instrumental in bringing thousands of young activists into the New Left. Nevertheless the SWP, like other parties of the American Left, was unsuccessful in its major political and organizational goals. The SWP, like other American Trotskyist organizations, was most influential in terms of the numbers of writers and intellectuals who passed through the organization. While few remained Trotskyists, and many became neoconservatives after their break with Trotskyism and the Left, the large number of influential figures who were at one time SWP members is impressive. The party's ranks included such figures as Hal Draper, Irving Howe, C. L. R. James, Sidney Lens, and Staughton Lynd.

The SWP, like other Marxist parties, attempted to work with and influence the American labor movement. In this they were much less successful than their Communist rivals. While some SWP members did obtain leadership positions within unions, and some workers were recruited into the party, on the whole the SWP obtained little or no influence within the labor movement. The most successful labor campaign among American Trotskyists occurred before the founding of the SWP, when Trotskyite activists managed to organize a militant Teamsters' union in

Minneapolis. But other than this beachhead, the SWP made few other inroads with workers during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Largely this was a result of the insularity and infighting that dominated the party during these years. When the party began to recover as a result of the rise of the New Left, new efforts were made to bring the SWP closer to the working class. The most important of these was the attempted “proletarianization,” whereby members were strongly encouraged to get factory jobs to proselytize for Trotskyism on factory floors and in unions. This tactic was largely unsuccessful however, and few new working-class members joined the party. However because the SWP has continued to emphasize proletarianization, a large number of its members did go to work in industrial jobs, and many obtained rank-and-file union positions.

One of the most influential aspects of the SWP’s history may be its prosecution under the Smith Act in 1941. The Smith Act, which criminalized advocating the violent overthrow of the U.S. government, was used to prosecute 28 members of the SWP and the SWP-led Minneapolis Teamsters’ Local 544. In the end 12 members were convicted of violating the act and served from 12–16 months in prison. Ironically the leadership of the Communist party vigorously supported the Smith Act prosecutions of their Trotskyist rivals only to find themselves prosecuted under the same law after the end of World War II. This case was particularly important because it was the first major government prosecution of radicals after the end of the first Red Scare.

Today the SWP is smaller and less influential than at any point in its history. During the course of the 1980s, the party moved further and further away from Trotskyism, and the party no longer considers itself a Trotskyist organization.

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Smith Act

SONS OF LIBERTY

Unlike the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act generated a political storm in 1765. Nearly every rank in society was caught up in the tempest—unskilled workers,

artisans, small farmers, planters, and merchants; blacks as well as whites, women as well as men. Before the protest was over, upper-class community leaders had assumed direction of the colonial resistance movement.

As secret organizations formed in the American colonies to protest the Stamp Act of 1765, the Sons of Liberty took their name from a phrase used by Isaac Barre in a speech against the Stamp Act in Parliament. They were organized by merchants, businessmen, lawyers, journalists, artisans, and others who would be most affected by the Stamp Act. The leaders included John Lamb and Alexander McDougall in New York and Samuel Adams, James Otis, and Paul Revere in New England. These societies, including those in the Carolinas, Virginia, and Georgia, kept in touch with each other through committees of correspondence, supported the nonimportation agreement, forced the resignation of stamp distributors, and destroyed stamped paper. They also participated in calling for the Continental Congress of 1774.

In Boston in the summer of 1765, a group of shopkeepers and artisans who called themselves the Loyal Nine began preparing for agitation against the Stamp Act. As that group grew, it came to be known as the Sons of Liberty. Comprised mainly of artisans and tradesmen, it grew fast.

The first widely known acts of the sons took place on August 14, 1765, when an effigy of Andrew Oliver, the distributor of stamps for Massachusetts, was found hanging in a tree on one of the city’s streets along with a large boot with a devil climbing out of it. Before the evening a mob burned Oliver’s property on Kilby Street, then moved on to his house, where they beheaded the effigy and stoned the house as its occupants watched in horror.

The Sons of Liberty first formed in New York City in the fall of 1765. One of its aims against the Stamp Act was to enforce nonimportation agreements. If discovered the merchants would force the guilty merchants to make humiliating public confessions. New York’s sons were also active in encouraging resistance through committees of correspondence.

Signing their name, *Vox Populi*, the Sons of Liberty sent warnings against using stamps required by the Stamp Act, telling those distributors to take care of their houses, persons, and effects. Crowds thus forced those men to resign, and then destroyed any shipments of stamps. In New York processions involving hundreds of residents shouted liberty and paraded through the streets nearly every night in late 1765. The sons gained widespread support and popularity among the city’s craftsmen, laborers, and sailors. Wherever they existed they posted notices reading

“liberty, property, and no stamps” and took the lead in enforcing the boycott of British imports.

The 10 weeks from August 14 to November 1, 1765 were the most disorderly period of colonial opposition to British authority. The Sons of Liberty directed their violence against property however and invariably left avenues of escape for their victims. No one was killed or tarred and feathered, although some stamp distributors had their pride wounded. By September 1765, leaders of the sons recognized that unless they prevented violence, their cause would be discredited. Thereafter they directed public demonstrations with firm, disciplined hands, sometimes organizing hundreds of protesters like a small army. They also forbade their followers to carry weapons even when facing armed adversaries.

Violence did erupt in Newport, Rhode Island. A gang of seamen led by John Webber, an English sailor, rampaged against the provincial stamp distributor. He then turned against the merchants, publicly humiliated the sheriff, and seemed on the verge of plundering the town until the authorities subdued him.

In the early months of 1766, there was such chaos that many of the royal governors had gone into hiding. The sons had displaced the royal government in nearly every colony. The Stamp Act Congress had concluded its business, but there was little hope that its petition to England would be heard. Correspondence between the various groups began toward the mutual support and the cause.

After the repeal of the Stamp Act in early 1766, the Sons of Liberty waned in most of the colonies. However the movement was revived with the passage of the Townshend Acts in 1767 and remained a fixture of American resistance up to the time of independence. It was then that the Sons of Liberty played a particularly prominent role in developing the First Continental Congress (1774). New York’s sons, notes Roger Champagne, proved to be the best organized, most capably led, and most effective band of extremists. These Liberty Boys played a major role in shaping colonial public opinion against the British government. During the Stamp Act crisis, Isaac Sears, John Lamb, Joseph Allicocke, and Alexander McDougall all effectively bridged the distance between aristocrats and the general populace by successfully forging alliances to defeat British policies.

The Sons of Liberty resurfaced to resist the Tea Act that Lord North tried to implement against the colonists’ wishes. The leaders engaged in subversive acts that Greenville responded to swiftly and decisively by closing the city’s port to all trade until the tea was fully paid off. Parliament followed that up by imposing stiffer measures known as the Coercive or

Intolerable Acts. But these reprisals against the sons only emboldened the colonists even more.

A new framework for popular patriot politics emerged as the sons and Committees of Correspondences elaborated a coherent set of democratic political ideals. Mechanics in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston lead the anti-British agitation by adapting established campaign techniques; they coordinated and galvanized opposition to the Quartering Act and supported nonimportation. Such activities, notes Sean Wilentz in *Chants Democratic*, continued once the Intolerable Acts were imposed. The formation of an independent Mechanics’ Committee to replace the Sons of Liberty in 1774 ensured the survival of what Alfred Young contends was the city’s militant, anti-British, increasingly democratic brand of popular Whiggery. As Gouverneur Morris once observed, with the sons’ help, “the mob had indeed, begun to think and reason.”

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SONS OF VULCAN

The Sons of Vulcan began as a secret organization of Pittsburgh iron puddlers in 1858. Despite the advantages of being high-skilled workers, the organization remained underground because of the negative attitude toward trade unionism in Pittsburgh at that time. Because of a favorable tariff bill and the demand created by the outbreak of the Civil War, the Sons of Vulcan came out in the open in 1862. Puddler Miles Humphrey served as the union's first president.

As the demand for iron remained strong after the Civil War ended, membership increased rapidly. By 1865, the union represented puddlers in five different states. At this point manufacturers did their best to resist the expansion of the union. What was essentially a fight to the death occurred in the Pittsburgh area that same year, and the Sons of Vulcan won. As part of their victory in 1865, the union introduced the sliding scale to the iron industry for the first time. Designed by Humphrey and other Sons of Vulcan leaders, the sliding scale meant when the price of iron bars increased, wages went up as well. However if the price dropped, the union puddlers had 2 months to adjust to the coming wage drop. This system stayed in place in the iron industry well into the twentieth century.

In 1867, the ironmaster-turned-politician Abram Hewitt struck out at the Sons of Vulcan, calling puddlers "the most ignorant men we have." Such an attack was a sign of the union's growing strength. By 1873, the union had 83 lodges located in 12 states. It was widely regarded to be one of the strongest organizations in the entire labor movement. The Pittsburgh district, where most steel in the United States was made, was the strongest region represented in the union, too.

The Panic of 1873 marked the beginning of the decline of the union's power. In 1874, iron makers called a lockout that threw 40,000 people out of work nationwide. The manufacturers wanted to reduce the rates of the sliding scale because of the low price of iron. The union agreed to a revision, but the two sides could not work out the exact terms. Convinced that the lockout was an attempt to seize control of an industry that the puddlers considered to be "our trade," the dispute dragged on for months. In the spring of 1875, a few puddlers returned to work. They were joined by nonunion apprentices and African-American strikebreakers imported directly from Richmond, home of the largest ironworks in the South. Despite these setbacks the first ironworks around Pittsburgh broke ranks in April 1875 and agreed to re-employ Sons of Vulcan under the

previous sliding scale. Within a few weeks all the manufacturers signed. At this point the puddlers' skills remained essentially irreplaceable, so employers felt compelled to capitulate.

However the 1874–1875 strike had put a big scare into the puddlers. They came to realize that they had to align their interests with the interests of other iron-making unions in order to protect their position in a changing industry. In fact it is no coincidence that Andrew Carnegie was planning and erecting the first successful Bessemer steel mills around Pittsburgh at precisely this time. Bessemer steel was a decided improvement over the iron rails used for the nation's burgeoning railways. Besides being more productive than iron mills, Bessemer steel mills did not require puddlers. Therefore the Sons of Vulcan feared for their future.

This is why the Sons of Vulcan were the primary organizers of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers in 1876. This merger of craft unions also included the United Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Roughers, and Rollers, and the United Nailers. The members had come to recognize that in times of trouble, workers in every part of the mill had to band together to coordinate their response. Nevertheless antipathies continued to exist between these trades, which would threaten this amalgamation in the future. The puddlers who had been the Sons of Vulcan however were the largest and strongest of the constituent unions in this new organization, contributing approximately 85% of the union's original membership. Therefore it should come as no surprise that Joseph Bishop, the former president of the Sons of Vulcan, became president of this new organization.

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SORGE, FREDERICK (1828–1906) International Workingmen's Association

Frederick Sorge was a key figure in bringing Marxism to the United States, both as a trusted correspondent of Karl Marx, as an organizer of the International Workingmen's Association in the United States, and

as a pioneering historian of the American labor movement. The son of a broad-minded Protestant clergyman, Sorge was born in 1828 in the German state of Saxony. Probably radicalized as a student in Halle, he participated in the 1848 liberal uprising and fought with Friedrich Engels in the battle of Baden. Like thousands of others made refugees by the failed revolution, Sorge moved through Switzerland, the Low Countries, England (where he met Marx) before landing in New York in 1852 and making a home in Hoboken, New Jersey.

In the United States Sorge fell in with the large community of German “forty-eighters” and like them continued liberal activism through the Republican party and the election of Abraham Lincoln. Steadily moving toward more class-oriented politics, Sorge joined the Communist Club of New York City, which in 1867 affiliated as Section 1 of the International Workingmen’s Association (IWA; First International).

By this time Sorge’s career as a music teacher and some shrewd investments in boarding houses allowed him a comfortable living and plenty of time for organizing work. As president of Section 1 of the IWA, Sorge initially attempted to recruit Yankees or native-born, English-speaking members who, he understood, would have to adopt the organization for it to make inroads in the United States. However he came to regret this tactic as the IWA was overrun by Yankee reformers, like Victoria Woodhull, whose universal-program included women’s rights, spiritualism, land reform, racial equality, besides restoring to labor its full measure, and inaugurating the cooperative commonwealth. Fearing that such enthusiasms would alienate the true American workers, a prospect that seemed promising when the largest U.S. labor federation, the National Labor Union, voted to affiliate under the IWA’s banner, Sorge seized control of the organization and expelled the Yankee reformers, thus saving and destroying the organization at the same time.

The demise of the IWA in 1876 and the Lassallean turn of its successor, the Socialist Labor party, seemed to temper Sorge’s revolutionary ambitions. In the following years he devoted most of his time to the cause of the 8-hour day and trade union organizing, though he kept up his regular correspondence with Marx until Marx’s death in 1883. At the urging of Engels, who visited his home in 1888, Sorge undertook to write a history of American labor, which was serialized in the Marxist journal *Die Neue Zeit* over a period of nearly 5 years. Sorge died in 1906 at his home in Hoboken.

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SOUTH

From the early period of European settlement, the colonies along the southeastern coast of North America drew on different populations to satisfy their labor demands. The early settler population included substantial numbers of English and Irish indentured servants who initially found themselves working alongside smaller numbers of Native Americans and Africans, all held in various degrees of “unfreedom” ranging from temporary indenture to slavery for life. In the unstable conditions of midseventeenth-century Chesapeake, this “equality of misery” bred both resentment and solidarity among those at the bottom of an unstable economy constructed around the export of tobacco for sale on the world market. An insatiable demand for new sources of labor combined with elite fears of rebellion among the “giddy multitude”—anxieties briefly realized during the multiracial Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676—to encourage a hardening of racial lines and a growing dependency on the forced labor of African slaves. The racial stratification introduced to sustain this sharp division between the free and the unfree, formally inscribed in southern law and custom from the colonial period, would dramatically undermine the power and influence of southern laborers and encourage racial antagonisms that continue fundamentally to shape American working-class history 3.5 centuries later.

Southern slavery provided the foundations for a hierarchical society hostile to popular democracy. The plantation-based elites in whose hands power was concentrated resisted attempts to tamper with the existing social and economic order and were generally opposed to industrial development. The divergence between an industrializing North and an agrarian South became increasingly apparent in the decades between Revolution and the late antebellum period, and at the outbreak of the Civil War, the South could boast of only a small handful of industrial islands in a sea of cotton and other agricultural commodities. Dominated by a master class obsessed with fears of servile insurrection and equipped with a powerful police apparatus, slaves enjoyed few

opportunities to assert their collective power. Their resistance was marked mostly by individual acts of rebellion, punctuated occasionally by short-lived collaborative plots and insurrections. By the late antebellum period, white wage workers had managed to establish craft guilds in some southern cities, but their bargaining power was constantly undermined by slaveholders and by urban employers who resorted increasingly to slave labor to frustrate free laborers' attempts to win better wages and conditions. Such circumstances reinforced the racial animosity that pervaded southern society and rendered unlikely any possibility for collaboration across the color line.

Emancipation and Reconstruction

Those prospects were transformed by the Civil War itself, which did away with slavery, bestowed formal legality on collective action by former slaves, and made possible for the first time since the late seventeenth century, meaningful collaboration between black and white free laborers. At the center of the struggle over Reconstruction was the fundamental clash between the freed slaves' aspirations to build a new order free from exploitation and humiliation and their ex-masters' determination to retain as much of the prerogative they had enjoyed under slavery as possible. In that confrontation black workers displayed a remarkable capacity for collective organization—most visibly in the Republican-sponsored Union or Loyal League Movement, which swept across much of the South and which at the peak of its influence fused the workplace militancy of a grassroots trade union with the broader political aspirations of its black, overwhelmingly working-class membership. Such was their influence that in many places, the Ku Klux Klan organized as a direct response to the activity of these leagues and societies. Sometimes under cover of the Republican party apparatus, at other times independent of, or in opposition to it, black workers engaged in a series of offensive strikes aimed at expanding their rights and improving their working conditions.

Planters feared that emancipation and the introduction of the free-labor system advocated by northern Republicans would bring an end to their control over their mostly black agricultural workforce, and they responded to freed people's assertiveness in the immediate postwar period with harsh brutality and attempts to resurrect slavery in all but name. Federal officials in Mississippi and Alabama reported that freedmen were drifting into the cities from the

countryside with their "ears cut off by their former masters for their assertion of their freedom," and similar outrages were reported from across the South as unrepentant Confederates attempted to re-establish their domination. Their outrages provoked a reaction in the North, shifting power to radicals in the Republican party and placing federal power behind freed people's attempts to carve out new lives free from such humiliation. Where federal intervention or negotiation could not produce an outcome acceptable to freed people, they resorted to strikes—in the rice swamps and the cotton and sugar cane fields; along the docks in Jacksonville, Mobile, New Orleans, Galveston, Charleston, and Savannah; and in shipyards along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

The threat of physical coercion temporarily abated by radical ascendancy, black agricultural workers began to restructure their working lives—withdrawing women and children from field labor, shortening their working hours, and abandoning the old gang-labor system in favor of arrangements more amenable to their aspirations to become independent landholders. Deprived of their old authority, planters in parts of the South began searching for an alternative source of labor: Chinese coolie labor was imported into South Carolina, Louisiana, and Mississippi in substantial numbers in hopes that it could be "compelled to labor the year round," and in places Italian and German immigrant colonies were established, but most of these experiments were short-lived and from the landowners' perspective, unsuccessful. By the late nineteenth century, most planters had reconciled themselves to the reality that African-Americans would continue to provide the bulk of plantation labor for the region.

The Reconstruction period also saw the first tentative efforts at interracial collaboration. The end of the war brought the emergence of the National Labor Union (NLU) and widespread agitation for the 8-hour day. Meeting in Baltimore in August 1866, the NLU committed itself of the "grand and ennobling idea that the interests of labor are one; that there should be no distinction of race or nationality." In reality the NLU's deeds lagged considerably behind its rhetoric. Despite considerable interest on the part of African-Americans, the NLU balked at making an energetic attempt to bring black workers into its organization. It was not until 1869 that its leaders became convinced of their folly, and even then they recommended the organization of black workers into a separate Colored National Labor Union (CNLU). In its statement of purpose, the CNLU declared that "any labor movement based upon...discrimination and embracing a small part of the great working

masses of the country, while repelling others...will prove to be of little value." It appealed to the "'poor white man' of the South, born to a heritage of poverty and degradation like his black compeer," to "overcome the prejudices now existing" in order to build a labor movement that could win gains for all working men and women.

For various reasons the potential embodied in the early period of the NLU was never realized. With the struggle over Reconstruction dominating political life in a racially polarized South, it was almost inevitable that the CNLU assemblies would be transformed into adjuncts of the Republican party. Tensions had surfaced between state-level Republican leadership that came to assume prominent positions in the black labor conventions held throughout the South and black workers who though loyal to the Republicans, wanted an organization that would fight to improve their wages and working conditions. Some of their actions revealed a fusion between political aspirations and economic concerns that had been common in the Union League agitation: Savannah dockworkers fought not only to raise their wages but also to repeal the odious poll tax; rice field hands in the South Carolina low country resorted to strike action in 1876 not only to reject the wage concessions demanded by local planters, but also to mobilize against the conservatives' return to state power.

Though some effective grassroots local assemblies would outlive the early period of consolidation under the leadership of Republican politicians and party operatives, the general assault on radical-led state governments took its toll on black workers' organization, and the racial polarization that accompanied the overthrow of Reconstruction throughout the South crushed whatever fragile possibilities for interracial collaboration might have existed several years earlier. The onset of economic crisis in 1873 dealt a staggering blow to the NLU throughout the United States and this combined with the restoration of white supremacy after the election of 1876 brought the decline of the NLU and a setback to the wave of working-class organization that had followed the conclusion of the war.

The Knights of Labor and Working-Class Inter-Racialism

Ironically the same economic difficulties that had brought about the decline of the NLU led later that decade to a revival of labor organization under the leadership of the Knights of Labor, a formerly secret society with obscure origins in Philadelphia in the late

1860s, but whose membership and profile in American industrial life rose dramatically in the context of the nationwide railroad uprising (known as the "great upheaval") that erupted in 1877. By 1880, hundreds of local knights' assemblies had been established across the South, with substantial numbers of black workers pledging their loyalty to the organization.

In the practical work of attempting to lay the foundations for organization among southern workers, the knights exhibited in more developed form all the contradictory positions on the race question that had earlier characterized the NLU. The radical impulse behind its enduring motto "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All" left open the possibility of collaboration across the color line, but the situation on the ground was more complex, suggesting a continual negotiation between egalitarian principle and accommodation to local and national prejudices and to the racism prevalent among much of their white membership. Variations ranged from the more typically segregated local assemblies to genuine attempts at biracial and interracial structures. Workers occasionally struck together across the color line, as they did in the 1881 New Orleans Cotton Yard strike, but more often black workers were left to face their employers and local and state authorities on their own, and on some occasions blacks found white workers positively hostile to assertions of black militancy. The peak in the knights' influence nationally, and in its stature among southern laborers, occurred in 1886, when membership reached 700,000 workers. In addition to launching its historic agitation for the 8-hour day, the organization was preparing for a confrontation with Jay Gould, railroad tycoon and the most prominent employer of the age, who seemed to epitomize the arrogance and contempt of capital for labor.

The year 1886 was a watershed in one other important respect. In October of that year, the knights held their annual convention in Richmond, Virginia, the former capital of the Confederacy, and a minority of delegates, including New York Painters' Assembly No. 49, determined to take a stand against race prejudice and for the rights of African-American workers. On their arrival in Richmond, the New York delegation was informed that one of their members, African-American delegate Frank J. Ferrell, would not be permitted to stay in the hotel they had arranged in violation of segregation laws, whereon the delegates canceled their reservations and approached convention organizers urging them to make a stand. After negotiations organizers consented to having Ferrell introduce knights' General Master Workman Terence W. Powderly in the opening ceremony. Ferrell's presence on the stage and the attendance at a Richmond theater later that evening of the entire New York

delegation without respect for segregation caused a near riot in Richmond and an uproar in the southern white press, which declared it an outrage for “visitors in a southern community to attempt to ride rough shod over the social laws [and] traditions...of their entertainers.”

Conversely the knights’ willingness to defy southern racial custom under the glare of the national press in Richmond raised their stature in the eyes of African-Americans throughout the United States. The crusading black editor T. Thomas Fortune wrote in his *New York Freeman* that the events proved “there is one great organization in the land which recognizes the brotherhood of all men and has the courage to practice what it preaches,” and he and other prominent African-Americans urged blacks to join the knights *en masse*. By 1887, there were reportedly some 400 all-black locals through the South and over 60,000 black workers enrolled in the order nationally. In the South they were strongest in industrial and urban centers, like New Orleans, Louisville, Richmond, and Birmingham, but the knights met with an enthusiastic response among rural workers as well, especially in Georgia and the Carolinas.

A number of observers stirred by the knights’ work in the South less than a decade after the restoration of white supremacy concurred with the overly optimistic assertion of one labor journal that the organization had “broken the walls of prejudice,” but the reality was less flattering. Powderly had won acclaim for his defiance in Richmond, but there and throughout his leadership of the knights, he had been careful to draw a distinction between economic agitation and social equality, conceding the thrust of the segregationist position. He favored separate black and white knights’ locals moreover, and he was less than energetic in responding to correspondence from black workers appealing for practical aid. The knights had always shown ambivalence toward industrial militancy—workers engaged in some of the most militant confrontations in American labor history were under its banner, but the organization was formally opposed to strikes. Throughout the South the movement had given birth to a variety of class-based political insurgencies, such as the Greenback-Labor parties, but this development too flew in the face of a formal policy of political abstention.

The crucial impediment to a more rigorous interracialism in the 1880s came from outside the workers’ movement however. The knights met with relentless hostility from both rural- and urban-based employers and particularly from those who resented any tampering with their black-labor supply. In South Carolina newspapers called for a lynch law against white organizers attempting to organize African-American field

hands, and white organizer Hiram F. Hover was shot by a white mob in Warrenton, Georgia, in 1887 for his efforts in organizing black farm laborers. In their campaign to limit the knights’ appeal, South Carolina authorities introduced legislation that harkened back to the conspiracy laws of the old South and appropriated funds for resurrecting the state militia, disbanded since Redemption. Southern knights found themselves drawn into three bitter strikes in the late 1880s: a bruising showdown with Gould’s Texas and Pacific railroad, another with Arkansas cotton planters and their vigilantes in 1886, and a third bloody confrontation in the Louisiana sugar parishes in 1887. The knights’ defeat in all three of these, in which Powderly had offered only tepid support, combined with the repressive atmosphere after the Haymarket affair to extinguish yet again hopes for organizing the South. Individual assemblies survived, attaching themselves in some cases to the emerging Populist movement or where they existed, to affiliates of the fledgling United Mine Workers, but as a real force in the South, the knights were finished.

The AFL and Racial Exclusion

The knights’ main rival, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), had been founded in 1881 but consolidated only in 1886, and from the beginning its commitment to an exclusive craft unionism limited its appeal in the South to relatively small groups of skilled white, male workers in the building trades and on the railroads. Samuel Gompers, who presided over the AFL, maintained throughout his career that the organization did not discriminate on account of race, and by the early twentieth century, a number of affiliated unions had hired black organizers and taken other steps to organize African-American workers, but these feeble measures coincided with wide-scale displacement of blacks from skilled trades throughout the region, and for the most part lily-white or white-dominated labor councils reached out to blacks only as a means of protecting the livelihood of their white members, consigning them to segregated, all-black federal labor unions.

In general Gompers and the AFL leadership tolerated racial exclusion and discrimination on the part of affiliated locals, offering as a rationalization the excuse that national AFL leaders could not violate the autonomy of local unions. Outside the AFL the railroad brotherhoods pursued an even more flagrantly racist exclusionism, and through their organization, black workers throughout the South were pushed from skilled engineer positions into the

dirtiest, most dangerous, and lowest paying jobs as firemen and common laborers. Economically marginalized and feeling little or no loyalty to a labor movement that formally and informally excluded them, black southerners felt little compunction about lending their efforts to breaking strikes called by the craft unions.

The only prominent exceptions to the AFL's disastrous accommodation to segregation at the end of the nineteenth century were to be found on the docks and in the mines and to a limited extent, in the southern lumber industry. Black longshoremen either dominated work at the ports or enjoyed such strength in numbers there that a policy of outright exclusion was simply unviable. Galveston dockworkers had cooperated across the color line in 1877 and again in 1898, and a long period of racial conflict on the New Orleans docks—punctuated briefly by a general strike in 1882—gave way in 1907 to an impressive interracial strike involving 10,000 black and white workers backed by the local Central Labor Council. In the coal-mining districts around Birmingham and southern Tennessee, a resilient interracial tradition with roots in the Knights of Labor galvanized miners during important strikes in the 1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century.

The IWW in the South

On the docks and in the mines, interracial cooperation developed within industrial unions formally affiliated with the AFL, but in the lumber industry, it was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) that went furthest in attempting to forge cross-racial unity. Founded in Chicago in 1895 by a coalition of left-wing radicals and industrial unionists convinced of the ineffectiveness of the AFL's craft exclusionism, the IWW stood from its inception for "[admitting] the colored worker on the same basis as the white," speaking out against the prevailing racist temper of the times, and committing itself to organizing the "one big union" on the principle of industrial unionism. After a difficult beginning, the IWW launched a concerted effort to recruit black workers into its ranks from 1910 onward, pushing beyond the narrow economism typical of the official labor movement previously. Its leaders spoke out against the brutal lynching of African-Americans so common in the South and openly defied segregation, distributing pamphlets directed at winning the loyalty of African-American and Mexican workers and seeking to subvert the powerful legacy of white supremacy among its white membership. "Labor organized on race lines will drown," it

reminded them. "Only organized along *class* lines will it swim." "If you are a wage worker," it promised lumber workers, "You are welcome into the IWW, no matter what your color." Labor historian Philip Foner asserts that the IWW was "the only federation in the entire history of the American labor movement that never chartered a single segregated local."

The IWW organizers made substantial inroads in two important sectors of southern industry. Its Maritime Workers' Union established locals in Galveston, New Orleans, and Baltimore, with the New Orleans local playing an influential role in the local labor movement from 1910 onward. Its most impressive success however came in the notoriously anti-union southern lumber industry, which employed more workers than any other in the region, a majority of whom were African-American. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers (BTW) was established in 1911 by a group of IWW organizers and Socialist party sympathizers headquartered in southwest Louisiana, and they rapidly recruited members throughout the region's sawmills and logging camps before being faced with a determined campaign against them led by some of the most powerful employers in the South. By early 1912, more than 20,000 lumber workers—half of them African-Americans—were locked into a bitter struggle against the South's lumber barons, who resorted to blacklists, race-baiting, and armed vigilantes to crush attempts at organization. Abandoned by the AFL, the BTW affiliated with the IWW, and its leading organizer Big Bill Haywood visited the region to address interracial mass meetings. Despite mounting a sustained and impressive display of interracial solidarity, the BTW finally went down to defeat in the face of orchestrated mob violence in February 1913.

Despite the optimistic predictions of the region's industrial boosters from the 1880s onward, the new South remained predominantly an agricultural region through the first-half of the twentieth century, and aside from a modest foothold in the skilled trades, organized labor remained confined mainly to port cities and to the male-dominated extractive and manufacturing industries well into the twentieth century. There were two notable exceptions to this trend. Black women had been engaged in domestic service in the homes of southern whites, and later in commercial laundries, from the 1870s, and in spite of the difficulties of organizing in these circumstances, they had on occasion engaged in collective action. In the wake of emancipation, whites throughout the region had complained about widespread insubordination among black domestics. In Richmond black women refused to "cook [or] do the washing for the white people" in protest of new laws segregating public transportation.

In Florida whites suspected that blacks had organized “a kind of secret society [that met] regularly [to] fix their own prices for doing housework, cooking, washing, etc.” The strike launched by dockworkers in Galveston in 1887 extended to include black domestics, and in 1881 black washerwomen in Atlanta had struck *en masse* against the multiple indignities they faced in their working lives.

The other source of employment that drew in female workers in large numbers was the southern textile industry. Founded under public guise of a philanthropic exercise to rescue poor whites from poverty, the textile industry was saturated in paternalism and racial exclusion from the outset. With an infinite supply of desperate white southerners fleeing the countryside for the employer-dominated mill villages winding their way southward from the Carolina piedmont through to northern Alabama, southern textile mills proved difficult to organize.

World War I and the Great Migration

Just as textile employers enjoyed a monopoly on labor within the mill villages, southern employers generally enjoyed near-exclusive command over their labor supply, and particularly over black workers deprived of the most basic democratic rights, from the end of Reconstruction through the period of the First World War. But U.S. entry into the war brought a profound disruption to labor relations in the South. The availability of relatively well-paid industrial work sent black and white laborers northward in the hundreds of thousands, making skilled labor scarce, raising the value of unskilled labor across the South, and providing laborers with a degree of leverage in negotiating wages and conditions they had not known previously. Employers attempted to shape federal intervention in the region’s economy and during the war enjoyed the support of the government in suppressing industrial militancy and containing wage demands, but workers also attempted to make the best of the extraordinary conditions brought about by the war. Despite the employers’ efforts, workers’ frustrations exploded in a wave of strike activity in the postwar period as they did elsewhere across the United States, though usually without success. The repression unleashed by government and employers against this postwar militancy overwhelmed the fragile roots of union organization in much of the South—handicapped as it was by racial exclusion in some of the region’s most important industries—and the 1920s saw a further steady retreat on the part of organized labor in the South.

The Depression and Southern Workers

The stock market crash in October 1929 found organized labor at a low ebb across the United States and nowhere more than in the former slave states. There every advantage enjoyed by northern employers was enhanced and every weakness among laborers magnified. While the Depression Era would not bring a complete turnaround in these conditions, the 1930s did give rise to two critical developments: The rise of industrial unionism and the first sustained attempt to confront the racial divisions that had paralyzed southern labor. The first major confrontation of the period developed in the nearly all-white textile industry, where workers embarked on a series of spontaneous strikes in 1929 to protest against the stretch-out—mill owners’ attempts to boost productivity dramatically while reducing millworkers’ pay. The most dramatic confrontations came in Elizabethton, Tennessee, and Gastonia, North Carolina, where fierce, lethal violence broke out among workers and national guardsmen, local police, and company security. In Elizabethton workers responded with fury to the kidnapping of union officials by local businessmen, while the Communist-led National Textile Workers’ Union pointed to the official violence in Gastonia to expose the absence of basic democratic rights for workers in the South.

The fledgling Communist party (CP) had met with little success in attempts during the late 1920s and early 1930s at forming revolutionary alternatives to the lily-white, narrow craft unions approved by the AFL, but importantly for its southern work, its organizers had insisted that durable organization could be built only on the basis of black and white unity and a forthright reckoning with the legacy of racial division. This would prove an important asset when by the mid-1930s more favorable conditions opened the door to the Congress of Industrial Organizations’ (CIO’s) industrial unionism in the South, and a substantial number of CP organizers brought their experience and their antiracist convictions into the new work of organizing basic industry. Under pressure from black trade unionists, like A. Phillip Randolph, the AFL itself had experimented fitfully with organizing black workers, but its successes were even more limited, and in the thirties its slightly improved record owed much to efforts to keep pace with the infectious appeal of the CIO’s industrial crusade.

The Depression years brought widespread misery to southern workers, but it also compelled federal intervention when the Roosevelt administration recognized the region’s poverty as the “nation’s number one economic problem.” The South’s backwardness,

manifested in widespread destitution, acted as a drag on the U.S. economy as a whole, Roosevelt's advisors warned, and fundamental reform became a matter of national urgency. Ultimately however the New Deal program left an ambiguous legacy across the region. Sharecroppers and agricultural laborers found their hopes dashed under Roosevelt's AAA program, which paid large landowners to leave productive land fallow but offered little or nothing to tens of thousands of laborers left without work or compensation of any kind. As a result fierce struggles would break out when planters attempted to drive unemployed laborers off their holdings in Arkansas and Alabama. Organized into the Southern Tenant Farmer's Union and the Alabama Sharecroppers' Union, these laborers were led by left-wing radicals associated with the Socialist and Communist parties.

The South's industrial workforce experienced similarly mixed results under the New Deal. Though employers would continue to mount stiff resistance and often to prevail in industrial confrontations, workers buoyed by the protective elements of the NRA responded enthusiastically to new opportunities for unionization, and the first dramatic manifestation of this came in the textile industry, where some 200,000 southerners joined a 3-week long national strike in 1934 in a renewed attempt to combat the stretch-out. Led this time by the AFL-affiliated United Textile Workers' Union, whose strategy of looking to the Roosevelt administration did not reflect the determination of rank-and-file strikers and ultimately failed to bear fruit, the 1934 general strike went down in defeat, leaving a bitter legacy of betrayal among textile workers and reinforcing a widespread sense of ambivalence toward trade unionism. In legislative terms the NRA codes reinforced the wage differentials that had penalized southern workers and black workers concentrated in low-paid, unskilled positions in particular.

World War II and the Rise of the CIO

The CIO's industrial unionists recognized the importance of organizing the South even before they had deserted the AFL, but translating that impulse into an effective campaign proved difficult. Organizers in a range of industries documented the difficult conditions existing in the region, where they faced staunch opposition from employers and the Ku Klux Klan. The newly independent CIO had expressed its resolve to organize the South at its first convention in 1937, but a concerted effort would not be undertaken until the end of that decade, after it had consolidated gains

in basic industry in the North. In areas where interracial unions like the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) had held onto some semblance of organization through the 1920s, as in the Birmingham district, their support for the organizing efforts of vulnerable workers unlikely to prevail on their own proved crucial. Northern Alabama was described by one observer as a "strike hatchery" by the late 1930s, and with the miners' assistance, area sawmill workers succeeded in organizing a rare foothold for lumber unionism. Other hopeful signs emerged from the tobacco industry, where an overwhelmingly black workforce showed increasing militancy from 1936 onward; and by the end of the decade the CIO, with growing support among black workers and civil rights organizations, had accumulated a modest record of success in organizing southern industry.

The outbreak of World War II thus occurred against the backdrop of mixed results for the labor movement in the South: A vibrant current of principled inter-racialism had emerged—thanks largely to the CP and its organizers and publicly endorsed by a layer of southern liberals—and established a presence in the new unions; but large sectors of southern industry remained unorganized, and on the whole white supremacy remained firmly entrenched among broad layers of white southerners, including white workers. In some ways war mobilization brought results similar to those that had prevailed during the First World War—the reduction of unemployment through vastly increased labor demand and attempts by both workers and employers to manipulate the negotiating apparatus set up by federal authorities to enhance their position. In the South once again, employers exerted themselves to preserve the status quo against the winds of change, but with the pall of the Depression lifted, workers felt increasingly confident to assert themselves, and the CIO managed to win unionization in southern steel plants, in the tobacco industry, and in other important sectors that it had been unable to organize in the 1930s. Black workers in particular sensed that the wartime emergency provided an opportunity to strike out against exclusion and workplace inequality. Barred from employment in key defense industries and suffering widespread discrimination throughout the American economy, they responded enthusiastically to A. Phillip Randolph's call for a "march on Washington" in July of 1941, called off only after Roosevelt agreed to issue an executive order banning discrimination in defense industries.

The establishment of the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) grew directly out of the March on Washington Movement (MOWM), and its establishment polarized the South. Black workers

looked to it for support in their struggles against the hostility they faced from racist employers and unions alike. With its modest efforts opposed at every turn by southern Democrats, the AFL bureaucracy, and the Railroad Brotherhoods, the FEPC conducted public hearings in Birmingham, but employers throughout the region vowed defiance against any attempts to compel them to hire black workers. The fruits of that opposition became evident in June of 1943, when white shipyard workers launched vicious race riots to protest black workers' promotion into semiskilled labor in shipyards in Beaumont, Texas, and Mobile, Alabama. In the tense national atmosphere punctuated by fierce race rioting, the CIO came under withering and wholly legitimate criticism from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for not adopting a more forthright campaign against racism, but unlike the AFL, it formally endorsed the FEPC's efforts and established a Committee to Abolish Discrimination, undertaking an energetic campaign to win its membership to solidarity across the color line in its early years. "Today CIO unions are found in every Southern state and are growing steadily in the region's basic industries," Lucy Randolph Mason pointed out in 1945. "Among the many hundreds of thousands of CIO members there are a vast number of Negro workers."

Postwar Organizing

On the basis of the modest inroads they had made in the South, both the AFL and the CIO launched campaigns to organize the South in the immediate postwar period. From the outset the AFL's campaign was laced with race-baiting and strident anticommunism, its potency enhanced in the new Cold War context. The CIO, too, became tentative in the face of a growing conservative backlash, and when it launched Operation Dixie with great fanfare in 1946, CIO organizers determined from the outset that they would pursue a respectable campaign purged of left-wing influence. Against the backdrop of increasing polarization between the national CIO's left and right wings, steelworkers' organizer Van Bittner embarked on a defensive campaign, attempting at every juncture to avoid a confrontation with Jim Crow and pinning his hopes for success on organizing groups of white workers far less receptive to unionization than southern blacks.

In responding to the CIO challenge, the AFL committed substantial resources to organizing black southerners, and though neither campaign could

claim gains sufficient to turn the tide in favor of organized labor in the region, in the end even the moribund AFL won more workers to unionization than the faltering CIO effort, including substantial numbers of African-Americans. Under Bittner's direction, the CIO launched raids against some of the most vibrant left-led unions in the region, including United Tobacco Workers' Local 22 and Birmingham's Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers' Union. By the time the AFL and CIO merged in 1955, the crusading zeal that had fired the rise of industrial unionism in the mid-1930s and offered hope for a vibrant inter-racial labor movement had expired, and former CIO unions in parts of the South were reported to be upholding segregation laws in their union halls. Indeed the new federation purged those left-led unions that had stood at the forefront of interracial unionism, and southern workers would have to navigate the convulsive years ahead without the guidance and support of a labor movement committed to principled inter-racialism.

Labor and Civil Rights at the Crossroads

Ironically just as black workers' legal challenges to workplace inequality began to bear fruit in the late 1950s a number of key industries—steel, shipbuilding, lumber, even textiles—began to enter into sharp decline. The civil rights movement that emerged into public view with the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 had been gestating among black southerners for decades and particularly since the end of World War II. Black workers, many of them veteran trade unionists and some who had received their training in the labor movement, played a key role in initiating and building the movement at its grass roots. Often behind the scenes, and occasionally more visibly, black workers managed to fuse their workplace struggles with increasingly militant public agitation. Black industrial workers played a prominent if unacknowledged role in the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth's Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Some of the energetic young radicals attracted to Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) extended their early voting rights work to organizing black and white workers in the Mississippi Delta to fight for better wages and access to health care. Most dramatically Memphis sanitation workers fed up with dangerous working conditions and pitiful wages engaged in a determined strike that would result in deployment of the national guard and draw Martin Luther King, Jr., into the epic confrontation that would end in his assassination. A year later

Charleston hospital workers attracted widespread support when they launched a 113-day strike to protest the firing of 12 of their colleagues for demanding a union.

Sections of the labor movement, particularly the remnants of the left-led United Packinghouse Workers, would play an active role in the civil rights movement, and others, including the United Automobile Workers (UAW), would provide it with critical financial support, but within the South itself, a weak and politically timid labor movement could do little to counter the racist sentiment taking hold of its white membership in the increasingly polarized South. Some white workers influenced by the White Citizen's Councils and the Klan and outraged by organized labor's tepid support for black advancement attempted to organize breakaway unions. The Southern Federation of Labor, organized in direct response to the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision tried unsuccessfully to establish a segregated regional alternative to the AFL-CIO. In Virginia white members in one of the largest textile workers' locals in the country pooled their unions' dues to subsidize private schooling for their children rather than consent to integration. A similar wave of white defiance occurred in reaction to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, with walk-outs launched to protest the dismantling of in-plant Jim Crow facilities or black promotion to white positions. It was this backlash against black advance that drove white workers to abandon the Democratic party in the South and led to the resurgence of the Republicans, a shift with profound consequences for national politics.

In some respects the post-civil rights era South is unrecognizable from the politically monolithic, economically stagnant, overwhelmingly agrarian region it was even as late as half-a-century ago. The Sunbelt South boasts a diversified economy with an upwardly mobile urban middle class, and cities like Atlanta, Houston, and Miami are today metropolitan powerhouses on a par with their counterparts elsewhere in the United States. This new prosperity has been unevenly experienced of course, and the decline of basic industry has reinforced the low-wage characteristic of the southern economy at the same time that public services have been drastically reduced. Recent years have seen a massive influx of immigrant laborers, mainly from Central America, who now play a key role in the food-processing and construction industries. While the South has shed some of its distinctiveness, the region retains the legacy of fierce anti-unionism. None of this, from the vantage point of the early twenty-first century, looks particularly southern any longer. In important ways the South, long the beneficiary of the race-to-the-bottom among

American manufacturers seeking cheap labor, is now itself a victim of a global capitalist economy offering even lower production costs abroad—a transformation that confronts the region's workforce with unprecedented challenges and perhaps new opportunities as well.

BRIAN KELLY

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See also Emancipation and Reconstruction; National Labor Union; Slavery; Union League Movement

SOUTH ASIANS

South Asian Americans (those who trace their ancestry to the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives) are comparatively small in number (1.9 million in the 2000 census or 0.67% of the total U.S. population), but they have made a distinctive mark

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with their outstanding contributions to the American economy. The general impression is that they are highly paid, well-qualified professionals, but there is also a growing number employed in low-wage industries as waiters, newsstand workers, retail clerks, taxi drivers, and domestic servants.

An overwhelming number of South Asian Americans are from India—1.7 million or 89%—compared to 9% from Pakistan and 1% each from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The remaining three groups number less than 10,000. The majority of South Asian immigrants arrived after the passage of the 1965 Immigration Reform Act, which gave preference to highly skilled professionals, such as doctors, engineers, and scientists. They were followed in the 1980s by sponsored relatives who lacked the English language proficiency and technical skills of the earlier group and moved into lower sectors of the economy as small-scale entrepreneurs in retail and service industries or on the factory floor. The 1990s saw a fresh wave of immigration of hi-tech workers for the computer and information industries. By the turn of the twenty-first century, South Asians were to be found in a wide range of occupations, from the most sophisticated to the most menial. However their heavy concentration in certain areas, for example, as taxi drivers or in the hotel-motel industry, led them to organize effectively against racist practices and exploitative conditions.

The history of activism among South Asian American labor can be traced to an earlier, smaller immigration from 1900–1910, when more than 7,000 workers, mostly Sikhs, migrated from Punjab in British India to the Pacific Northwest. They were peasants who came to work the lumber mills and railroads in British Columbia and Washington State, and they eventually settled down as a farming community in California. Employers eager for cheap labor welcomed the industrious Sikhs but also used them to undercut other workers. There were no female immigrants, so the men lived in crowded camps on the outskirts of town. The Sikhs encountered fierce prejudice and organized violence from a white population, especially the Asiatic Exclusion League, which was already inflamed with hatred for the Chinese and Japanese who had arrived earlier. Prohibited from owning land, marrying white women, or becoming citizens, the Sikhs fought back by maintaining ethnic solidarity, marrying and raising families with Mexican women, setting up elaborate and complicated land-lease partnerships with whites, and moving the courts aggressively whenever they felt cheated. A dramatic example of success among this first group of immigrants was the Punjabi farmer Dalip Singh Saund, who became a member of Congress and served three terms from 1957–1963.

Immigration from South Asia shut down completely after 1917 with the Barred Zone Act and did not pick up until after World War II, when Indians were granted citizenship rights in 1946. The 1965 Immigration Act was a watershed for South Asian immigration. The United States, suffering a severe labor shortage of skilled personnel due to the demands of the Vietnam War and Cold War competition with the Soviet Union, dropped its racist criteria in immigration policy for the first time in history and encouraged the immigration of qualified professionals from Asia. Thousands of South Asians, educated in western-style engineering and medical institutions and facing limited opportunities in the homeland, immigrated to the United States, particularly to the major metropolitan centers of the Northeast and Midwest where jobs were plentiful in the manufacturing and healthcare industries.

Though they climbed the economic ladder comparatively swiftly and settled in middle-class white suburbs, South Asian Americans encountered obstacles at work that forced them to organize into professional associations to help redress their grievances. Thus the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) was formed in 1982 to fight discrimination in residency requirements. With a membership of 35,000 physicians and 10,000 medical students in 1994, AAPI became a powerful lobbying force, actively monitoring policy changes that could affect the practice of its members. Similarly associations of engineers, scientists, journalists, and the like were formed to serve the common interests of South Asians in the professions.

The immigration of nonprofessionals from Asia in the 1980s and 1990s saw their rapid growth in other niche markets, especially in the franchise industry. By the year 2000, about 90% of Dunkin' Donuts franchises in the Midwest were owned and operated by South Asians, with Ismaili Muslims or Khojas claiming a significant share of the market. Gujaratis (from the western Indian state of Gujarat), most with the common surname of Patel, control an estimated 65% of budget hotels and 40% of all hotels and motels nationwide. They built up their businesses through chain migration of family members who supplied round-the-clock labor needed for the upkeep of motels. South Asians also experienced discrimination and hostility from competitors and were denied insurance as high-risk clients. They fought back by organizing and forming their own association in 1989, called the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA), an advocacy group to champion the rights of Asian American hoteliers.

It was not until 1998 that South Asian taxi drivers, mostly Muslims from Pakistan and Bangladesh, founded the New York Taxi Workers Alliance

(NYTWA). With over 5,000 taxi drivers and spirited leadership from cofounder and director Bhairavi Desai, the union fought to change discriminatory and excessively punitive rules and regulations by the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) and to protect drivers' rights to due process. On May 13, 1998, the NYTWA organized one of the most stunning strikes in the history of the labor movement when over 45,000 licensed taxi drivers withheld their labor for 24 hours. Since New York taxi drivers represent more than 90 countries, the victory was both a triumph of interethnic solidarity and a reaction to oppressive conditions in the taxi industry. Other South Asian workers' movements in New York include Worker's *Awaaz*, first organized to assist domestic workers but later broadened to include other workers in seeking fair compensation, reasonable working hours, and safe conditions, and *Andolan*, which organizes low-wage female workers to fight against the injustices of abusive employers. The growth of grassroots labor activism in the New York area stems in part from the higher proportion of low-wage South Asian workers in this region compared to other parts of the United States.

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SOUTHEAST ASIANS

According to U.S. Census figures, in 2000 Filipino Americans constituted the largest Southeast Asian group in the United States, with an estimated population of 1,864,120. The estimated 1,110,207 Vietnamese Americans made up the second largest group of Southeast Asians. Cambodians were a distant third with 178,043. Two groups originating in Laos, the Hmong and the ethnic Lao, were almost as numerous as the Cambodians, with 170,049 and 167,792 individuals, respectively. Census figures in 2000 showed 110,851 people of Thai origin in the United States.

The census also estimated 37,167 Indonesians and 10,711 Malaysians at the end of the twentieth century.

Among the Southeast Asian groups, only the Filipinos had a long history in the United States. Nearly all the others had arrived in the United States in significant numbers only since the second-half of the 1970s. The Vietnamese, Cambodians, and people from Laos began to arrive after 1975, as refugees following American involvement in wars in their countries. During the two decades from 1951 to 1970, only 4,998 people from these three countries migrated to the United States, according to data from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. The smaller numbers of Thai, Indonesians, and Malaysians came as part of a general increase in immigration from Asia to the United States that began in the 1970s following a change in American immigration policy in 1965. Even among Filipino Americans, newcomers tended to predominate at the opening of the twenty-first century, as nearly 70% of all Filipinos to reach America from 1930 to 2000 came in the 1980s and 1990s.

Beginnings of Southeast Asian Labor: Filipinos in Agriculture

Filipinos began to arrive in the United States after the Americans seized control of the Philippines in 1898 in the Spanish-American War. From 1910 to 1920, the Filipino American population grew from under 3,000 to over 26,000, and it increased to four times the latter number during the 1920s. Most of this growth was a result of the demand for Filipino labor in the agriculture of Hawaii and on the West Coast of the mainland.

In 1906, the Hawaii Sugar Planters Association (HSPA) hired attorney A. F. Judd to travel to the Philippines to recruit field workers and to make legal arrangements for bringing the workers to Hawaii. By 1925, Filipinos made up about half of all plantation workers in Hawaii. Five years later an estimated three out of every four agricultural workers in Hawaii were Filipinos.

Farmers in California and canning factories in Alaska also started to recruit Filipino workers in large numbers. An estimated 45,000 Filipinos reached the West Coast of the mainland United States during the 1920s. Improved transportation and refrigeration had made it possible to grow fruits and vegetables on large farms in one part of the nation for export to all other regions. The resulting demand for cheap agricultural labor on the West Coast resulted in a rapid growth of the Filipino population on the mainland,

from 5,603 people in 1920 to 45,372 in 1930. Filipinos worked as migrant laborers, following the harvest seasons of crops around California and the other West Coast states of Oregon and Washington.

The migration of Filipino agricultural workers to the United States decreased after 1935, as the Philippines began to move toward political independence. Still Filipinos in the United States continued to work in farming in fairly large numbers until the end of the 1960s, and they were involved in major labor movements in Hawaii and California. In the early 1920s, Filipino labor activists in Hawaii organized several major strikes. Lettuce pickers in the Salinas Valley in California formed the Filipino Labor Union (FLU) in 1933, and the FLU staged a strike the following year. In 1966, under the leadership of Filipino American Larry Dulay Itliong, the largely Filipino Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC) joined with the National Farm Workers' Association (NFWA) to create one of history's broadest labor alliances. Known as the United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee and later simply as the United Farm Workers (UFW), this union extended the NFWA's ongoing strike and boycott against California grape growers.

Southeast Asian Labor after World War II: Filipinos in Medicine

Following World War II, the Filipino American population began to shift from primarily male to primarily female. Much of this demographic shift was due to the arrival of women from the Philippines married to American men stationed on military bases. An additional reason though was the increase in Filipino nurses in the U.S. labor market. The Exchange Visitor Program, established as part of the U.S. Education Exchange Act of 1948, enabled foreign nurses to come to the United States for 2 years of study and professional experience. Filipino nurses, with their American-style educations and English-language skills, were able to take advantage of this opportunity in much larger numbers than nurses from other countries, and Filipino nurses frequently remained beyond the stipulated 2 years. Numbers of nurses from the Philippines grew from 7,000 in 1948 to 57,000 in 1953.

Filipinos continued to be a prominent part of the American medical profession. As demand for doctors in the United States increased, the number of Filipino physicians in the United States grew, so that physicians from the Philippines were arriving in this country at the rate of over 700 per year by the early 1970s.

This number decreased after 1976, when Congress passed legislation requiring medical personnel, and other professionals, to have job offers from American employers before arrival. However numbers of Filipino nurses continued to increase as recruiters in the U.S. health care industry began actively seeking nurses in the Philippines. Filipino nurses in the United States increased from an estimated 10,500 in 1970 to close to 100,000 by 2000, with nearly 1 out of every 10 Filipino Americans in the labor force employed in nursing by the latter year.

The Late Twentieth Century: Diversification

Southeast Asians from countries other than the Philippines began to become a recognizable part of American labor history only during the 1980s. As newer Southeast Asians entered the American labor force, they tended to be over-represented in retail trade. By 1990, about one-fourth of all Americans of Southeast Asian ancestry were in retail, and this continued to be the case through 2000. The retail concentration was particularly high among the Thai, with about 38% of Thai Americans in the labor force in retail trade in 2000. Thai Americans were notable for their heavy over-representation in restaurant work. Just under one out of every five Thai Americans worked in eating and drinking establishments by 2000.

Connected to the high rates of employment in retail and such occupations as small stores and restaurants, self-employment increased rapidly among people from Southeast Asia from 1980 to 2000. In 1980, a little over 4% of all employed people of Asian nationality who were born in Southeast Asia were self-employed. By 2000, this had grown to 7%. The Vietnamese and Thai were the most likely to be self-employed, since an estimated 10% of all Vietnamese Americans and 9% of all Thai Americans in the labor force were self-employed in 2000.

The Southeast Asian groups that had arrived in the United States as refugees generally had higher levels of unemployment than those that had arrived as immigrants, probably because many of the latter had come to the United States specifically for work. In 1990, for example, unemployment rates for the refugee groups ranged from about 8% for the Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodians to about 17% for the Hmong. In that same year, unemployment rates were under 6% for Thai and Indonesians and under 5% for Filipinos. A decade later unemployment among the Hmong had gone down to just over 8% while the rate continued to hover at about that same level for Lao

and Cambodians. Vietnamese unemployment rates however had gone down to below 6%, approximately equal to that of the Thai and only slightly above the rate of Filipinos, Indonesians, and Malaysians.

By 2000, most of the nonrefugee groups enjoyed median household incomes that were close to or even above those of other Americans. The refugee groups had also experienced substantial upward mobility in income and professional status. However many also experienced difficulties as a result of their positions in the American labor force. The self-employed Vietnamese Americans often operated small stores in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. This made them subject to robberies and even murders. While some Thai Americans operated restaurants or worked in professional jobs, others labored on the margins of the American economy. Some of the most serious labor market problems involving Thai people in the United States came to light in August 1995, when United States Immigration officials staged a raid on a garment factory in El Monte, California. Surrounded by barbed wire, the factory held 72 workers from Thailand, kept in virtual slavery by co-ethnic employers. In a number of other cases, immigration officials in the United States have found Thai women brought illegally to the United States and forced to work as prostitutes.

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SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION

Denied coverage under the National Labor Relations Act, isolated in small groups in the countryside, working seasonally, impoverished, and thus unable to afford union dues, racially divided, oriented toward either subsistence or independent land ownership, farm and plantation workers have been notoriously difficult to organize into unions. Until the California organizing victories of Cesar Chavez's United Farm

Workers (UFW) in the 1960s, their scattered successes remained of limited duration, especially in the Deep South, with its legacy of slavery, racism, and hostility to organized labor. One of the most dramatic examples of organizing farm workers however occurred on the cotton plantations of northeast Arkansas during the 1930s, under the auspices of the interracial Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU).

Galvanized by the 1934 visit of Socialist Norman Thomas to the Arkansas delta, local Socialist party members H. L. Mitchell and Clay East began to organize black and white tenants and sharecroppers to form the STFU. Encompassing roughly 6,000 square miles of fertile river bottom squeezed between the St. Francis and the Mississippi rivers to the north and west of Memphis, the delta was characterized by highly concentrated land ownership, a single-minded devotion to cotton production, a black majority, and an extremely high rate of farm tenancy and indebtedness. In the STFU strongholds of Poinsett, Crittenden, and St. Francis counties, for example, 80%, 88%, and 95%, respectively, of all farmers were tenants working someone else's land rather than as independent owners in 1930. Forty years earlier 75% of farmers in this region of the Deep South had owned the land they worked.

The STFU began with the modest goal of helping both black and white sharecroppers and tenants claim a fair share of the government payments made to cotton farmers under the Agriculture Adjustment Act's (AAA's) crop-reduction program. In an effort to boost cotton prices, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal agricultural program directly compensated planters for taking land out of cultivation. Although crop reduction contracts obligated cotton planters to share AAA payments with the families who worked their land, they often pocketed the government check and illegally evicted their tenants and sharecroppers instead. Displaced and cheated plantation workers filed grievances with the Cotton Section of the AAA, but to little avail. In 1934, for instance, the AAA received 477 complaints from cotton workers in Arkansas, but canceled only 11 planter contracts. In response to these abuses and the government's failure to correct them, the STFU rapidly grew into an interracial social movement that challenged the power wielded by large landholders over indebted sharecroppers, tenants, and small farmers of both races in the rural South.

The union's first significant victory came in the harvest season of 1935, when it called out Arkansas cotton pickers in a successful strike. Led by a motley coalition of socialist organizers, Christian social activists radicalized by the Great Depression, and African-American preachers (who made up half of the union's executive board), like Edward Britt

SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION

McKinney, the STFU combined the fervor of religion with a faith in union solidarity that cut across racial lines. Supported by the national office of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Rheinhold Niebuhr's Committee on Economic and Racial Justice, by 1936 the STFU enrolled 25,000 members, two-thirds of them black, in Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Declaring itself open to "laborers, share-croppers, renters, or small landowners whose lands are worked by themselves," the STFU organized the men and women who bore the brunt of the collapse of the cotton economy during the 1930s. The union embraced several goals, some practical, others utopian. First it defended the rights of tenants and sharecroppers to AAA payments and secure tenure on the land and lobbied in Washington for agricultural programs that would respect the interests of the South's millions of farm-tenant families. Second the union hoped to organize seasonal and itinerant agricultural day laborers in the cotton fields to demand a fair wage. More ambitiously however STFU organizers sought to break the dependency engendered by the crop-lien system, which kept sharecroppers and tenants perpetually in debt to their landlords. In this they aimed at nothing less than a radical transformation of the southern plantation system and envisioned a new rural social order based on widespread smallholding land ownership, government-backed loans, and the development of cooperative farms.

Black and white workers in the South had on occasion cooperated before the 1930s, most notably in labor struggles on the docks of the Gulf Coast, the coalmines of Alabama, and the piney woods of Louisiana and east Texas. But the STFU brought black and white sharecroppers together for the first time since the Populist movement of the 1890s. The union's commitment to inviting both races into the same labor organization reflected a widespread tendency in the 1930s, as the new industrial unions sponsored by the Committee on Industrial Organizations (CIO) shook off the American Federation of Labor's (AFL's) entrenched habit of racial exclusivity that had denied African-Americans the opportunity to participate fully in the American labor movement. In the view of the planter class, the STFU's bold racial egalitarianism proved as threatening as its economic program, since open violation of the rural South's laws and customs of segregation undermined the system of white supremacy on which the impoverishment of rural workers depended.

The embrace of an interracial union movement in the segregated rural South subjected STFU partisans to violent repression by planters and their allies, resulting in tentative federal investigations of the

wholesale violation of sharecroppers' civil rights. But inter-racialism created internal tensions as well, since not all white tenants proved ready to abandon racial privilege, and not all black sharecroppers easily placed their trust in whites, some of whom had helped suppress an attempt at black farm union organization in Arkansas a generation before in the Elaine massacre of 1919. Mitchell insisted that in the STFU, "There are no 'niggers' and no poor white trash..., only Union men" (H. L. Mitchell, *Mean Things Happening in This Land*, 1979), but some segregated locals persisted. Nevertheless where blacks and whites worked and lived in close proximity, they joined the same organization. Even then however some blacks charged that the STFU's African-American members bore the brunt of repression while whites reaped the benefits of organization.

The STFU also suffered factional division over the nature of its relationship to the industrial union movement. Hoping to gain the backing of the powerful new unions in the CIO, and to benefit from their access to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), in 1937 the STFU affiliated itself with the United Cannery, Agricultural, and Packing Workers of America (UCAPAWA). We wanted to be a union," H recalled of the STFU many years later. "We wanted to be in the mainstream of organized labor." UCAPAWA, which drew together workers in the fields and packing sheds of California's San Joaquin Valley, the fish canneries up and down the Pacific Coast, and the citrus groves of Florida, seemed the natural home for the cotton pickers of the STFU. But the CIO was designed for workers who toiled in factories and mines, earned wages, met in union halls, and paid dues. The STFU members remained rooted on the land, farmed on shares, met in rural churches, and certainly never had enough cash to support their organization. These were the factors that had shaped the union's basic character, its organizing strategy, its emphasis on protest, its appeal to the conscience of the nation, and its religious fervor, but they sat quite uneasily within UCAPAWA. "Fish cannery workers on the West Coast do not have the same problem as cotton workers in the South," proclaimed the STFU in an open letter to its friends explaining its reasons for breaking with UCAPAWA in 1939, after only 18 months of affiliation. The STFU and UCAPAWA had quarreled over questions of procedure, finance, autonomy, and jurisdiction. During this brief but troubled stint as part of UCAPAWA, the STFU never really could accommodate itself to its role as part of a CIO union.

A closely related source of internal turmoil for the STFU was the division between Communist and Socialist party approaches to the problems of

agricultural workers. The Communist party, and the leadership of UCAPAWA, argued that that farm labor unions should be divided by tenure: One organization for day laborers and sharecroppers, whom they saw as rural industrial workers, and another for small farm owners and tenants, who retained a modicum of independence from the owners of large plantations. In contrast the Socialist-led STFU nurtured a deep commitment to organizing people who worked the land, whatever the particulars of their relationship to capital. This ideology, predicated on what STFU organizers believed was the essential fluidity of rural class relations and oriented toward the goal of petty proprietorship, remained central to the STFU's philosophy, political program, and status as an organization. It ultimately proved irreconcilable with the Communist party's program of division by land tenure and its view of sharecroppers and tenants as an agricultural proletariat. Ultimately the bitter feuds over CIO affiliation and Communist influence in the STFU split the union, and many African-American members chose to remain in UCAPAWA.

Together the challenges of inter-racial organizing, the uneasy alliance with an industrial union movement oriented toward the needs of production workers, and the contentious disputes over communism fatally weakened the STFU by the end of the decade. In addition the latter part of the 1930s saw the rapid dispersal from the land of the very people the union sought to organize. Rural poverty, soil depletion, evictions, and mechanization drove many southerners out of agriculture during the Depression. By World War II the STFU served its dwindling membership primarily as a labor recruiter rather than as a union or a social movement, as southern agricultural workers began to enter wartime industries in large numbers. Renamed the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU) in 1946, the union affiliated with the AFL. Although in its new incarnation the NFLU took on the struggles of farm workers in California and Louisiana, it never fully recaptured its identity as a radical social movement. Nevertheless the STFU's original vision of an inter-racial movement of the rural poor set an important precedent for the wave of change that swept the South during the 1960s. In retrospect Mitchell admitted that "the ordinary trade unionist never understood the STFU. We were a mass movement, something like the civil rights movement thirty years later" (H. L. Mitchell, *Mean Things Happening in This Land*, 1979).

Indeed the STFU prefigured important aspects of the synthesis of the civil rights and labor movements that characterized some of the most dynamic organizations of the 1960s. First it drew on the latent political activism of the black church, which breathed

life into the union gospel through the community standing and stirring oratory of local preachers like E. B. McKinney and the union songs set to gospel music by the union's unofficial bard, John Handcox. Secondly the union's socialist and Christian leadership, if not always its constituency, embraced nonviolence on both tactical and philosophical grounds. Finally in order to defend itself against repression and publicize the sharecroppers' plight, the STFU recruited more privileged advocates from churches, universities, and civil liberties' organizations far beyond the confines of the rural South. In this the STFU foreshadowed tactics that would re-emerge in the movements of the civil rights era, embodied in the struggles of the UFW, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Memphis sanitation workers strike of 1968. Like their predecessors in the STFU, the grassroots activists in these social movements understood that the nation's disinherited, isolated, faced with repression, and often written out of labor law and state protection, had to rely on public sympathy and the active support of progressives and concerned clergy to secure social justice.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Mitchell, H. L.; United Farm Workers of America

SOUTHWEST

The Knights of Labor swooped into Texas and Indian and Oklahoma Territories in 1882, organizing coal miners, railroad shop men, and disparate groups of workers and farmers. On the Galveston docks skilled white longshoremen who compressed cotton in the

holds of ships failed in their 1883 boycott of black longshoremen who took part of the work. By 1885, black and white longshoremen, members of the knights, threw themselves in front of bales to persuade black dockhands to strike, and a settlement was worked out. It was the beginning of a long and fragile biracial alliance on the wharves, rare in a southern state. Apparent success in the 1885 railroad strike on Jay Gould's lines was earned by men weary of 12-hour days for \$1.15, 7 days a week. It brought much growth nationwide, and Texas discontent reached a peak in 1886 with 75 strikes—but it was a false dawn for labor as shown in the railroad-provoked Great Southwest Strike in 1886. Food provided by sympathetic farmers prolonged the strike. The dramatic climax came April 3, when 10 federal and state deputies under the command of gunslinger Jim Courtright, who was wanted for murder in New Mexico Territory, shot it out with five strike sympathizers south of Fort Worth. Three days later the knights swept the Fort Worth city elections, including one member who was elected mayor. Yet the collapse of the strike—smashed by court injunctions, strikebreakers, and special deputies—revealed the lack of significance of the earlier triumphs. And the scattered political victories in 1886 drove the Texas knights more into political cooperation with the Farmers' Alliance and later the Populists and in the direction of establishing agrarian assemblies.

The railroads meanwhile offered jobless miners free transportation to Indian Territory, hauling in so many eastern and southern Europeans that wages were depressed to as low as \$30 a month in their dreary company towns. The Krebs mines were the most dangerous in the nation, since they were particularly dusty and the men often had to work while stooping in water. Over 1,600 men died in Oklahoma mines from 1873–1969. The showdown came in 1894 when the company slashed wages 25%, provoking a strike. Backed by the Choctaw Nation's eviction notice, federal troops routed 2,000 miners and their families without warning, herded many of them into boxcars, and dumped them at the Arkansas state line. Despite some political and economic successes in various communities, the knights went down in Indian Territory with the failure of the coal strike in 1894, and in Texas with the collapse of the Populists and the last two railroad assemblies in Dallas and Houston in 1896.

The knights arrived in New Mexico in the mid-1880s, and many of its members were associated with the Santa Fe Railroad. Key assemblies around Las Vegas however were soon infiltrated by the masked, night-riding *Gorras*, a band of Mexican-Americans defending their small plots of land from

the encroachment of Anglo ranchers. Besides cutting fences, the *Gorras* destroyed thousands of Santa Fe Railroad ties because the workers were not paid enough to cut and haul them. The knights and the *Gorras*, in their independent People's party, won an upset election victory over the Republicans in San Miguel County, 1890, but sharp division in the ranks over the use of violence and fusion with the Democrats ruined their political efforts in northern New Mexico by the time of the 1894 elections.

Arizona Territory was isolated from national trends, not plagued by an excess of labor, and dominated by mine owners who were small operators and maintained a fairly close relationship to the miners. During the 1890s, the lowest wage in the Globe-Miami mines, using Anglo and European hands, was \$3 a day while the Mexican workers in Clifton-Morenci made no more than \$2 for a 10-hour shift. But discontent was rare until Anglo miners in Globe in 1896, protesting wage cuts and the employment of Mexicans, organized the first Western Federation of Miners (WFM) local in the territory, and it prevailed after a company lockout.

The Southwest was knit together by the Santa Fe Railroad system, which was partially shut down by the American Railway Union (ARU) in July 1894, during the Pullman boycott. The ARU was trying to organize one big railroad union, but court injunctions and U.S. Marshals kept the stoppage brief. Also the operating crafts and machinists had contracts with the Santa Fe, and most of them—even many who were also ARU members—believed they had to honor those contracts.

State courts invariably ruled for employers, illustrated when railroad construction hand Henry Wilson sued his former employer for not providing his back pay as provided by the Texas Judge J. Simkins ruling in 1892 that the law was unconstitutional class legislation and wrote: "Unquestionably, so long as men must earn a living for their families and themselves by labor, there must be, as there always has been, oppression of the working classes."

Progressive Era and Collapse

Railroading and mining were the two leading industrial professions in most of the Southwest, and the Santa Fe line was struck again, this time by machinists and other shop men, in 1904–1905. The unions resented the hiring of nonunion workers as well as work rule changes, especially piece-rate payment. The company had strikebreakers ready for over a thousand who walked out, and the machinists were

finished after a few months. During World War I the federal government forced the Santa Fe to raise wages and engage in collective bargaining.

Phelps Dodge (PD) was the biggest of the mining companies, and the most consistently depressed industrial work force in the Southwest were its coal miners in New Mexico, most of whom were Mexicans and Italians. In the Dawson mines, opened in 1902, 385 were killed in tremendous explosions in 1913 and 1923. The United Mine Workers (UMW) tried to organize in the very early days, but organizers were barred from entering town, and the merest whisper of unionism was forbidden. Company-owned housing made it a classic slum-ridden company town. There were waves of layoffs caused by technological improvements in the 1920s and the Depression in the 1930s.

Indian Territory and Texas coal miners fared better, winning strikes in 1903 that secured numerous benefits. It led to the organizing of every craft in Thurber, Texas. During the Progressive Era the miners were a third of the membership of the Oklahoma State Federation of Labor (OSFL), and the miners and carpenters were the two largest unions in Texas. For some two decades after 1903, miners and operators prospered.

The OSFL, the railroad brotherhoods, the social progressives under Kate Barnard, and their agrarian ally, the Farmers' Union, dominated the writing of the new Oklahoma State Constitution, 1906–1907, which provided child-labor, 8-hour, and employer liability provisos regarding mines and the abolition of both convict labor and the fellow-servant doctrine, among others. Enabling legislation for these provisos along with other reforms, for example, forbidding railroads from using blacklists and requiring the 8-hour day for all public workers, passed during the progressive heyday, 1907–1910. Oklahoma's unions claimed 21,285 in 1907. The same coalition and similar provisos prevailed in Texas during Thomas Campbell's terms as governor, 1907–1911.

Dominated by the railroad and mining industries, but pushed by their respective unions, New Mexico also adopted similar legislation, beginning with statehood in 1912. The initiative, referendum, recall, direct election of U.S. senators, an anti-injunction measure, and several others previously mentioned were enacted by Arizona's progressive coalition of labor, agrarians, and small businessmen. The Arizona State Federation of Labor, representing some 7,000 union members at its founding in 1912, was perceived as having control of Arizona politics, 1910–1916. The state's first elected governor, George P. Hunt, was a former copper miner and labor supporter. In the 1910s, only the Arizona unions were keenly concerned about the incursion of labor from Mexico, but that sentiment gained ground

in Texas at the time. Texas was a one-party, Democratic state, but in all four states the effective political alliances were with the Democrats.

Traditional craft unions also sprang up in southwestern cities. There were scores of locals representing the building and printing trades, tailors, musicians, barbers, cigar makers, brewery workers, oil workers, blacksmiths, theatrical stage hands, coopers, butchers, telephone operators, among others. Some struggled to stay alive, for example, the retail clerks, street railway employees, laundry workers, and unskilled hands in the directly affiliated federal labor unions. In a number of communities where there were railroad shops or mines, their unionization inspired the organization of many other crafts.

In 1915, with wartime demand raising copper prices, Arizona miners enjoyed a flurry of success, especially when the WFM called out some 5,000 at Clifton-Morenci, where the wages were lowest. Governor Hunt called in the National Guard to keep strike-breakers out. The men got a wage increase, abolition of the differential wage scale, and standing grievance committees. Hunt's action was hailed as a model settlement by some media, but PD responded by taking control of every aspect of Arizona life, buying newspapers and sheriffs, seducing legislators, and bullying union leaders. Hunt was defeated by fraud in 1916, and by the time he was reinstated, the companies had broken the WFM and destroyed the progressive movement in the state. In 1917, PD faced a strike at Bisbee led by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the Mine, Mill, Smelter Workers (MMSW, the former WFM). Twelve hundred miners were loaded into box-cars and hauled to a desert stockade in New Mexico. Over half the deportees were citizens, and some were war veterans. Company unions replaced the real unions. The MMSW in Arizona, and New Mexico as well, were wracked by internal schism and constituted only a shell of unionism.

Though the Texas State Federation reached its peak of pre-World War II membership with 55,000 in 1920, World War I and its aftermath of red scare and renewed open-shop drives ended progressivism and sent southwestern labor into decline. The largely peaceful Galveston longshoremen's strike in 1920 was suppressed by martial law, highlighted by the attempt of three Texas National Guard lieutenants, out of uniform, to kidnap the editor of the *Houston Press* 40 miles outside the martial law zone. The state then adopted the Open Port law, 1921, which virtually required governors to break up strikes and impose open shops wherever disputes interfered with the shipment of goods.

Organizing drives in the oil fields of Texas and Oklahoma in 1917 were subverted by wartime charges

of radicalism and serving German interests. Masked vigilantes seized 17 IWW members from the police—in the Tulsa Outrage—whipped them repeatedly and tarred and feathered them. Most of the oil companies soon granted wage increases and other benefits similar to union demands as part of the open-shop movement, and oil unionism was dead until the early 1930s. Texas coal miners, facing a declining market and huge wage cuts, were locked out in 1921 and soon dispersed. Oklahoma's coal operators abrogated their contract with the UMW in 1924, slashed wages by a third, and imposed the open shop. The demise of the UMW was a severe blow to the Oklahoma labor movement. During the war the Amalgamated Meat Cutters of Oklahoma City and Fort Worth had prospered under federal mediation, but the packers, facing renewed international competition after the war, slashed wages and imposed company unions. The nationwide strike of 1921–1922 was broken in large part because of the availability of numerous unskilled and semiskilled workers from the swollen ranks of the unemployed. Most of the strikebreakers were black, and one each was killed in the two cities. The defeat of the nationwide shop men's strike, 1922, was a body blow to the railroad union movement in the Southwest.

Southwestern building trades and retail locals in the burgeoning cities from Phoenix to Beaumont were the targets of the Open Shop Association. Texas and Oklahoma oil booms in the 1920s spurred much construction, and the building trades—all almost entirely Anglo—held on to their membership and jobs better than other unions in the less than prosperous 1920s.

Labor's political clout vanished. A revived farmer-labor movement did elect J. C. Walton governor of Oklahoma, 1922, but he got so caught up in a literal war against the Ku Klux Klan that he neglected to push his farm-labor agenda, which included an 8-hour day for all labor and a minimum-wage law for women. Klansmen and others impeached Walton and removed him from office in November 1923. The finances of the Oklahoma State Federation of Labor became so depleted that for several years it was unable to pay the salaries of the president and secretary.

Hard times deepened labor's gloom. By the early 1930s, in the desperate years of the Depression, labor backed repatriation efforts. State and local governments took the lead in shipping some half-a-million people of Mexican ancestry to Mexico, though some were American citizens. In Arizona Anglo packing shed workers and black hands in the cotton oil mills and cotton compresses were among those who joined the cannery workers union, 1937–1939, but there were too many available workers, and the union lacked the power and the money of the Associated Farmers of

Arizona. The mostly Mexican coal miners in the Gallup, New Mexico, fields became affiliated with a Communist-controlled splinter group that rejected the UMW. Their strike in 1933 raised wages, but the killing of the sheriff brought fierce retribution, including deportations and long prison sentences. In Texas Southwestern Bell engaged in mass layoffs, given with 15 minutes' notice, typified by rampant favoritism and age discrimination. Female operators sometimes fainted at the switchboards from the extreme summer heat. On passage of the federal minimum wage law in 1938, American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) was forced to raise wages throughout the Southwest. Oklahoma chain-store clerks worked 16 hours a day for as little as \$9 a week. Waitresses worked for their meals and shared tips with employers. Over 300 thousand were unemployed by 1933, some 42% of all workers in the state.

Revived Unions, 1930s–1970s

Traditionally repressed groups benefited slightly from the New Deal and the war. In the Dawson, New Mexico, coal mines many futile strikes broke out in the 1930s, but the length of the national strikes in 1943 finally yielded a closed-shop contract, 1945, including a retirement plan and portal-to-portal pay. Only 4 years later the last major customer, the Southern Pacific, switched to oil, and the Dawson mines soon closed. The dreary history was much the same in Van Houton, 1903–1949; Sugarite, 1912–1941; Gardiner, 1911–1939; Brilliant, 1917–1953; and Madrid, 1893–1954. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union operated in eastern Texas and Oklahoma and elsewhere in the South. It made the nation conscious of the low living standards associated with cotton production, and Oklahoma passed the first landlord-tenant relations bill in the United States in 1937, promoting equitable rental contracts and arbitration. Even after winning a 1938 strike over wages, over 10,000 San Antonio pecan shellers lost their jobs because it was the only industry in the country that was forced to mechanize by the passage of the minimum wage law. Low wages and poor living conditions persisted for central Arizona's Yaquis through World War II. Many lived in tents or cardboard shanties and slept on their floors. Many joined building trades unions during the war and got back pay, but it still did not raise their wages to the level of Anglos or Mexicans.

The New Deal's Wagner Act, 1935, triggered widespread organizing efforts. Mine, Mill launched organizing drives throughout the region. In Oklahoma the

zinc and lead operators retaliated by raising wages and launching a company union. The new National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ordered the company union disbanded, and the MMSW eventually won a contract. At Bisbee in 1941, after PD fired 35 union members, the NLRB reinstated them. The company challenged the NLRB's authority before the U.S. Supreme Court, which devised the "Phelps Dodge rule." It became a touchstone in American labor law—companies could not refuse to hire workers on account of union membership. Organized labor not only played a key role in raising wages above the poverty level for minorities in unionized communities but also abetted their political awakening. When the MMSW organized PD at Clifton in 1942, the number of Mexican-Americans on the town council soared from zero, where it had been since the turn of the century, to an average of three for the next two decades.

The oil workers union advanced through Texas and Oklahoma with several successful strikes, but it was not until World War II, when the federal government ensured peaceful collective bargaining that virtually all refineries were organized. The wartime Fair Employment Practice Committee found both the union and the companies discriminatory in dealing with black workers, and they began their gradual change at that time. Texas locals took the lead in the nationwide refinery strikes in 1945 that preserved take-home pay even as working hours were cut after the war. Oil workers were the biggest of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions in both states in the 1940s and 1950s.

In the maritime industry in the 1930s, sailors aboard U.S. vessels suffered from damp, vermin-infested quarters, rotten food, and harsh discipline. Rank-and-file sailors, a number of whom were Communists, rebelled against the shippers in the strikes of 1936–1937. After considerable violence in several Texas ports, the CIO's National Maritime Union (NMU) brought about a quick and dramatic transformation of seamen's living and working conditions. During World War II Communist NMU leaders pressured employers and the government to end the Jim Crow hiring practices in Texas ports. Communist rhetoric was radical, but in negotiations they tended to conduct themselves just like other CIO officials. The union grew prodigiously in the war. The casualty rate among merchant seamen during the first-half of 1943 was proportionately greater than in the armed services. A successful postwar strike was followed in 1950 by the purging of Communists from the NMU.

After the Wagner Act was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1937, the Bell companies officially severed their relationship with the company unions.

The unions soon became truly independent, led by the Southwestern Telephone Workers. The fractured bargaining system was dissolved in 1947 with the establishment of the Communications Workers of America, which was forced to strike that year, primarily over AT&T's refusal to recognize the new union.

The largely Hispanic MMSW workers in Hanover, New Mexico, accused of communism, fought off injunctions in their 1950 strike against Empire Zinc by putting wives and sisters on the picket lines and blocking strikebreakers from getting into the mines. They wanted payment for all time spent underground, which was common in the other mines in the district. In the 1951 settlement, the union did not score much more than a moral victory, but the unusual confrontation inspired some leftist Hollywood writers and directors to make the 1953 movie, *Salt of the Earth*, which was targeted in the hysteria of the McCarthyite era and banned from being seen in the United States.

From 1939 to 1953, union membership in Texas grew—in thousands of members—from about 111 to 375, in Oklahoma from 34 to 87, in Arizona from 16 to 56, and in New Mexico from 9 to 25. The revived unions energized corporations and political leaders into cracking down on organized labor. In 1947, Texas banned all union security measures, thereby entrenching the open shop in the name of right to work. The Arizona electorate approved an open-shop constitutional amendment in 1948 while New Mexico, the least industrialized southwestern state, defeated one in 1948. The United Auto Workers (UAW) represented nearly 9,000 members at Temco and Chance Vought in Texas in 1956, but under the state right-to-work law also represented over 2,400 in the bargaining units who opted not to join the locals. Labor exercised occasional political clout, as shown in the elections to Congress, 1950s–1970s, of the Udall brothers, Clinton Anderson, Ralph Yarborough, and Fred Harris.

A collective-bargaining breakthrough with the big four copper companies, including PD, came in 1967 after the United Steel Workers absorbed the MMSW. The idea that companies of similar size producing similar products should be pressed into similar contracts—pattern bargaining—had become the postwar norm in the auto and steel industries. But in the nonferrous metals, the various craft unions had preserved their individual strongholds, and the companies had played off the unions against each other. The Steelworkers united with the crafts for bargaining, and when the companies rejected the uniform contracts, an industrywide strike of some 60,000 shut down copper, lead, zinc, and silver mining and refining in the United States, centered in the Southwest. The companies did not employ strikebreakers, since

inexperienced workers could easily ruin machines and themselves in the dangerous mines and smelters. In 1968, the companies agreed to their first pattern contract.

Hard Times Again

In 1979, the UAW waged an intense campaign to organize the new General Motors plant in Oklahoma City. Oklahoma business leaders financially supported plant workers who were campaigning against the union, but the UAW won the representation election overwhelmingly. While it was blow to the Oklahoma establishment, it was a more typical of the post-1973 era of higher fuel costs and intensive global competition when Oklahoma voters adopted a right-to-work constitutional amendment in 2001. The UAW has not organized any of the growing number of foreign-owned auto plants built in the United States, and Toyota is confident that its new truck plant announced in 2003 in San Antonio will be nonunion. Toyota is taking aim at the big three truck market in the Southwest and will benefit from a large labor pool on the struggling south side of the city.

On striking PD in Morenci, the Steelworkers inadvertently launched one of the milestone events in the retreat of organized labor in the 1980s. The other copper companies had agreed to a basic wage freeze for 3 years, but PD—facing collapsed copper prices and stiff international competition—wanted more. Over 2,300 workers struck in 1983 rather than accept a much-reduced package of wages and benefits. The governor reluctantly called out the national guard to protect strikebreakers, whose jobs were guaranteed against replacement by strikers. While President Ronald Reagan's firing of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers (PATCO) in 1981 was a landmark loss for labor, PATCO was a public-sector union whose members were legally barred from striking. It was the PD strike of 1983–1984 that provided the private-enterprise model for creating an open-shop environment, overt company strikebreaking through the tactic of permanent replacement. Many companies followed.

Many mines, smelters, steel mills, and packing-houses shut down because of foreign competition and obsolete operations. Railroads, newspapers and publishers, petrochemical plants, and auto and aircraft factories cut jobs by the thousands, replacing workers with machines. The open shop returned to the building trades, hit by the application of industrial technologies to construction as well as competition from skilled immigrants. The old mining base as

well as the newer manufacturing enterprises in much of the Southwest gave way to service-sector jobs, especially low-wage ones.

Unions in the Southwest began focusing on public employees, teachers, and service-sector jobs, for example, those in hotels and hospitals. Many of these workers have been intimidated over the decades, but attitudes can be changed, and few of their jobs can be moved. The Service Employees' Union is establishing building service unions, many of whose members are Mexican immigrants looking for ties with labor. Many southwestern public workers and teachers are forbidden to engage in collective bargaining or strikes, but unions always at least install grievance machinery. Teachers and state, county, and municipal employees have learned that they can engage in consultation agreements in lieu of collective bargaining if need be. The growth rate of these unions has surged since the 1970s.

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SOVEREIGN, JAMES R. (30 MAY 1854–1920s?) Knights of Labor

James R. Sovereign served as the Knights of Labor's national leader during the economic depression and social upheaval of 1893–1897. A product of farm life

and a stonemason by occupation, Sovereign both personified and advocated the merging of the urban, industrial labor movement of the 1880s and 1890s with the rising agrarian protest among farmers. Sovereign played a central role in articulating the mutual concerns of farmers and workers by allying the Knights of Labor with the National Farmers' Alliance. He also attempted to redirect and focus the protests of workers and farmers into political action by campaigning for a third national political party, The People's (or Populist) party, during elections in 1892, 1894, and 1896.

Sovereign was born on 30 May 1854, in Cassville, Wisconsin. Sovereign's early experiences help to explain his labor ideology. When Sovereign was 2 years old, his parents left him with paternal grandparents on their farm 7 miles west of Elgin, Illinois. Sovereign stayed until 16, when his grandfather's death and grandmother's relinquishment of the farm left him homeless. He migrated to Kansas to drive cattle from Texas, then worked heavy-construction jobs. By spring 1872, Sovereign moved to his father's farm near Cresco, Iowa, where he resumed high school at age 18. Four years later, he married Caroline Saucer. The couple had six children.

In 1874, Sovereign took up the craft of a marble cutter and carver and ended up in Muscatine, Iowa, by 1880. In 1881, he joined a Muscatine local assembly of the Knights of Labor, which first appeared in Iowa in 1878. Sovereign left stonemasonry in 1884 to recruit new knights and edit a local knights' newspaper, the *Industrial Leader*, in Dubuque, Iowa. Due in part to Sovereign's organizing, Iowa knights grew from 41 local assemblies and 3,200 members in 1885 to 233 local assemblies and 30,000 members across 86 counties and 228 communities.

Sovereign's subsequent election as state master workman coincided with dramatic changes in Iowa's economy and population. Both the value of manufactured goods in Iowa and the number of wage workers outside of agriculture increased by 60% from 1875–1895. During the 1880s, the rural population shifted toward the cities and towns to increase the urban population by 50%. In response to these changes, the Iowa knights secured through legislation a new Iowa Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1884 and new coal mine safety and health regulations. The knights state organization provided data and drafted legislation to the point where their political platform became the Bureau of Labor Statistics' recommended legislative reforms. As the leader of Iowa knights, Sovereign was poised to make the jump into state government. In 1890 and again in 1892, Governor Horace Boies appointed Sovereign as Iowa Commissioner of Labor Statistics.

Although the knights' national leader Terence Powderly had initiated cooperation with the National Farmers' Alliance in December 1889, the knights' losses of membership from failed strikes of 1886–1890 weakened them. Powderly's nonpartisan political stance also attenuated the ability of workers and farmers to obtain economic reform through a unified political agenda. In Iowa a convention of Knights of Labor members, trade unionists, Greenback party loyalists, and Iowa Farmers' Alliance supporters formed the Iowa People's party (Populists) on 3 June 1891. Discontent with Powderly grew until the November 1893 national meeting of the knights, when he resigned and an unstable coalition of Midwestern Populists and New York Socialists under Daniel DeLeon elected Sovereign grand master workman.

Sovereign lacked Powderly's broad administrative and leadership abilities. When he reneged on a promised editorship for Socialist Lucien Sanial, Socialists quit the Knights, abandoning their effort to move the Knights toward Marxism. A return to Masonic-style secrecy in 1895 alienated Catholics. More significantly though, Sovereign suspended the coal miners' National Trade Assembly 135, strong in Iowa, and glassblowers Local Assembly 300, which had funded the national office during crises. During the Pullman Strike and Boycott, he allied the knights with Eugene Debs's American Railway Union, but his call for a national sympathy strike was limited by other knights to Chicago alone. Later he testified against participation in future strikes: Words that would follow him. In July 1897, he joined Debs and AFL President Samuel Gompers in West Virginia during a United Mine Workers' strike but was privately seen as a liability by AFL leaders. That November Henry Hicks replaced Sovereign as head of the national knights. Sovereign moved to Idaho, where he witnessed military abuses during the 1899 Coeur d'Alene miners strike. He also spent time farming and selling insurance in Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, around 1900, but subsequently resumed newspaper editing in Ferry County, Washington, near the Colville Indian Reservation, where he died during the 1920s. Keller, Washington, residents erected a monument in Sovereign's honor in 1931.

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See also **Knights of Labor**

SOVEREIGNS OF INDUSTRY

The Order of Sovereigns of Industry was a labor reform organization that first appeared in Massachusetts in 1874, committed to "reconciling the interests of labor and capital" through cooperative consumption and production. William Earle, its founder, was a small fruit grower and organizer for the Patrons of Husbandry from Worcester, Massachusetts. Having found the Grange too limited in focus, he decided that American producers needed a more inclusive organization, one that would incorporate all working people. He issued a call to interested parties and in January of 1874 established the first council of the Sovereigns of Industry.

The sovereigns proposed to fight the middlemen, speculators, and monopolists who encroached "upon the liberties or rights of individuals" by charging extortionate prices for necessary goods. Their principal method was cooperation, primarily cooperative consumption, through which members would "purchase of such merchandise as we consume...[cheapen] production of such goods as we can produce with our labor, [and]...best *reconcile the interests of labor and capital*, which have been rendered antagonistic by the prevailing systems of trade." Their goal was to guarantee equal rights and "equal privileges under the social systems of the land," where producers would receive their proportionate share of the wealth and capital a suitable return for the risk of investment ("Declaration of Purposes," *Sovereigns of Industry Bulletin*, November 1875).

The Sovereigns of Industry came into existence during the depression of the 1870s, a period of economic and trade union decline, and yet it attracted a rapidly expanding membership. During 1875 and 1876, as many as 40,000 people from 18 states joined the organization. New England, and especially Massachusetts, was home to the greatest concentration of members, while in Pennsylvania the sovereigns organized over 11,500 members and 78 councils. The national organization could support a newspaper, the *Sovereigns of Industry Bulletin*, and fielded lecturers to spread their message.

In the process of expansion, the sovereigns absorbed an array of skilled workers, trade unionists, and labor reformers of all stripes. Only a few months after he founded the order, Earle sought to merge his organization with the Industrial Congress, the feeble descendant of the National Labor Union. Though the congress rebuffed his appeal, the order did absorb a number of trade unions. In Philadelphia the first council of the sovereigns absorbed many of the leaders of the failed International Workingman's Association Section 26 and included Fourierists, such as Albert Brisbane, as well as leading members of the Knights of Labor. One well-known Fourierist member, John Orvis, was also a former Brook Farm resident, labor reform editor in the 1840s, and long-time promoter of cooperative stores.

This diverse membership agreed on the importance of cooperation but seemed to have less confidence in the national leadership's analysis of the labor problem. In fact considerable disagreement arose over the proper role and usefulness of trade unions, the role of the state in labor reform, and the very nature of the antagonism between labor and capital. John Shedden, for example, a Yorkshire-born veteran labor activist from Philadelphia who was to become the organization's president in 1878, believed in the irreconcilable interests of labor and capital as did many trade unionists. He however rejected the utility of such trade union tactics as the strike. Strikes, Shedden argued, recognized the legitimacy of the wage system, which he believed should be entirely transcended.

Despite various dissenting opinions, the sovereigns approached cooperation earnestly. Being a hierarchal organization with local or subordinate state and national councils, the order contracted on each level with wholesalers and manufacturers for membership discounts. Local councils established cooperative grocery stores largely on the Rochdale model, and state councils purchased goods in bulk from manufacturers at a reduced price. In 1876, Earle estimated that the total yearly trade was \$3,000,000. From the proceeds and experience they gained from these ventures, the sovereigns expected to fund and operate cooperative

industries. Clearly many, not only Shedden, hoped to transcend the wage system entirely.

The sovereign's rapid success lasted only a few years. By 1878, the order was already collapsing. In part its problems stemmed from the decision to run its stores on the Rochdale model that forswore extending credit to consumers. To ensure the security of their cooperatives and save members from the trap of debt, the order denied its members credit and forced them to seek help elsewhere as the economy worsened. Prices also were falling, and this made successful negotiations for discounts with manufacturers difficult if not impossible to achieve. As the organization failed to deliver on its promise of inexpensive goods, membership rapidly declined, and by the end of the decade, the Sovereigns of Industry had completely disappeared.

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SPIES, AUGUST (1855–1887)

Anarchist

August Vincent Theodore Spies was born in Landeck, Germany, in 1855. The son of a forester, Spies became an avid reader and student of German history and philosophy before he left for the United States in 1872, where he would embark on a career as an anarchist agitator, organizer, orator, publisher, and, ultimately as a martyr to the revolutionary cause.

Spies traveled around the United States after he arrived, working odd jobs and discovering that many wage earners were, in his view, distressingly passive and deferential to their employers. He arrived in Chicago in 1874 or 1875, settled in the German North Side, and found work in his acquired trade, as an upholsterer. After the bloody repression of the

railroad trainmen's strike in 1877, Spies volunteered for the German workers' militia, armed groups organized in Chicago to protect workers from the police, and participated in the socialist movement.

In 1881, Spies played a leading role within a group of young, mostly German-born Socialists who abandoned electoral politics and embraced revolutionary activity. The Chicago militants were inspired by the exiled German anarchist Johann Most, who advocated the use of arms and dynamite in the violent struggles he believed were necessary to bring about a social revolution.

However Spies and other socialist revolutionaries in Chicago did not employ the violent tactics Most espoused. Indeed they remained faithful to the teaching of Karl Marx, who insisted that only the mass mobilization of the working class could create a labor movement powerful enough to overthrow the capitalist order. In 1883, Spies joined other revolutionary labor organizers in Pittsburgh where they issued a famous manifesto calling workers to act on their duty to rebel against oppressive rulers.

By this time Spies and his comrades had taken control of Chicago's influential socialist newspaper, *Arbeiter Zeitung*, a daily published in German that would, under Spies's direction, reach a circulation of nearly 20,000—making it by far the most widely read radical newspaper in the nation's history. Spies was equally active as a leader of the International Working People's Association (IWPA), which established branches in most of the city's working-class districts in 1885. Spies also participated in creating the Central Labor Union, a body of trade unions led by socialist revolutionaries, which soon rivaled the size of the established Trades and Labor Assembly.

By this time Spies and the Chicago revolutionaries had begun to call themselves anarchists because they believed in creating a cooperative society without centralized state control and because they believed direct action, rather than electoral action, was required to make the social revolution—action that would inevitably provoke violent repression by armed forces determined to defend the ruling order. Having completely abandoned electoral activity, Spies and the anarchists boldly advocated preparing for violent activity by urging their followers to arm themselves and to make dynamite bombs for use in confrontations with police and the militia.

While Spies waged this war of words against the capitalists and their minions, he was swept up in the tide of labor militancy that welled up across the country in March and April of 1886, as workers struck over a wide range of issues, mostly notably the 8-hour day. Acting on a proposal by the Federated Trades and Labor Organization that all workers leave their

jobs on May 1 to gain an 8-hour day, Spies and his anarchist comrades organized a variety of work groups in Chicago who gained the 8-hour day, sometimes without having to take a pay cut.

When May Day came to Chicago, more than 30,000 workers left work, including many who were mobilized by the anarchists. Spies was at the center of the storm of strikes that hit Chicago. Despite the dire predictions of the press and the fear that the anarchists would resort to violent tactics, the strikes remained nonviolent until the night of May 3 when Chicago police killed four strikers at the McCormick Works.

Spies had given a speech to these workers just before the shootings, and he was outraged over the events he witnessed. He then published a militant editorial telling workers to arm themselves to battle the police. He also publicized a rally to be held on May 4 at the Haymarket to protest the shootings. Spies opened up the meeting that night calling for calm, but later the police marched on the assembly, a bomb was thrown into their ranks, and a bloody riot erupted in which at least seven policeman and three civilians were fatally wounded.

Spies and the anarchists were blamed for the whole bloody affair and accused of hatching a conspiracy to attack the police at the Haymarket and in other areas, as a means of launching the revolution. August Spies was arrested, charged with being an accessory to the murder of the first policeman to die, and identified as the ringleader of an alleged anarchist conspiracy. Along with six other anarchist workers, he was tried in the summer of 1886 and sentenced to death by hanging.

In a final appearance before the court, Spies delivered a much-quoted speech. After declaring himself a good citizen and an innocent person willing to die for his ideas, Spies angrily told the court, "If you think you can stamp out the labor movement, then hang us!" But, he added, "Here you will tread upon a spark, but here, and there, and behind you and in front of you...flames will blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out."

Even more memorable were Spies's last words as he stood bound and hooded on the gallows on November 11, 1887. The covering over his head could not prevent Spies from uttering his last, free words: "The time will come," he said, "When our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today."

Spies's final words became his epitaph and are inscribed at the base of the famous monument at Waldheim Cemetery in Forest Park, Illinois, that was dedicated to Spies and the four other Haymarket martyrs who died in 1887.

JAMES GREEN

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SPIES, LABOR

In 1935, a Cincinnati streetcar worker sent a letter to Senator Robert M. LaFollette begging him to send investigators to ferret out labor spies in the streetcar union. Spies "report everything that goes on at the meeting" to the boss, he wrote, and "It is hell to have to be afraid to work like that." Worse, workers suspected that their union officers were the double agents. Fearing the letter would fall into the hands of the spies and he would be "discharged without any kind of hearing," he signed his letter only "A member of this union." In mills, mines, and department stores, labor spies attended union meetings, ran for union elections, and looked out for agitators and signs of industrial unrest. Private detective agencies supplied undercover operatives to American industry from the mid-nineteenth century through the late 1930s, when the LaFollette Committee's public hearings exposed undercover detectives and embarrassed employers, effectively squelching the practice. The secretive nature of labor espionage precludes reliable assessments of its scope. Trade unionists and historians have argued that labor espionage and strikebreaking retarded unionization and revealed anti-unionism unique to American employers. But workers readily took jobs as labor spies, suggesting that workers' willingness to inform on each other should be incorporated into the history of class formation and working-class consciousness.

Origins

Labor espionage originated on the railroads in the 1850s. Railroads ballooned into huge employers in the nineteenth century, with dispersed workforces of conductors and engineers operating with marginal

supervision by a thin layer of managers. Theft proliferated. Workers scalped tickets and stole freight, while conductors simply pocketed cash fare payments in a practice so widespread it acquired its own slang, “knocking down.” Railroads searched endlessly for technologies, from fare boxes to ticket punches, that could thwart conductor thefts.

Allan Pinkerton marketed a creative solution. Few localities had standing police forces or detective squads, and the weak U.S. state meant that U.S. Marshals focused on protecting government property and the mails. While European employers turned to state police forces to surveil and suppress workers, the United States developed a characteristically privatized labor-discipline system. Pinkerton had been freelancing as a postal inspector in Illinois, and he approached the Chicago-area railroads in 1855 with a proposal jointly to sponsor a railroad-checking business; Pinkerton would supply detectives to report on the “habits and associations of the employees.” Within a few months Pinkerton’s agents had caught a conductor on the Chicago & Burlington Railroad with a pocketful of ticket receipts. Railroad contracts made up a substantial portion of Pinkerton’s detective business for decades thereafter.

Undercover railroad surveillance was called “spotting.” Spotters rode trains, posing as regular passengers while they surreptitiously noted the conductor’s fare receipts and counted heads on the train car. Spotters also reported on conductors’ demeanors and service to passengers, recording whether conductors kept their cars and uniforms clean and treated passengers courteously. Thus spotters functioned as surrogate supervisors, serving as the eyes of management. Conductors despised spotters and developed strategies to foil them, from marking their shoes with chalk to alert other workers to attacking them on the platform. As streetcar service grew in cities, spotters popped up to surveil streetcar conductors as well; department stores hired spotters to watch store clerks as early as 1869.

Spotting seems to have spawned labor espionage. The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, already using Pinkerton spotters, called on Pinkerton in 1873 for help when violence erupted in the road’s Pennsylvania coalmines. Pinkerton sent James McParlan, an experienced spotter, to work as a miner and infiltrate the miners’ ranks. Two years later McParlan revealed himself and accused his astonished coworkers of membership in the Molly Maguires, helping send several to the gallows. The tremendous publicity surrounding the Molly Maguire trials apparently helped advertise the notion of using undercover operatives among workers to identify agitators and detect unrest. Once the technology of labor espionage was created, it could be deployed for multiple uses. Thus detectives posing as

railroad passengers could just as easily pose as miners or conductors.

Growth and Practices of Industry

Detective agencies proliferated after the 1877 railroad strike. Few barriers to entry slowed the industry’s growth: An aspiring detective needed only an operative and a client to get started. Pinkerton marketed his services with a steady stream of books and pamphlets, helping attract new entrants to the detective business, and former Pinkerton operatives opened their own agencies. Reliable assessments of the growth of the labor-spy business are hard to produce; detective agencies often provided general investigative services in addition to labor spies, and many added professional strikebreaking as well. After Pinkerton strikebreakers fired on steelworkers in Homestead in 1892, congressional hearings investigating the use of private strikebreakers led Pinkerton publicly to renounce labor spying and strikebreaking, although this renunciation lasted a few years at best. Open-shop movements in the early twentieth century and after World War I drove demand. New York City had 75 detective agencies by 1904; Chicago had 58 by 1918. In 1936, the LaFollette Committee counted 230 agencies nationwide and estimated their employment from 40,000–135,000. Large agencies included Thiel’s, the Railway Audit and Inspection Company, Corporations Auxiliary, and the William J. Burns Agency (whose proprietor became the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from 1921 to 1924).

Agencies tended to use a standard set of practices. Solicitors visited employers to drum up business and if retained arranged for the employer to hire an undercover operative under an assumed name. Operatives were directed to apply for a job in the factory or mine and report to work regularly, all the while observing coworkers closely. If a union already represented workers, operatives were to join the union and seek elective office, to get access to membership lists and union strategy; in nonunion workplaces operatives looked for signs of trouble and identified potential organizers. Operatives prepared daily reports for the agency, which abridged and compiled findings for employers. Employers could fire agitators, develop blacklists, and strategize to avert strikes with the information thus obtained.

The defects in this system were obvious to workers and employers alike. Agencies had incentive to exaggerate and foment trouble to create demand for their services, and operatives could easily fabricate reports from a barstool. Skeptical of its labor spies, General

Motors retained several detective agencies to surveil each other's operatives in the 1930s. Despite the problems with labor espionage, employers lured by the promise of insider information continued to hire spies, and LaFollette's 1936 investigation revealed that firms like Standard Oil, Quaker Oats, Ford, and Montgomery Ward all hired labor spies.

Labor journalists and progressives regularly published antispies polemics beginning in the late nineteenth century. These polemics followed a generic pattern of announcing the existence of the labor-spy system, revealing the tactics used by spies, describing particular instances of espionage, and attributing worker quiescence to fear and mistrust bred by the spies. Well-publicized exposures of labor espionage included the Interchurch World Movement's report on the 1919 Steel Strike. Former spies sometimes wrote their own accounts, including Charlie Siringo of the Pinkertons, who described his infiltrations into the Western Federation of Miners at length.

State Intersections

Gradually a state surveillance apparatus grew alongside the private-detective agencies. While state governments built national guard forces to break strikes, federal and local police agencies created detective squads that investigated radicals, whether Communist or trade unionist. Many of these antisubversive units popped up during World War I, like the Bureau of Investigation and the Army's Military Intelligence Division; federal agents infiltrated the IWW and tailed researchers investigating the 1919 Steel Strike. In the 1920s, the line between state and private surveillance of workers blurred as detective agencies and government agencies shared information and operatives moved between public and private payrolls.

Union Strategies

Workers employed various tactics to discover spies in their ranks, from following suspected spies to see whether they met with handlers or mailed fishy letters to publishing photographs of exposed detectives in union newspapers to alert other locals to watch out.

The extreme secrecy and clannishness trade unions sometimes displayed can be attributed in part to fear of detective infiltration.

Two ideas for battling labor spies recurred. Most often unionists proposed licensure. Wisconsin trade unionists seem to have originated the idea to require

all detectives to obtain state-issued licenses, thus automatically precluding the anonymity spies required. Wisconsin passed a licensure law in 1925. Detectives easily skirted the law by closing their Wisconsin offices and sending agents in from nearby states. Another favored tactic was state-sponsored investigations; the Homestead hearings, the Commission on Industrial Relations, state hearings in Wisconsin in the early 1920s and Pennsylvania in 1928 all explored the phenomenon and proposed limitations on private detectives. Only in Wisconsin did legislation emerge from the hearings.

In general though labor espionage ranked low on unions' list of priorities. Union legislative agendas rarely mentioned labor espionage, and only rarely did union leaders speak about the problem. The American Federation of Labor's (AFL's) aversion to state intervention in labor relations may be one reason; the relative importance of other issues, like the injunction and the yellow-dog contract, may be another.

Workers as Spies

A third reason may be unions' anxiety about exposing their own members. While polemicists and unionists presented the labor-spy problem as one of professional detectives infiltrating workplaces, evidence suggests that most workplace operatives came from the ranks of workers. Investigators' files hold hundreds of letters soliciting work as an informant from machinists and garment workers. In 1936, one detective agency estimated that 70% of its operatives were workers who supplemented their wages with informant's stipends, not professional detectives. In this light labor espionage looks not just like a vast conspiracy of employers and detectives, but also as a shortage of solidarity. Workers who spied are a sign of the limits of class consciousness.

Collapse of Industry

New Deal progressives never publicly raised these questions however when the LaFollette Committee convened in 1936 to investigate labor spies and strike-breaking in a bid to build public support for the imperiled Wagner Act. Workers who spied were presented as dupes who had been tricked by cunning detectives into inadvertently betraying fellow workers. By shaming corporations using spies, and revealing the predilection of spies to embellish reports, the LaFollette Committee helped damp demand for labor

espionage. Further the new National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) could readily investigate allegations of labor espionage and penalize employers, as the board interpreted the act to ban labor spying. The Supreme Court upheld this interpretation in *NLRB v. Fansteel* in 1939.

In the late 1930s, detective agencies complained to government investigators that lawyers had taken over the work of fighting unions, since attorney-client privilege shielded their consultation from public scrutiny. The NLRB investigators continued to discover labor spies at work through the early 1940s, but the number dwindled swiftly. Employers turned to more sophisticated strategies to fight unions, like welfare capitalism and human resources techniques.

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See also *Fansteel v. U.S.*; LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee; Railroad Strikes (1877)

SPRINGER, MAIDA (1910–2005) International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

Once touted as the pride of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), Maida Springer was a pioneer in struggles for social, political, and economic equality and justice for workers, women, and people of African descent. Beginning as an active volunteer for the ILGWU in 1932, Springer moved on to hold various union offices, including educational director, staff member of the Dress and Waistmakers'

Joint Board, business agent, and labor organizer. After 1955, her activism turned increasingly toward the African continent, where she served as a critical adviser to many of the burgeoning and struggling labor movements through her promotion of labor exchange programs and trade schools. She connected her struggle for civil and economic rights at home to the broader Pan-African movement for independence.

Born on May 12, 1910, in Panama, Springer immigrated to the United States where her early political outlook was forged in the cauldron of black protest politics of the World War I era. Weekly she heard Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association hammer the message of black pride and unity and street orators, such as A. Philip Randolph and Frank Crosswaith, inveigh against police brutality, lynching, and the widespread discrimination and exclusion African-Americans experienced. Springer brought the sensibilities forged in these childhood lessons to bear on her labor activism.

Just before the Depression forced her to join the wage labor force, Springer heard a speech by Randolph that transformed her thinking about organized labor. Randolph cast the problem of labor union exclusion in a new light by pointing out that white workers paid a price for their racism with lowered wages. This analysis awakened Springer to a new vision of organized labor as an institution capable of improving the lives of all workers. Randolph would become her lifelong mentor in her work for labor and civil rights and African labor development.

A serendipitous trip to England in 1945 as the first black woman to represent American labor abroad served to fuse Springer's domestic activism with an international purpose. Influenced by Pan-African luminaries George Padmore, Ras Makonnen, Jomo Kenyatta, and Una Marson, she committed herself to the task of orienting American labor toward an investment in the struggles of African workers to organize strong unions and free their countries from the yoke of colonialism.

Known affectionately on the continent as "mama Maida," Springer began more extensive work in Africa with her 1960 appointment as an American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) international representative. Serving as a vital labor consultant, she brought attention to East Africa, where she helped the fledgling Tanganyikan labor movement withstand the combined effort of industry and the colonial government to render it ineffective. She advised the Ethiopian labor movement in the country's first labor-management agreement, involving a sugar plantation union. She provided the same services for Liberian labor in the country's first tripartite National Industrial Relations Conference. With

her special interest in structuring programs designed to increase skill level, Springer oversaw numerous labor education programs. The Institute of Tailoring and Cutting, a Kenyan trade school that was established in 1963 primarily through her determined will, continues to operate in Nairobi.

Springer's work on behalf of Africa served to bolster the reputation of the AFL-CIO on the continent. As a close ally of many African labor and political leaders, including Julius Nyerere, Tom Mboya, and Rashidi Kawawa, Springer used her connections in labor, academic, and progressive circles in the United States to publicize the African perspective of colonialism. Many of the AFL-CIO anticolonial resolutions have the imprint of her influence.

In contrast Africans largely viewed the activism, policies, and personnel of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the non-Communist world labor body to which the AFL-CIO belonged, as paternalistic, ineffective, and compromised by colonial sympathies. After the AFL-CIO agreed to direct its African activities through ICFTU channels only, Western labor's influence in Africa fell off dramatically. As African nations gained their independence and sought to disentangle from their colonial past and Cold War constrictions, Springer saw her influence wane further. Most of the new governments forced the disaffiliation of African labor centers from the ICFTU, viewing the organization as a threat to nation-building policies, including the incorporation of labor movements into one-party states.

In the mid-1960s, Springer returned to the ILGWU as the general organizer for the Southeast region. She also traveled to the West to assess the prospects for organizing Mexicans and Asians into the garment industry in California. The pervasive racism among white union members throughout the country often dismayed her. Still she occasionally showed her trademark humor in the face of untenable barriers to organizing. When asked by southern white labor leaders how they could stop the practice of segregated bathrooms among their membership, Springer quipped, "Turn off the water in the white bathroom and let nature take its course."

Springer returned to the international affairs arena in the 1970s, first as a staff member of the African-American Labor Center, an AFL-CIO auxiliary, and then as an AFL-CIO consultant in international affairs. Her work included serving as coordinator of drought relief for the 17 affected West African countries in the Sahel and traveling extensively in Africa to provide various forms of aid to unions and assess needs.

Recognized as a role model, Springer acceded to the requests of labor centers to help bring more

women into the labor movement and increase their levels of activism. In 1977, she helped to coordinate the first Pan African Conference on the Role of Trade Union Women, which served as a forum to discuss the struggle for equal rights and the economic and social conditions and impediments women faced. From 1977 to 1981, she served as coordinator for the establishment of the women's bureau of the Turkish Federation of Labor. In 1979, in Indonesia she participated in putting together a seminar for female workers designed to increase female activism. In many parts of the world, Springer found that the concerns of women were similar. They wanted equal opportunity, equal pay for equal work, day care provisions, family planning, an end to employer verbal abuse, and 8-hour days with no forced overtime.

In addition to her international work, Springer dedicated herself to domestic civil rights activism. At Randolph's behest she served as an organizer for the 1940s March on Washington Movement. As Midwest director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute in Chicago, Springer worked on expanding voter education and registration from 1969–1973. From 1970–1974 she served as a vice-president of the National Council of Negro Women, which had rural cooperative projects with women in the southern United States and in countries in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

In the few years of life left to Springer, she again extended her services to Africa by helping to raise money for the Maida fund, a program administered through the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center. The fund helps child agricultural laborers leave this dangerous and exploitative work and return to school.

Springer's marriage in 1928 to Owen Springer produced one child, Eric Winston Springer. In 1965, she married James Horace Kemp, who would serve as president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and was a prominent Chicago labor leader. Maida Springer died on March 29, 2005.

YEVETTE RICHARDS JORDAN

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STANDARD OF LIVING

See *American Standard of Living*

STEEL AND IRON

Steel was the iconic industry of the Industrial Age—mammoth, smoky caldrons of fire and flame producing a miracle metal that could be shaped into anything and everything, from rails to I-beams, battleships to thumb tacks. The sheer size of its workforce and its central importance to the U.S. economy in the twentieth century made its labor struggles iconic as well. The industry and its workforce have fallen on hard times in the last few decades, and the industry as it exists today is a very different one than existed from 1880 to 1980. But for those 100 years, steelworkers were at the center of creating something like a (now apparently temporary) working-class republic. The rise of unionism in steel in the 1930s and 1940s transformed not only the lives of steelworkers, but it was a leading force in changing the rules of the game in American society for most of the second-half of the twentieth century.

When Iron Becomes Steel

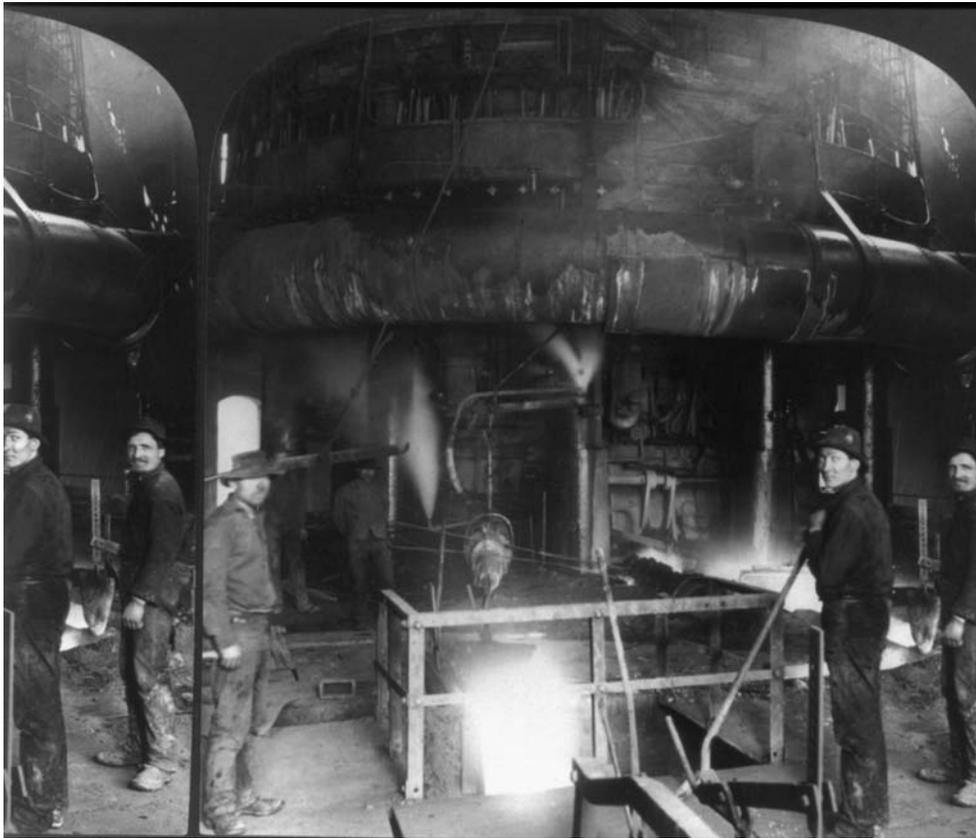
Iron is an ancient metal, dating back to 3,000 B.C. or before. Steel is an alloy of iron and carbon, produced by burning iron at such high temperatures that it liquefies and in the process not only introduces small amounts of carbon, but also makes possible the removal of various impurities, such as silicon, phosphorus, and sulfur. When exactly iron becomes true steel is a matter of some definitional debate, since ironworking has almost from its very beginning, accidentally at first, involved some admixture of carbon. The Damascus steel that amazed European crusaders in

the blades of Muslim warriors, and which was widespread in the Middle East from 900 to 1600 A.D., is thought to have derived from India’s wootz steel, dating from 300 B.C. But in today’s terms this steel—so visibly and practically different from iron in its time—is classified as wrought iron by metallurgists.

Steel becomes modern, true steel only when it can be reliably produced in large quantities—that is, only when the science of metallurgy is capable of precisely controlling the amounts of carbon and other alloys to produce a specific steel for specific purposes. Today’s high-carbon steel, for example, is especially hard but brittle. Low- and medium-carbon steels are softer but more amenable to being shaped into sheets and structural forms. Adding other metals produces different kinds and qualities of steel. Chromium steel for example combines hardness, strength, and elasticity, while nickel steel has the tensile qualities of high-carbon steel without the brittleness.

Centuries of trial-and-error experimentation and repetition by iron masters in small shops eventually led in 1709 to the blast furnace that used coking coal to turn iron ore into large batches of pig iron. Puddling furnaces, developed about the same time, allowed rough variations of the carbon content in this wrought iron. But modern steel became unambiguously steel only in the 1850s with the invention of the Bessemer Converter in England, which finally allowed for the relatively precise control of the iron’s carbon content. The Bessemer breakthrough was short-lived, being replaced in the 1860s by the open-hearth process for cooking iron into steel. Breakthroughs in rolling-mill technology during those same decades produced the modern integrated steel mill by 1870—one where a blast furnace turns iron ore into pig iron, which is then turned into steel by an open hearth, or today a basic oxygen, furnace. Molten steel is then poured into basic forms called blooms, which are then passed through a series of rolling machinery that shapes the steel into various forms as it gradually cools. With only minor variations, this was the industry of the 1870s in the United States, and it is the industry of the integrated portion of the U.S. industry today.

As steel mills increased their scale in the late nineteenth century, what had been craft-based small-scale production was transformed into mammoth workplaces full of relatively unskilled workers tending massive machines and moving raw materials and finished product from one place to another. The mechanization of steelmaking paradoxically produced a very labor-intensive process, and the workforce was divided between the craft occupations—some of them ancient, some of them less than a decade or two



At the lower level of the blast furnace. Drawing of the slag, steelworks, Homestead, Pa. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-69676].

old—and industrial grunts. The craft workers tended to be of English and German descent, while the much more numerous unskilled jobs were held by more recent immigrants from Eastern and southern Europe. As the metallurgists perfected their control of carbon content, so steel management sought to master its control of a polyglot workforce.

The Nonunion Era

Craft unions appeared simultaneously with the new steel industry of the late nineteenth century. In 1876, several of these unions—including the Sons of Vulcan, the Iron and Steel Roll Hands' Union, and the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers—merged into the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. Until 1892, these unions had substantial workplace power because they possessed craft knowledge and skills that management depended on. But as the noncraft part of the steel workforce grew in importance, the craft unions disdained them as members—partly because

the view of unions then was that they could work only based on craft power, partly because craft workers blamed unskilled workers for the degradation of their crafts in the transforming process they were undergoing, and partly because the unskilled workers were of different nationalities, religions, and traditions.

In the late 1880s, in the Pittsburgh area, then the center of American steel, the amalgamated was on the defensive at most non-Carnegie mills, and it had successfully enlisted the support of some of the unskilled immigrant workers, thereby winning some important local mill victories even as they still denied unskilled workers membership in their unions. This was the period during which Andrew Carnegie was buying and building mills, consolidating a haphazard industry under his control, and Carnegie was at first ostentatiously friendly with the amalgamated, accepting the iron scale for wages at all his plants until he faced stronger competition and the collapse of rail prices (then the principal steel product) in the late 1890s. Carnegie's approach changed dramatically in a showdown in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892.

As Jonathan Rees has shown, the amalgamated was “never as strong in any other mill as it was in

Homestead and never as strong in any other district as it was in Pittsburgh” (J. Rees, *Managing the Mills*, 2004). The union also had substantial support among unskilled workers and the townspeople, including elected officials. By taking on the union at its strongest point, Carnegie Steel ensured that a victory in Homestead would rid it of the union in all its other mills. Under the leadership of former coke magnate Henry Clay Frick, Carnegie locked out the work force, declaring it would no longer run union in Homestead. After some initial victories against Pinkerton guards, Homestead steelworkers eventually succumbed as the State of Pennsylvania seized control of the town and eventually escorted scabs into the mill.

But Homestead was just the most dramatic of the losses the amalgamated suffered in 1891 and 1892. It lost a series of strikes in eastern Pennsylvania in 1891, and most of the non-Carnegie firms in the Pittsburgh area were abandoning union scale, as had several Carnegie mills. As Rees explains, “Many steel manufacturers besides Carnegie Steel took on the union in the summer of 1892 because companies throughout the industry perceived the Amalgamated Association as vulnerable . . . By August, there were more non-union mills up and running across the country than at any time in the previous twenty years” (J. Rees, *Managing the Mills*, 2004). The nonunion era in steel had begun, and it would last, with only minor interruptions, for nearly half a century.

Though the amalgamated maintained a membership in many mills after 1892, and it sought to rebuild itself more than once, it was eventually defeated in all subsequent struggles. When U.S. Steel was formed in 1900 by merging a variety of companies into Carnegie Steel, the amalgamated had contracts at several of the mills, and for the next decade, it mounted various plant-level strikes to maintain recognition. It took U.S. Steel almost a decade to eliminate the union, but by 1909 it had. Labor strife continued at U.S. Steel and other companies after 1909, and despite the virtual nonexistence of the amalgamated, labor actions heated up during the years of war production, beginning in 1914. In 1916, for example, there were 72 strikes in the industry. In most cases however, striking skilled workers were simply replaced, often by less skilled workers who increasingly showed that they could do the job. The increased organizing of the full-production war years culminated in the Great Steel Strike of 1919—great for its size, not its result, which was another resounding defeat.

By 1919, there were two dozen different unions, of which the amalgamated was but one, that claimed to represent some segment of the steel workforce, a combined dues-paying membership of 100,000 out

of some 500,000 steelworkers during these peak production years. With leadership from the Chicago Federation of Labor and the decidedly tepid approval of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), this group of unions formed a national coalition and called a national strike across the industry beginning on September 22. A total of 250,000 steelworkers struck on that first day—more than twice the existing membership and clearly enough to disrupt production substantially, causing both economic pain for the companies and political problems for the war presidency of Woodrow Wilson. The strike’s organizers had hoped for federal government arbitration of a settlement. When President Wilson made clear that was not going to happen, the organizationally weak but still symbolically prestigious amalgamated pulled its skilled workers off the picket lines in November. Though it varied greatly from mill to mill, there were fewer strikers with each passing week. By January 8, 1920, the unions admitted the obvious and declared the strike officially over.

Though another bitter defeat that would chill union organizing in steel another decade or more, the 1919 strike crafted a weapon that steelworkers would eventually use to change the economics of the industry—an industrywide strike that was as much political as economic, bringing the question of steel wages and conditions to the citizenry as a whole by halting steel production across the economy and thus not only strangling company profits, but also goading politicians to intervene between companies and workers who might otherwise destroy each other, the industry, and all it meant to the American economy then. What is more, the strikers in 1919 tended to be the foreign-born lesser skilled workers, not the craft aristocrats of old, and the idea that all steelworkers should act as one, whether in one union or a coalition of unions, took root in this core industry.

The Union Era, 1937–1983

The organization of the steelworkers in the mid-1930s by the Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO) is well-known. At first the steelworkers seemed recipients of favorable external events, not themselves agents of their own destiny. The National Labor Relations Act was passed in 1935, encouraging the formation of labor unions as official government policy. The CIO was formed, over AFL objections, in 1936 to organize steel, auto, rubber, and other manufacturing workers on an industrial basis, with everybody in a given industry belonging to one big union. Rubber workers in Akron and autoworkers at

General Motors in Flint, Michigan, established the breakthroughs in 1936 and early 1937, from which the steelworkers benefited. Organizers from the United Mine Workers braved the slings and arrows of the Coal and Iron Police in steel company towns, and rank-and-file steelworkers worked quietly if at all to organize themselves department by department, mill by mill, sometimes using the company union structures that were in some cases leftover from the welfare capitalism of the 1920s and in others, hastily constructed mechanisms for avoiding the new legal environment. Seemingly out of nowhere, without a fight yet being mounted, U.S. Steel ([USS] in control of about half the industry) abandoned more than three decades of the fiercest anti-unionism and in March 1937 recognized the CIO's Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC). At the time somewhat less than 20% of steelworkers at USS had joined the union

When steelworkers finally did enter the fight on their own behalf in the Little Steel Strike of May 1937, they lost one last time—against the smaller but still huge steel companies of Bethlehem, Republic, Inland, and Youngstown Sheet & Tube. Direct, unalloyed repression had always been strongest in steel, and 13 workers were killed and scores more injured in the strikes that dotted Pennsylvania, Maryland, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and New York. But the tide was turning, and as production for World War II took off by 1940, SWOC renewed its organizing mill by mill, finally achieving a breakthrough with a series of successful strikes at Bethlehem Steel in February and March of 1941. By 1942, when SWOC officially became the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), the new union represented a commanding majority of all those who worked in steel.

The war years, during which unions traded membership security agreements for a no-strike pledge for the duration of the war, were years of internal organization, the time when most steelworkers learned their unionism, developed new leadership at the plant and department levels, and established a daunting number of committees, standing and ad hoc, to address the numerous issues the union chose to address from job classification schemes to the annual union picnic. The organization that emerged from the war was unlike anything seen before in steel.

With former miner Philip Murray the head of both the USWA and the CIO, the steelworkers were the main act in the massive 1945–1946 strike wave. With more than a million CIO workers already on strike in auto, meatpacking, and electrical equipment, on January 21, the steelworkers emptied the steel industry of workers, with 800,000 walking out of all steel, steel-related, and even some nonsteel plants. The entire industry simply stopped. Unlike all previous steel

strikes, including the massive effort in 1919, everybody went out together regardless of occupation, employer, ethnicity, or location. And after the federal government forced what many saw as an inadequate wage increase to keep up with postwar inflation, they all went back together as one. The 18.5-cents-an-hour increase they won (nearly double what the steel companies had offered) then became the standard for settling all the CIO strikes and many AFL ones as well.

Over the next decade steelworkers' capacity to go out together and come back together across the entire industry not only bludgeoned the steel companies into something like a 50% increase in real wages, it made steel wages and benefits (and company profits and practices) national political issues every 3 years, with the general public broadly supportive because whatever the steelworkers won generally improved the prospects of all other workers, union and nonunion. Depending on the year, from 500,000 to 600,000 steelworkers shut down the industry with regularity—in 1949, 1952, 1955, 1956, and 1959. When the steelworkers won partial company funding of health insurance in the 1949 strike, they were among the first to have it, but the benefit became standard in most workplaces in the following 20 years. Something similar happened with private company-funded pensions, also first won in the 1949 strike. Though other unions were often the innovators of a new benefit or contract provision, the massive nationwide steel strikes made just compensation and higher standards of living for all workers consistent popular demands that the government (at all levels) was expected to help in achieving. For a quarter-century beginning in the late 1940s, real wages for all production and nonsupervisory workers (about 80% of the private-sector workforce) increased by nearly 70% until 1973, when they began a decline from which they have yet to recover.

Eventually the nationwide strikes wore out both the companies and the union, and after 1959 they took action to avoid them (including with a formal agreement in 1973) while still continuing to improve steelworkers' living standards and working conditions into the 1980s. The 40 years from 1941 to 1981 were prosperous ones not only for steelworkers, but for the industry as well. A well-managed oligopoly, the industry had substantial ability to raise its prices in a growing economy, and it was one of the few profit-making steel industries in the world in the postwar period. Until the 1970s, steadily rising real wages across the economy fueled further economic growth, but then as both nonunion wages and economic growth stagnated, the economics of the industry changed for the worse. About half the industry was lost in the worst economic recession in postwar U.S.

history in the early 1980s. After a dramatic wave of mill closings from 1977–1983, the industry was thoroughly restructured. After a few years when a renewed stability had seemed to be restored, a new stream of closings and then bankruptcies were followed by a second restructuring of the industry in the early years of the new century.

We can date the close of the union era with the 1983 concessions' contract, the last industrywide contract and indeed the last time the union even tried to negotiate on an industrywide basis. The character and financial condition of the various companies varied so widely that the union had to reorganize completely its postwar bargaining approach, treating each company's situation differently without putting wages (now defined as the broader "employment costs") into competition. Far from disappearing the USWA has probably played a stronger and more decisive role in the integrated part of the industry in the last 20 years than in the previous twenty. But that part of the industry is now but a part, and no longer the whole.

Globalization and Minimills: Workers on the Defensive

The American steel industry at the dawn of the twenty-first century produces about 100 million tons of steel a year (in net tons shipped), an amount that is 60% greater than its peak production during World War II and larger than in any year prior to the 1970s, when the industry first reached the 100-million-ton level. It is of course no longer a growth industry, but it is far from dead as a metal and an industry. What have been lost are jobs, hundreds of thousands of union jobs, and the communities that were built around the wages and benefits steelworkers received for doing those jobs.

Imports killed some of these jobs, since they now fulfill 20%–30% of American demand for steel in any given year. But minimills took many more, revolutionizing steel production within the United States in a new nonunion sector. Minimills produce steel from used steel, the ubiquitous scrap that has accumulated, and goes on accumulating, after a century of industrial production. Using electric furnaces to melt and reprocess scrap, minimills skip the entire front end of the integrated steelmaking process (the blast furnace and pig iron). With the development of continuous-casting (now used in integrated production as well), they also skip the blooming process. As a result these steel mills are much smaller (thus, minimills), with smaller workforces, and they can be located almost anywhere, as they increasingly have been

since the 1970s. Today about half of U.S. steel production comes from minimills. The workers in these mills are almost all nonunion, and they generally have wages and benefits that track union standards in the integrated sector at a 15%–25% distance.

What remains of the integrated sector is now the other half of the industry. This half is still strongly union, and after two decades of some of the most complicated and difficult negotiations in the history of collective bargaining, these workers have real wages that are roughly comparable to what steelworkers in 1980 had achieved.

Together these two halves of the steel industry employ about 100,000 wageworkers versus a rough average of some 500,000 a year from World War II into 1980. It may seem unfair to compare the productivity of this two-part industry with the days when there was only the integrated part, since minimills produce steel that somebody long ago had already produced. But today's steelworkers, union and nonunion combined, each produce about 1,000 tons of steel a year versus 138 tons in World War II, 200 tons in 1965, and 300 tons in 1980. The vast majority of steel jobs were lost to these productivity increases.

The steelworkers' union has fought a valiant defensive battle to preserve wages and standards in the integrated industry, and it has mobilized its members politically and in a series of fierce rearguard strikes that has kept a union presence in any mill that ever had one. It has not yet mounted a serious effort to organize the minimills. After losing more than half its membership (including many in other industries like copper, aluminum, and can), the union has more recently been gathering other manufacturing unions under its banner, with the Rubber Workers and Paper Workers the largest of a series of mergers. It has reconstituted itself as a broad manufacturing union now, with a longer official name reflecting its current complexity. By common agreement of this more industrially diverse membership however, the union will continue to be referred to as United Steelworkers, reflecting a labor struggle that continues into a third century and a metal known for its durability, resilience, and toughness.

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STEEL STRIKE (1959)

On July 15, 1959, more than 500,000 steelworkers—from Buffalo to Birmingham, from Baltimore to Oakland, California, with Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Gary, Chicago, and the Minnesota iron range in between—struck 12 steel companies, shutting down more than 90% of steelmaking in the United States. They did not return to work until November 6, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld President Dwight D. Eisenhower's right to force them back to work with a Taft-Hartley injunction.

Half-a-million workers on strike for 116 days makes the 1959 steel strike the largest single work stoppage in U.S. history. A few other strikes have involved as many or more workers, including the 1946 steel strike when 800,000 walked out, and many have lasted longer. But combining mass and length in what was then called "man days idled," no other strike in U.S. history comes close.

The strike was engineered by U.S. Steel and the other steel companies with the aim of reversing the momentum the steelworkers' union had gained in collective bargaining with similarly massive, but shorter strikes in 1946, 1949, 1952, 1955, and 1956. With each of the earlier strikes, the union had won some new benefit as well as real wage increases totaling nearly 100% in the 18 years prior to 1959.

The 42-day strike in 1949, for example, forced the steel companies to fund a pension plan and partially to fund health insurance. The 34-day strike in 1956 completed the union's immediate postwar bargaining agenda when it won supplemental unemployment benefits, which ensured that steelworkers received about 80% of their wages when they were laid off.

Though some of their public rhetoric suggested otherwise, the steel companies were not focused on taking away any of these gains. While also aiming to slow the growth of wages, their primary target in 1959 was "rigid union work rules" protected by Section 2-B, the "Local Working Conditions" part of the Basic Steel Contract. Particularly offensive was a "past practice" clause the union had won in 1947 and had then used in the grievance-and-arbitration system to expand greatly its shop-floor powers. The U.S. Steel head Roger Blough claimed that 2-B restricted management's right to manage, protected featherbedding and other forms of loafing on the job, and even more broadly, forced "labor practices which impair the competitive principle [and] are incompatible with a free society."

Chafing under the burden of "rigid union work rules" was a common management complaint during what Mike Davis has called the "management offensive of 1958–1963." As in steel, most unions had acceded to formal management rights clauses in the late 1940s, but had then used their grievance and shop-steward systems gradually to erode the authority and discretion of front-line and then higher levels of management. Blough spoke for management in general when he described this grievance-by-grievance process as "glacierlike forces" that had to be reversed. In many workplaces, as in steel, a key issue involved union restrictions on management's ability to eliminate jobs when it installed new technology.

Also common during this time was the long strike as a management strategy. In 1959 alone, coal miners in Kentucky and West Virginia were on strike for 129 days, wholesale and retail bakers in New York City for 102 days, copper workers at Kennecott for 173 days and at Phelps Dodge for 238 days. As the U.S. economy had been growing through 1957, companies had given unions more than they thought they could sustain when the worst economic recession of the postwar era hit in 1958. Coming out of that recession, workers' finances had been weakened by long lay offs, and many workers were therefore less capable of sustaining long strikes.

A long-strike strategy was particularly appealing in steel for two different reasons. One had to do with a pattern that had clearly emerged with the regularity of postwar steel strikes. Buyers of steel products, such as auto companies, engaged in frenzied buying prior to

contract deadlines, stockpiling steel for use during the strike. With relatively short strikes (the 58-day strike in 1952 being the longest), demand for steel would fall precipitously after a strike, as buyers continued to draw down their stockpiles. Led by U.S. Steel Labor Relations chief R. Conrad Cooper, the companies sought to stimulate buyers' stockpiling in 1959 and to concentrate production (and profits) in the first-half of the year, leaving them in position to outlast the steelworkers in a prolonged economic war of attrition in the second-half. This part of the strategy succeeded brilliantly, since the companies compiled a profitable year despite the strike, and they never really faced economic pressure to settle the dispute.

The second reason for a long-strike strategy was that the steelworkers' union did not and could not pay strike benefits during steel strikes; even very modest payments to 500,000 workers who were no longer paying dues would bankrupt the union in a matter of weeks. An additional advantage the companies thought they had was that by 1959, there was a well-organized and bitter rank-and-file opposition to the steelworkers' union president, David J. McDonald. The logic was that months without paychecks would further split the ranks from the leadership, thereby weakening the union to renegotiate its work rules. This part of the strategy failed miserably.

A long-strike economic war of attrition is a contest of competing solidarities. Rank-and-file steelworkers began the strike reluctantly, with a clear majority telling reporters that they preferred continued work to a wage increase. The companies' June proposal, attacking 2-B and accompanied by loose language from Cooper about reversing "the mistakes of the last 18 years," forced a resigned unity but little enthusiasm. Having struck every 3 years for more than a decade, steelworker families had systematically prepared for a possible strike, with many building up stockpiles of their own based on the plentiful opportunities for overtime during the first-half of the year. The union had well-oiled machinery for striking, including an internal welfare system that addressed hardship cases among strikers based on local union treasuries. But the union also reached out to merchants, banks, charitable agencies, and local and state governments that in most steel towns were highly cooperative, both out of genuine sympathy for the strikers and for more pragmatic reasons given the steelworkers' previously demonstrated capacity for organizing politically and commercially to reward its friends and punish its enemies. The first months of the strike were relatively easy for most steel families, but by October most were hurting, and the union's internal welfare system was straining to meet all the hardships. According to extensive

week-by-week reporting in the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* however, the mood among the ranks had hardened by then. As the situation became more desperate, reporters found an anger and an *élan* that had previously been absent.

When President Eisenhower's injunction forced steelworkers back to work in November, they were angry, not relieved. Though a smaller steel company, Kaiser, had broken ranks and settled with the union on its own, the other 11 companies showed little sign of weakening. The Taft-Hartley process however required the companies to submit a final offer that the steelworkers had to vote up or down by the end of the 80-day cooling-off period in late January. The companies' proposal was a long way from its June demands of no wage increase and a gutting of Section 2-B; it offered a package worth about 30 cents an hour over 30 months and to submit its issues with 2-B to an impartial arbitrator. The economic package was outsized compared to other labor contracts at the time, but the union leadership required even more in order to make up for wages lost during the strike, and they dismissed out-of-hand submitting anything in 2-B to the whims of an arbitrator.

As a late January vote of the rank-and-file approached, both the union and the companies conducted opinion polls among steelworkers, and they both showed enormous 9-to-1 majorities against the final offer and for going back on strike when the cooling-off period ended. With the Eisenhower administration aware of these results and claiming that a renewed strike would threaten national security, it leaned (gently in public, heavily in private) on the companies to settle, and on January 6 they did. The final package was worth 39 cents an hour over 30 months, and 2-B would be submitted to a union-management committee for further study.

The 1959 steel strike, the last industrywide strike, was a decisive victory for the steelworkers, and the steel companies would never again challenge the union. It also blunted, though it did not end, the larger management attack on union power, with Mike Davis aptly calling it "the Eastern front" of the Management Offensive. *New York Times* labor reporter A. H. Raskin saw the strike as part of a dangerous change in postwar labor relations, "a struggle over basic power relationships," not a "conventional bread-and-butter quarrel" but "a conflict profounder than any fought by unions and employers since the bloody strikes of the Thirties." The final settlement, Raskin said, "marked a rout of the major companies in what they considered a crusade to re-establish the lost prerogatives of management.... A management victory would have meant a general reassessment of the bargaining relationships

STEEL STRIKE (1959)

built up in most major industries in the quarter-century since the New Deal.” That reassessment would be delayed another quarter-century in no small part because of the extraordinary solidarity the steelworkers displayed in the second-half of 1959.

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See also **Steel and Iron**

STEELE v. LOUISVILLE AND NASHVILLE RAILROAD COMPANY (1944)

In December 1944, the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Steele v. Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company* squarely addressed the issue of the discriminatory treatment of African-American railroad workers by the all-white railroad brotherhoods that both excluded them from union membership and used their institutional power to negotiate contracts that were explicitly harmful to blacks’ job rights. Although failing to overturn the brotherhoods’ whites-only membership policy, the Court found an implicit “duty of fair representation” in labor law that accorded formal, legal recognition on the unions, requiring them to represent black workers covered by their “craft or class” without prejudice.

The context for the decision was the long-standing tradition of racial exclusion and discrimination in the railroad industry and its dominant unions. For decades before World War II, African-American workers in the railroad-operating trades (firemen, brakemen, and switchmen, in particular) had confronted a sharply discriminatory labor market as well as considerable hostility from their white counterparts. Allowed access to these positions only in the South, they were everywhere excluded from membership in the all-white railroad brotherhoods, which

used their strength and legal recognition as trade unions to negotiate contracts that favored white employees at black workers’ expense. “For the past fifty years,” civil rights attorney Charles Hamilton Houston observed in 1949, the white railroad brotherhoods “have been using every means in their power to drive the Negro train and engine service worker out of employment and create a ‘racially closed shop.’” Whites’ hostility toward blacks assumed a variety of forms, including strikes calling for the dismissal of black employees and outbreaks of violence, particularly in hard economic times. During the 1910s and especially after World War I, contracts became whites’ most effective technique for limiting blacks’ access to key jobs and fixing their percentage in the workforce.

In the years following World War I, it was evident that many black railroaders were losing ground in the labor market, and by the Great Depression, their status in the industry had reached a crisis point. Black firemen and trainmen had decreased in number from their historic high in 1920 of about 6,505 and 7,609, respectively, to 2,356 and 2,857 in 1940. So bad did the situation appear that John T. Clark of the St. Louis Urban League privately admitted in 1934 that the “story of the Negro in the railroad and transportation industry is most pathetic.” There was little question that by the start of World War II, racial discrimination in the operating sector of the railroad industry, a long-established fact of life, was increasing. Despite growing shortages of labor, the white brotherhoods refused to relax their staunch opposition to the employment of black firemen and brakemen; for their part railroad managers and officials of the federal War Manpower Commission and Office of Defense Transportation responsible for labor procurement maintained an antiblack stance as well.

The plight of black railway firemen particularly deteriorated under the Southeastern Carriers’ Conference Agreement of 1941, which one federal investigator later called the “ultimate in all discriminatory agreements” aiming at the “total elimination of colored men as firemen.” The previous year the all-white Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen (BLFE) informed some 21 railroads of its intention to negotiate even more restrictions for black workers. Their proposed agreement would reserve all diesel jobs for promotable men, a category restricted to whites; in addition promotable men would be given preference on all new or changed runs, and the percentage of nonpromotable men would be limited to 50% on each railway division. With officials of the National Mediation Board (NMB)—the federal agency overseeing railroad labor relations—playing a key role, the parties signed a contract in February 1941.

Almost overnight black workers found themselves confronting demotions and furloughs.

Southern black firemen turned to the courts for redress. In the late 1930s, two southern, independent railroad associations, the International Association of Railway Employees (IARE) and the Association of Colored Railway Trainmen (ACRT), had retained noted civil rights attorney Charles Hamilton Houston to represent them in legal matters. Houston was not a labor law specialist when he began his legal work on their behalf, but he needed little introduction to southern black railroaders' plight: His father, the prominent Washington, DC, attorney, William Houston, had served as general counsel for the independent Railway Men's International Benevolent Industrial Association after World War I. After graduating from Harvard Law School, Charles worked with his father in the firm of Houston & Houston and joined the Howard University Law School faculty, where he would serve as the vice-dean. In that capacity he transformed legal education with the aim of training a new generation of black attorneys committed to social activism in the legal realm. From 1935 to 1938, Houston served as special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People before returning to private practice. Although he had only occasionally addressed labor issues before, the ACRT and the IARE retained him in 1939. Houston would now launch a campaign against employment and union discrimination that would engage a good portion of his energy until his death in 1950. The 1941 Southeastern Carriers' Conference Agreement, which Houston believed to have been "born in iniquity and conceived in sin," made for a convenient target.

Bester William Steele, a 54-year-old veteran employee of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in Birmingham, Alabama, put himself forward as a plaintiff for the IARE. As a result of the new agreement, Steele lost a desirable job in the passenger pool in 1941, replaced by a white fireman who possessed less seniority. Out of work for 16 days, he was next assigned to a more difficult and less-remunerative position in local freight service, where he was again displaced by a junior white fireman and assigned to work on a switch engine. Angered by the unfair treatment, Steele turned to his union, the Birmingham chapter of the IARE, of which he was general chairman. For Steele and other IARE officers, the 1941 agreement and the subsequent legal challenge to it became an organizing tool to generate publicity and enthusiasm among black railroaders. Over the next decade of legal maneuvering, Steele remained a committed activist, representing his men not just in court, but in negotiations with company and white brotherhood officials as well.

Houston filed suit in Alabama court in August 1941. Over the next 3 years, the Steele case made its way through the judicial system. On January 13, 1944, only months after Steele and other black railroaders had publicized their plight by testifying at the federal Fair Employment Practice Committee hearings on discrimination in the railroad industry, the Alabama Supreme Court upheld a lower court's dismissal of Steele's suit. As in earlier rulings, the Alabama court found no constitutional questions or federal action involved. Where Steele's attorneys argued that the white brotherhood "was under a duty to give the minority employees, non-members of the Brotherhood, notice of any action to be taken which would in any manner detrimentally affect their seniority rights," the court found no such duty at all.

Then in December 1944, the U.S. Supreme Court dramatically reversed the lower court's decisions, as well as its own previous stance in cases of racial discrimination under the 1934 Railway Labor Act. In two related cases concerning railway trade unions and racial discrimination in employment—*Steele v. Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company* and *Tunstall v. Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen*—the court held that the Railway Labor Act that governed union-management relations in the railroad industry implicitly imposed a "duty of fair representation" on the exclusive bargaining agent—in this case, the BLFE. Under the provisions of the Railway Labor Act, the BLFE had been "clothed with power not unlike that of a legislature which is subject to constitutional limitations on its power to deny, restrict, destroy or discriminate against the rights of those for whom it legislates and which is also under an affirmative constitutional duty equally to protect those rights." As the exclusive bargaining agent, the union had to serve as the representative of all members of its craft or class (in this instance locomotive firemen), the minority as well as the majority, nonmembers as well as members. That means that like it or not, the BLFE had to represent fairly the black workers in the class or craft of firemen that it excluded from membership. The court made it clear that the Railway Labor Act did not require the union to admit blacks to membership; indeed it could legally establish its own membership guidelines that explicitly prohibited African-Americans from joining. Yet the act imposed "upon the statutory representative ... at least as exacting a duty to protect equally the interests of the members of the craft as the Constitution imposes upon a legislature to give equal protection to the interests of those for whom it legislates." The U.S. Congress had "seen fit to clothe the bargaining representative with powers comparable to those possessed by a legislative body," the court argued,

but it had also “imposed upon the representative a corresponding duty . . . to exercise fairly the power conferred upon it in [sic] behalf of all those for which it acts, without hostile discrimination against them.” Congress had not intended to “confer plenary power upon the union to sacrifice, for the benefit of its members, rights of the minority of its craft.” Discrimination “based on race alone” was “obviously irrelevant and invidious.” Such reasoning led the court to conclude that the 1941 contract was unquestionably discriminatory.

The ruling was widely hailed by supporters of civil rights. “[E]very single proposition we have advocated for five years was adopted by the United States Supreme Court,” Houston privately but enthusiastically declared. For the black weekly the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the decisions had forever outlawed the nefarious practices of the “unholy alliance of reactionary employers and prejudiced rail unions.” The decision was “another milestone in the legal struggle to break down discrimination against Negro Americans,” declared NAACP special counsel Thurgood Marshall. The white head of the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC), Malcolm Ross, insisted that the Steele case would in time “be recognized as a Dred Scott decision in reverse,” while the white director of the FEPC’s San Francisco Office, Harry Kingman, concluded that Houston’s accomplishment was “worth many hundreds of the individual cases with which we deal in field operations.” As a consequence Houston should be considered “one of the most famous and respected attorneys in the nation.”

These assessments and predictions overstated the impact of these decisions. Houston himself realized that considerable legal effort would be required to make the ruling a reality. Moreover he understood clearly the limitations of his victory: The white brotherhoods were still legally free to bar black railroaders from union membership. The issue of racial exclusion in unions had been consciously left off Houston’s legal agenda on the grounds that it “may be best that we do not bite off too much at one time.” His purpose rather was to lay the groundwork for future challenges. But for Houston’s clients—the IARE and the ACRT—the membership issue was hardly a priority; they exhibited little interest in merging into the much larger, more powerful, and hostile white brotherhoods, instead preferring an approach that would allow them to bargain for themselves.

Through the Steele, Tunstall, and numerous other cases over the next 15 years, black workers won tangible if limited gains. As the court toppled barriers to employment and representation, the white railroad brotherhoods erected new ones, although they took pains to disguise their discriminatory intent. Following

the Steele decision, Houston predicted accurately that there would be a rush to the courts by the remaining several thousand black firemen who were still suffering under the 1941 contract. Houston, still representing the ACRT and IARE, filed multiple suits, while the Provisional Committee to Organize Colored Locomotive Firemen—an organization formed by A. Philip Randolph in 1941 and supported heavily by his Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—followed an identical path, similarly seeking injunctive relief against the 1941 contract and subsequent revisions. After considerable legal effort, black firemen had emerged more-or-less victorious in their legal struggles against the white brotherhood and various southern railroads to preserve their jobs and respect their seniority by 1952. An internal study conducted for the Provisional Committee in 1954 concluded that “the anti-discrimination injunctions are effective in practice” and found “No over-all patterns of discrimination.” The cases of discrimination uncovered, Provisional Committee Attorney Joseph Rauh concluded with satisfaction, were “more or less isolated incidents rather than a pattern of systematic discrimination.”

In effectively overturning discriminatory contracts, black railroaders achieved their occupational preservation: They held onto their jobs and secured respect for their seniority rights. But their judicial victories did not address hiring discrimination or the overall loss of jobs brought about by the contraction of the railroad industry. Given the decline in railroad employment in this period, few new black workers replaced their retiring predecessors. Black railroaders were “rapidly passing out of the operating departments” of the railroad industry,” Randolph testified before congress in 1962. “In the South today, most of the railway yards have been practically transformed from black to white.”

The final and ultimately insurmountable barrier to full black rights was union membership. Over the course of the 1950s, Randolph and his Provisional Committee spearheaded an unsuccessful legal effort to open the firemen’s brotherhood and force the admission of African-Americans on the straightforward grounds that the BLFE could not, by definition, represent blacks fairly—that is, exercise its duty of fair representation—if it continued to exclude them from membership. In *Oliphant et al. v. BLFE, et al.*, the Provisional Committee’s attorneys argued that the BLFE continued to discriminate through its exclusion of blacks from membership. But the court accepted the white union’s assertion that no discrimination had taken place, only “legitimate practices used by most unions for reasons other than discrimination.” The intent of Congress in passing the Railway Labor Act was the promotion of industrial peace, a goal that

would have been undermined had Congress required the admission of blacks into white unions. The white brotherhood was, it concluded, a private association, not a governmental agency. "To compel by judicial mandate membership in voluntary organizations where the Congress has knowingly and expressly permitted the bargaining agent to prescribe its own qualification for membership would be usurping the legislative function," it reasoned. Black workers who continued to feel that union exclusion undermined fair representation needed to look to Congress, not the courts, for change. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the district court's ruling, resolving any doubt about the BLFE's status as a "private association, whose membership policies are its own affair." The following year the Supreme Court denied certiorari. The Provisional Committee's test case in its long campaign to mandate union desegregation through the law had failed. Throughout the mid-1960s, the Supreme Court refused to address the issue of railroad union integration, effectively resolving one of the most significant remaining issues in favor of the white brotherhoods. Only with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act would union membership exclusion and segregation become illegal under federal law.

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See also Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Fair Employment Practice Committee; Railroad Brotherhoods; Railway Labor Acts; Randolph, Philip A.

STEVENS, URIAH (1821–1882) Founder, Knights of Labor

Uriah S. Stevens was a skilled garment worker and founder of the Knights of Labor. He served as its chief leader as it moved from local to national significance from 1869–1879. The order's most decisive years came after Stevens had shifted his attentions to electoral politics. Still he left his own unique imprint on the organization in its early years.

Born August 3, 1821, in Cape May, New Jersey, Stevens initially hoped to join the Baptist ministry. When the 1837 economic panic hit however, he could no longer afford his religious training and instead entered an apprenticeship under a tailor. In 1845, Stevens moved to Philadelphia to practice his trade. Wanderlust apparently prompted an 1853 journey to Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America. After a 5-year stay in California, he made Philadelphia his home again and immediately threw himself into the abolitionist cause. Perhaps his travels played some role in inspiring his radical antislavery. Perhaps, too, his mother's Quaker roots contributed. At any rate he actively supported the Free Soil party in 1856 and the Republican party in 1860.

In 1862, Stevens helped to found the Garment Cutters' Association of Philadelphia. By 1869, Stevens's union was so weak that its members had voted to abandon it. Nine stubbornly refused to go their separate ways, and led by Stevens, they created a new organization, the Royal Order of the Knights of Labor.

Stevens's ideas shaped the distinctive character of the early knights in three ways. First he intended that the knights reject the exclusiveness of craft unionism and bring the various trades and indeed all labor into one big union. Only by combining could American workers move beyond the wage system, or what Stevens and other Gilded Age labor activists called "wage slavery," to a cooperative society, he believed. Stevens's broad-based approach was interracial as

well, although he advocated separate assemblies of black and white workers. Second Stevens insisted that members engage in strict secrecy and intricate rituals. As a longtime member of various fraternal societies, including the Masons and Knights of Pythias, he understood that mystery and ritual cemented members' loyalty to a union, protected them from employer backlash, and encouraged stability. Finally Stevens was unique in the degree to which he saw the relationship between employer and employee in the Gilded Age through the prism of his religious worldview. Certainly many labor leaders drew on religious language and principles in articulating labor's grievances and vision, including Terence Powderly, the Catholic leader of the knights who succeeded Stevens. But in contrast to Powderly, Stevens saw the knights' "brotherhood of producers" as God-ordained and mandated, while Powderly tended to emphasize social and economic justifications for amalgamation.

Under Stevens's leadership, the order grew slowly, from a handful of members in 1869 to only 9,300 10 years later, and it remained limited to Pennsylvania and neighboring states. One reason for this was that members' longstanding culture of craft unionism proved resistant to Stevens's principle of brotherhood. Unskilled workers did not gain entry until the mid-1870s. Also employers' antilabor offensive in the aftermath of the 1877 railway strike made it extremely difficult to organize. Many unions fell apart under the pressure of blacklists, lockouts, and (because the late 1870s were depression years) intense labor competition. In addition the knights' strict secrecy impeded growth.

The movement to end secrecy gained ground in the late 1870s. Besides the concern about growth, the knights' mainly Catholic membership was also anxious about opposition from the Catholic church and the public's negative view of secret organizations in the wake of the trial and execution of accused Molly Maguires, a secret association responsible for assassinating mine owners in Pennsylvania. Stevens adamantly opposed any compromises on secrecy and rituals, because in his eyes these were essential to nurturing bonds among divided and demoralized workers. But compromises there were, most of which Powderly sponsored. Consequently Stevens permanently left office in 1879, and Powderly took his place as grand master workman.

Stevens also left the knights because like many labor activists, he was drawn as an individual to electoral politics during the depression of the late 1870s. In 1878, he was a delegate to the Greenback-Labor party convention and the party's nominee to represent Philadelphia in Congress. He lost the election. Stevens died in 1882. It is a measure of his

stature in the order as well as his distance from it that in the late 1880s, Powderly's opponents, who shared little with Stevens's ideologically, nonetheless identified their cause with him.

TERESA A. CASE

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See also **Knights of Labor**

STEWART, IRA (1831–1883) Eight-Hour Day Activist

Few labor leaders in American history have devoted themselves so doggedly to a single legislative reform as did Ira Stewart. Born in 1831, a man of little formal education, he was a laborer's son who was sent to work as a machinist's apprentice as a youth, Stewart nonetheless left his mark on the thinking of an entire generation of American labor leaders. Over the 30 years of his 8-hour campaign, there were few labor reform papers that did not publish something he had written. Practically everything Stewart wrote was a weapon in his battle for the 8-hour day; indeed so persistently did he charge up this same hill that even his labor allies came to refer to him as the "8-hour monomaniac." In the end Stewart was victorious, not in achieving his dream during his lifetime, but in placing the 8-hour demand and his justifications for it at the forefront of labor's agenda.

Stewart did not set out to establish a new economic paradigm for the labor movement. He was a practical man who worked out his theories to attain a practical end: The reduction of the hours of labor. His first task was to persuade the membership of his own International Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths to embrace the cause. Skilled workers at the time were skeptical of short-hour demands, which in their minds could be purchased only at the cost of reduced wages. Rather than attempt to skirt these all-important bread-and-butter issues, Stewart chose to attack them head-on, a tactic he may have learned from his long association with Boston's abolitionists. Accordingly he introduced his fellow machinists and blacksmiths to the bold slogan, "a reduction of hours is an increase in wages."

The linchpin on which the entire superstructure of Steward's argument rested was the idea that the general level of wages was determined by the "habits, customs, and opinions" of the workers themselves. The idea that wages rise to the level of culture and character of the worker has its roots in Thomas Malthus and John Stuart Mill, but the elaboration and popularization of it was clearly Steward's own accomplishment. Given shorter hours, Steward argued in a writing style that was plain, direct, and unadorned with jargon, workers collectively would cultivate their habits, wants, and desires and gradually demand increasing pay to meet these newfound needs. But there was an even greater reward than higher wages: With rising wages and greater consumption, the wheels of industry would turn more quickly to meet the growing demand. Capitalists would be encouraged to make their workplaces more productive by introducing new workers, machinery, and technologies; as output increased and unit costs fell, so would prices. Not only were shorter hours going to deliver higher wages, but they also promised to make those wages go farther in the market.

While his theory contained much hope and promise for the anxious workingmen of the Reconstruction years, Steward was careful also to point out the stumbling blocks strewn across the road to the 8-hour day. Chief among these was a corollary of his first principle—the ability of workers to demand greater wages depended on the ability of all workers to uplift their habits and character; a few stragglers in the line of progress could hold back all the rest. How many stragglers it took to hold back the mass of rising workers was unclear; at times in his writings it appeared as though a single degraded worker was enough. In listing his 8-hour principles, Steward emphasized that progress depended on unanimity. "Where all ask for more wages, there will be no motive for refusing, since employers will all fare alike." Such solidarity had been labor's dream since its inception. But by founding this consensus not on moral suasion or the perfection of labor's organizations, but on the hard rock of the material, intrinsic character of the workers themselves—what Steward termed the "habits, customs, and opinions of the masses" that were "the strongest power in the world"—Steward insisted that such unified action was possible at last. All must rise together, he warned, or none will rise at all.

American labor was ready for Steward's ideas. By 1863, Steward had convinced his own union and the Boston Trades Assembly to proclaim the 8-hour reform "the cardinal point to which our movement ought to be directed." That fall the most influential labor paper in the nation, *Fincher's Trades' Review*,

jumped onto Steward's bandwagon, adopting a new masthead that read, "Eight Hours. A Legal Day's Work for Freemen."

Steward made a shaky alliance with the Radical Republicans and former abolitionists of the Bay State by founding the Boston Eight-Hour League in 1869. The league scored one important victory in its first year, successfully lobbying for the establishment of the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics, the nation's first. Steward's influence was evident throughout the bureau's first annual report (1870), a report that was largely written by his close associate, George McNeill, assisted by Steward's wife Mary Bowers Steward (a longtime activist in her own right, having been secretary of the Hopedale utopian community when she wed Ira), who for many years lent her clerical services to the bureau.

Over the following decade, Steward published many influential pamphlets and columns, including "A Reduction of Hours, an Increase in Wages" (1865), and "Poverty" (1873), which were reprinted in many newspapers and quoted from rostrums across the land. Steward embarked on the writing of a definitive book on the 8-hour question, which he planned on entitling, "The Political Economy of Eight Hours," but he died before it could be finished in 1883.

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STOCKYARDS LABOR COUNCIL

The Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) created the Stockyards' Labor Council (SLC) on July 23, 1917 after a meeting between William Z. Foster and Robert McQueen, both of the Railway Carmen, and Dennis Lane and Joe O'Kane of the Cattle Butchers' Local 87 at the CFL headquarters on July 15, 1917. The purpose of the labor council was to provide an organization to unify all unions with jurisdiction over stockyard employees under one organizing body. Martin Murphy, a hog butcher from Chicago, was elected president of the SLC, and Foster served as the organization's first secretary.

STOCKYARDS LABOR COUNCIL

The success of the SLC would ultimately depend on its ability to cross craft, racial, and ethnic lines. Under the direction of a central organizing body, the SLC worked carefully to display a united front within the yards and worked carefully to avoid open competition with other stockyard locals. To facilitate this endeavor, each affiliated union appointed representatives to work directly with the labor council. This helped prevent rivalries and ensured no conflicts of jurisdiction. With the beginning of American involvement in World War I, the SLC worked closely with the already established Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen (AMC) to mobilize public support and to organize the packinghouse industry. Although the AMC and the SLC officially remained separate entities, the SLC's recruitment of black workers eventually forced the AMC to reconsider its own treatment of African-Americans and immigrants in the industry and changed the way labor organizers in the industry would address race and ethnicity issues.

In addition to determining the most effective way to recruit new members, Murphy and Foster struggled with how best to gain the support of the other craft unions. Drawing on an endorsement from the CFL, the SLC was able to access the vast labor-organizing resources of Chicago and began its first mass-organizing drive in 1917. At its first meeting, an estimated 10,000 workers attended. Unfortunately after this first meeting very few of those in attendance joined the fledgling group, since some feared the reprisal of packinghouse officials while others remembered the failed 1904 packinghouse strikes and were unwilling to throw their full support behind the union effort.

The SLC did recover from these disappointing results and began a new round of organizing. Subsequent attempts did attract a number of new members, especially after news that the SLC had prepared a list of demands that included a wage increase, gender-equitable pay scale, and an 8-hour day for presentation to the packers. With these demands in place, the SLC next focused its efforts by organizing their members. Rather than organizing members into skill or company unions, the SLC organized people according to neighborhood locals to best avoid ethnic conflict. This strategy was especially successful among Polish and Lithuanian workers who provided some of the strongest support for the SLC.

In spite of the strong central European support, there were still serious concerns as to the best way to reach out to and organize African-American stockyard workers. This was difficult because a number of black civic, fraternal, and religious organizations relied on the philanthropic activities of the packinghouse owners to maintain the operations of their institutions. In return many African-American

community leaders cautioned their members against becoming too involved with the SLC. For example one influential church leader lectured his congregation that the interests of African-Americans were tied to the economic development of the country and of the white interests that control it. The SLC officials also faced difficulties enlisting the aid of important black newspapers, since these organizations often cautioned workers to proceed carefully before dealing with the union. In addition to the resistance to the union movement by African-American institutions, black workers, especially new arrivals from the South, found greater opportunity by aligning themselves with the packers, especially as companies like Swift directed its operations to fire labor unionists and replace them with black workers in 1917–1918.

Moreover African-Americans still remained apprehensive toward the SLC because of the policy of creating neighborhood locals. Some saw these institutions as merely an extension of the Jim Crow unionism of the American Federation of Labor. Under this plan African-Americans would feel free to attend union meetings in white communities and white members would be encouraged to attend meetings in black communities. However instead of motivating interracialism, this plan advanced *de facto* segregation, since African-Americans rarely attended meetings in white neighborhoods, and white workers avoided meetings in black enclaves. Despite the latent racial tension, the SLC continued to reach out to African-American workers by hiring more black organizers and electing an African-American hog butcher, A. K. Foote, vice-president in 1917.

Over time, the SLC made slight inroads with African-American workers but still failed to attract the mass support of southern black newcomers coming North in search of employment and still distrustful of unionization. By November of 1917, both the SLC and the packinghouse owners continued to look for support among black workers in preparation for labor unrest that many thought was imminent. As the packers continued to court black civic and religious groups, the SLC members authorized their leaders to launch a nationwide strike. At this same time the coalition between the SLC and the AMC began to splinter. The AMC leadership refused to support the proposed strike, since such action, some believed, violated the World War I no-strike pledges. However this debate was rendered moot when the President's Mediation Commission interceded, since any strike within the yards would negatively impact wartime meat production. Instead employers and union officials agreed to allow a federal arbitrator, Judge Samuel S. Alschuler, to settle any dispute through binding arbitration for the duration of the war.

By the spring of 1919, the war in Europe concluded and the packers, and the SLC and other organizations within the stockyards seemed headed for a confrontation. With the end of binding arbitration imminent, the SLC sought to increase its organizational profile and membership totals by staging a series of mass meetings and rallies. These meetings were designed to pressure packinghouse owners into recognizing the union and to demonstrate to African-American workers, many of whom still were leery of unionization, that the labor council's rhetoric of interracial cooperation was genuine. In addition to the rallies, the SLC sponsored a parade and union picnic to highlight further its commitment to racial solidarity.

Much of the work done to improve race relations in the yards was undermined by a race riot in the summer of 1919. During the riot the SLC and the CFL tried to maintain peace among the workers and maintain the organization by holding a mass, interracial meeting to encourage the rank-and-file not to return to work until the unrest had been settled. This measure appeared to have been successful, since there were no major incidents inside the yards. The situation changed however when 49 homes occupied by Lithuanian workers were burned, leaving hundreds of residents homeless. Although rumors circulated that African-Americans committed the crime, evidence to the contrary suggested that Irish gangs set the fires to incite racial conflict between the two groups.

While the SLC was struggling with internal discord, new challenges from a former ally, the AMC, developed. Following the war the SLC and meat cutters wrestled over the question of renewing the arbitration agreement, which the AMC supported, or launching a strike in the yards, a position held by the SLC. This conflict reached its epoch in April 1919 as the AMC, without consulting the rank-and-file, signed a recognition agreement with the packers and established the District Council 9, who claimed jurisdiction over all the butchers in the stockyards. This move not only threatened to re-establish occupational and class divisions in the yards, but also caused considerable confusion, since both District 9 and the SLC claimed to represent the butcher workmen.

This conflict continued until 1920 when the CFL convinced District 9 and the SLC to participate in an election to determine which organization would represent their interests. The workers decided to retain the SLC, and in response District 9 refused to accept the results. Before this new situation could be rectified, allegations surfaced that SLC leader John Kikulski—himself a veteran organizer since the 1904 unionization drive; an activist in the Polish National Alliance; and publisher of the Polish language paper,

Glose Robotnica or *Labor's Voice*, had embezzled money intended to aid striking butchers in Detroit, Michigan. After the allegations surfaced, Kikulski resigned from the SLC, taking a large number of his Polish and Lithuanian supporters with him, and joined District 9, where he was soon to be elected president. Despite the fact that an SLC investigation revealed Kikulski's guilt, many of his Slavic supporters still remained loyal to him and to District 9. Without the strong support from immigrant labor in the yards, and after months of organizational struggles, the SLC resigned from the CFL in 1920 and ceased operations.

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STOKES, ROSE PASTOR (JULY 18, 1879-JUNE 20, 1933) Activist and Writer

Rose Pastor Stokes was born Rose Harriet Wieslander in Augustowo, Poland, then part of the Russian empire and subject to the increasingly frequent and violent Jewish pogroms. Her parents, Jacob Wieslander, a boot maker, and Hindl Lewin, separated when Stokes was young, and she and her mother moved first to Germany before settling in London's East End slum with her aunt. There her mother found work in a garment factory, and Stokes briefly attended a free Jewish school, but her childhood was marked primarily by grinding poverty. One of her earliest memories was of her mother leading a strike in her London factory when the owner whitewashed the windows, blocking the workers' view. When Stokes was 10, her mother married Isaac Pastor, a peddler, who soon left his new family to seek his fortune abroad. Her mother, pregnant with Pastor's child, took in sewing, and Stokes left school to help her mother at

home. After the birth of her stepbrother, Rose, her mother, and the new baby immigrated to the United States, meeting Isaac Pastor in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1890. But once again Stokes, though only 11, needed to help her family, and she found work in a Cleveland cigar factory. Over the next dozen years, Stokes toiled long hours for low pay making cigars in both sizable factories and small shops in the owner's home, known as a "buckeye." Although her formal education ended, it was in the cigar-making shops of Cleveland that Stokes first heard of socialism as a solution to the exploitative work conditions under which she and millions of others toiled. Absorbing what she could from the local public library and like-minded coworkers, Stokes also sought redress through trade unionism. As a female Stokes was relegated to the least skilled, lowest paid positions within the cigar industry, but when she and her coworkers applied for a charter from the Cigar Makers' Union, they were rejected on the grounds that they were unskilled.

Shortly after Stokes moved away from socialism for a time as she began writing for the New York City-based *Jewish Daily News* (*Yidisher Tageblatt*) while still working at her Cleveland cigar shop. In March 1903, the paper offered Stokes a fulltime position on its staff, and she moved to New York, quickly becoming an avid observer of the city's vibrant immigrant community on the Lower East Side. She wrote various articles, many of which focused on working women such as herself, and under the pen name of Zelda, Stokes also wrote a regular advice column, "Just between Ourselves, Girls," in which she encouraged her readers to be well-behaved, even docile workers, a far cry from her earlier sentiments while toiling in the cigar shops of Cleveland. In 1905, while interviewing several Lower East Side settlement workers and philanthropists, the young reporter met James Graham Phelps Stokes. Graham Stokes, as he was known, was a graduate of both Yale University and Columbia University's Medical College and belonged to a wealthy and prominent New York family. Despite his considerable wealth and social privilege, Graham Stokes was drawn to settlement work, part of the Progressive Era's response to the misery caused by industrial capitalism. The young couple were drawn to each other, and their 1905 marriage drew headlines for its "Cinderella-like" qualities. She was the immigrant Jewish cigar maker, he was old native-stock, Protestant, and wealthy. Despite these vast differences, the marriage worked, at least for the first 12 years during which both Stokeses were active Socialists. She was an especially popular speaker for the socialist cause before both working-class audiences and the more well-to-do. In socialism she saw the remedy for the exploitative conditions of

labor and dire poverty that she herself had so long experienced. Yet it was her new-found position as the wife of a wealthy man that seemingly freed Stokes to express so eloquently her radical politics, as she did during the 1909 garment makers' strike known as the "Uprising of the 20,000" and again in the 1912 New York hotel waiters' strike.

Like many Socialists in 1917 who initially supported U.S. entry into World War I, both Graham and Rose Pastor Stokes resigned from the party, which remained steadfastly antiwar. But the Bolshevik revolution later that same year changed her thinking—and caused an irrevocable rift in the marriage. Stokes returned to the Socialist party, speaking out against the war and was soon charged with espionage. Although her conviction was eventually overturned, that her husband's uncle provided evidence against her further distanced Stokes from her increasingly conservative husband. They were officially divorced in 1925. By then Stokes had become a leader in the newly formed Communist party, though she was among only a handful of women to do so within its male-dominated hierarchy. She was present at the party's first American convention in 1919 and for several years after was a member of the central executive committee of the Workers' party, the above-ground arm of the Communist party that had been driven underground in the United States shortly after its formation. Throughout the 1920s, Stokes spoke passionately and wrote eloquently on the lesser status of working-class women under industrial capitalism. She was equally interested in working for racial equality and saw in the Communist party the solution to the impact of racism on African-Americans. At the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow in 1922, Stokes presented the "Thesis on the Negro Question," in which she argued that African-Americans had a particular interest and an important role to play in the revolutionary struggle. Her motion was accepted by the Fourth Congress and would be the guiding force regarding race within the Communist party for years to come. Although the 1920s were generally productive and personally fulfilling years, including a second marriage to fellow Communist Jerome Isaac Romain in 1927, Stokes's happiness was short-lived. Diagnosed with breast cancer early in 1930, Stokes followed up a mastectomy with special radiation treatments available only in Germany, where she died in 1933, shortly after Adolf Hitler came to power. She spent the last 3 years of her life bravely fighting her terminal disease while feverishly working when able to finish her autobiography. Although it lay unfinished at her death, the autobiography—its very title of *I Belong to the Working Class* summing up Stokes's perception of herself—remains a

passionate and elegant account of one activist's efforts on behalf of workers everywhere.

KATHLEEN BANKS NUTTER

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See also **Communist Party; Jews; Progressive Era; Socialist Party of America**

STRASSER, ADOLPH (1849–1936) Cofounder, American Federation of Labor

Adolph Strasser, leader of the Cigar Makers International Union and one of the cofounders of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), belongs to a group of largely forgotten American labor leaders whose influence on the course of mainstream unionism was considerable in the late nineteenth century. A close associate of Samuel Gompers in the early years of the AFL, he steered the cigar makers and parts of the New York labor movement away from ethnic unionism in the 1870s and away from socialism in the 1880s. By the end of the 1880s, he had become one of the foremost proponents of what came to be known as “pure and simple unionism.”

Strasser was born in 1849 in Hungary and immigrated (probably via London) to the United States in 1872. While very little was known about his background even among his close associates, the multilingual Strasser (he spoke German and English) was active in the labor movement of New York City from the time of his arrival there. Strasser joined the First International soon after his arrival but was expelled from it after his role in the Tompkins Square riot was criticized by the leaders of the group. He then helped found the Social Democratic Workingman's party in 1873 and became its secretary. Strasser also belonged to an organization of like-minded immigrant Socialists from Central and Western Europe, the Economic and Sociological Club, where he met the young Gompers.

In 1874, Strasser became active in the cigar makers union. To counteract the politically passive and exclusionary craft union in that trade, he and a group of politically minded fellow workers (Gompers among them) founded the United Cigar Makers of North America in 1874, a union that welcomed workers of all ethnic backgrounds and varying skill levels. In 1875, the group became Local 144 of the Cigar

Makers' International Union (CMIU) of North America. Gompers served as president, Strasser was vice-president of the local, and a year later, Strasser became president of the CMIU whose journal he also edited. Strasser and Gompers together soon gained a political profile as union leaders in the city when they founded the Amalgamated Trades and Labor Union of New York City in 1877 and found themselves leading a lengthy strike of New York cigar makers in the fall of 1877. Even though the strike was neither started nor initially approved by the union Strasser led, he became the *de facto* leader of the movement for better wages and working conditions in the tenement-based cigar trade in New York City. The strike brought out Strasser's strengths as a tough-minded but practical organizer, whose energy for the cause outweighed his relative political inflexibility.

After the loss of the strike, Strasser continued to lead the CMIU. His primary interest was in stabilizing the membership and providing a fixed set of benefits for union members even if that meant limiting membership to relatively well-paid workers in the trade. Strasser spoke out in the labor movement's fight against Chinese workers (which preoccupied the cigar workers on the West Coast), testifying before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor in 1883 as a supporter of pragmatic, depoliticized trade unionism.

By the time of Strasser's testimony before the U.S. Senate, he had already become a controversial figure in the New York City labor movement, where his home base lay. Strasser's increasing distance from grassroots socialist movements in the city and his focus on lobbying the New York State legislature to prohibit cigar making in tenements, alienated him from many immigrant constituents who favored a more political unionism. In 1882, members of Local 144 voted a slate of socialist candidates into leadership positions. When Strasser (with the support of Gompers) disqualified the newly elected president of Local 144 and declared the election invalid, the cigar makers' union split nationwide into the Cigar Makers' Progressive Union and the Cigar Makers' International Union.

During the 4 years of dual unionism in the cigar trade, Strasser remained president of the CMIU and together with Gompers and a small group of craft unionists started the Federation of Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU) in 1882 to provide a lobbying arm for organized labor. The federation became the foundation for the AFL, which he helped found as well in 1886.

Opposition from Socialists, especially in New York City, continued to dodge Strasser even after the reunification of the cigar makers' union in 1886. In the late 1880s, his outspoken and inflexible manner continued to cost him support within the union and in the New York City labor movement where he continued to fight

with Socialists and politically active Knights of Labor. When Strasser opposed a change in the constitution of the Cigar Makers' International Union in 1891 that would affect the election of the international president, he found himself in opposition to Gompers and resigned his presidency of the union.

In subsequent years Strasser worked as an organizer and speaker for the cigar makers and the AFL, making his base in Buffalo, New York. Much of his work during this latter time did not provide much visibility for this erstwhile union president. Strasser retired from union work in 1914 at the age of 65 and became a real estate agent. He moved to Florida in 1918 and died in Lakeland, Florida, in obscurity and poverty on January 1, 1936.

DOROTHEE SCHNEIDER

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See also **American Federation of Labor (up to CIO merger); Tompkins Square Riot (1874)**

STRIKE WAVE (1919)

In 1919, more American workers than ever before took collective action to create a new and better way of living for themselves. Over four million employed workers, one out of every five, were involved in a strike, a proportion that has not been surpassed before or since. In this extraordinary and truly decisive year, it was often not just the basic terms of employment that were at issue. The famously conservative railway brotherhoods, as well as prominent dissidents in the largest American union, the United Mine Workers, advocated nationalization of their industries. A vast strike challenged the governance of the steel industry, the heart of the nation's economic and military preponderance. The chairman of the strike committee, John Fitzpatrick, an American Federation of Labor unionist supposedly working directly under the indubitably patriotic Samuel Gompers, declared at one point that "we are going to socialize the basic industries of the United States."

The year 1919 was supposed to be the year of a great reconstruction of American industrial society. At the turn of the century and during World War I, progressives and working-class activists in numerous different factories, union halls, and government offices had experimented with new kinds of organizations that they thought might bring about the dream

of production guided by social needs. For at least a decade before the beginning of the war, reformers had brought to the forefront of American consciousness the labor question. This was the problem of how to maintain the viability of a democratic polity in the face of profound changes in the workplace caused by exponential industrialization and unrelenting corporate consolidation. Despite its continuing attraction to millions of immigrant workers, the United States at the turn of the twentieth century was the most violent nation on earth when measured in terms of the ferocity of its strikes and various other forms of open conflict between working people and their employers.

The ideology and practices of scientific management, the open shop, and "Fordism" were at best uneasily accommodated by an astonishingly diverse workforce. The new factory regime of the twentieth century depended on workers whose various experiences included peasant economies or craft production, workers' control and Taylorism, socialism and the Republican party, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), collectivism and nativism, sharecropping and iron molding, racism and respectability, family economy and the boardinghouse, factory paternalism and anonymous machine tending. The most common form of worker resistance, quitting, was endemic. In 1919, there was a kind of coalescence of aims, an attempt to apply or re-interpret the meaning of American freedom and democracy in the workplace in ways that might profoundly alter the new economic order. However despite challenges, by the end of 1919 and the beginning of the next presidential administration, the dominance of large corporations over American life remained secure.

The immediate causes of the strike wave of 1919 came out of the crisis of World War I. For labor the war created unprecedented opportunities. By early 1915, war orders were pouring into U.S. industry, helping to pull the nation out of the sharp economic downturn that had begun in 1914. As American industrialists mobilized their plants for much higher levels of production, and the cutoff of immigration sharply increased the demand for labor, workers sensed a new power and flexibility. As progressives had envisioned, with American entrance into the war, state-coordinated planning boards took over large sectors of the economy. The federal government took over the railroads and telegraphs and threatened seizure of Chicago's giant meatpacking plants in response to labor unrest there.

Gompers, the head of the AFL, pledged his support of the war effort. He forced through the federation's executive council a resolution to respect existing standards of industry during the war. Partly as a



Strike leader at Gary, Ind., advising strikers. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-77539].

result of Gompers's efforts to gain legitimacy and positions for the AFL in the administrative arms of the government's war agencies, union membership increased by about two million during the war. Labor's influence within the Wilson administration was evident everywhere in Washington. A former mine workers' official, William Wilson, had been appointed the first secretary of labor. In 1917, Woodrow Wilson became the first president to appear before a convention of the AFL. He declared that while American troops fought for freedom abroad, the nation must ensure the freedom of labor at home. In April of 1918, the National War Labor Board (NWLB) was created; the influence of cochairman (with William Howard Taft) Frank Walsh made it the most pro-labor agency the federal government had ever created. In July of 1918, the NWLB decided that Bethlehem Steel should recognize workers' shop committees elected under the board's oversight; in October the board asked U.S. Steel's chairman, Elbert Gary, to grant the 8-hour day to his employees. By the time it had ceased functioning in the summer of 1919, the board had issued over 200 decisions that ordered collective-bargaining agreements with employees and had created over 100 independent shop committees in nonunion plants. Although the federal government's influence in the arena of labor

relations began to dissipate following the armistice in November 1918, it was in the context of state intervention or sanction that new, often more inclusive forms of workers' organization gained a tenuous legitimacy in a number of different industries, most notably in meatpacking, steel, and electrical manufacturing.

The first major strike of 1919 did not fit neatly into the template of corporate compromise and the government-labor entente that had emerged during the war. The Seattle General Strike had its origins in a decision by the city's 35,000 shipyard workers to authorize a strike against the U.S. Government Emergency Fleet Corporation 2 weeks after the armistice. When 110 locals of the Seattle Central Labor Council endorsed a general strike in support of the shipyard workers, the hierarchy of the AFL internationals was vehemently against the new movement. The Seattle labor movement was strongly influenced by radicals from the IWW and Socialist party and had often issued resolutions in support of the Bolshevik revolution. A General Strike Committee ran city services efficiently during the strike itself. The mayor and state attorney general requested and received federal troops to help suppress the strike, which was now overlaid with anxieties, spreading across the nation's headlines, about Bolshevism and revolution. The unions themselves voted to end the peaceful strike,

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but nonetheless a challenge had been forcefully made to the postwar delineation of labor's freedom.

The tactic of organizing beyond the boundaries of traditional union jurisdictions and developing the potential for larger general or sympathy strikes was one of the most important characteristics of the 1919 strikes. In the public mind, the general strike was associated mostly with the IWW, but before the war, expansive "system federations" of unions had been formed on the railways by rank-and-file activists and militant AFL locals. In 1917–1918, both a Stockyards' Labor Council and a National Committee for Organizing Iron and Steel Workers were established by militant minorities representing federated AFL unions. In February of 1919, the United Textile Workers announced a national strike movement for the 48-hour week, and silk workers in Paterson, New Jersey, organized a coalition of immigrant societies to present strike demands. In April an outlaw railroad strike began in Chicago and spread rapidly south and west; Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer had 23 strike leaders arrested. In response to the unrest, President Wilson appointed a Railway Labor Board, which awarded a wage increase. On July 4, New York City put 11,000 police on alert, and there were mobilizations of troops in Boston and Chicago for an anticipated general strike in support of Tom Mooney, a radical convicted for the bombing of a Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco in 1916. Three general strikes in Canadian cities also made a deep impression.

A vitally important factor in considering the outcomes of the largest strikes in 1919 was the growing antiradical mood of the country at the time. Since President Wilson was occupied to a large extent following the armistice with questions of foreign policy and the progress of freedom and self-determination abroad, an angry red-scare mentality combined with ugly manifestations of racism and nativism surfaced at home. Strikes, protests, and any manifestations of left-wing sympathy with the Bolshevik revolution were exaggerated by the press as representing dangerous threats to American freedom. The Seattle General Strike at the beginning of the year was widely described as being led by Bolsheviks and Wobblies. In March the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of Eugene Debs for violating the Espionage Act; and the socialist leader was sentenced to 10 years in prison. In the spring several bombings occurred that were allegedly instigated by radicals, and in April a Post Office official intercepted 36 bombs that were to be delivered to prominent Americans. In June a large bomb devastated the front of A. Mitchell Palmer's house in Washington. In August and September the Communist and Communist Labor parties were founded in

Chicago; both organizations immediately turned their attention to endorsing mass strikes across the nation.

The outcome of the Boston police strike in early September quite dramatically illustrated the political potential of swelling antilabor and anti-Communist sentiment. Public opinion was from the beginning quite unfavorable to the strike; looting, chaos, and dangerous Bolshevik-inspired mobs were widely anticipated if and when the policemen left their posts. Thousands of Bostonians were mobilized into citizen defense committees to maintain order. There was some isolated looting. The city's Central Labor Union refused to endorse the strike, and Gompers proposed the police return to work pending arbitration. Governor Calvin Coolidge however declared that "there is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, anytime." He called in the national guard, fired all the strikers, and hired replacements. Coolidge's actions were widely publicized and propelled his political career. On his western speaking tour to gain support for the League of Nations, President Wilson called the strike "a crime against civilization."

The Boston police strike was still in progress when the National Committee to Organize Iron and Steel Workers announced that U.S. steelworkers had voted for a nationwide strike to begin September 22. It was the Great Steel Strike that best represented the many forces at work in the industrial warfare of 1919. It was the largest single walkout the nation had yet witnessed, with over 250,000 workers eventually striking under the auspices of a committee of AFL-affiliated organizers. The national committee was a hybrid creature of craft and industrial unionists, with William Z. Foster, a former Wobbly and syndicalist at its head. Before sending out the strike call, the committee appealed unsuccessfully to Elbert Gary for a conference, then to President Wilson for mediation, declaring that Gary's "kaiserism" made a mockery of the democratic ideals of the war. Gompers himself turned against the strike when Wilson proposed a national industrial conference of labor, employers and the public to consider postwar labor issues. However Foster and his cadre of organizers had built up a strong momentum among the rank-and-file for action, and the strike went on as scheduled.

The fact that the steel strike was strongly supported by immigrant communities in and around the mills and that it was organized by Foster, an avowed syndicalist who made only a hesitant repudiation of his earlier radical writings when questioned by a Senate committee, raised the issue of Americanism in the labor movement quite sharply. There were at least 30 different nationalities represented among the strikers, many of whom were Eastern Europeans inspired

by the overthrow of autocracy in their homelands. The dynamics of the strike also clarified racial divisions that had emerged during the “great migration” of over 450,000 southern blacks to northern cities during the war. In 1917, a vicious race riot had erupted in East Saint Louis as a result of union exclusion of blacks; in the summer of 1919 a large race riot broke out in Chicago that helped undermine the solidarity of the packinghouse and steel workers’ organizations that had established a tenuous hold there. During the steel strike itself, the city of Gary was placed under martial law following riots by strikers against African-American strikebreakers imported by the steelmakers. Foster himself observed after the strike that blacks had not hesitated to work as strikebreakers because of the discrimination traditionally practiced by many of the AFL unions involved in the steel-organizing campaign and strike.

The steel strike was carried out quite effectively in its first weeks. The nature of the movement that Foster and the national committee had helped to build was illustrated by the fact that several large mills had struck before the official call was put out. It was largely a movement inspired by rank-and-file energy and resentments, but under the guidance also of Foster with his extraordinary organizing ability, the strike showed once and for all that a nationwide strike against mass-production industry was possible.

Six weeks after the beginning of the steel strike, John L. Lewis announced a nationwide strike of coal miners. A settlement known as the Washington agreement had been negotiated between the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) and the coal operators in 1917 that set wage increases, prohibited discharge of miners for union membership, and laid fines against wildcat strikers for the duration of the war or until April 1, 1920, whichever should come first. The operators however continued to hold the agreement in effect after the armistice, and steadily rising prices after the war overtook the miners’ wage gains. Wildcat strikes continued after the war in many mines. After Lewis issued the strike call, President Wilson denounced the impending strike as unlawful and immoral, and Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer gained an injunction prohibiting the UMW leadership from participating in the strike. Despite a decision by the UMW Executive Committee to call off the strike in the face of government pressure and escalating accusations of mob rule and Bolshevism against the strike in the press, numerous independent unions stayed away from the mines. The miners eventually gained a wage increase brokered by the Wilson administration, but Socialists, Communists, and independent district leaders continued to press the grievances of discontented miners through the early 1920s.

In October, as steel strikers and organizers were being violently dispersed in Pennsylvania, the Wilson administration convened a national industrial conference in Washington to consider the democratization of industry. Gary maintained at once that the conference had no jurisdiction or power to compel a settlement in the steel conflict. The conference deadlocked on the issue of union recognition; the employers by a narrow majority refused to accede to bargaining with outside representatives of the workers. Still according to historian David Brody, the industrial conference must be judged a partial success for labor. Negotiations and resolutions during the conference revealed an informal, near consensus of union men, the public, and many of the employers that workers must be entitled to collective bargaining with representatives of their own choosing. According to Brody the conference laid the conceptual and ideological groundwork for the Wagner Act of 1935.

The strike wave of 1919 died amid the furor of the Red Scare, with its identification of strikers, immigrants, and dissenters against the new industrial order as “un-American.” As well the strike wave illustrated the limitations of the new unionism of the prewar era, with its broadening of the extent and scope of union action to include federations, local councils, common organizing campaigns, and strikes and extension of jurisdictions to include African-Americans, women, and the unskilled. State suppression, vigilante attacks, and divisions in the labor movement undermined the inchoate but vigorous movement for industrial democracy. A sharp depression in 1921 and a renewed open-shop drive by employers further weakened the labor movement. By the end of 1919, the new capitalism of Fordism, Taylorism, labor-management cooperation, and corporate welfare policies had gained a new momentum and legitimacy in American economic life.

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STRIKEBREAKING

Although the United States was in the forefront among nations in introducing civil liberties, many American corporations employed private armies to break strikes and to prevent workers from organizing. Usually independent entrepreneurs supplied corporations with armed mercenaries and replacements for workers on strike, but Ford Motor Company built its own private army. Because many municipal police forces were too small to control crowds, and sometimes sympathized with workers who walked off the job, state authorities often used militia to suppress strikes. Believing even state militia insufficient, Pennsylvania in 1905 formed an elite paramilitary strike-breaking force, the State Constabulary. During the period prior to World War II, management often resorted to violence in breaking strikes.

After 1945, violent labor conflict declined although it never disappeared. Management increasingly turned to psychological manipulation and screening in the hiring process to prevent unionization. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which organized labor denounced as a slave labor bill, provided management with significant new advantages in combating strikes and union-organizing drives.

Labor was usually readily available to employers seeking to replace strikers during the first four decades of the twentieth century. A significant proportion of the workforce experienced either seasonal or long-term unemployment. The various industries experienced slack seasons at different times of the year, so there were almost always many people without jobs. In addition those who were not young often found it difficult to obtain work in industry, because many employers believed they did not possess the necessary strength or endurance. Regular “fink markets” sprang up at clearly identifiable locations in larger cities, often where homeless men congregated.

The Emergence of the Strikebreaking Business

Supplying strikebreakers and armed guards to protect them and intimidate unionists became a very

profitable business during the first decade of the twentieth century. The first U.S. national detective agency, established by Allan Pinkerton, pioneered in providing armed guards to management during strikes, first performing this service when miners walked out in Braidwood, Illinois, in 1866. The Pinkerton Detective Agency’s armed guards contributed to Carnegie Steel’s decisive victory in the 1892 Homestead, Pennsylvania, strike, which eliminated unionism from the steel industry for several decades. By 1891, Jack Whitehead had become the first to assemble a permanent band of strikebreakers that could be moved quickly over significant distances to meet employers’ needs. His “40 thieves,” skilled ironworkers and steelworkers recruited in Birmingham, Alabama, assisted in breaking several strikes in the Pittsburgh area from 1891–1901.

During the early twentieth century, new strike-breaking agencies formed large mercenary armies that they could transport on short notice almost anywhere in the United States and even outside it. Although largely composed of men hastily recruited to break particular strikes, the mercenary armies were built around a core of permanently employed men, both armed guards and workers.

James Farley was the first to establish strikebreaking as a big business and consequently amass a fortune. He specialized in breaking urban transit strikes, nearly monopolizing the business from 1903 until his retirement in 1907. Farley operated on a national basis, breaking strikes from the Atlantic to the Pacific, often arming his crews on the streetcars. His most dramatic successes occurred in the 1905 New York subway strike, which he broke in less than a week, the 1903 Richmond and Chicago strikes, the 1907 San Francisco streetcar strikes, and the 1905 Chicago teamsters’ strike.

Middle-class Americans, feeling stifled and ignored in an increasingly bureaucratized and overcivilized society, celebrated the strikebreakers’ display of traditional masculine attributes, like courage and aggressiveness, that appeared to have vanished with the frontier. The mass media described Farley as combining the executive ability of a modern business executive with the primitive masculinity of a gladiator. It claimed strike sympathizers had inflicted scars on him in violent assaults in which his life had been at risk, a claim the labor press denied as false. The professional strikebreaker’s prominence in early twentieth-century labor conflict was reflected in Farley becoming a subject of controversy in the 1906 New York gubernatorial campaign and in Jack London’s portrayal of him in his novel *Iron Heel* (1907) as instrumental in helping the capitalists establish a dictatorship.

After Farley's retirement the leading urban-strike-breaking firms were directed by three of his former hirelings: James Waddell and Archie Mahon, who met while working for Farley during the 1905 New York subway strike formed Waddell & Mahon, and Pearl Bergoff established Bergoff Brothers. These firms merged after Mahon's death in 1914 as Bergoff Brothers and Waddell. Like Farley they drew on contacts with organized crime to recruit armed guards and strikebreakers. The new firms expanded to include railroad, shipping, and mining strikes in addition to mass transit. Bergoff Brothers and Waddell even sent strikebreakers to Cuba in 1916. These firms derived significant revenue from gambling operations they set up, where they housed strikebreakers, some of whom complained they were forced to participate in them.

The Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency and the Mine Wars

The Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency assumed charge of strikebreaking and labor espionage in much of the coal-mining territory of southern West Virginia and in parts of Colorado. It also became primarily responsible for law enforcement in many isolated mining counties, exercising tight control over company towns. The firm was formed in 1892 as a partnership between William G. Baldwin, who concentrated on railroad policing, and Thomas L. Felts, who provided armed guards to mining corporations. The mass media praised Felts, like Farley, for entrepreneurial skill that enabled him to amass great wealth and attributed to him the fearlessness of the nineteenth-century frontier gunfighter.

Baldwin-Felts guards often used violence in strikes and in driving labor organizers from the mining region. They watched for any sign of union sympathy among the miners, even intercepting mail, and during strikes evicted miners and their families from company housing. In both West Virginia and Colorado during the 1910s, they engaged in large-scale gun battles with union miners, in some of which both sides sustained significant casualties. There were many smaller skirmishes. Baldwin-Felts guards were often organized along military lines into companies and squads. In strikes in both states, Baldwin-Felts guards paraded machine guns to intimidate the miners and their families. In 1913, in West Virginia, they fired one from an armored-plated train at a miners' tent colony in a night attack.

During the 1910s, bloody and sustained armed conflicts erupted during strikes in the western Arkansas

coal country (1914–1915) and in the forests of western Louisiana (1911–1913), where management also entered into arrangements with detective agencies to suppress strikes. In Arkansas the Bache-Denman Coal Company hired the Burns Detective Agency to help it open previously unionized mines with nonunion labor, precipitating violent skirmishes that culminated in a massive gun battle lasting several hours. Striking timber workers in Louisiana denounced the Burns and Pinkerton detectives who raided their union meetings and drove them from their homes as “black hundreds,” after Russia's brutal and reactionary paramilitary gangs, and armed in self-defense.

Pennsylvania's Coal and Iron Police and State Constabulary

In Pennsylvania, the nation's leading coal-mining state in the early twentieth century, mine corporations established the coal and iron police, a private force to disrupt labor organizing and break strikes. The state permitted corporations for a small fee to hire uniformed armed policemen, whom they paid and supervised. Many coal and iron policemen had criminal backgrounds.

In the twentieth century's first three decades, coal and iron police were a prominent presence in Pennsylvania's coal-mining sections, watching railroad stations and stopping automobiles on the road to ensure that labor organizers did not come into contact with miners. Union miners often accused coal and iron policemen of depriving them of basic civil liberties and of sexually abusing the women in their communities, a charge they also leveled at Baldwin-Felts guards in West Virginia and Colorado.

In 1905, Pennsylvania's legislature, anxious to quell labor militancy, established the nation's first state police, an elite mounted force known as the State Constabulary. It was modeled on British constabulary stationed in Ireland, and its members even wore bobby-style helmets. The men recruited were rigorously trained in the use of firearms, hand-to-hand combat, and horsemanship. State Constabulary troops were posted at four barracks in the coal regions, deliberately isolated so they would not develop any relationship with workers. The State Constabulary immediately gained notoriety for using rough tactics during mining and streetcar strikes, including riding into crowds on sidewalks and aggressively beating people with their long hickory batons, causing trade unionists to denounce them as “black Cossacks.” This epithet associated the State Constabulary with the mounted paramilitary force of

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Europe's most despotic regime and its savage suppression of peaceful protest.

Municipal Police and State Militia

Municipal police and state militia considered strike-breaking among their most important assignments, and they developed innovative methods to disperse crowds of strike sympathizers. Police departments, which grew significantly in the major cities during the early twentieth century, acquired fleets of patrol wagons to move men quickly to protect strikebreakers and erected a network of signal boxes to report trouble from crowds immediately. Police often charged picket lines and when mounted sometimes trampled strike sympathizers when riding into crowds. Such tactics could quickly demoralize strikers, driving them back to work. In Detroit, the nation's largest automobile-manufacturing center, the United Automobile Workers' union (UAW-Congress of Industrial Organizations [CIO]) accused the police of collusion with management during strikes and repeatedly denounced it for assaulting pickets and failing to investigate the bombings of union offices and activists' homes.

When confronted by charging, club-wielding mounted policemen, strikers and their sympathizers sometimes defended themselves by aiming their picket signs at the riders' kneecaps, which caused some of them to fall from their horses. Alternatively, they might place ball bearings on the street, knocking the horses off their feet. In Detroit in 1938, the UAW-CIO vigorously protested the police commissioner's order banning pickets from carrying signs he claimed were used as weapons. The UAW-CIO insisted this order violated the Second Amendment's guarantee of the right to bear arms. The most serious atrocity police committed against strikers and their sympathizers was the Memorial Day Massacre during the Little Steel Strike in Chicago, when they shot dead 10 people who had been peacefully demonstrating, hitting seven in the back and three in the side.

Because municipal police often lacked the manpower to suppress picket lines and strike crowds effectively, state authorities sometimes assigned militia this task. State militia possessed both superior firepower and greater mobility. The appearance of the militia's heavy-weapons' units, equipped with Gatling guns, often caused strike crowds immediately to melt away. Before automobiles came into wide use, cavalry enabled militia to patrol a much larger area in and around a city than police could. Colorado state militia, which had absorbed some Baldwin-Felts guards, during the 1913–1914 southern Colorado coal strike

committed the most famous atrocity in American labor history, the Ludlow massacre, killing two women and 11 children when they shot up and burned a large miners' tent colony.

The College Student as Strikebreaker

College students represented an important source of strikebreakers during the early twentieth century because their youth and vigor made them especially qualified for heavy physical labor, they had ample free time to intervene in strikes, and their affluence and ignorance of working-people's conditions caused them to sympathize with management in labor disputes. From the turn of the century until the early 1920s, male college students were prominent in breaking urban transit, teamsters', railroad, shipping, and gas and electrical workers' strikes; and the Boston policemen's strike. Because corporate business had assumed financial control over colleges and universities by the early twentieth century, administrators and faculty, who undoubtedly influenced students, tended to be hostile to organized labor. Many of the nation's leading college presidents were known for their anti-labor views. Harvard's president Charles W. Eliot, for example, offered fulsome praise for the strikebreakers' courage. As a result the labor press repeatedly used "elite hero" as a synonym for strikebreaker. Faculty tenure was uncommon until the late 1930s, so professors who expressed sympathy for unions were often discharged.

College students were also drawn to strikebreaking because it provided a test of manhood in a period when upper- and middle-class men felt increasingly insecure in their masculinity. Bureaucratization resulted in a loss of autonomy and deprived men of the opportunity to behave in the rough and boisterous manner that had been equated with manly conduct. Administrators at the turn of the twentieth century were also forbidding students to engage in violent, mass-student rituals, like cane rush, because of the danger involved. But strikebreaking, which administrators endorsed even though it often resulted in violent confrontations, bonded masses of young men together and allowed them to perform feats requiring strength and daring.

Female collegians were much less likely than men to participate in strikebreaking, further associating it with rough masculinity. While most female students, like their male counterparts, tended to be conservative, their ability to explore the world outside the campus was much more restricted. Nor did they share men's attraction to violence.

Engineering students were particularly desirable as strikebreakers because they were often the only skilled replacements available to management. By the early twentieth century, engineering colleges had developed close working relationships with corporations that funded and benefited from their research. In 1921, a railroad company even placed a track and passenger car on the campus of the nation's leading engineering school, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, so it could train students to replace its striking workers.

College-student strikebreaking declined in the 1930s but did not disappear, as working-class youth more sympathetic to labor came to constitute a large proportion of the student body, and the Depression lessened frivolity's appeal. Many collegians had considered strikebreaking a lark. The shift from a homosocial to a heterosocial leisure culture by the 1920s also reduced strikebreaking's appeal to college men, to whom it had constituted an important opportunity for male camaraderie.

African-American Strikebreaking

African-Americans, excluded from industrial occupations and many trade unions, emerged as another important strikebreaking force after the turn of the century, often transported long distances from the South to northern cities to take the place of strikers. Most of the African-American elite believed that the best strategy for black advancement required forging alliances with white business leaders and lacked sympathy for unionism. The black elite exercised significant influence in the black community through the black press and the black colleges and manual-training institutes. Strikebreaking appeared to offer blacks an opportunity to break the color bar in hiring in northern industry.

In addition many African-American men found strikebreaking appealing because it provided the best opportunity to escape the obsequiousness white society required of them. Blacks became increasingly subordinated after 1890, as the South elaborated a system of legal racial segregation and disfranchisement. During the first decade of the twentieth century, violent antiblack riots with significant casualties and destruction of property broke out in both southern and northern cities. African-American opportunities in military service, the only arena in which aggressive masculinity was tolerated in blacks, greatly diminished in the decades after the Civil War. But as strikebreakers black men, ordinarily expected to step aside when encountering whites, could brandish weapons, assume a posture of intimidation, and even shoot

white strikers and sympathizers with the approval of employers and often the white public.

The importation of massive numbers of African-American strikebreakers, largely from the South, by professional strikebreaking firms, was an important cause of the defeat of the national packinghouse strike in 1904 and the Chicago teamsters' strike in 1905. Steel corporation officials also credited African-American strikebreakers with a critical role in breaking the 1919 steel strike, which involved 365,000 workers. Yet invariably blacks failed to gain a permanent foothold in industry through strikebreaking. As late as 1939 and 1941, sizable numbers of black strikebreakers were used in the Chrysler and Ford auto strikes, respectively.

The Decline of Strikebreaking during the 1920s

As union membership and work stoppages declined precipitously after the early 1920s, sharply diminished demand pushed the professional strikebreaking business into temporary decline. Pearl Bergoff even sold off his arsenal and commissary equipment, hoping instead to make money in Florida real estate. Streetcar strikes, which had paralyzed the principal means of transportation in numerous American cities during the first two decades of the twentieth century and provided substantial revenue for strikebreaking firms, became infrequent as automobile ownership spread. Once this alternative mode of transportation became widely available, streetcar men lost most of their leverage and were much less likely to walk out.

Strikebreaking in the Auto Industry

Because the auto companies and their parts suppliers, closely allied with municipal police, presented a powerful and solid front against unionization, the UAW-CIO, determined to gain recognition but aware it could probably not prevail in any conventional strike, developed an innovative new tactic, the sit-down. By occupying a plant, the union prevented police from breaking picket lines and ushering in strikebreakers.

To break a sit-down strike, auto management might drive out the occupiers with tear gas, as at Detroit's Yale & Towne plant in 1937, which ended in a stinging union defeat. Management also mobilized large squads of vigilantes to intimidate the strikers and their families physically, as in the 1937 General Motors (GM) sit-down in Flint, Michigan,

and in the sit-down against GM parts suppliers in Anderson, Indiana. In both strikes procompany vigilantes violently attacked and injured UAW-CIO activists and destroyed union property. Management also spread rumors to demoralize those engaged in the sit-down, claiming their wives and children had fallen ill and that little support existed on the outside.

To counter these strikebreaking efforts, the UAW-CIO formed paramilitary units known as flying squadrons that shored up picket lines threatened with police or vigilante assault; communicated accurate information to sit-downers about developments outside occupied plants, including family news; and transported food and other necessary supplies to the sit-downers. Female relatives of UAW-CIO members established their own flying squadrons called the Women's Emergency Brigade, whose members donned military-style berets. They gained renown in the 1937 Flint sit-down strike for positioning themselves in the front ranks in clashes with armed police and bravely withstanding tear gas attacks. In other conventional strikes, like those at Federal Screw and American Brass in Detroit in 1938, the flying squadrons fought mounted police hand-to-hand.

Organized labor confronted well-armed mercenary armies not only in isolated mining and lumbering regions, but in the leading U.S. automobile-manufacturing metropolis, a heavily populated center of advanced technology. The Ford Motor Company's service department, led by former navy boxer Harry Bennett, who developed close ties with organized crime, became the world's largest private army during the late 1930s, committed to preventing unionization by spying on the labor force at work and in their neighborhoods, intimidating workers, and beating union activists, often severely. Many Ford servicemen were ex-convicts who had served prison time for violent crimes. The service department's strong-arm tactics ensured that Ford was the last of the big three auto manufacturers to be organized.

Because of the layout of Ford's massive flagship plant, River Rouge in Dearborn, just outside Detroit, neither a sit-down strike nor one that depended on establishing picket lines offered much prospect for success. When Ford, refusing to bargain, forced a strike in April 1941, the UAW-CIO prevailed because it used highly innovative tactics. Bennett had obstructed plant windows in the only two buildings facing streets to prevent transmitting food and supplies to strikers. He also placed machine guns on roofs. But the union shut down the plant by barricading roads serving it.

To break the strike Bennett tried to divide the labor force by provoking interracial violence. Ford, which had long made significant financial donations

to black churches and had hired more African-Americans than the other auto companies, enjoyed strong support in Detroit's black community. The UAW-CIO countered Ford's appeal to blacks by arguing that Ford assigned them to the less desirable jobs and pointed to backing from prominent African-American activists Walter White and Paul Robeson, both of whom came to Detroit to persuade black workers to join the union. Bennett armed black workers who remained loyal to the company with clubs, knives, and crowbars and had them assault predominantly white pickets, hoping to provoke militia intervention to break the strike.

However a split within Ford management, pitting Bennett, whom Ford strongly encouraged to use violence against the strikers, against Ford's son Edsel, apparently joined by Ford's wife, Clara, who urged negotiations, along with the union's innovative tactics, enabled the UAW-CIO to win recognition and the best settlement that had yet been achieved in auto manufacturing.

Strikebreaking in the Post-World War II Era

After World War II employers resorted less often to violence in suppressing strikes, particularly outside the South. Working-class suburbanization lessened opportunities for confrontation. In a heavily bureaucratized and more androgynous society that delegitimized anger, management increasingly relied on psychological manipulation to disrupt organizing and defeat strikes. The 1947 Taft-Hartley Act provided management with new advantages that made successful organizing and strikes less likely. The erosion of the nation's disproportionately unionized manufacturing sector, as a result of job loss to overseas competition and technological unemployment, contributed to the steady diminution in the percentage of organized workers after the mid-1950s, resulting in fewer work stoppages.

New union-avoidance firms, staffed by psychologists and lawyers, emerged to advise management on how to break strikes and defeat organizing campaigns. Proliferating during the 1970s, the consultants trained management to run anti-union propaganda campaigns that involved special meetings employees were required to attend, the showing of anti-labor videos, and home visits. The consultants defamed union activists by falsely accusing them of sexual or financial misconduct, associated unions with violence, and spread rumors that the plant would relocate if unionized.

In the more conservative climate of the 1980s, with unions weakened by the migration of jobs abroad,

workers who went on strike often found themselves permanently discharged. In 1981, President Reagan fired striking air traffic controllers *en masse*. The threat of permanent job loss proved highly effective in intimidating workers from using the strike, their weapon of last resort. In a 1991–1992 strike, Caterpillar Tractor decisively defeated one of the nation’s strongest unions, the UAW, by threatening permanent replacement.

Labor’s prospects for prevailing in a strike became increasingly bleak after 1980. It failed miserably in its attempt to persuade Congress to pass legislation to prohibit companies from permanently replacing strikers. By the first decade of the twenty-first century, the American public accorded unions less legitimacy than at any time since the 1920s, and most workers considered a strike too risky to attempt.

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SWEENEY, JOHN J. (MAY 5, 1934–) President, American Federation of Labor- Congress of Industrial Organizations

John J. Sweeney is the fourth president of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). Succeeding interim chief Tom Donahue, he began his term in 1995. Sweeney was swept into office at the head of a federation-wide reform wave. The so-called Sweeney revolution, which was led by New Voice reformers, pledged to recapture organized labor’s spirit from the 1930s, organize the unorganized, improve the standard of living of all Americans, and become once again a force to be reckoned with in American politics. As the initial euphoria wore off, Sweeney had a very difficult time fulfilling his promises and keeping the AFL-CIO together. Recently five powerful unions—the Service Employees’ International Union (SEIU), the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Laborers’

International Union of North America, and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, and Hotel Employees’ and Restaurant Employees’ International Union (UNITE-HERE)—have bolted from the AFL-CIO’s ranks to form their own federation, the Change to Win Coalition (CTWC). Weakened and beleaguered Sweeney presently is continuing his fight to advance the working class while presiding over a divided labor movement. It remains to be seen if he can overcome these obstacles as well as the conservative political mood of the nation.

Although he represented the candidate for change in the 1995 AFL-CIO presidential election, Sweeney’s background is nearly identical to those of the previous federation leaders. With the exception of Lane Kirkland, all the AFL-CIO presidents grew up in the Bronx, New York, which Sweeney described as a “pack-a-lunch-and-take-the-subway-to-work” kind of place. Similarly all three have been the descendents of Irish immigrants. Moreover and again with the exception of Kirkland, George Meany, Tom Donahue, and John Sweeney were raised in staunchly pro-union families. Sweeney’s father was a bus driver and a member of the Transport Workers’ Union (TWU). His mother was a domestic servant. Like so many people of that generation and those circumstances, three things dominated his early life: the Catholic church, family, and unions. Without the church, Sweeney once wrote, there would be no redemption. Without the family, there would be no love. And without the union, there would be no food on the table.

Sweeney began working as a teenager. He found a job at the Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Westchester County. And he joined what eventually became the Service Employees’ International Union, Local 365. After high school Sweeney went to college, first to Iona College in New Rochelle, where he majored in economics. Later he attended the Xavier Labor School in Manhattan. His higher education helped him frame his political and economic philosophy, which centers on the idea that economies should work for workers, and not the other way around. Somewhat surprisingly despite his union background and his proworker sympathies, after college Sweeney went to work for International Business Machines (IBM) as a market researcher. His stint at IBM lasted a short time, and he left it for a research job with the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union. That post led in 1961 to another, the contract director of the Building Service Employees’ Union, Local 32B. This job brought Sweeney into more politically powerful circles, since he worked directly with Tom Donahue, then a rising star in organized labor. As Sweeney and Donahue expanded Local 32B, they began

to gain regional, then national attention. In 1976, Sweeney succeeded Donahue as Local 32B president, and soon after, he helped transform the Building Service Union into the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU), dedicated to helping all service workers of all backgrounds.

The rising fortunes of the SEIU stood in stark contrast to the rest of the labor movement. Although there were some positive developments in the 1970s and early 1980s, unionists in those years witnessed a wholesale decline in living standards and in the power of the labor movement. The problem was threefold. First in the early 1970s, the American economy entered a long slowdown. High oil prices, antiquated factory systems, and rampant inflation contributed to an overall dwindling of worker economic and consumer power. Second instead of working with organized labor to improve the situation, employers and politicians waged an all-out campaign to rollback pocketbook and fringe-benefit gains that unionists had won from the 1930s–1960s. As Sweeney has put it, the rich and powerful broke the social contract that emerged from the Great Depression. Many employers and politicians gave up the commitment to provide a social and economic safety net for the working class. Third the labor movement itself became decrepit. Under the direction of the elderly Meany, the AFL-CIO lost political ground while American workers were losing economic ground. In 1979, Meany finally retired, and Kirkland became the federation's president. Arguably the average American worker barely noticed the difference.

Kirkland was the quintessential labor bureaucrat insider. He was greatly sympathetic to union workers, but he traveled in the nation's highest political circles away from the daily grind of local union politics, organizing, and labor relations. Although Kirkland vigorously opposed Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush's antilabor agendas, his challenge to the conservatives was rather anemic. Kirkland's greatest achievements came on the world stage where he was instrumental in the democratization of Poland and the efforts to find stable, moderate, and anti-Communist governments in Central America. Closer to home Kirkland failed to stem the lowering tide for the American workers' standard of living. He did however bring more unity to the shrinking labor movement. By 1989, three major unions—the United Auto Workers, the Teamsters, and the United Mine Workers—had rejoined the AFL-CIO. But increased solidarity did not translate into renewed activism to stop the declining impact of the AFL-CIO.

For many in the labor movement, their patience with President Kirkland ran out in 1994. That year the Republican party launched its Contract with America campaign to capture the U.S. Congress.

In those off-year elections, many conservative candidates espoused anti-union rhetoric and won. Once again the AFL-CIO seemed slow and unresponsive. Angered by labor's inability to answer the challenge, several union leaders publicly denounced Kirkland. Under mounting pressure in June 1995, the 73-year-old Kirkland resigned as AFL-CIO president. His lieutenant (and Sweeney's personal friend) Donahue was tapped to fill the vacancy until the October AFL-CIO Convention.

The 1995 convention was one of the federation's most contentious. After months of organizing, an insurgent group of unionists, who called themselves the New Voice, were making lots of noise. Influenced by New Left radicals, like Michael Harrington, leaders like Sweeney, Rich Trumka, Ron Carey, and Linda Chavez-Thompson forged a coalition of organizations including the International Association of Machinists, the SEIU, the Teamsters, the UAW, and the United Mine Workers of America (UMW). The group handily defeated Donahue and elected 61-year-old Sweeney. Sweeney pledged to fulfill the New Voice promise of "giving American workers a raise" while fighting for "economic security and social justice." President Sweeney dramatically reshaped the AFL-CIO headquarters, rearranging its national budget so that more union dollars went toward organizing. He helped the federation extend itself by changing its public relations approach, which resulted in the creation of the AFL-CIO web site (www.aflcio.org) and refashioning the old *American Federationist* into the much flashier *Americans @ Work*. Finally Sweeney made an immediate impact on the 1996 presidential election, helping the mainstream pro-labor candidate, Bill Clinton, get re-elected.

Unfortunately for Sweeney the AFL-CIO, and unionists generally, the second Clinton term was not a halcyon age for American workers. Rather the final years of the millennium constituted a missed opportunity. President Clinton made very little headway with this domestic agenda as his presidency became mired in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Having a wounded liberal president was bad enough, but beginning in 1996 the Teamsters' Ron Carey, a staunch Sweeney supporter, became embroiled in his own political scandal that resulted in his ouster from office and the election of James P. Hoffa, son of the fabled Teamster president. Other problems soon followed. Significantly despite the pledges of New Voice union leaders and millions of dollars devoted to organizing, the membership of the AFL-CIO has failed to grow. In fact the number of union workers in the American labor force has declined since 1995. Of course one can point to large impersonal economic forces, such as automation, the transplanting of American

manufacturing overseas, and the continued downsizing of the labor force as major factors in organized labor's woes. But there were other causes as well. Sweeney has presided over an era when American politics have turned decidedly to the right. These pressures on the AFL-CIO have been almost too much to bear, and the federation has once again begun to break.

An internecine fight broke out in 2004 when SEIU President Andy Stern publicly attacked Sweeney's leadership. Stern, Sweeney's protégé who had in fact succeeded his mentor as SEIU's chief in 1996, challenged the federation to do more organizing and work harder to foster unity, consolidation, and cooperation among smaller unions. Sweeney tried to placate his rivals by adopting a series of reforms, instituting reorganizations, and laying off headquarters' staff. The tactic failed to convince the leaders of five major unions—the SEIU, the Teamsters, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Laborers, and UNITE-HERE—to remain in the AFL-CIO. On June 14, 2005, these five unions formed the CTWC and began a process to pull their 5 million members out of the federation. Virtually overnight the AFL-CIO's membership has shrunk by nearly 40%. Moreover the federation has also lost more than one-sixth of its operating budget. The SEIU and the Teamsters alone had contributed over \$20 million to the AFL-CIO. Enfeebled and splintered the AFL-CIO has tried to reach out to CTWC without result. Consequently Sweeney has had to increase the dues of remaining unions. He also sent out Rich Trumka to try to drum up some local support. The AFL-CIO has been somewhat successful in obtaining solidarity charters with some CTWC locals.

While organized labor has been battling itself, the overall situation for American workers has become more precarious. In addition to more plant closures and layoffs, both union and nonunion workers have struggled as their health insurance and pension systems have faltered and in some cases failed. President George W. Bush's administration seemed quite unsympathetic to those issues. In fact President Bush worked diligently to weaken overtime and wage rules, made unfriendly appointments to major federal labor relations posts, and has done very little to stop the continuing de-industrialization of the United States. He also proposed substantial revisions to the old New Deal safety net, including a privatization plan for social security. The AFL-CIO itself wrestled to define a strategy to oppose conservative politicians and their plans. There have been some victories. In October 2005, under pressure from the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades' Department, the Bush administration re-instated

Davis-Bacon wage protections that had been suspended in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. But advances like this have seemed fleeting. In 2005, the percentage of union workers in the labor force reached a nadir, 12%. And, traditional stalwart groups within the labor movement, such as African-Americans, are quickly becoming nonunion workers because of downsizing. Once again—as social commentators had done immediately before the advent of the New Deal—some critics have begun to question if unions, particularly the AFL-CIO, are still relevant to today's workers. The answer to that question rests in large measure with Sweeney.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Kirkland, Lane

SWINTON, JOHN (1830–1901) Labor Journalist

John Swinton was perhaps the most influential and unique labor journalist of the late nineteenth century. A longtime journalist for established New York newspapers, including the *New York Times* and the *New York Sun*, Swinton founded his own newspaper, *John Swinton's Paper*, to champion labor issues in 1883. Though short-lived, running for fewer than 4 years, *John Swinton's Paper* was one of the first independent U.S. labor newspapers and a force that even propelled some labor issues into the halls of Congress.

Swinton was born in Salton, Hoddingtonshire, Scotland, with the good fortune of having a vicar for an uncle who tutored him in a firm knowledge of letters. When the family moved to Montreal, Swinton was learned enough to be apprenticed to a newspaper printer, beginning his lifelong press career at the age of 13. Following in the footsteps of many Scotch and Irish immigrants for whom Canada was just the first leg in a journey to the United States, the Swintons moved to New York in 1849.

After a brief flirtation with academia, taking classes at New York Medical College, Swinton continued in his destined trade. As a journeyman he traveled extensively, for a time securing a position as a compositor in a South Carolina printing office in Charleston, then moving on to Kansas just as it began to earn its bloody nickname; there he set the *Lawrence Republican*, then back to New York City again. Though there is no documentary evidence of Swinton's youthful ideological views, the facts of his early life do fit with the assertions of some biographers who claim that Swinton was deeply offended by the slavery he witnessed in South Carolina and expressed his feelings in his rush to the frontlines of abolitionism in Kansas.

Skilled and experienced in printing, intelligent and critically minded, Swinton secured a position as a reporter for the *New York Times*. Swinton gravitated naturally to the city's literary and radical haunts, spending much of his time at Pfaff's saloon on the corner of Broadway and Bleecker with his close friend Walt Whitman. Most of his war years were consumed scribbling away at the *Times* without a byline, but in a remarkably short time, he was promoted to an editor's desk.

In 1869, Swinton embarked on the assignment that would shape the rest of his life. He penned a nine-article investigative series on "Our Working Classes," which were either the result of his developing interest in the conditions of labor or were the occasion of his awakening to them. The following year Swinton continued his interest in labor issues, publishing a biting analysis of foreign contract labor entitled "The Coolie Question," in the *New York Tribune*. By the time the sharp depression of 1873 struck the nation and police wantonly beat protesters at Tompkins Square Park (which Swinton witnessed), Swinton had become a committed labor activist.

Swinton had the rare ability to exist in both the conventional world of journalism and the radical milieu of the labor movement. While working for the *New York Sun*, Swinton spearheaded the effort to force the New York State Assembly to investigate police actions at Tompkins Square, ran for mayor under the banner of the ephemeral Industrial Political party, an offshoot of the moribund International Workingmen's Association, and held court at the anarchist Justus Schwab's Lower East Side saloon.

In 1880, Swinton toured Europe and unlike many of his American predecessors on their first visit to the continent found that the experience made the squalor of U.S. conditions seem even worse by comparison. While in England Swinton spent a day with Karl Marx and interviewed him for the *New York Sun*. Swinton, knowing his subject's philosophical bent,

asked, "What is?" Marx, Swinton observed, "Seemed as though his mind were inverted for a moment...[and] in a deep and solemn tone, he replied: 'Struggle'."

In 1883, he testified before the Blair Committee of Congress that was then documenting industrial conditions and later that October launched the project for which he is primarily remembered, opening one of the first independent U.S. labor newspapers, *John Swinton's Paper*. Looking back on his publishing venture later in life, Swinton described his newspaper as "ideal, idyllic, heroic, archetypal, rational, godly and inexpensive." At four pages of six columns selling for 3cents a copy, it reached its peak circulation of 10,000 after its first year. Though its distribution was never great, its influence was keenly felt largely because of the great respect Swinton himself had earned for the integrity of his reporting and his commitment to independence and honesty. For example in 1884, *John Swinton's Paper* began a long investigative series uncovering contract-labor abuses in New York City that prompted Congressman Martin A. Foran of Ohio to introduce an anticontract labor bill that passed the following year.

John Swinton's Paper took up many causes but always maintained its independence from them. It supported Henry George's candidacy for mayor of New York, though it criticized his economic principles. It was a strong supporter of the Knights of Labor and criticized its leadership. While many labor reformers, such as Wendell Phillips, preached racial internationalism, Swinton embraced a spread-eagled racial nationalism, especially on the issue of Chinese immigration.

The newspaper never turned a profit, and Swinton freely underwrote its losses from his own savings. Even after it was evident his newspaper was sinking into bankruptcy, Swinton's stern view of journalistic independence caused him to refuse all donations unless accompanied by a similar number of subscriptions. His last issue was dated Aug. 21, 1887.

Swinton, as was his talent, continued to write for larger New York newspapers while continuing to speak on labor platforms and support labor causes. Swinton was the featured speaker at the 1892 American Federation of Labor convention where he reviewed the "battalions that fought this year at Homestead, Buffalo, and Coeur d'Alene." In 1895, he edited a collection of writings by Eugene Debs, Samuel Gompers, and other labor leaders entitled, *A Momentous Question: Labor's Side of the Labor Question*.

Marx described him as a "well-meaning bourgeois" and had he lived in the twentieth century, he probably would have been described as a fellow traveler. Swinton was a man highly regarded by many

who did not share his principles, including one powerful chief editor who eulogized him by saying, "He is the only man I ever knew who had no axes of his own to grind."

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SYLVIS, WILLIAM (1828–1869) National Labor Union

William Sylvis was the premier U.S. labor leader during the 1860s. He organized iron molders into the strongest union in the country, helped found the National Labor Union, pioneered new organizing methods, and pushed for such reforms as an 8-hour day, greenback currency, and expanded rights for women and African-Americans.

Sylvis, the son of an American-born wagon maker, learned iron making as an apprentice in his hometown of Armagh, Pennsylvania. In 1850, Sylvis married Amelia Thomas, with whom he produced four children. Two years later Sylvis moved his family to Philadelphia where he found steady work. After Amelia's death in 1865, Sylvis married Florrie Hunter, who bore him one child.

During the Panic of 1857, Sylvis joined a local iron molders union that was fighting a wage cut. The strike failed, but the union survived, and Sylvis, who distinguished himself as a picket organizer, was elected recording secretary in 1858. The next year Sylvis helped organize a national convention of iron molders. In 1860, the International Iron Molders' Union (IMIU), the result of this effort, elected Sylvis treasurer.

In the 1850s, Sylvis supported Stephen Douglas's wing of the Democratic party, which opposed African-American civil rights and equivocated on slavery. During the secession crisis of 1860–1861, Sylvis participated in the Committee of Thirty-Four, a northern trade union effort to avoid war by compromising on slavery. When the Civil War began, Sylvis, like most northern Democrats, abandoned compromise. He

organized a company of Union volunteers and in 1862, served in a Pennsylvania regiment.

Meanwhile the IMIU had nearly disappeared because of a bad economy and military service by its members. In 1863, Sylvis, who had returned to Philadelphia, won election as president of the IMIU (an office he held until 1869) and set out on a nationwide recruiting drive. By 1865, Sylvis had added over 100 locals, organized 6,000 of the nation's 9,200 journeymen ironworkers, and made the IMIU the largest U.S. trade union.

Sylvis pioneered such organizational methods as centralized union government, membership cards, and high-dues payments to fund strikes. These tactics enabled the IMIU to boost molders' pay ahead of inflation, a major achievement given the general decline in workers' wartime purchasing power. Despite this success Sylvis's personal abrasiveness alienated some union members.

Centralization helped the IMIU survive the postwar recession and an 1866–1867 employer drive to break the union. The onslaught cost the IMIU one-fourth of its membership, but by avoiding union-crushing strikes and playing employers off against each other, Sylvis kept the IMIU alive.

Sylvis's faith in centralization informed his efforts to establish a national union federation. Although unable to attend the founding meeting of the NLU in 1866, Sylvis supported its labor reform agenda of shorter hours, cooperative enterprise, currency reform, and creation of a federal labor department. Elected NLU president in 1868, Sylvis recognized that the organization's weak control over affiliated unions limited its effectiveness in collective bargaining. Accordingly Sylvis used the NLU to advocate labor-reform issues, which he publicized on national speaking tours and in the *Workingman's Advocate*, the NLU's official newspaper, which Sylvis co-owned.

Sylvis linked the cause of labor's rights to expanding rights for African-Americans and women. Despite Sylvis's prewar support for racist Democrats and his postwar denigration of the Freedmen's Bureau and Radical Reconstruction, as NLU president he supported organizing African-American workers. In 1869, shortly after Sylvis's death, the NLU seated its first black delegates. Isaac Myers, a Baltimore ship caulker who founded the Colored National Labor Union in cooperation with NLU, praised Sylvis's support for African-American labor. However most NLU-affiliated unions, which were overwhelmingly white, ignored Sylvis's recommendations and excluded African-American members.

Likewise Sylvis's support for women's rights neither sparked a wave of female union organizing nor secured woman's suffrage. Notwithstanding these

failures, Sylvis befriended Elizabeth Cady Stanton and defeated a campaign to deny her a seat at the 1868 NLU convention where she represented the New York Woman's Suffrage Association. The NLU refused to endorse woman's suffrage, but it did support inclusion of women in trade unions.

Sylvis's growing interest in such legislative remedies as 8-hour day laws and greenback currency persuaded him that an independent political party could better advance labor's cause than could trade unions, which he perceived as defensive organizations. Sylvis's movement toward third-party politics was cut short by his death on July 26, 1869. During the Civil War era, Sylvis turned the iron industry into the stronghold of organized labor and demonstrated the effectiveness of centralized, bureaucratic union government.

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See also **Civil War and Reconstruction; National Labor Union**

SYNDICALISM

Syndicalism was a political philosophy that rejected electoral politics as ineffective and corrupt, focusing instead on economic action. Syndicalists identified unions as the focal point of revolutionary activity. They argued that increasingly militant strikes would educate workers about their own potential and grow into general strikes that would ultimately bring production to a halt and enable them to abolish the political state. The state would be replaced by a federated set of syndicates, or unions, through which production and distribution would be organized. Tactically they advocated not only general strikes, but also direct action—activism in the streets and at the factory door—and the frequently misunderstood practice of sabotage.

Revolutionary syndicalism emerged as an ideology and set of practices in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. The most important theorists were in France, where syndicalism first took root. Fernand

Pelloutier articulated the rationale for opposition to electoral politics and antistatism at the end of the nineteenth century. Emile Pouget wrote on the general strike, direct action, and, infamously, sabotage. Georges Sorel, the most influential syndicalist theorist, argued the importance of a militant minority to lead workers to revolution, defended revolutionary violence, and explored the emotional appeal of consciously constructed myths to motivate masses of people. When syndicalists established themselves in the *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT), the most important federation of unions in France, they became a formidable presence in the labor movement. Syndicalism also gained a footing in Italy, infused by a sharper antistatist edge that revealed the influence of anarchist Mikhail Bakunin. Like in France, Italian syndicalists strove to capture the most powerful labor organizations in their country—the Chambers of Labor, which exerted enormous influence in the years surrounding World War I.

Syndicalism and the Industrial Workers of the World

The major vehicle for syndicalist ideas and practices in the United States was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), founded in 1905. Debate continues about whether the IWW, whose leaders referred to themselves as industrial unionists, was actually a syndicalist organization. The IWW was too amorphous and diverse an organization to unite under a single ideological mantle—its leaders even argued endlessly about the value of political action—but clearly they were aware of European syndicalist ideas. William Trautmann, a major contributor to the IWW's *Industrial Union Manifesto*, drew explicitly on syndicalist ideas. William Haywood traveled to Europe in 1908 and met with CGT leaders. At the very least the IWW was an organization in which syndicalism was one of several competing ideologies and which frequently used syndicalist practices.

Unlike in much of Europe, the IWW's embrace of syndicalism came from a rejection not of political parties, but of an exclusive and conservative labor federation. American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders wanted to organize only that fraction of the working class that had valuable craft skills. The AFL virtually ignored largely unskilled southern and Eastern European immigrants, African-American workers, and women of all races and ethnicities. This meant that again unlike most European syndicalists, IWW leaders were advocates of dual unionism who

sought to organize unskilled workers rather than working with existing craft unions.

Syndicalism was an ideal ideology for the disempowered and disenfranchised the IWW sought to organize, relying on strength of numbers and confrontational tactics. The IWW leaders, like other syndicalists, considered the union the agent of revolutionary activity and the general strike the means to that revolution. More importantly they drew heavily on syndicalist tactics when organizing workers, be they rugged western miners or immigrant workers in the East, or African-American workers in southern ports. They relied on direct action and especially on its malleability as a strategy in strikes and other confrontations. Up and down the West Coast, Wobblies battled restrictions on free speech, getting arrested reading the Declaration of Independence and overflowing jails to sap recalcitrant towns' resources. In Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912, the IWW devised moving picket lines to overcome court injunctions and led marches through the streets so strikers could see their numbers and hear their own voices. The Wobblies guided over 20,000 workers from more than 20 nations to victory in a seemingly unwinnable strike.

In this strike, the most important waged by the IWW on the East Coast, the impact of immigrant syndicalists on the radical union was clear. The IWW relied heavily in Lawrence on the syndicalist *Federazione Socialista Italiana* [FSI], whose members contributed their own notions of direct action. The FSI syndicalists suggested a children's exodus to remove sons and daughters of strikers from the hardship of the strike. They infused the IWW's efforts with the anarchist mentality characteristic of Italian syndicalism, pushing the organization to confront the state directly to free framed striker leaders.

Ultimately the strike in Lawrence and the strike by silk workers in Paterson, New Jersey, in 1913 exposed the strengths and limitations of syndicalist strategy in the United States. Syndicalist tactics were potentially very powerful—scorned textile workers not only in Lawrence, but also in textile towns across the Northeast, won pay increases. But no general strike erupted as a result of the strike, and employers in Paterson, fully aware of the IWW, banded together to defeat it.

The Lawrence strike had an additional unintended effect of squelching an effort to create an alternative syndicalist organization. William Z. Foster, eventually a leading American Communist, was among those who argued the IWW was not a truly syndicalist organization because it practiced dual unionism. The Syndicalist League of North America (SLNA) he created to “bore from within” the American Federation

of Labor (AFL)—to try to take control of the largest labor federation in the United States—followed the model of French syndicalism much more closely than the IWW. Unfortunately for Foster, he launched his new organization at the moment of the IWW's success in Lawrence. At its peak the SLNA, which Foster called an educational institution rather than a union, had a couple of dozen branches, mostly in the West and Midwest, and around 2000 members.

Whether or not the IWW was a syndicalist organization, its detractors certainly saw it as one. As its notoriety grew, so, too, did its reputation for advocating sabotage and promoting violence. Though many regarded sabotage and violence as synonymous, sabotage as an oppositional tactic covered a very broad range of potential activities from the destruction of machinery to “soldiering on the job,” when workers intentionally slowed down to control the pace of production themselves. Regardless the Socialist party in 1912 voted to expel any members who advocated the use of sabotage or violence—a move aimed squarely at IWW members. In broader terms IWW advocacy of sabotage contributed to an aura of potential violence that followed its members wherever they went.

The notion that the IWW was a potentially violent organization was not wholly a fabrication. Sorel provided a theoretical basis for the use of revolutionary violence. The IWW members did not shy from advocating violence in conflicts with armed defenders of capitalism. But most Wobbly exhortations to violence never moved beyond a rhetorical level, and most of the time when actual violence occurred, the Wobblies responded in self-defense—and got the worst of it. Especially once the United States entered World War I, and during the postwar Red Scare, vigilante groups and patriotic organizations frequently attacked IWW members.

World War I and Its Aftermath

World War I was a turning point for syndicalism in the United States in two ways. First the flexibility of syndicalist philosophy and its emphasis on the creation of emotion-provoking myths and on the utility of revolutionary violence led certain immigrant syndicalists far to the right. Though the IWW strenuously opposed the war, many syndicalists throughout Europe and in certain immigrant communities in the United States supported it. Some believed that an armed proletariat would eventually turn to revolution; others began to argue that only nationalism

could galvanize revolutionary ardor. The FSI members for example split angrily over the war; most who favored intervention eventually returned to Italy and became Fascists.

Those who remained opposed to the war—including virtually the entire IWW—faced an enormous backlash. Many immigrant syndicalists were deported. The IWW was plagued with mass arrests and became little more than a defense organization. By 1919, over 20 states had passed criminal syndicalism laws—once again the organization was deemed syndicalist by its foes—to aid prosecution of IWW members.

Syndicalists also had to face the emergence of the powerful new revolutionary force of communism. Though many syndicalists initially greeted the Russian revolution with enthusiasm, disaffection quickly followed as Lenin centralized power in the Soviet Union. It soon became clear moreover that Communists and syndicalists striving to organize workers would be ideological foes far more often than they were allies.

Syndicalism, especially if defined broadly as a set of tactics, survived the war in various ways. A number of the new unions, like the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, had syndicalist members and emphasized direct action and the general strike. One historian discerned syndicalist impulses among San Francisco dockworkers in the 1930s, and one could make a similar argument for many CIO unions in their early militant days. But over the decades syndicalist tactics were sapped of the revolutionary

vigor that had made the philosophy so potentially valuable to workers and that had created so much fear in its opponents.

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See also Amalgamated Clothing Workers/ UNITE; American Federation of Labor; Anarchism; Congress of Industrial Organizations; Dual Unionism; Foster, William Z.; Haywood, William; Industrial Workers of the World; Italians; Lawrence Strike (1912); Paterson (NJ) Silk Strike (1913); Textiles; World War I

T

TAFT, PHILIP (1902–1976) **Labor Scholar, Historiographer**

During the era when organized labor became “Big Labor,” Philip Taft became the leading representative of the primary mode of U.S. labor historiography, the “Wisconsin School” of labor history. He gained scholarly prominence by adapting the school’s analytical framework to the changes in organized labor brought about by the New Deal and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Taft’s persistent emphasis on the realities of institutional development, as manifested in changing union organization and operation, was well suited to comprehending the labor movement’s experience with unprecedented organizational restructuring and expansion.

Taft’s apprenticeship in labor scholarship began in 1928, with his enrollment in the labor studies program offered by the University of Wisconsin’s Economics Department. Taft quickly embraced the program’s unconventional practice of economics, with its emphasis on the empirical investigation of organized labor’s experience with American capitalism. Underlying Taft’s positive response was his own decade-long experience as a laborer in America’s mobile workforce. Taft proceeded to make the Wisconsin School approach into his own. Narrating how unionists actually built and administered their own organizations became the enduring characteristic of his scholarship.

At Wisconsin, Taft worked closely with Selig Perlman, whose influential *A Theory of the Labor Movement* was published the year that Taft enrolled.

Taft conspicuously launched his career in 1935 when he coauthored with Perlman the fourth and final volume of the series that placed the Wisconsin School at the head of American labor scholarship, *History of Labor in the United States*. Like many of his fellow Wisconsin graduates, Taft worked in public administration. His service record included the Wisconsin Industrial Commission, the Resettlement and Social Security Administrations, and the War Labor Board. During his lengthy residence with Brown University’s Economics Department (1937–1968), his involvement with the practice of labor relations continued. However, his primary career commitment was to research and teaching.

True to his Wisconsin training, Taft’s extensive research record included investigations into contemporary unionism as well as historical union development. His contemporary focus was on the problems unions faced as independent institutions with distinctive modes of organization and operation. He examined existing union structures—the AFL’s trade union autonomy, the CIO’s organizational expansionism, and AFL-CIO rivalry—to assess their impact on the conduct of union functions: institution building, internal union governance, organizing policy, collective bargaining strategy, and public policy. His interest in these relationships endured throughout his career, with major studies published in 1954 and 1975.

Taft’s best-known publications were histories: a two-volume history of the AFL (1957, 1959) and a single-volume survey of organized labor in the United States (1964). His historical analysis centered on the

same union structures and functions but reversed the lines of influence. Taft detailed how the demands of solving everyday operational problems generated a structural core of “business unionism” common to successive versions of American unionism. Highlighted in his account was a pattern in which the ideological positions of unionists were repeatedly eclipsed by the problem-solving activities of unions. Taft’s stress on the pervasiveness of business unionism—Taft’s preferred terminology—re-iterated the Wisconsin School emphasis on job-conscious unionism. At the same time, he located the origins of this unionism in an institutional logic instead of the ideological conflict featured in Perlman’s history. With this interpretive move, he established the continuity between the AFL and CIO. Taft thereby overcame the historiographical dilemma confronting the Wisconsin School, the analytical impasse generated by Perlman’s equation of job-conscious unionism with AFL trade unionism.

Despite his objections to Perlman’s adherence to outmoded theory in the face of changing historical reality, Taft remained bound to Perlman’s theory in ways that limited his own historical reconstructions. Taft’s treatment of business unionism as the essence of unionism led him to reduce the history of American unionism to the history of business unionism. Because his treatment of unions as institutions minimized their intersection with nonunion institutions, he similarly narrowed the bounds of institutional analysis.

Taft’s significance is tied to his role in two historiographical transitions, since he twice served as a central figure in defining the relationship between one generation of labor historians and the next. In the first instance, he led economists in adapting the Wisconsin School’s analytical framework to the changing realities fostered by New Deal reforms. Conversely, when historians responded to postwar social reform movements by broadening their empirical reach to include previously excluded workers and institutions, Taft held fast to the analytical boundaries set by his mentors. His adherence to Wisconsin School realism was grounded in the school’s enduring quarrel with the reality-defying abstractions of mainstream economics. Despite the reasons behind his position, the limits of Taft’s adaptability were momentous for the practice of labor history, marking the end of the Wisconsin School’s interpretive hold over the field.

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See also Commons, John Rogers; *Historiography of American Labor History*; Perlman, Selig

TAFT-HARTLEY ACT

The Taft-Hartley Act, or the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, was the first large-scale revision of a major New Deal program. Passed during a period of increasing hostility to labor as a result of the post-World War II strike wave, Taft-Hartley placed a number of restrictions on labor union practices. The Act’s partisans argued that the bill would help equalize the playing field between labor and management, though its opponents instead labeled it a “Slave Labor Act.” The Act survived a veto by President Truman and six decades of lobbying for its repeal, and most of its provisions are still in effect.

Origins of the Act

Almost immediately after the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935, which set up the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in an attempt to protect workers’ efforts at creating and joining unions, groups like the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the Chambers of Commerce began to lobby for a revision of federal labor policy. These groups argued that the NLRB and the Wagner Act were biased in favor of workers, pointing to the list of restrictions on the actions of management that were included in the 1935 act without any comparable restrictions on the actions of labor unions. Numerous Republicans and

southern Democrats proposed revisions to the Wagner Act in the ensuing decades, most of them aimed at restricting certain union practices, such as the closed shop, a situation where union membership becomes a precondition for hiring, and secondary boycotts, which is when a union refuses to deal with any firm that purchases goods from the target of a boycott.

These attempts at labor reform came to naught until public opinion turned sharply against the labor movement in the immediate aftermath of World War II. While the strike wave that occurred in 1945 and 1946 was considerably smaller than the one which followed the first World War, it nevertheless was large enough to renew cries for reining in the power of the labor movement. Even prominent Democrats who had been largely pro-labor, such as Harry Truman, became increasingly disillusioned with parts of the labor leadership when figures like John L. Lewis led their workers out on strike not just against employers, but even against the government.

The Republicans won back control of both houses of Congress in 1946, at least partially as a result of a wave of antilabor sentiment in the wake of the strike wave. The new Republican leaders of Congress seized upon this new public mood and quickly went to work to craft a bill aimed at reforming federal labor policy. This effort was led by Representative Fred A. Hartley Jr. of New Jersey and Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio. Both men headed the Labor Committees of their respective houses of Congress, and both moved quickly to hold hearings and draft bills amending the Wagner Act.

Both bills were largely similar, though the Hartley bill was considerably more harsh. After the Taft-Hartley Act was passed, Hartley claimed that he had intentionally made his bill more extreme so that when a compromise bill was agreed on in the end, it would seem more moderate. Regardless, the compromise bill agreed upon by both houses of Congress ended up including most of the provisions that had long been called for by the NAM and other anti-union organizations. Moreover, it was immediately criticized by both the AFL and the CIO, along with a number of northern Democrats, liberals, and labor economists.

Despite this opposition, the bill sailed through both houses of Congress with overwhelming majorities, garnering votes from both Republicans and southern Democrats. President Truman decided to veto the bill, but his veto was overridden by Congress, and the Act was passed. While most at the time viewed Truman's veto as having resulted from an actual opposition to the Taft-Hartley Act, some scholars have disputed this view. In fact, Truman had become increasingly wary of some of the most powerful labor

leaders, especially John L. Lewis, and actually had pushed for some labor legislation to increase his authority over unions that strike against the national interest. As a result, some have suggested that Truman vetoed the bill precisely because he knew his veto would be overridden. That way, he would be able to garner the appreciation of the labor movement while still achieving substantive labor reforms and increasing his authority to intervene in strikes.

Taft-Hartley's Provisions

The Taft-Hartley Act contained a number of revisions to federal labor policy. The major revisions fall into three main categories: first, the creation of a category of unfair labor practices to match the pre-existing set of unfair management practices instituted by the Wagner Act; second, limitations and restrictions on union security clauses in contracts; and third, institutional changes to the National Labor Relations Board. In addition, there were a number of minor changes covering a variety of topics, including the eligibility of supervisors to join unions and the status of Communists in positions of union leadership.

One of the stated goals of the drafters of the Taft-Hartley Act was to equalize the powers of labor and management. To accomplish this, the Act included a list of union practices that were to be outlawed as a counterweight to the list of unfair management practices already in effect. The most important of these restrictions was a ban on jurisdictional strikes, strikes that were called for the purpose of forcing an employer to give work only to members of a given union, and secondary boycotts. Both of these tactics had become popular among certain powerful unions, particularly the Teamsters.

Of more importance to the labor movement as a whole, Taft-Hartley placed restrictions on many popular union security practices. The closed shop was banned under Taft-Hartley, and it was made more difficult for unions to institute a union shop, where employees are forced to join the union after they are hired, and automatic dues checkoff, where the employer removes union dues directly from an employee's paycheck. Moreover, under Taft-Hartley, individual states could pass "right-to-work" laws, which would outlaw the practice of the union shop entirely.

Taft-Hartley also acted to restructure the NLRB, dividing its authority in two by creating a General Counsel, which was meant to be independent from the rest of the Board. This Counsel had the ability and the obligation to seek injunctions against both

TAFT-HARTLEY ACT

employers and unions who violated the Act. This division of powers was intended to separate the prosecutorial from the decision-making aspects of the NLRB's work and to potentially dilute the supposed pro-union bent of the Board.

Finally, the Act included a number of miscellaneous provisions. These included empowering the president to intervene in strikes that threatened a national emergency, requiring union leaders to sign affidavits stating that they were not supporters of the Communist Party, and explicitly excluding supervisors from protection from the NLRB. While these provisions did not form the basis for the contemporary opposition to Taft-Hartley, some have taken on increased importance in later years, both rhetorically and practically. The anticommunist affidavits, for instance, were not a major sticking point for most of the staunchly anticommunist AFL and CIO unions, although later scholars critical of the Act have placed a great deal of importance on it. And the provision excluding supervisors from NLRB bargaining units quickly became a powerful anti-union tactic for companies, allowing them to reclassify large segments of their employees as supervisors, thus making them ineligible for union membership.

Consequences of the Act

Despite the heated rhetoric surrounding its passage and the frequent attempts to repeal it over the last six decades, the Taft-Hartley Act had surprisingly few ramifications for the American labor movement. The unions that many thought would be most affected by the new list of unfair labor practices, such as the Teamsters, continued to flourish after the passage of the law. Union strength and the incidence of strikes were largely unaffected by the passage of the law, and outside of the South, where "right-to-work" laws were quickly enacted, union security provisions continued to flourish in most unions. Some have pointed to the South as the area hardest hit by Taft-Hartley, arguing that the "right-to-work" provisions were responsible for the low rates of unionization throughout the region. However, the labor movement was weak in the South even before Taft-Hartley.

Nevertheless, hostility toward Taft-Hartley continues to this day. Congressional efforts to repeal the Act were almost successful under the Carter and Clinton administrations, and Ralph Nader has used repeal of the Act as one of his campaign platforms in at least two presidential elections. Certain sections of the law have been amended or deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, particularly the

provision mandating anticommunist affidavits. Nevertheless, most aspects of the law remain in effect.

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TAPPES, SHELTON, (1911–1991) First Recording Secretary, United Auto Workers Local 600

Shelton Tappes, an African-American autoworker and the first recording secretary of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 600, the largest local in the world in 1941, was born March 27, 1911, in Omaha, Nebraska. During the 1930s, Tappes, who participated in labor activities supported by the left, became one of the leading labor organizers within the black community of Detroit. As a member of the UAW's Negro Ford Organizing Committee, he was in the vanguard of black labor leadership, holding the position of chairman of the foundry at the Ford's River Rouge plant during the Rouge strike in April 1941. After the successful strike, Tappes was part of the Ford negotiating committee for the first union contract between the UAW and Ford Motor Company.

Tappes's early schooling, including high school and one semester on scholarship at the University of Nebraska, was in Omaha. He moved with his family to Detroit in 1927 and got his first job as an autoworker at the Briggs plant working in the wet-sanding department in 1928. During the Depression years, Tappes participated in social protest actions carried out by the Communist Party. While he was never a member of the Party, his curiosity pulled him toward educational programs and other activities sponsored by the Communists. For example, he participated in fund-raising for the Scottsboro Boys and Angelo Herndon, activities that were sponsored by Communist-affiliated groups such as the International Labor Defense.

In 1936, Tappes was hired to work in the foundry at the River Rouge plant of Ford Motor Company. Soon after, he became part of the early UAW organizing efforts through his work with the UAW Negro Ford Organizing Committee, which met every Sunday

morning. The committee consisted of ministers, attorneys, and workers from Ford, Dodge, Murray, and Packard auto plants. Committee members fanned out through the black community to disseminate information about the importance of the UAW to African-American workers. The experience taught Tappes the skills that made him indispensable as a union organizer for the UAW. After the successful strike at the River Rouge plant in the spring of 1941, Tappes was elected first recording secretary of UAW Local 600, the largest and most militant local in the country, a position he held until 1946. As the leader of Local 600 and the left-leaning faction identified with George Addes and R. J. Thomas, Tappes initiated activities and goals for what soon became a “Negro” caucus in the UAW. He placed what was considered one of the most important issues among black workers on the table in 1943 when he proposed the appointment of a black representative on the International Executive Board (IEB) of the UAW at the Buffalo convention. The “Tappes” resolution did not succeed, but the issue of black representation galvanized black trade unionists to unite around common grievances within the union. Tappes also worked with the interracial Metropolitan Detroit Council on Fair Employment Practices and the Citizens Committee for Jobs in War Industry, two groups devoted to combating bias in the defense industry.

In 1945, Tappes lost the endorsement of the progressive, or left, caucus, which cost him the election for recording secretary. Soon after Walter Reuther became president of the UAW, he eliminated many black staff positions, which further weakened Tappes’s influence. Increasingly, Tappes distanced himself from the Communist-tainted wing of the progressive black caucus. In 1950, Tappes applied for a position on the Ford Department staff of the UAW, which was once all white. Reuther hired Tappes—knowing full well that he had never voted for him—because of the high regard he had among black workers. Tappes signed on first as international representative for the UAW and was appointed assistant to William Oliver, the director of the Fair Employment Practices Department (FEPD), a few years later. Tappes once compared the role of the FEPD under Oliver to that of a fire station: rather than initiating changes in employment practices, the FEPD restricted its activities to putting out fires when the bell rang.

In 1957, Tappes joined with other black moderates within the UAW leadership circle to form the Trade Union Leadership Council (TULC) for the purpose of not only promoting African-Americans to higher positions but increasing the responsibilities of those already on the UAW’s paid staff. The TULC was largely responsible for getting Nelson Jack Edwards

on the IEB in 1962, which was the culmination of the resolution introduced by Tappes in 1943.

Tappes retired in 1976 and was in the process of organizing around issues related to aging when he died on April 19, 1991.

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See also **Sheffield, Horace**

TEACHING

Teaching takes place in families, churches, organizations, and workplaces around the globe, but the occupation called teaching typically refers to the labor performed by an adult in a schoolroom of young people. Locally controlled in the United States, this work concerns the transmission of socially valued knowledge, skills, and habits. Teaching involves three core tasks: planning and delivering instruction, creating opportunities for students to practice their learning and expand their knowledge, and assessing student performance. Whether in public or private schools, these tasks have remained remarkably stable over time. Social, political, and economic developments, however, have influenced when and where schools were established, how they are organized, who became teachers, and how teachers approach these tasks.

Teaching in Early America

Schooling varied considerably among the colonies. Only in New England towns did anything resembling public education exist. Believing that widespread literacy would foster a godly, lawful community, the Puritans established one-room schools sustained by local taxation. Few schools existed in the southern colonies where settlements were sparse and distant. Wealthy planters hired itinerant tutors to instruct their children for a few months of the year, while other people educated their children themselves. Limiting access to knowledge was crucial to the maintenance of the slave system, and by the eighteenth century,

southern colonies made teaching slaves illegal. New England-style district schools spread to the Middle Atlantic and western states, but very few opened in the southern states until after the Civil War. Churches maintained charity schools for the urban poor, and private academies and denominational schools also provided work for teachers. In large communities, a schoolmaster might have as many as one hundred pupils, and in small ones, an enrollment of 10 or 15. Schools were generally ungraded, though in large cities pupils were more likely to be separated by age and achievement into two groups: elementary and grammar schools.

Colonial schools were usually taught by men; some were barely literate, others college educated. Many communities valued evidence of good character over academic achievement when selecting a teacher. The common practice of boarding the schoolmaster with local families suggests that teaching was a single man's occupation, but some communities provided a house for the schoolmaster and his family, loath to employ transient unmarried men of questionable character. Occasionally, school boards hired women who needed income to teach young children and girls, or to teach during the summer when men were needed in the fields. Some widows also operated private "dame schools" out of their homes.

With school terms ranging from as little as two to 10 months a year, teaching was seldom regarded as a full-time, lifelong occupation. For the most part, men regarded teaching as temporary employment, which they would happily abandon if a better opportunity arose. Many taught to support themselves while preparing for a higher-status profession. Others pieced together a living by moving from one short-term school to another. Some supplemented teaching with work in the church or local government, while others farmed or engaged in other productive labor. This was not unusual in early America; only a small number of men specialized in a single occupation.

Comparatively free from direct supervision, teachers were nonetheless appraised by laypersons in the community. Ministers, local politicians, prominent citizens, and parents visited schools to hear the students read, examine their written work, check on attendance, and generally evaluate the teachers' work. Teachers were also expected to maintain the schoolhouse, keeping it clean and supplied with firewood. These visits, sometimes unannounced, influenced a teacher's continued employment and funding for the school.

Teachers typically received a combination of wages and perquisites in exchange for their labor. Perquisites might include room and board; the use of land, a house, or a horse; or the right to charge tuition for

teaching additional subjects or for teaching pupils from outlying areas. Because teachers' pay came from the public purse, some communities awarded school employment to individuals unable to support themselves, such as physically handicapped men or widows. Schoolmasters generally earned more than common laborers, about the same or a little less than artisans, and much less than ministers, physicians, and lawyers. Schoolmistresses' pay was exceptionally lower.

Teaching Becomes Women's Work

Agricultural patterns continued to shape rural teaching in the nineteenth century, but rapid urban and industrial development spurred changes in city schools. Both working people and middle-class reformers agitated for more and better schooling. Reformers argued that the nation needed to educate and assimilate the immigrant masses, while leaders of the antebellum working class demanded public education as a measure of the nation's commitment to building a workingman's republic. The resulting mid-nineteenth-century common school movement increased the availability of education for urban youth, and in the process, fostered the expansion and feminization of the nation's teaching force.

In pursuit of greater operating economies, city school boards began to reconfigure school work in ways that made teaching less attractive to men. As teaching became more regimented, more time-consuming, and less rewarding in the 1830s, the number of male teachers in industrial states like Massachusetts began to decline. Lengthening the school year and standardizing the school day, school boards inhibited teachers from pursuing other employment while teaching. They also placed large numbers of teachers under the supervision of one principal-teacher, sharply reducing the number of positions in which men could exercise an accustomed degree of autonomy. By separating students into grades, school boards economized on salaries paid for teaching the lower grades, assumed to require less skill and knowledge, and they began to fill these positions with women. Besides encouraging men to seek other employment, these changes stratified school employment in ways that resembled domestic relations within the household, with women in charge of children yet accountable to a patriarchal figure, making women's employment in schools seem more natural than it had previously appeared.

The movement for women's education made this vast source of labor available for teaching. Whereas colonial literacy rates show a significant disparity

between men and women, the gap closed after the Revolution. Enlightenment and republican ideals inspired tremendous improvements in women's education without conferring equal citizenship. The Revolutionary generation continued to deny women equality, but it ascribed to them new political obligations as the wives, mothers, and educators of citizens. Private academies flourished, and the training women received widened their prospects to include teaching.

Founders of female academies, like Catharine Beecher and Emma Willard, popularized teaching as a respectable work for young women that was not a departure from traditional female roles but rather preparation for their obligations as wives and mothers. Previously, women's work outside the home diminished the status of women, as well as the status of the men in their families, but in the nineteenth century, a few years of teaching became understood as a temporary stage in a woman's life, devoted to the service of others. Since women employed as teachers were presumed to be dependent on their fathers and expected to become dependent on a husband, and since they had few alternatives for wage-earning work, school boards rationalized paying women between 50% and 70% less than men.

Seeking to produce larger numbers of qualified teachers, U.S. educators adopted a European innovation: the normal, or teacher-training, school. The reformer and politician Horace Mann secured funding for the first state normal school in Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1839. Other states followed, using public funds to open more than 100 state normal schools and many more city and county normals by the turn of the twentieth century. Unlike in Europe, normal schools in the United States enrolled mostly women, offering two to four years of advanced education and pedagogical training in exchange for a pledge to teach. The growth of normal schools in the 1870s brought the daughters of farmers and mechanics into teaching, and in subsequent decades, city normal schools inadvertently fostered greater ethnic diversity among teachers, opening the occupation to a growing number of native-born daughters of immigrants, especially Irish-American and Jewish-American women. Despite the very low cost of attendance, only a minority of nineteenth-century teachers attended normal schools. As long as the need for trained teachers outstripped availability, normal training represented a means to advance to a more desirable position in a city school, especially one of the new high schools. It did not become a requirement for entry into teaching in most states until the twentieth century. More common was a few days' attendance at regional teachers' institutes, held once or twice a year. Led by administrators and experienced teachers,

institutes offered brief courses of study to enhance teachers' skills.

Nineteenth-century efforts to improve the work of teachers also included the formation of voluntary organizations. Men founded the earliest state teachers' associations as well as the American Institute of Instruction and the National Teachers Association, later renamed the National Education Association (NEA). Attracting mostly male educators, these national associations attempted to influence policy making in education and create a more self-regulating profession. Female classroom teachers began to form their own associations for mutual aid and economic protection in the 1870s.

The process of obtaining employment in teaching varied, but for most of the nineteenth century, laypersons, not educational professionals, hired teachers. Positions were sometimes advertised, but local authorities often awarded desirable positions to family members and friends. In both rural and urban schools, nepotism and patronage appear common, but employment in teaching almost always entailed some form of examination. Typically, the local minister or a school board member examined prospective teachers. Usually the examination was conducted privately, but some communities staged it as a public competition. Examiners might ask candidates about teaching methods or discipline, and perhaps quiz them on spelling or arithmetic. Some examiners concentrated on evaluating a prospective teacher's character. Others attempted to assess their mastery of academic subjects, while some simply tried to gauge whether the candidate had the strength to keep the big boys in line or haul firewood in the winter. Examinations for urban schools and high schools were more likely to emphasize academics. If successful, teachers received an official certificate, authorizing them to teach for one year in the district where the examination took place. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, examinations included written, graded tests in a range of subjects, and certification covered teaching throughout the county for a longer period of time.

Just as hiring practices varied, so did the terms and conditions of employment. No regulations governed teachers' pay or workplaces. Instead, gender and region factored strongly, with most city teachers earning two to three times what rural teachers did, and men earning two to three times what women doing similar work earned. Both urban and rural school facilities ranged from modest to uncomfortable. Common complaints included overcrowded classrooms, inadequate heating, and unsanitary facilities. Throughout the nation, but especially in cities and across the impoverished post-Civil War South, the cost of providing public education exceeded authorities'

expectations. After emancipation, southern blacks crowded into makeshift schools in church basements, abandoned buildings, and under tree arbors. Local governments' miserly provisions for black schools hastened their employment of blacks as teachers, paying them a small fraction of what white teachers in white schools earned. Abysmal pay and facilities in segregated schools persisted until well into the twentieth century, but for black women, teaching represented the very best of a limited range of employment options.

Though seldom prestigious, teaching offered women unprecedented opportunities in the nineteenth century. While male teachers often complained of poor pay and demeaning supervision, family life accustomed women to labor with little or no remuneration and close supervision. Teaching offered women the means to live apart from family and even migrate, earn a small income, and maintain social respect—opportunities seldom experienced by middle-class women but taken for granted by middle-class men. Normal and academy-trained teachers figured prominently among those who migrated to teach on the frontier, overseas, and in the post-Civil War South. Although their migrations were likely influenced by spiritual and moral beliefs, most historians agree that a sense of mission was not the only factor. Self-supporting income, the prospect of useful labor, opportunities for higher learning, and often a desire to escape social constraints attracted women to pursue teaching opportunities near and far from home. Female domestic and factory workers sometimes earned more than women who taught, but the personal independence associated with teaching kept schools supplied with an educated, committed workforce. After the Civil War, women teachers reported working for much longer periods of their lives. Though available statistics are limited, average teacher tenure in cities like Boston extended to nearly 20 years. By 1900, teaching had become a means for women to postpone and, in some cases, reject marriage.

Teaching in Modern America

As the U.S. population exploded at the turn of the twentieth century, schools no longer looked like independent local enterprises but more like parts of a vast, nationwide bureaucracy structured by gender. Between 1870 and 1900, the nation's schools expanded dramatically; the number of teachers more than tripled. Women filled most of these teaching positions; they also composed the majority of elementary school principals and even attained the superintendency in

several cities and states and many counties. Curtailing women's occupational advancement through teaching, however, were two related developments. First, existing political systems of school governance came under attack, and second, male educators re-asserted authority over education with a new centralized bureaucracy. Together, these developments consolidated a class of male administrators with authority over a predominantly female teaching force.

Criticism of the ward-based system of school governance in large cities precipitated the transfer of authority from local school districts to a central superintendency. Progressive-era reformers argued that local control fostered graft and patronage rather than efficient systematic education. They contended that ward politics had no place in the schools and that rational scientific planning would better facilitate the goals of public education. They succeeded in restructuring public education along corporate bureaucratic lines, creating new positions of administrative authority for a rising cadre of educational professionals, few of whom were women or long-serving classroom teachers. Centralization improved some of the terms of teachers' employment, but it also raised the specter of teachers becoming subject to industrial conditions of work.

With centralization, employment relations between teachers and public schools formalized. States took over responsibility for certification, introducing a range of certifications to reflect various levels of teacher training and moving away from examinations as a means of establishing qualifications to teach. Written contracts of employment also replaced oral agreements, giving teachers more security but also subjecting them to extensive new professional and moral regulation. Written rules prohibiting teachers from dancing, drinking, and dressing immodestly date from this era.

In cities like New York and Chicago, women teachers' associations rallied to defend the ward system, preferring the locally controlled, politicized schools they knew to the impersonal, "factoryized" schools they feared. Centralization portended to distance teachers from decision making in education. It also altered the relationship between teachers and their communities, frustrating teachers who saw their already limited authority diminished by these new relations of employment. Teachers regarded some reforms favorably, for example, efforts to replace the dubious oral examination with more definitive certification requirements. But accustomed to promotions based on seniority, many teachers objected when school authorities proposed to use standardized tests of merit to determine promotions, worried that test performance would matter more than years of classroom performance.

Several local teachers' associations developed into teachers' unions during these years. Formed to protect teachers' interests and provide mutual aid, these local associations grew more militant as centralization reconfigured relations between school authorities, teachers, and the communities they served. No longer beholden to school authorities as they had been under the ward system and yet alienated within these new bureaucracies, organized teachers developed a sharper sense of class identity and felt freer to make economic demands on their own behalf. Among the most influential early teacher organizations was the Chicago Teachers' Federation, which at the height of its power claimed more than half the elementary school teachers in the city as members. It affiliated with the Chicago Federation of Labor in 1902 and became Local 1 of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in 1916. Teacher activism peaked in the first decades of the twentieth century when the cost of living surged ahead of teacher salaries. But activism seldom reached small town and rural teachers, and the majority of city teachers remained more likely to join conservative professional and protective associations than unions.

Organized teachers, especially AFT members, suffered through the anti-union backlash and red scare of the World War I era. Even though most teachers were native born, white, female, and middle class, critics questioned their patriotism and professionalism. Entrusted with the responsibility to Americanize their pupils and blamed for soldiers' poor performance on intelligence tests, organized teachers were accused of being neither adequately trained nor sufficiently loyal. Superintendents urged teachers to join the more professional NEA, and legislatures around the country required teachers to sign loyalty pledges and passed laws to remove teachers who made any "treasonable or seditious" acts or statements. Thousands of teachers were suspended or discharged, or had their licenses revoked for violating loyalty regulations. Dutiful work was no longer enough; teachers were now enjoined to display their professionalism and loyalty as well.

Following this period of punitive regulation, the nation faced a serious teacher shortage. In the 1920s, the proportion of men in teaching declined to less than 15%, while opportunities in better-paid clerical and sales jobs enticed women to leave the classroom. School authorities' first response was to raise salaries and lower entry requirements, but some states experimented with raising standards to require normal school graduation for elementary teachers and bachelor's degrees for secondary teachers. These higher requirements for entry into teaching produced favorable results, leading other states to follow suit and

soon creating a surplus of teachers. World War II brought another shortage, and again by raising entry requirements to require bachelor's degrees in most states, the schools attracted more wage earners into teaching.

As states raised hiring qualifications for new teachers, teachers grew more likely to identify as professionals rather than dependent servants of the community. Educational research and pedagogical innovations also contributed to teachers' sense of expertise. Although teacher activism declined during WWII, teachers demonstrated greater confidence in the value of their work and more impatience with poor remuneration in the following years.

Mid-Twentieth-Century Transformations

Teaching at mid-century was marked by numerous struggles over pay and discrimination. Faced with spiraling inflation after WWII, teachers in several cities resorted to strikes. Throughout the 1940s and well before *Brown V. Board of Education*, black teachers fought for equal pay with whites in school districts across the South, while white women teachers finally achieved pay equity with men in most urban schools in the 1950s. But even when these struggles succeeded, many still felt shortchanged because their salaries did not keep pace with inflation. Teachers' battles for gender and race equity and a fair standard of living persisted, while another form of employment discrimination, against married women as teachers, came to an abrupt end at mid-century without much of a struggle at all.

Prejudice against married women as teachers derived from two deeply rooted ideas in American society: first, that women's labor belongs to their husbands, and second, that public employment is akin to charity. School authorities doubted that women could serve their families and the schools without slighting the latter, and assuming married women did not need to earn income, they were also wary of putting them on the public payroll. During economic downturns in the late nineteenth century, some school boards passed regulations that required women teachers to resign when they married. About 5% of female teachers were married at the turn of the twentieth century when New York teachers launched a successful attack on prohibitions to married women's employment in schools. School authorities re-instated marriage bars during the Great Depression but dropped them again during WWII.

Several factors ensured that marriage bars would not return. War-related employment and higher

wages in other lines of work reduced the pool of candidates interested in teaching, while the postwar marriage and baby boom increased demands on already limited school resources. At the same time, cultural concerns about sexual deviance raised anxieties about a teaching force composed largely of spinsters. As women won political rights, made economic demands, and lived independently of men in the twentieth century, critics had begun to question the influence of spinster teachers over children, charging that they made boys effeminate and girls more interested in teaching than marriage. In the 1940s, educators reversed their opinion on the employment of married women, suddenly arguing that motherhood enhanced teachers' success. Intense policing of gendered behavior and appearance among school employees followed, precipitating a sharp decline in single women teachers from 69% in 1940 to less than 30% of teachers in 1960. According to the historian Jackie Blount, this exodus of single women took place while married women entered teaching at twice the rate they entered the general workforce.

Schools also began to work hard to recruit male teachers as role models for boys, especially at the high school level. The baby boom triggered some growth in elementary schools, where most women continued to be employed, but high schools nearly doubled in size between 1957 and 1979. Anxious to attract more men to the work, school authorities promised career paths that failed to measure up to recruits' expectations. Frustrated city high school teachers fueled the resurgence of teacher unions in the 1960s, with aggressive demands for improved school conditions for all and better terms of employment for teachers. Participating in public demonstrations and standing on picket lines in defense of their social and economic rights did not feel unprofessional, disloyal, or self-interested to this new cohort of young male breadwinner-teachers as it did to many women teachers. Rather, in the context of the civil rights movement, these new male teachers regarded their activism as part of the broader movement for social justice.

Many teachers now identify as agents in the struggle against social inequality. Since the mid-twentieth-century battles over desegregating schools, diversity in the nation's classrooms has once again soared with multiple races, religions, ethnicities, and languages represented. Historically, Americans' strong support for public education derives from the belief that schooling provides all youth with equal opportunities. Attempting to make that dream become real continues to both motivate and frustrate individuals who pursue careers in teaching.

Receiving an education has long represented empowerment and social mobility for disadvantaged

youth. For many minority groups in the twentieth century, pursuing a career in teaching has signified both personal social advancement and a commitment to help others follow. Teaching became associated with class advancement when educated blacks won positions in the segregated schools of the post-emancipation South and used those positions to claim rights and create a black middle class. Teaching shaped another trajectory of social mobility when the native-born daughters of Irish and Jewish immigrants secured jobs in urban schools in the early twentieth century. Their entry into the predominantly white, middle-class teaching force hastened the assimilation of those racialized groups, but it did not spur recruitment among other minority groups. Indeed, the race and gender of the teaching force has remained remarkably constant over the last 150 years. At the turn of the twenty-first century, women compose 72% of teachers, and only 13% of teachers are people of color. Asian, Hispanic, and Native Indian teachers remain rare. The nation's teaching force is not nearly as diverse as the student body.

A Profession, an Occupation, or a Vocation?

Scholars debate whether teaching should be understood as a profession. Nineteenth-century educators aspiring to professionalism sought to define the work of teachers as an important service to society, requiring specialized knowledge and autonomy in the performance of the work. Their interpretation of professionalism, however, soon reflected the emerging gender division of labor in schools between administration and classroom teaching. Male professionalism emphasized independence and expertise in decision making, while female professionalism stressed altruistic classroom service. Since then, some sociologists have described teaching as a semi-profession or a helping profession, attempting to reconcile a degree of classroom autonomy with a vocation in which practitioners are expected to sacrifice material rewards for the intrinsic satisfaction of serving others.

Rejecting these models of professionalization, some scholars identify teaching as a white-collar occupation. The historian Marjorie Murphy described teachers as "the aristocracy of labor." Indeed, urban teachers have shared much in common with workers in commerce and industry. Teachers may exercise some independence in the classroom, but they are dependent on school board members, superintendents, and taxpaying parents, among others, for their income and continued employment. As schools have grown more bureaucratic in the twentieth century,

teacher autonomy has declined and the regimentation of classroom work has increased. Since the late nineteenth century, teacher activists have repeatedly protested how principles of business and industrial production have infiltrated the schools.

The mission of education, however, continues to distinguish relations of employment in teaching from those in commerce and industry. At the turn of the twentieth century, organized teachers recognized the distinctiveness of their work when they disagreed among themselves about a rather simple question: Who was their employer? Did they serve the public, or did they work for the school superintendent? Some teachers believed that all school workers were employed by the public and together had a professional responsibility to cooperate in the service of the public good. Others, influenced by the industrial conflicts of the turn of the twentieth century, questioned that vision of cooperative service, insisting that professionalism was an ideology that obscured the subordination and exploitation of teachers. These teachers tended to see the superintendent, not the public, as the teachers' employer, and a process of conflict and negotiation, rather than cooperation, as the dominant form of relations between them. These two perspectives continue to influence present conceptions of teachers' responsibilities. They offer historical insight into the current spectrum of opinions that locate teaching somewhere between the poles of an exploited service occupation and a professional, socially mobile pursuit.

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See also **American Federation of Teachers; National Education Association**

TEAMSTERS FOR A DEMOCRATIC UNION

Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) is a reform caucus within the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). Its main goals are union democracy and militancy in collective bargaining. TDU was formed in 1976 from Teamsters for a Decent Contract (TDC). Teamsters belonging to the International Socialists (IS) created TDC in August 1975. TDC's goal was for the Teamsters to achieve a good Master Freight Agreement in 1976. TDC's activism led the Teamsters' president, Frank Fitzsimmons, to call a four-day official national strike against the freight companies. This resulted in a substantially improved Master Freight Agreement. However, TDC's success infuriated the Teamsters' leadership, and a group of Teamster thugs attacked the only convention delegate that TDC managed to elect during the 1976 IBT national convention.

The IS, while pleased with the work done by TDC, was disappointed that TDC did not lead to the formation of a broad rank-and-file leadership. Nevertheless, the success of TDC in helping the Teamsters achieve a good Master Freight Agreement resulted in the IS deciding to form a permanent reform movement within the Teamsters: Teamsters for a Democratic Union.

TDU believes in militancy and fighting against concessions in collective bargaining agreements. While for the first few years of existence TDU struggled to gain major victories, it engaged in collective struggle, whether through such actions as strikes, union elections, and contract campaigns. These battles paved the way for TDU's future successes.

Its first major victory occurred with the 1983 National Master Freight Agreement where the Teamsters president, Jackie Presser, agreed to a rider that would have allowed freight companies to pay lower wages and benefits to employees hired after layoffs. This would have resulted in rehired Teamsters receiving a

lower wage compared with other employees, which would have adversely affected over one third of Teamsters under the Agreement, as they were currently unemployed. TDU managed to obtain a copy of the Agreement, which led to it publicizing the Agreement and its likely undesirable effects. TDU's campaign was successful, as the Teamsters' membership overwhelmingly rejected the rider.

TDU continued the fight against concessions during the 1980s, with an increasing number of Teamsters supporting its campaigns. However, IBT presidents continually defied the wishes of the members. For example, in 1987, Presser imposed the United Parcel Service (UPS) contract despite the members rejecting it, and in 1988, the acting president, Weldon Mathis, enforced the freight contract regardless of the fact that Teamster members once again voted against a national contract. Nevertheless, the rank and file gained enough strength, in part through agitation led by TDU, to ensure that future Teamster presidents accepted members' wishes.

In addition to its goal of militancy in collective bargaining, TDU also called for an end to discrimination against minorities. While TDU's members are mostly white males, this has not stopped it from adopting a progressive agenda in relation to minorities. For example, at its first national convention, TDU passed a resolution stating that employers use racial discrimination to divide and weaken the rank and file. It claimed that the only way it can be successful is to implement and support policies that end discrimination. Likewise, its current "Rank-and-File Bill of Rights" states that TDU opposes discrimination in all forms and supports affirmative action. TDU formed a "Women and People of Color Committee" as part of its efforts to eliminate discrimination against minorities. The Committee focuses on highlighting issues of race and gender on the job and in the union and encouraging leadership among these groups, but very few members of minorities have joined the group. Nevertheless, in both policies and practices, TDU is attempting to end discrimination against minorities. It was, however, to gain its greatest success in its attempts to democratize the Teamsters.

TDU and the Democratization of the Teamsters

TDU's main goal, as its name implies, is to democratize the Teamsters and for the rank and file to have an important role in the union. TDU's founding constitution stated that the purpose of TDU is to form a

national unified movement of rank-and-file Teamsters that is committed to fight for rank-and-file rights on the job and in the union. Beginning in 1976, TDU had success in its efforts to democratize the Teamsters. This was despite its small size; in 1979, TDU had 6,000 members compared with approximately 2 million IBT members. TDU proposed new bylaws that would have allowed the rank and file to elect union stewards and business agents. While TDU was not successful in most situations (in part because any change required a two-thirds majority), it was successful on some occasions. These included, among others, Flint Local 332 in 1976 and Detroit Local 299 in 1980. Democratizing Teamster bylaws is still one of TDU's main goals; its current Rank and File Bill of Rights states that there should be elections for all business agents and stewards. Likewise, there should be a special election for vacancies in office, and local union committee members should also be elected. TDU's greatest success occurred with the democratization of the Teamsters.

In 1986, the United States government began investigations into the Teamsters through the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). The government believed that the Teamsters were corrupt and had ties with the Mafia. Indeed, from 1957 to 1990, every president of the Teamsters, save Billy McCarthy, has been convicted and sentenced for a federal crime. While the government considered placing the Teamsters under trusteeship, TDU argued that the government should monitor Teamster elections, with members being allowed to directly elect the president and other leading union officials. TDU campaigned around the country, held rallies, gathering signatures in support of direct election for the Teamsters' leadership. At times, the organization managed to persuade their locals to adopt the TDU's position. The campaign was ultimately successful. In March 1989, the government and the union reached an agreement. The RICO charges were dropped in return for the democratization of the Teamsters, including allowing the rank and file to elect national leaders. There is little doubt that without the RICO charges, the democratization of the Teamsters would not have occurred as quickly as it did. Nevertheless, TDU's national campaign against trusteeship and for Teamster members to directly elect the top union officials influenced the government.

TDU decided not to field a candidate for the Teamsters presidential election in 1991. Instead, it endorsed Ron Carey, who was president of Teamsters Local 804 in Queens, New York, because he supported its goals of union democracy and militancy in collective bargaining. TDU organized meetings in support of

Carey; its members provided places for Carey to stay as he toured the country, and passed out literature, made phone calls, organized rallies, and got out the vote. TDU's efforts were successful. In December 1991, Carey was elected as president of the Teamsters.

Under Carey's leadership, the Teamsters supported many of TDU's goals, and the Teamsters became a progressive union. Carey increased the organizing budget, while at the same time reducing union officials' salaries. He also increased education for stewards and rank-and-file members, and put emphasis on contract campaigns, local unions, and shop-floor organizing.

TDU, however, was not entirely happy with Carey's presidency. It was disappointed that Carey refused to discontinue a union pension plan for union officers (many were already covered by at least one other retirement fund), especially as the plan cost the Teamsters one seventh of its annual revenue. Likewise, TDU was frustrated because Carey did not authorize mail-out ballots in local officer elections. It believed that mail-out ballots would result in increased voter turnout, thus giving the rank and file a greater role in the union.

Nevertheless, TDU's independence suffered under Carey's presidency. It was afraid to criticize him, as it thought this would give the Old Guard grounds to attack Carey's reforms. Thus, under his presidency, TDU and its newspaper (*Convoy Dispatch*) became completely identified with Carey.

TDU's Role in the Successful 1997 UPS Negotiations/Contract

Apart from helping to democratize the Teamsters and moving the union to the left, TDU played an important role in the successful strike against UPS in 1997 (the UPS agreement is the United States' largest collective bargaining contract). As the 1993 UPS contract failed to meet member expectations, the Teamsters implemented many new campaign tactics well in advance of the 1997 negotiations. The union decided to implement TDU's idea for a contract campaign. TDU argued that bargaining happens at the bargaining table, but an equally important front is in the workplace through a contract campaign in which members support the Teamsters bargaining committee and attempt to unite all Teamsters.

In preparation for the negotiations, Carey formed a 50-person UPS bargaining committee, which included several TDU members. Indeed, TDU played an active role. In addition to the idea of a contract campaign, TDU had a long involvement on the shop floor at UPS. TDU had trained workers to fight their

bosses. In locals where officials were hostile to Carey (that is, the Old Guard), TDU members led the way.

Following the breakdown in negotiations, the Teamsters went on strike. Lasting 15 days, the strike was ultimately very successful, with the union achieving the majority of its demands. The victory was hailed as one of labor's greatest successes since the 1940s.

TDU Under Hoffa Jr.

The 1997 UPS negotiations were Carey's last major triumph. Instead of relying on the rank and file during his successful 1996 re-election campaign, as he did in 1991, Carey hired political consultants. However, the consultants—the November Group—implemented an illegal fund-raising scheme on Carey's behalf. While Carey was eventually cleared of all charges, during the investigation, the Justice Department forced Carey to step down as president and the Teamsters to conduct a new presidential election. The election led to James P. Hoffa Jr.—Jimmy Hoffa's son—defeating the TDU-backed candidate Tom Leedham to become president of the Teamsters.

This did not stop TDU from engaging in militant activity. During the protests against the World Trade Organization in 1999, unions had a separate protest from other antiglobalization protesters. However, it was a Teamsters local, whose president is a member of TDU, that was the most militant. Teamsters Local 174 in Seattle broke from the official union protest to join the protest by environmentalists, students, anarchists, and members of the general public. Other TDU members from different locals joined it.

Not surprisingly, however, TDU's influence declined under Hoffa Jr.'s leadership. Unlike the 1997 UPS agreement, the 2002 agreement was a disappointment to many, especially part-time workers (unlike the 1997 rank-and-file campaign, the 2002 negotiations were conducted from the top, with little member involvement). This was because there was only a 50-cent increase in starting pay for part-time workers, there was no increase in the daily guarantee (three and a half hours), and UPS workers in the Central States Pension Fund, which is the largest pension fund, received no increase.

TDU campaigned against the contract. However, a clear majority of UPS workers ratified the contract (72.1%), although voter turnout was only 38%. This was the lowest voter turnout in UPS history and the first time it had fallen below 50%. However, following member dissatisfaction with the collective bargaining agreement—in particular, that there was no pension

increase in the Central States—according to TDU there has been a dramatic increase in membership (however, the actual size of membership is unknown, as TDU does not release its membership numbers).

While TDU started from humble beginnings, its influence is without question. Indeed, it is arguably one of the most successful union reform caucuses in U.S. history. TDU had an important role in two of the three biggest events in U.S. labor since the late 1980s: the election of Ron Carey as president of the Teamsters and the 1997 UPS strike (the other being the election of John Sweeney as president of the AFL-CIO. However, a case can be made that TDU also had a role in that. If it were not through the election of Carey, it is doubtful that Sweeney would have gained office). Thus, TDU has been at the forefront of major change within the U.S. union movement and is one of the most influential union reform movements in U.S. history.

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See also Carey, Ronald; Fitzsimmons, Frank E; Hoffa, James P.; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; United Parcel Service Strike (1997)

TELEPHONE OPERATORS UNION

During the 1910s, the Telephone Operators Union (TOU) dramatically improved telephone operators' working conditions, wages, and self-esteem, and significantly increased women's influence in the labor movement. At its peak in 1919, the TOU, with 18,000 members, had organized locals in over 30 states and several Canadian provinces, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts, and from Edmonton, Alberta, to the Panama Canal Zone. New England was the most heavily organized region, with 4,000 operators in the Boston local alone.

Telephone operators confronted formidable obstacles in organizing. The nationally integrated Bell companies, which provided most of the nation's telephone service, commanded enormous financial resources, and the Bell system could undermine union support by extending conditions and benefits the TOU had achieved to areas where it had not penetrated. Low wages made it difficult for operators to sustain a union or build strike funds. Companies could easily replace these semiskilled workers if they walked out. The TOU could not maintain a stable membership because company policy required that an operator resign her position when she married. Operators were almost entirely young women in their teens or 20s, inexperienced in union administration and bargaining. Male telephone workers—repairmen, cable splicers, and installers—whose skills gave them much more leverage in strikes, were reluctant to support the operators and sometimes deliberately undermined them.

The TOU was first organized in Boston in 1912, where a strong central labor union, a long-standing tradition of social activism dating back to abolitionism, and a vigorous women's movement provided a favorable environment for the emergence of a viable female labor organization. Boston was a principal center of the settlement house movement and of the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL), which provided critical assistance in establishing the TOU. The TOU also drew on an emerging youth culture that emphasized peer relationships, forged in high schools that most operators attended. The high school promoted a group consciousness and administrative skills through student government, as well as training in writing, beneficial to labor organization. The TOU promoted solidarity among its youthful membership with festive parades and dances. During the 1919 New England telephone strike, operators at a mass rally in Boston took to the stage to perform the shimmy.

Discontent over low wages, mandatory split shifts that often extended the working day over 15 hours, arbitrary discharge, and physical abuse by chief operators led a group of operators to seek help from the Boston WTUL secretary, Mabel Gillespie, who advised them to organize a union and present carefully formulated demands. She called in the chief organizer of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), American Federation of Labor (AFL), to assist in the campaign. In May 1912, having firmly established their local, the Boston operators initiated organizing among the male telephone workers.

After New England Telephone Company management made clear its unwillingness to negotiate, the operators voted overwhelmingly to strike. The Company immediately began importing hundreds of



Telephone operators at Aberdeen proving grounds. Aberdeen, Maryland. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-064182-D].

operators from other Bell subsidiaries throughout the East and Midwest, many of whom it housed at Boston's most luxurious hotel. After protracted negotiations, Boston's 2,200 operators stunned the Company by voting down a settlement that provided annual bonuses rather than wage increases. Back at the bargaining table, a group of young women, facing much more experienced and better-educated managerial officials, won highly favorable terms, including union recognition, wage increases, and a significant reduction in split shifts. The TOU also gained an eight-hour workday, which became universal throughout the Bell system, and established a six-hour day as a goal. During the next several years, the TOU spread outside New England, developing especially strong locals in Montana and along the Pacific Coast.

In its early years, the TOU mounted a vigorous campaign for equal rights within the IBEW, which initially chartered the operators as sublocals subsidiary to male locals, and restricted their voting rights at conventions. The operators modeled their struggle for equality within the IBEW on the vibrant women's suffrage campaign in which many of them were active. In 1917, the operators won full convention representation, and the next year the IBEW granted them an autonomous department, with control over finances. The Telephone Operators Department (TOD), IBEW,

became, in effect, the first national trade union led by women.

Telephone operators' militancy intensified after the telephone service was placed under government control and operation in August 1918, as a one-year war measure. Postmaster General Albert Burleson, the government official assigned jurisdiction, was hostile to unionism and discarded the collective bargaining procedure in use since 1913. Burleson announced that government employees were prohibited from striking. When neither New England Telephone nor the government acted on their wage demands, New England's union operators voted to strike, ignoring pleas from the IBEW leadership not to do so.

The April 1919 New England telephone strike resembled the garment workers' Uprising of the 20,000 a decade earlier in its spontaneity and rejection of male authority. It completely shut down telephone service in five New England states, although the male telephone workers did not join it until its third day. The strike was marked by street riots in Boston, as large crowds assaulted college students who volunteered their services as strikebreakers. The operators settled on very favorable terms, and most important, protected their right to bargain collectively.

Victory in the 1919 New England telephone strike precipitated a wave of national organizing among

TELEPHONE OPERATORS UNION

operators, resulting in the formation of over 50 new TOD locals outside New England in the next several months. The TOD, although severely handicapped by lack of funds, even managed to establish 11 locals in the Deep South, where women's unionism was almost unknown. Major operators' strikes occurred in several southern cities during 1919, as well as in St. Louis, Cleveland, and along the Pacific Coast.

The TOD was determined to promote women's labor leadership and heighten operators' self-esteem by involving the rank and file in the burgeoning post-World War I workers education movement. This movement offered young women workers the opportunity to acquire both a broad cultural education and the writing and speaking skills necessary to administer union locals and negotiate with management. Telephone operators flocked to night classes at Boston Trade Union College, which assembled arguably the most impressive faculty of any workers' school. Sizable operator delegations were enrolled at Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, the principal residential workers' school for women. Union operators also attended the National WTUL Training School in Chicago.

The TOD devoted considerable effort to enhancing worker dignity, combating unfavorable stereotypes of operators in the mass media. It pressed for higher wages, in part to permit operators to live independently of their families. The TOD also pioneered in countering the prevailing images of the sexes in trade union iconography, which depicted workers as brawny men and women as maternal figures. Its emblem, the "Weaver of Speech," presented the woman as a worker performing a task critical to commerce: the telephone operator held in her hands the lines through which the entire nation communicated.

The TOD declined sharply during the early 1920s as telephone management initiated a campaign to install company unions, part of a larger anti-union campaign that significantly weakened the labor movement. By 1923, TOD membership outside New England had largely evaporated, and the New England telephone men had seceded from the IBEW to form a company union. New England Telephone began plans to introduce the dial system, which threatened job loss and would greatly reduce union leverage. Boston's local, the TOD's largest, was torn by factional strife. With New England Telephone refusing to consider a wage increase, the TOD president, Julia O'Connor, who had directed the 1919 New England walkout, led the operators out on strike in June 1923 for higher wages and the seven-hour day. Although many operators refused to heed the call, the strikers put up a determined fight, paralyzing service in many of the region's major cities. As in 1919, violent conflict between prostrike crowds

and strikebreakers erupted on several occasions. The strike was broken after a month, and its leaders and many operators were permanently blacklisted.

After the failure of the strike, the TOD was in effect destroyed, although it maintained a skeletal existence under O'Connor until 1938. Telephone operators' unionism did not return to New England for nearly 50 years. Three of the nation's most prominent women labor activists during the next several decades—Julia O'Connor Parker, Rose Finkelstein Norwood, and Rose Sullivan—began their careers as leaders of the operators' union in Boston. Through them, the TOD continued to advance workers' interests long after its demise.

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See also **Women's Trade Union League**

TENNESSEE CONVICT UPRISING (1891–1892)

Between July 14, 1891, and late August 1892, over a thousand Tennessee miners rose up in arms to protest the use of convict laborers in the State's coal mines. Most of the miners were white, while a majority of convicts were black. The miners targeted three coal companies in east Tennessee: Briceville, Coal Creek, and Oliver Springs, and one in mid-Tennessee, Tracy City. The largest of the companies, Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company (TCIR) in mid-Tennessee, leased convicts from the State of Tennessee; the smaller east Tennessee companies subleased convicts from the TCIR to work in their respective coal mines. The "Convict Wars" (the name given by contemporaries to the rebellion) took place amidst America's turbulent labor struggles of the 1890s, a period in which workers throughout the country challenged the waxing power of large-scale corporations, portrayed increasingly by unions as fostering unjust workplaces and perverting America's democratic ideals.

Over the course of this 13-month-long rebellion, the miners coupled military actions with vigorous political efforts in an attempt to undermine the convict lease system. They asked supportive government officials to intervene legally on their behalf and compelled the governor to call a special session of the legislature to

debate the convict lease system. Continuing a legal strategy begun in the late 1880s, the miners brought a number of cases to the courts seeking to secure their rights as workers and to limit the reach of convict laborers into the east Tennessee mines. When all these efforts failed, the miners established a formal political alliance with the Farmers Alliances in an effort to secure the election of legislators committed to ending Tennessee's convict lease system. These political actions were interspersed with four distinct attacks on the prison stockades and suggest two important points: that the miners viewed the attacks as a form of political petition, and that they saw political and economic actions as two sides of the same coin. This worldview was particularly noteworthy at a time when major labor federations, like the American Federation of Labor, frequently disengaged from political lobbying and adopted a strategy that relied primarily on economic negotiations with company employers.

The miners' sustained political engagement with the State of Tennessee offers numerous indications of their political sensibilities and cultural outlook. The men who opted to work in Tennessee's coal mines in the late nineteenth century came from the areas surrounding Anderson and Grundy County, where the majority of farms were worked by their owners. As the population of these rural communities grew, younger sons, who did not inherit property, sought work in the nascent postbellum Tennessee coal mines. When they came to the east Tennessee coal towns, many of them bought houses and began to call the towns home. None of these mining sites were traditional company towns where the coal companies owned not just the mine, but also the land in the town and the local store, and thus could dictate rents, housing allotments, and the cost of mining and household supplies. Rather, many of the families who came to live in the mining towns viewed themselves as homeowners with a serious stake in the future of the mines and the surrounding towns. This perspective was shared by both the miners and the shopkeepers who came to service these communities.

In petitioning against the use of convict labor in the mines, the men of east and mid-Tennessee repeatedly spoke in the phraseology of homeownership. Were the coal companies to replace them with convict laborers or to force them to accede to lower wages by threatening to replace them with unfree miners, the miners argued that they would lose their homes, not just their jobs. The local shopkeepers, who joined the miners in the Convict Wars, likewise realized that if the miners were to lose their jobs to convict laborers, their businesses would suffer greatly. Thus, the miners and their local supporters positioned themselves politically and ideologically as family men who had

economic stakes in their communities—not as itinerants who moved from mining camp to mining camp with only a commitment to the next paycheck.

At the same time that the miners portrayed themselves as upstanding propertied citizens—and certainly not of the “school of the commune or nihilist,” as Shapiro has noted in her larger study, *A New South Rebellion*—they depicted the companies as behaving in unpatriotic, “un-American” ways. The miners' leaders made clear that as a group they favored competitive capitalism but objected to what they believed were unfair interventions into the marketplace. They were particularly irked by the state government's decision to lease convicts to privately owned coal companies, thereby enabling the companies to impose onerous and unjust contracts on the miners. Should miners refuse to accede to company demands, the coal company owners could easily threaten to fire recalcitrants and replace them with convicts.

The Convict Wars ended in August 1892. During the miners' fourth attack on convict stockades, four militiamen were killed, some in murky circumstances. This loss of life turned public opinion against the miners. Faced with diminished public support and a much larger contingent of militia whom state officials had brought in from all over Tennessee, the miners capitulated. The aftermath of the rebellion continued to be felt in Tennessee's mining districts and in the state capital over the next few years, particularly in the form of court battles between the State of Tennessee and the coal operators over who should bear the costs of the rebellion and between the State of Tennessee and the miners. Although the rebellion had boosted labor organization in the Tennessee coalfields, especially the nascent United Mine Workers of America, its aftermath decimated these organizations as labor leaders faced a succession of rebellion-related prosecutions. Convict leasing continued in the State of Tennessee until the convict lease contract between Tennessee and the TCIR ended in December 1895.

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TEXTILE WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA

The Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA) emerged in 1939 in the wake of the upsurge in industrial unionism spurred by the newly formed Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in the midst of the Great Depression. The TWUA's immediate predecessor was the Textile Workers Organizing Committee (TWOC), which had attempted to organize the southern textile industry for the CIO in 1937. The TWOC had hoped for success despite the failure of the United Textile Workers (UTW) to organize southern mill employees in the massive, bloody General Textile Strike of 1934. In 1937, the TWOC won some early victories, securing nine contracts covering some 5,000 workers out of the 65,000 people who signed union pledge cards. Suspicion of union organizers, however, ran deep among many workers, who remembered the hostility, blacklisting, and humiliation they had recently experienced after having their hopes raised so high. But just as deep ran the mill hands' antagonism toward the working conditions they endured, particularly the hated "stretch-out," which required what they considered to be superhuman effort for little reward. The 1937 campaign stalled from a combination of intense, often violent opposition from businesspersons and local political and religious leaders and the deep recession that hit the entire country late that year. In 1939, activists from the TWOC along with many remaining UTW locals formed the TWUA-CIO, whose goal was the organization of the nation's textile industry, which meant a primary focus on southern cotton mills.

The textile industry presented many obstacles to TWUA organizers. "Textiles" included cotton, wool, silk, rayon, and nylon mills, as well as dye plants, hosiery mills, and rug and carpet factories. Each sector had its own history and internal squabbles. Historically, skilled workers in northern textile plants had organized their own unions, excluding the bulk of less-skilled operatives, who in the twentieth century were largely immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. Skilled hands often viewed the TWUA's goal of organizing all workers into a single union with skepticism. In addition, the textile industry was decentralized, with hundreds of companies, none of which had a market share of over 3%. The largest sector in textiles, cotton yarn and fabric, had shifted its base from the North to the South in the previous 50 years. By World War II, southern mills turned out nearly 80% of the nation's cotton textiles. But in 1946, there were over 1,000 individual cotton mills in North Carolina alone. Cannon Mills, the largest single southern

textile employer, had 41,000 employees in 20 mills scattered throughout the region. The TWUA faced a formidable challenge. Organizing any particular plant required enormous expenditures of time and money, but success would mark only slight progress toward the larger goal of a unionized industry.

These challenges were compounded by the TWUA's meager finances. Although the union claimed to have 275,000 members in 1939, only a small percentage of them paid dues, and the TWUA began operations with a net deficit of \$200. The TWUA had only 84 organizers on staff in 1939 and sought to cut its budget. Since the TWOC had spent nearly \$2 million in its 1937 campaign, TWUA officials were understandably concerned about how they might pay for a new southern campaign.

Wartime Gains and Operation Dixie

World War II altered the organizing dynamic. Wartime government expenditures revived the textile industry, creating markets for whatever mills produced. To ensure labor peace, the federal government's National War Labor Board encouraged unionization, offering the automatic checkoff of union dues in return for no-strike pledges in union contracts. The TWUA gained over 120,000 new members during the war, its total membership reaching 450,000 in 1945. Broken down by region, however, the union's success had its limits. The TWUA had organized just over 40,000 southern workers during the war, reaching a total of 70,000 union members out of 600,000 textile workers in the region. Fewer than 10% of North Carolina's 200,000 mill workers were under contract. The vast majority of TWUA membership remained in the North, where tight wartime labor markets and government orders made unionization worth the price for even antiquated mills that would otherwise not be competitive. Most textile workers, however, lived in the South and were unorganized.

This imbalance affected the TWUA's goals. To pay for southern organizing efforts, the TWUA had to ensure the survival of northern mills. Increased southern wages would reduce the incentive for northern mills to relocate. Southern workers hardly opposed wage increases, but their main concerns were the pace of production, the stretch-out, and arbitrary supervisors. The speedup and stretch-out were directly related to wages, it turns out, because most textile workers were paid on a piece rate—a certain amount of money per unit of production—not by the hour. Sidestepping this complexity, TWUA organizers emphasized the North-South wage differential.

The TWUA's major southern organizing campaign after the war was Operation Dixie, which began in 1946. Although the union won a number of elections, Operation Dixie ultimately made little headway in organizing the region. Memories of the repression that followed earlier organizing efforts certainly affected mill workers, but the wartime and postwar boom also had resulted in a doubling of textile workers' wages between 1941 and 1946, whether or not workforces were unionized. This undercut arguments that only unionization would boost wages. In addition, anti-union forces exploited racial fears, noting that the CIO supported the principle of racial equality. In truth, the TWUA violated its principles in the South and did not challenge the color line in textiles that had long prevented blacks from obtaining production jobs. But fears of union civil rights activism made the predominantly white textile labor force wary. In the emerging Cold War climate, anti-union activists also linked the TWUA with Communism. Although the TWUA leadership was staunchly anticommunist, the historic Communist presence within the CIO, mainly among organizers and leadership in specific unions, provided a kernel of truth to the charge.

Unrealized Promise

Established TWUA locals could bring enormous, positive changes in the lives of workers. Unionized mill hands enjoyed secure access to their jobs, had some protection against burdensome workload increases, and could defend themselves against supervisors. Grievance procedures allowed workers to file official complaints, with the possibility of third-party arbitration if necessary. Grievance procedures hardly ensured workplace justice, but they represented an enormous increase in power for southern workers. These benefits could not be understood or realized, however, until mills were organized with signed contracts, something that precious few southern workers ever experienced.

Mill owners continued to oppose organizing efforts with impunity and to resist new demands by organized workers. In 1951, the TWUA called on unionized southern mills to strike for increased wages, cost-of-living allowances, medical insurance, and pensions. But unionized southern mills were still a small percentage of the region's textile industry, and targeted companies refused to concede, arguing that granting these demands would make them uncompetitive. Unwilling to risk their livelihoods, union members crossed picket lines in droves.

The failed 1951 strike further reduced the TWUA's slim credibility in the region and ignited a struggle

between George Baldanzi and Emil Rieve for control of the organization. Baldanzi eventually left to join the UTW, which fought the TWUA over the remaining southern locals. Meanwhile, the northern textile industry finally collapsed, unable to survive in a competitive market after a burst of prosperity during the Korean War. The southern textile industry also suffered from intense competitive pressures in the 1950s. Many plants closed, some of them unionized, because of foreign competition and shifts in domestic industrial markets toward synthetics and plastics. A reeling textile industry did not bode well for the TWUA.

The TWUA limped along, but with little influence on the declining industry. The union focused its energy on organizing the giant J. P. Stevens Company plant in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. The union received a boost from the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which opened production jobs to African-Americans, who were more inclined than whites to join unions. Still, most white workers were reluctant to join an organization that included blacks. Nevertheless, the TWUA won an election at the Roanoke Rapids mill in 1974 but was unable to wrest a meaningful contract from the obstinate employer. In 1976, the TWUA merged with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers to form the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, with the goal of combining resources to force Stevens to bargain in good faith.

In the end, the TWUA never realized its ambitious early agenda, but given the overwhelming obstacles the union faced, it is not clear what strategies might have produced more positive results. The domestic textile industry was unstable and in decline throughout most of the union's history. There is plenty of evidence that most textile workers wanted better lives and working conditions, but the risks of joining a union, especially in the South, were real, and the benefits were impossible for organizers to demonstrate in advance.

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See also Congress of Industrial Organizations; National War Labor Board (WWII); Operation Dixie; Textiles; United Textile Workers

TEXTILES

The domestic textile industry had its origins in the eighteenth century, grew fitfully during periods of war, boom, and recession, reached its peak in the mid-twentieth century, and appeared to be on the verge of extinction in the early twenty-first century. The cotton textile industry initially competed primarily with wool for dominance in the American economy, but both experienced severe competition from foreign producers, particularly those in Great Britain. Entering the twentieth century, cotton was by far the largest sector in textiles, and the industry had begun a massive regional shift from the North to the South. Even under the heading of cotton textiles, the industry included many different processes, including spinning, weaving, and the dyeing of cloth. In addition, unlike other major industries, textile production was decentralized, with hundreds of companies entering a relatively competitive marketplace. The early twentieth century saw the development of synthetics like nylon and rayon, which diversified the industry and competed with cotton. Beginning in the late 1940s and peaking in the 1990s, domestic textile mills reeled more than ever from foreign competition, with most succumbing by the turn of the century. Hundreds of thousands of jobs disappeared with them, disrupting the lives of workers and their communities. Ironically, this had happened before with the southern migration of the industry. Textiles had always been a volatile industry, and textile workers struggled throughout to make the best of often dismal circumstances.

Origins

By exposing the long-standing industrial dependence of the colonies, the American Revolution prompted the development of many domestic industries, including textiles. One impediment was technological expertise, which the English had and Americans coveted. It is not easy to convert bolls of raw cotton into usable fibers. Dirt, seeds, and debris must be removed before the fibers can be straightened and twisted into yarns. No hand processes could compete with machines designed to perform these tasks. State-sponsored efforts, local ingenuity, and the knowledge imported with immigrants like Samuel Slater overcame these technical deficiencies to launch relatively large-scale wool and cotton textile production in the late eighteenth century. The development of the cotton gin—which removed seeds from short-staple cotton and allowed the expansion of cotton production—and slavery, beyond the coastal South, increased potential domestic textile production. Although most American cotton still went to British mills, plenty stayed in the United States.

Conflict with Great Britain in the early nineteenth century inadvertently boosted the domestic textile industry. By curtailing trade with Great Britain, Thomas Jefferson’s Embargo Act of 1807 diminished the supply of cheap, imported fabric. In the next three years, the number of American textile mills increased from 15 to 87, mainly in the Northeast from Rhode Island to Massachusetts. These yarn-producing mills tended to be rather small, were powered by river currents, and relied on rural farm families, including children, for labor.

The War of 1812 provided further impetus for domestic textile manufacturing. Most notable was the construction of a large cotton textile mill in Waltham, Massachusetts, for a group of investors led by Francis Cabot Lowell. This “Waltham System” mechanized the weaving of cloth, using new power looms, as well as the spinning of yarn. For the first time, all operations would be housed under the same roof. Highly capitalized, with absentee owners and hired managers, the Waltham Mill began operations in 1814, providing coarse fabric to clothe slaves in the South.

Unlike earlier textile factories, the Waltham Mill employed mostly young, single, native-born women from farm families that were experiencing difficult circumstances. Textile employment lessened the economic burden for these families while allowing daughters new opportunities to be productive, and even to earn a dowry. Most of the young women expected mill work to be a brief phase in life, not a career. Mill owners adopted a paternalistic stance toward their

workers, in part to assuage parents' fears that the new factory and dormitories would be corrupting dens of vice and immorality. In the early years of rapidly increasing production and profits, the more generous side of paternalism often prevailed, despite a work regimen that averaged 12 hours a day, six days a week. Signs of future tensions appeared, however. Mechanization required scrupulous quality control, hence close supervision, and certain stages of production still required high levels of skill, which left a significant degree of control outside management's domain.

Market Shifts and Labor Transitions

The Waltham experiment began to unravel in the 1830s. As hundreds of competing mills were built and new technologies allowed increased production, competition forced all textile companies to search for ways to economize. In moves that would prove to be the source of textile labor conflict for generations, mill managers increased the speed of production, assigned workers more machines to tend, and lowered wages, which were usually "piece rates," a certain amount of money for a set amount of production. The process continued for many years. Workloads in 1854 in Lowell, Massachusetts, were nearly double those in 1840. As early as 1834, 800 women left their jobs in Lowell, protesting a 12.5% wage cut. Although they did not succeed in having their pay restored, the women frightened management and offered a stinging critique of a labor system that denied these native-born daughters what they considered to be their American birthright of fair wages and humane treatment. Another larger strike in 1836 concerned increases in prices charged by the Lowell management for room and board in company housing. This time the women succeeded in the short run, but the textile industry floundered along with most of the national economy for several years beginning in the late 1830s. This recession prompted the beginning of a long-term trend, the hiring of immigrants to perform the increasingly arduous textile jobs. In 1836, only 4% of textile workers were immigrants; by 1860, the total had risen to 60%. Most were Irish, fleeing famine conditions, with a number of French Canadians as well.

Given the combination of harsh competition and an increasingly immigrant labor force, textile managers no longer attempted to justify their operations as paternalistic efforts to improve the intelligence and morality of workers. Companies no longer invested as heavily in housing for workers, especially for Irish immigrants, who generally lived in slum conditions.

For a while, employers offered segregated housing to native-born and immigrant workers. Many of the remaining native-born workers used the old paternalistic language to their advantage, arguing that limiting the workday to 10 hours would contribute greatly to their overall health and welfare. Referring to textile operatives as "wage slaves," the Lowell Female Reform Association worked to change conditions and accused mill owners of violating their rights as Americans. But in a hotly competitive market, they could not prevent speedups, increased workloads, and decreasing piece rates. Even if market conditions had been favorable, the deep divisions within the labor force would have been difficult to overcome. By the Civil War, the textile industry had grown considerably, and it was notorious for hard labor and low wages.

War, Peace, and Migration

Whereas the Civil War ultimately proved a boon for many northern industries, cotton textiles suffered considerably. No longer was there a supply of raw cotton from the South. As a result, cotton mills sat idle and workers scrambled for alternative employment. For many years, cotton textiles had been far more popular than wool, as cotton was more comfortable in summer and easier to wash. During the Civil War, however, woolen manufacturing increased dramatically to fill the void. When cotton supplies resumed after the war, northern cotton textile manufacturing resumed, but monumental changes were imminent.

The future of textile manufacturing was in the South. There had been some small-scale production of cotton yarns in the South before the Civil War, accounting for nearly 6% of the nation's total. The war, however, had convinced many southern business leaders and politicians that increased industrialization was necessary to boost the region's fortunes. Given the proximity of enormous supplies of cotton, textiles appeared the obvious choice to lead the way. The cotton mill crusade began in earnest in the 1880s, after the serious depression of the 1870s ended. The number of southern cotton mills increased from 161 in 1880 to 400 in 1900. By the 1890s, a number of southern businesspersons who had prospered from brokering tobacco and cotton crops looked for what they hoped would be safer investments, given the farm revolts and reform movements in this era. Most of the capital invested in these southern mills came from local investors in the communities where the factories were built. Some northern investment was involved, mainly from machinery companies, but these were

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primarily local, civic ventures with the goal of boosting the economic power and the image of individual towns.

Textile workers in the South were drawn from the ranks of poor farm families, caught in the whipsaw of increasing crop production, decreasing prices, and often hopeless debt. Most mills were in the Piedmont region of the South, where rivers emerged from the mountains to provide the water power necessary to operate machinery. Workers, then, tended to be from these upland areas and southern Appalachia. Since slavery had not been widespread in this part of the South, most potential workers were white, and with the increasing rigidity of segregation, virtually all production jobs were reserved for whites only. African-American males could find textile employment only as janitors, yardmen, or in the undesirable, dirty job of breaking open compressed bales of cotton as they entered the manufacturing process. African-American females had little chance of finding jobs in textiles. With few exceptions, this color line held until the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Since many jobs were open to women and children, white workers often came to the mills as families. Indeed, mill owners often required a certain number of family members to work in the mills as a condition for obtaining housing in the company-owned mill villages. Just like the founders of the Lowell mills, most southern textile executives insisted that mill employment would be an uplifting experience for workers, teaching them solid work habits. In addition, mill owners emphasized their support for churches and recreational opportunities in the villages. For their part, most workers initially refused to commit fully to factory labor and often disappeared for long stretches during planting and harvesting seasons. As late as 1906, a regional survey concluded that whenever prices for tobacco and cotton rose, mill owners reported a scarcity of labor. In addition, daily absenteeism bedeviled managers, especially in departments that employed mostly women, who had to care for children, tend house, and do the shopping as well as hold down full-time jobs.

Meanwhile, the northern textile industry focused on wools and high-quality cotton yarns, conceding the market for coarser yarns to southern producers. Many northern firms, however, began to invest in southern mills once the erstwhile competitors became established. Although the appeal of the South for investors was cheap labor, there is little evidence that northern textile workers were living a life of material ease. Local investigations showed that many mill employees, especially the large numbers of young women workers, suffered from malnutrition and exhaustion. Housing conditions were decrepit for the mostly immigrant

labor force, which now consisted of dozens of nationalities. Labor conflicts rocked northern textile communities in the 1910s.

Perhaps the most famous strike occurred in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912, when the American Woolen Company cut wages in response to a state law limiting the workweek to 54 hours for women and children. Leaders from the radical Industrial Workers of the World successfully organized the diverse and divided workforce, which struck fear in the hearts of Lawrence city officials and played into the hands of southern boosters who advertised a complacent, docile, native supply of labor. Although the strike resulted in a short-term victory for workers, their unity across ethnic lines could not be sustained. The strike also revealed long-standing divisions between skilled and unskilled textile workers. Skilled workers, like highly prized loom fixers, tended to be native-born, male, and committed to less radical craft unions. In times of conflict, they were often at odds with the masses of production workers. A similar dynamic took place in the silk mills of Paterson, New Jersey, in 1913, resulting in a defeat for strikers there.

War, Peace, and Depression

World War I provided some temporary relief for the industry and its workers. Government war spending kept mills humming and profitable. Mill production expanded considerably. Southern mill owners complained, however, that many employees failed to take advantage of this opportunity to maximize earnings, preferring instead to work as many hours as necessary to meet their basic needs and to take the rest of the week off. In any event, the conclusion of the war brought hardship all around. Government contracts ended, profits slumped, and the boll weevil decimated much of the nation's cotton supply, driving up production costs in textiles. Wartime labor scarcity had boosted wages in both the North and the South, and workers did not readily accede to managements' desperate efforts to remain competitive by demanding wage reductions and workload increases while offering intermittent employment at best. The postwar re-adjustment took several years, culminating in northern mills in 1922 with a series of hard-fought strikes, which proved to be Pyrrhic victories for workers. Although northern mill employees preserved their wartime wages and forced employers to observe the 48-hour workweek, these triumphs only increased both the competitive advantage of southern mills and the incentive for northern mills to relocate. Between 1923 and 1933, 40% of New England's textile

factories closed, and nearly 100,000 of the 190,000 workers employed in that region lost their jobs.

Southern textile workers also fought postwar wage reductions. Strikes occurred throughout the region, beginning in 1919 and lasting into 1921, when the bottom fell out of the market for textiles. The American Federation of Labor's United Textile Workers (UTW) offered whatever financial support it could—which was meager—to groups of striking workers. In the end, workers and their organizations could not overcome the powerful economic forces arrayed against them, but their actions in the postwar strike wave gave pause to even the staunchest promoters of southern cotton textiles. No one could be so sure anymore that native-born, white mill hands were contented and docile compared with their immigrant counterparts in the North.

From 1922 on, the southern textile industry was essentially in a state of depression. Stiff international competition, new, more revealing fashions that required less cloth, and rising competition from synthetics combined to undercut demand for domestic cotton textiles. Mills operated when they received orders, which happened so unpredictably that mill workers had to learn to survive without steady industrial paychecks. This made it more difficult for managers to summon a full labor force when the opportunity arose. Since buyers often backed out of contracts, mills frequently accumulated large, unsold inventories of yarn and cloth and were forced to find ways to economize. In most cases that meant lowering wages. Later in the 1920s, a number of companies found that there were limits to what workers would accept. In 1927, the Harriet Mill in Henderson, North Carolina, was one of the first southern mills to experience intense labor conflict when the company refused to restore a previous wage reduction when the mills appeared to be temporarily profitable. This was followed in 1929 by large strikes in many southern communities that often involved armed troops and violent encounters. Most notable were conflicts at a rayon mill in Elizabethton, Tennessee, and at cotton mills in Gastonia and Marion in North Carolina. The UTW once again offered marginal assistance in Henderson, Elizabethton, and Marion, while the Communist-led National Textile Workers Union vied for leadership in Gastonia. In each case, however, the combination of a poor economy, insufficient strike funds, hunger, and hostility from business leaders, state and local politicians, and local clergy proved insurmountable for workers.

While the textile industry, both in the North and the South, had entered a version of the Great Depression in the early 1920s, conditions worsened after the 1929 stock market crash as the rest of the nation

joined in the misery. The only relief in the early 1930s came during the first year of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, when the National Recovery Administration's (NRA) textile code allowed mill owners to collaborate to establish production quotas and wage scales. In hindsight, however, it appears that the rush of business at this time was prompted by anxious customers hoping to buy as much as possible before the codes went into effect. Lax enforcement of the codes, or at least the assumption that other mills were cheating, motivated many mill owners to break their own codes of competition, and the textile industry plummeted even deeper into depression.

Mill workers, however, were emboldened by the NRA's Section 7(a), which declared it illegal for employers to resist the efforts of their employees to form unions. Textile workers throughout the country rose up in 1934 to challenge their dismal conditions of labor, with most focusing on the "stretch-out," the assigning of more and more work to individual employees with the goal of cost cutting. Nearly 400,000 workers participated in what amounted to a general strike late that summer. Many angry workers joined the ever-fledgling UTW. Mill owners responded by firing union activists, hiring vigilantes, and successfully convincing state and local authorities to support private property rights by any means necessary, including deadly force and violence. The strike ended disastrously for workers. The strongest union supporters were permanently blacklisted from the industry, and others were forced to adopt an air of humility and obedience to keep their jobs. The memory of resounding defeat in the 1934 General Strike affected all future organizing efforts in the South. This somber aftermath contributed to the myth that southern workers were docile and anti-union, but that attitude was largely a result of the concrete lessons learned in 1934 about the tremendous risks inherent in challenging the economic order.

War and Peace, Boom and Bust

World War II rescued the textile industry. By September 1940, well before Pearl Harbor, the federal government was purchasing half of the nation's production of cotton goods, including over \$1 million worth of North Carolina textiles each week. Throughout the war, most textile mills throughout the country could sell virtually anything they produced, with most goods going to support the troops. Before the war, farsighted mill managers, at least the few who either had financial reserves or who were able to obtain loans, had invested in "long-draft" spinning

technology, which eliminated several stages of the production process and reduced labor costs while also improving yarn quality. WWII masked the significance of this technological breakthrough by allowing even antiquated mills to earn profits, but the future was clear. Only those mills that invested in state-of-the-art equipment stood a chance to compete once government contracts no longer drove the market.

The war also seemed to provide a favorable climate for union organizing in textiles. A shortage of labor, particularly in the South, along with record demand for production appeared to give workers an upper hand in organizing campaigns. Moreover, the federal government's National War Labor Board encouraged unionization as a means of eliminating work stoppages that threatened war production. Indeed, early in the war, the newly formed Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA), an affiliate of the CIO, gained over 120,000 new recruits, with membership peaking at 450,000 in 1945. Broken down by region, however, southern TWUA membership in 1945 composed only 42,450 of the newly organized, and just 70,000 of the 600,000 textile workers in the region. TWUA leaders were in a bind. Most of their dues-paying members were in the North, but three fourths of textile workers were in the South. Northern union members were primarily interested in raising wages in the South to protect jobs in the North. Southern workers, however, were still mainly interested in combating the stretch-out. TWUA leaders favored northern interests, which hurt the union's chances in the South. But given the powerful forces in opposition to unionization in the South, it is difficult to know whether or not any organizing strategy could have proved successful.

The southern textile industry withstood the CIO's Operation Dixie, which was a concerted effort beginning in 1946 to organize the main industry in the region. As usual, organizers in textiles faced hostile mill managers, local leaders, and state officials, who attacked the CIO for favoring racial equality and harboring Communists. The decentralized nature of the industry also proved to be a major obstacle. Although there were major textile companies, in 1947 the largest firm sold only 3% of the nation's production. Even the largest companies were so only because they owned a number of relatively small mills. This made it extremely difficult to organize, because companies could shift production to other facilities in the chain. Success at a single mill, therefore, often made little long-term impact. This was quite unlike other major industries, like automobiles, in which a small number of corporations controlled virtually the entire domestic market.

The wartime and postwar boom in textiles lasted only until 1949, when foreign competition resumed and the industry began a long-term decline. Exports of U.S.-produced textiles decreased dramatically in this period, and even the domestic market suffered from imports. In addition, industries that had once relied on cotton textiles began shifting to synthetics and plastics. This undercut many of the investments in technology that mill managers had gambled on in the early postwar years. The Korean War offered a temporary respite, but deep recessions in 1954 and 1958 forced the closure of dozens of textile mills, mostly nonunion, and gave managers incentive to intensify their efforts to squeeze more effort out of workers and to install new machinery that might sharpen their competitive edge. Declining production and quality of domestic cotton crops also hurt the textile industry during the 1950s, as cotton was the largest single contributor to production costs. With no control over cotton costs, mill managers sought to cut costs by increasing workloads and speeding up production.

Last Gasps

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 created new opportunities for African-Americans to enter the textile labor force. Indeed, companies began to hire blacks for production jobs, and African-American textile workers increased from about 5% of the labor force to between 25% and 30%. Black workers also appeared to be much more inclined than whites to support unionization campaigns, like the decades-long effort to organize the J. P. Stevens Company. White workers, however, were often reluctant to join organizations that included blacks as equals, and this obviously hindered unionization efforts. Moreover, the number of textile jobs continued to decline because of increasing mechanization and the loss of market share to foreign competition. In short, blacks finally gained access to the region's largest industry in the midst of a long-term collapse that would only accelerate in succeeding decades.

The northern textile industry fared no better in this era. Unable to compete with the southern United States, let alone the rest of the world, northern manufacturers either invested in southern companies or went out of business. TWUA membership in the North shrank from 132,000 in 1950 to 20,000 in 1970.

Many domestic textile companies moved operations to Asia and Latin America during the 1980s and 1990s. The loss of American textile jobs escalated with the passage of the North American Free Trade

Agreement in 1994. Between 1997 and 2002, 236 textile plants closed in North and South Carolina alone, with a loss of more than 75,000 jobs. The remaining workers in textiles were mostly recent immigrants, many of them Latino. Textile employment in the early twenty-first century offered rock-bottom wages and grim prospects. In the end, it is difficult to locate the “golden years” for the domestic textile industry. From the 1830s onward, textiles suffered the ravages of intense competition and offered difficult, uncertain livelihoods to its workers, who struggled against overwhelming odds to improve their situations.

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See also **Gastonia Strike (1929); Industrial Workers of the World; Lawrence Strike (1912); National Union of Textile Workers; National War Labor Board (WWI); National War Labor Board (WWII); Operation Dixie; Textile Workers Union of America; United Textile Workers**

THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT

Approved by Congress in January 1865, and officially ratified by the states in December 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides that “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime” shall exist in the United States, and that Congress has power to “enforce this article by appropriate legislation.” A great Civil War achievement, the amendment resulted not just from Union defeat of the Confederacy, but also from politics. Though Congressional Republicans first proposed an antislavery amendment in December 1863, a revised version failed in the House of Representatives in June 1864. After the fall 1864 presidential election, subsequently, President Abraham Lincoln intensely lobbied Congress for Republican and crucial Democratic support, finally gaining the amendment’s acceptance.

Fluid politics invested the Thirteenth Amendment with ambiguities about labor rights. Avoiding radical language about “equality” that suggested social leveling, Republican sponsors adopted moderate words from the 1787 Northwest Ordinance permitting “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude.” Democrats read this terminology merely to abrogate chattelism, ownership of one human being by another, but Republicans interpreted it to eliminate all forms of coerced labor, leaving labor “unfettered and free.” In Section Two authorizing “appropriate legislation,” moreover, Republicans embraced the abolitionist theory that the Constitution mandated positive federal action to realize freedom, provoking debate as to how far Congress could go to protect free labor in the states.

The post-Civil War struggle over southern reconstruction pushed Republicans toward even broader views of the Thirteenth Amendment. When southern planters imposed “Black Codes” harshly restricting ex-slaves’ labor rights with vagrancy, apprenticeship, and entire contract regulations, federal officials in the Freedmen’s Bureau responded by assisting freed people to negotiate voluntary and “fair” labor contracts commensurate with northern visions of free labor. Moreover, under authority of Section Two, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1866 both to annul Black Codes and to expand protection against “badges

THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT

of servitude” impairing marital, property, and civil rights, as well as free labor, liberties soon secured in the Fourteenth Amendment.

Thereafter, lawmakers and jurists blunted the Thirteenth Amendment’s radical potential and construed it narrowly. True, in 1867, Congress banned “debt slavery” in the Anti-Peonage Act. That same year, Chief Justice Salmon Chase’s circuit court ruling in *In Re Turner* liberated an ex-slave from an apprenticeship agreement regarded as virtual slavery. Yet, the U.S. Supreme Court, beginning with the *Slaughterhouse Cases* (1873), limited the amendment just to abolish chattel servitude. In *Hodges v. U.S.* (1906), consequently, the Court denied congressional authority under the Thirteenth Amendment to stop mob obstruction of black employment, ruling that such was a state matter.

On occasion, labor organizers claimed that the Thirteenth Amendment liberated workers as well as slaves, but courts rejected that view. When, in 1972, Curt Flood challenged major league baseball’s reserve clause on Thirteenth Amendment grounds that it subjected him to involuntary servitude, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed that argument. Today, the Thirteenth Amendment remains a rarely cited and neglected part of constitutional law regarding labor rights.

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THOMAS, NORMAN (NOVEMBER 20, 1884–DECEMBER 19, 1968) Socialist Party

Norman Mattoon Thomas was America’s best-known Socialist from the late 1920s through the late 1960s. He ran as presidential standard-bearer for the Socialist Party six times.

Thomas was born in Marion, Ohio, on November 20, 1884, the descendant of a line of Presbyterian ministers on his father’s side and Presbyterian missionaries on his mother’s side. Showing great intellectual promise from an early age, Thomas graduated as valedictorian of his class at Princeton in 1905. After several years of volunteer service in slum neighborhoods of New York, Thomas attended Union Theological Seminary and was ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1911, taking on the pastorate of a church in East Harlem.

The First World War radicalized Thomas. An opponent of the war, he helped found the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and the National Civil Liberties Bureau, predecessor of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). In 1918, declaring that “these are days when radicals ought to stand up and be counted,” he joined the beleaguered Socialist Party. In 1922, he became codirector of the League for Industrial Democracy (LID), a post he would hold through 1937.

Thomas was an eloquent orator, and starting in 1924 when he ran for governor of New York State on the Socialist ticket, he put his talent to good use as a spokesperson for American Socialism. Eugene Debs had been the Socialist Party’s candidate for president of the United States many times between 1900 and his death in 1926, winning as much as 6% of the vote in the 1912 election; with Debs gone, Thomas stepped up to take his place.

In the 1920s, the Socialist Party was a shadow of the organization that had existed before government repression and internal splits had decimated it in 1919–1920. In 1928, when he first ran for president, Thomas received only 267,000 votes, a quarter of Debs’s vote in 1912. But with the onset of the Great Depression at the end of the decade, the Socialists’ prospects improved dramatically. Thomas made a much stronger run for president in 1932, garnering

881,000 votes. The Socialists were disappointed that they had not broken Debs's old record, but the increased vote seemed to bode well for the future. So did the influx of new recruits, many of them college students but also labor organizers including Walter and Victor Reuther in Detroit.

As it turned out, 1932 marked the end rather than the beginning of a Socialist renaissance. The presidential victor that year, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, secured the loyalty of working-class voters with programs like Social Security. Many people said that Roosevelt was "carrying out" the Socialist platform; Thomas would respond that the president was carrying it out "on a stretcher." The Socialists also faced stiff competition in the later 1930s from a vigorous Communist Party and suffered from debilitating faction fights. When Thomas again ran for president in 1936, his vote declined to a mere 187,000 and would never again reach even that low total in the succeeding elections (1940, 1944, and 1948) in which he stood as a candidate for the Socialists.

As war returned to Europe in 1939, Thomas opposed American entry on the side of the Allies, joining the conservative isolationist America First Committee. After Pearl Harbor, Thomas became a reluctant supporter of the war effort, though he criticized the internment of Japanese-Americans during the war and the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki that brought the war to an end.

The Cold War years were difficult ones for Thomas. The Socialist Party continued its decline. While Thomas was an outspoken critic of the Communist Party in the United States, he was dismayed by the assault on civil liberties in the McCarthy era. He offered critical support to the United Nations in the Korean War but opposed the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union. Seeing little point in running losing races for the presidency, he turned his energies to writing, publishing four books in a dozen years, including *A Socialist Faith* in 1951, *The Test of Freedom* in 1954, *The Prerequisites of Peace* in 1959, and *Socialism Re-examined* in 1963. In the 1960s, he began to draw crowds of eager listeners on college campuses again and was outspoken as a supporter of civil rights and as an opponent of the war in Vietnam. He died on December 19, 1968.

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TOBIN, DANIEL J. (1875–1955) President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

During his long tenure as the president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) from 1907 to 1952, Daniel J. Tobin hewed publicly to a conservative union philosophy while at the same time working steadily to build the size and power of the Teamsters organization. While he came into office as a reformer, by the 1930s he was frequently criticized for being complicit in the growing role of organized crime in his union.

Born in County Clare, Ireland, Tobin immigrated to the United States at the age of 15 and eventually came to work as a teamster in Boston. He joined the newly organized Teamsters Union in Boston at the turn of the twentieth century and soon won election to office in his local union. In 1907, he was elected to the presidency of the Teamsters Union as part of a reform effort to unseat the controversial incumbent Cornelius P. Shea. In the first years of his presidency, Tobin worked to bring stability back to a union troubled by local secession movements, many of which had resulted from opposition to Shea's leadership. At the same time, Tobin's unwillingness to accept improper practices by local leaders led to new secession movements, most importantly by a group of 14 locals in Chicago. Tobin himself received a life-threatening beating in 1909 when he tried to speak directly to members in one troubled local in New York City. In this initial period of turmoil, the union's membership and finances declined. While the IBT had been formed in 1903 with 50,000 members, by 1909, membership had dropped to 30,000.

Over the next two decades, Tobin oversaw a period of steady resurgence for the IBT. By 1930, the union had 90,000 members and its financial health was quite good. Tobin husbanded the union's resources carefully by urging local unions to pursue a cautious strategy in dealing with employers and requiring them to avoid sympathy strikes. He championed the ideals of craft unionism (organizing workers into particular unions according to their skill or occupation) and in the 1930s took a strong stand against efforts to move the American Federation of Labor (AFL) toward an aggressive organizing strategy based on industrial unionism (organizing workers by their workplace). All the while, however, he steadily worked to expand the Teamsters' jurisdiction to include a host of occupations besides the union's traditional drivers. By bringing stable hands, dairy workers, and warehousemen, among others, into the union, Tobin increased the organization's membership and its strategic power.

He essentially created an industrial union even as he proclaimed the virtues of craft organization. He maintained control over what became a sprawling organization by cultivating a group of powerful regional leaders, among whom were Dave Beck and James Hoffa, who served as international representatives. Appointed to their posts by Tobin and answering to him, these men dominated the locals in their area, overseeing strike efforts, leading organizing campaigns, and resolving intra-union disputes.

As the head of one of the largest and most powerful unions in the AFL, Tobin assumed a prominent role in the labor movement. He served as treasurer of the labor federation from 1917 to 1928 and was one of its vice presidents from 1933 until he died. Tobin sat among the inner circle of national union leaders who shaped the AFL's policies. While he spoke out against the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization, by the early 1940s, he became a leading voice within the AFL executive council, urging efforts to heal the breach within the labor movement. Tobin also took an active role in national Democratic Party politics. An avid admirer of Franklin Roosevelt, Tobin was the head of the Labor Bureau of the Democratic National Campaign Committee during presidential elections from 1932 to 1944. His prominent support for Roosevelt spurred hopes that Tobin might be appointed secretary of labor, but the president instead chose to appoint Frances Perkins.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the Teamsters grew dramatically, and by 1940, the union had 450,000 members and had become the nation's largest union. At the same time, it attracted increasing controversy over the role of organized crime in some of its local affiliates, especially in New York and Chicago. One critic in 1940 labeled it "the most racketeer-ridden union in America." Although Tobin loudly proclaimed his own integrity, his apparent inability or unwillingness to root out corruption in these locals drew criticism. By the time of his retirement in 1952, he was depicted as out of touch with his membership and disinterested in their conditions.

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See also **International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

TOMPKINS SQUARE RIOT (1874)

From the end of the Civil War in 1865 to the early 1870s, organized labor experienced a growth in real wages. But in 1873, the nation was hit with a severe industrial depression, which lasted nearly six years. With the Depression of 1873, wages dropped dramatically and most national labor unions collapsed. Hunger and unemployment ravaged both urban and rural areas. By 1877–1878, some three million workers were unemployed and perhaps 20% of the nation's working class was without work. Of the roughly 30 national labor unions in existence in 1873, there were but nine still alive in 1877. In New York City, the depression was particularly acute. During the winter months of January–March 1874, some 90,000 unemployed and homeless workers found but a temporary respite from life on the streets by moving among the city's police stations—which allowed the homeless to stay for one or two nights in any given station house.

In the midst of this suffering, workers intensified their call for public works employment and other forms of government intervention to aid the suffering. This movement, according to the historian Herbert G. Gutman, had expired in major cities across the country except New York. In New York, workers organized themselves into ward committees and created a Committee of Safety in late 1873. Foremost on the agenda of this movement of workers and the unemployed was pressuring the city government to take immediate action to relieve the distress of the unemployed. To that end, the Committee called for a large demonstration to take place in Tompkins Square on January 13, 1874. The Committee printed and distributed handbills urging workers to come to the rally by stating: "Winter is upon us, and nearly all employment has been suspended. Cold and hunger are staring in our faces. Nobody can tell how long the misery will last. Nobody will attempt to help if we don't do something ourselves. Now is the time to meet and consider how we are to get work, food, clothing, and shelter." In the meantime, it advised unemployed workers to simply take food and bill the city.

The mayor of New York, William Havemeyer, initially agreed to speak to the gathering at Tompkins Square, but quickly the city's response to the planned demonstration became one of organized repression, and the city's newspapers, almost without exception, condemned the call for a demonstration and the Committee of Safety as communistic and a danger to the natural order of civil society. City authorities and the police met to plan how best to deal with the demonstration. They decided to quell the demonstration as soon as it took place. On the morning of January 13, 1874, thousands of workers, employed

and unemployed, began gathering in Tompkins Square. The Square had been donated to the city by John Jacob Aster. Covering 10 acres, it served as a social space for the mostly poor immigrants who lived in abutting tenements. By 11 a.m., seven thousand people jammed the square and adjacent streets. No violence had taken place and not a single speaker had yet addressed the assembly. The police had been at work even earlier. By 6 a.m., two thirds of the entire New York City police force was on hand in the area of the Square and City Hall—some 1,600 officers, including detectives. Led by the police commissioner, police charged into the rally and began indiscriminately clubbing people; pandemonium ensued. The thousands of men, women, and children who had filled the Square and the area around it fled in all directions—with the police still pursuing them and clubbing anyone they came across. Among the thousands of people running from the police attack was Samuel Gompers, who in the following decade would become president of the American Federation of Labor. Indeed, Gompers wrote that he avoided being clubbed by jumping into a cellar doorway and that the police were engaged in “an orgy or brutality.” Not everyone ran from the police, at least not at first. In one spot, a group of German workers fought back, but to little effect. Violent disorder in the streets surrounding the Square continued off and on for a few hours. By the end of the melee, 46 workers were arrested and jailed. Most were under 40 years of age, with just over half of the arrested composed of German immigrants. Only 10 of the arrested were native-born.

The reaction of the city’s elite to the conduct of the police was overwhelmingly supportive, with few exceptions. A religious weekly labeled the unemployed “fools” and their leaders little more than “ruffians.” The *New York Herald* opined that only brute force could instill in workers a respect for those “who have plenty when [they] have nothing.” Mayor Havemeyer stated that “nothing better could have happened It is often easier to cure an evil than to arrest its progress when it is under way.” The response of the city’s elite was clear: municipalities had no responsibility for the unemployed, and any efforts by them to agitate for public relief would be dealt with severely. Organized labor attacked the city’s police department: the Tailors’ Union, the United Cigar Makers’ Union, the United Order of American Bricklayers, and the United Cabinetmakers’ Union, among others, denounced the action of the police as that found among tyrannical European monarchies; such conduct was hostile to the very foundations of liberty in a republic.

In the wake of the crushing of the demonstration at Tompkins Square, the movement of unemployed workers and its allies in organized labor disintegrated.

The Committee of Safety lost much of its support and opted for taking action in electoral politics by forming the Industrial Political Party. With a platform calling for government ownership of railroads, suffrage for all free citizens, and free secular education through college, for example, organized labor repudiated the Party as being too radical. Trade unions affiliated with the New York State Workingman’s Assembly and the Workingman’s Central Council formed their own political party, but both parties collapsed. Nonetheless, the agitation of the unemployed movement and trade unions helped fuel the formation of a labor party that put forth the newspaper editor John Swinton as its mayoral candidate in the fall 1874 municipal elections. This effort, though, received few votes. Not until the decade of the 1880s would workers’ organizations recover from the devastating consequences of the Depression of 1873–1879.

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TOWNSEND, WILLARD (1895–1957) African-American Labor Leader

From the mid-1930s until his death in 1957, Willard Townsend emerged as one of the most prominent African-American labor leaders in the country, second only to A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. From his base in the union of red caps that he helped to found and then lead, Townsend relayed his visible position into a platform promoting black unionization and attacking discrimination in the labor movement, the economy, and the broader society. Although the labor journalist George McCray exaggerated when he observed in 1942 that Townsend was “fast becoming the most powerful Negro leader in the country,” he was right to call attention to the union leader’s growing importance as a national figure and political commentator in the realm of race, labor, civil rights, and the economy.

Townsend was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1895, the son of a local building contractor. During World War I, he served with the U.S. Army in France as a

first lieutenant in the 372nd Infantry. Upon returning to the United States after the war, Townsend matriculated at the University of Toronto and then the Royal Academy of Science to pursue a medical education. The young veteran, like so many other black students, sought employment in the railroad industry to earn money to pay for his schooling. In Townsend's case, the job of dining car waiter on the Canadian National Railroad afforded him flexible employment during weekends and summers in the mid-1920s, until the company discharged its black workforce during an economic downturn. Townsend then took to the road, teaching at a black religious high school in Texas before securing a variety of unskilled jobs in Chicago. By 1930, Townsend worked as a red cap (a station porter responsible for carrying passengers' baggage to and from trains) at the Northwestern Railroad Terminal.

The upsurge in unionization that swept so many sectors of the American economy during the 1930s extended to the ranks of black railroad service workers. As A. Philip Randolph was securing union recognition and then a pathbreaking contract for the Pullman porters in his Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, African-American dining car waiters and station red caps were also organizing their own craft unions. Townsend was initially at the forefront of red cap unionization in Chicago, contributing to the establishment in 1937 of a small, interracial Brotherhood of Railroad Depot, Bus Terminal, Airport and Dock Red Caps, Attendants and Porters, which affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) as a federal local (a union attached directly to the Federation with no formal connection to larger international unions). The fragile alliance between the small number of white red caps and the larger number of black red caps did not last: when Townsend was elected to the union's presidency, many white members disaffiliated and instead joined the all-white Brotherhood of Railway Clerks. Racial problems—in this instance manifested in the union's second-class status as a federal union within the AFL—prompted the now largely black union to leave the AFL, opting instead for an independent status as the International Brotherhood of Red Caps (IBRC).

The union Townsend led confronted numerous obstacles in its early years. Jurisdictional claims by the all-white clerks' union led to efforts to subordinate black red caps in various terminals into segregated, auxiliary unions with few rights. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Townsend and the IBRC crusaded against the clerks and their racial policies, insisting that red caps deserved equal union rights and the opportunity to select democratically their own bargaining agent.

In numerous union elections, the IBRC bested the clerks among black employees. But before they could even compete in union elections, red caps had to establish their eligibility to draw upon the services of the National Mediation Board and the National Railroad Adjustment Board, the federal agencies responsible for labor relations in the railroad industry. The 1934 Railroad Labor Act initially did not apply to red caps, who, unlike Pullman porters and dining car waiters, were not formally recognized as railroad employees. Station managers claimed that unlike other service workers, red caps were independent contractors. Townsend's union devoted considerable effort to persuade the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) that, contrary to employers' claims, red caps were bona fide railroaders. The union's "March Forward to Job Legality" campaign was successful by September 1938 when the ICC rejected employers' claims and ruled that red caps were covered under the law. With that single move, the IBRC invoked the National Mediation Board's services and proceeded to win numerous union representation elections. With union recognition quickly followed contracts that established grievance procedures, seniority rights, and other nonmonetary gains. As a largely unskilled and easily replaceable labor force possessing little workplace bargaining power, however, red caps found that modest wage gains came only slowly.

When the red caps union—now called the United Transport Service Employees of America (UTSE)—ended its independent status and affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1942, Townsend joined the CIO's executive board, a move that afforded him a high-profile platform from which to carry on his campaign to organize black workers and oppose white unions' racial policies. As the highest-ranking African-American within the CIO, he quickly emerged as a prominent proponent of wartime civil rights and a sharp critic of American race relations. The violent race riots of 1943, he declared, were "grave symptoms of a disease that is gnawing at the vitals of our democracy." During the war, he spoke out in defense of Japanese-Americans, and during and after the war, he condemned restrictive covenants in real estate and federal agencies' roles in fostering segregation in new housing, denounced white trade unions' discriminatory practices, and attacked the widespread discrimination in the realm of employment. Townsend remained a fierce advocate of black trade unionization, the racial inequities in the labor movement notwithstanding. Racial problems were "workers' problems," Townsend argued, and the "labor movement" was the "only vehicle" to achieve "those things we have aspired and hoped

for.” “Aggressive unionism becomes the major force for the extension of the rights and progress for the Negro race,” he insisted. “It is the only segment of our society where Negroes and whites have been able to work together in common purpose.”

At the same time A. Philip Randolph was promoting his March on Washington Movement, however, Townsend adopted a skeptical stance, decrying the Fair Employment Practice Committee created by President Franklin Roosevelt to placate Randolph as underfunded and ineffective. Townsend’s critique was, to an extent, on the mark. But it is likely that his rivalry with Randolph played some role in his coolness toward Randolph’s various projects. Part of the tension was personal, with each leader vying for influence, but part of the tension was also organizational. Townsend was allied with the CIO and Randolph with the AFL. While Randolph did not deny the AFL’s racist policies (choosing to fight those policies from within), Townsend was harshly dismissive of the Federation and energetic in his praise for the CIO.

Townsend also directed criticism against the Communist Party (CP) and its allies in the labor movement, charging that Party members sought to “use Negroes in labor to further their ideology” and placing his UTSE at the service of the CIO in jurisdictional battles with a left-led union in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Like other black social democrats and liberals after World War II, Townsend indicted American racial practices for providing ammunition to the Communists. “We say ‘Communism is no good!’ ‘Communism is dangerous,’” he insisted. “Yet we do everything in this country to make the Negro Communist-conscious. Bad housing, discrimination, the whole list of grievances that cause him to seek an emotional escape.” In speeches and his regular column in the pages of the African-American weekly the *Chicago Defender*, Townsend invoked the intensifying Cold War as a spur to civil rights reform, charging that American race relations and practices weakened the United States in its contest with the Soviet Union for the allegiance of nonwhites in the decolonizing world.

In the final decade of his life, Townsend continued to promote his vision of black unionization and his critique of racial inequality. With the merger in 1955 of the CIO and the AFL, Townsend, like Randolph, served on the new AFL-CIO’s executive board. At the same time, he continued to lead the UTSE during its period of slow decline as falling numbers of railway passengers and management cost-cutting measures reduced the number of red caps dramatically. Townsend died of a kidney ailment in Chicago in 1957.

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See also Fair Employment Practice Committee; International Brotherhood of Red Caps/United Transport Service Employees of America; March on Washington Movement; Randolph, A. Philip

TRADE UNION UNITY LEAGUE

The Trade Union Unity League (TUUL), founded in Cleveland in August 1929, was the most significant industrial union federation to emerge in the United States between the birth of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, 1905) and the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO, 1935). As a member of the Communist Red International of Labor Unions (RILU, or the *Profintern*—the Russian acronym for the organization), its history was closely linked to the history of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) and the vicissitudes of policy directives from Moscow. Yet, in its struggle to carve out a militant union movement in a nation dominated by craft unions, the TUUL charted a course not dissimilar to that of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World, in which many of its leaders had first honed their organizing skills. Though it never recruited vast numbers of workers and was only in existence between 1929 and 1934, in those five short years it kept alive the ideal of industrial unionism. The TUUL’s challenge to the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the late 1920s and early 1930s helped inspire support for an internal rebellion in the AFL that ultimately led to the formation of the independent Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Origins: The Trade Union Educational League (TUEL)

The TUUL emerged specifically out of another Communist-dominated organization, the Trade Union Education League (TUEL), founded by the syndicalist

and soon-to-be Communist William Z. Foster in 1920. The TUEL sought to build a democratic, industrial, rank and file-centered union movement by steering conservative AFL and independent unions to the left. It rejected the IWW mold of independent, dual unionism even as it accepted the former organization's emphasis on syndicalist, shop-level organization. The TUEL's official organ, the *Labor Herald*, continually criticized the IWW's strategy for growing industrial unionism, condemning those "who still think that it is a 'revolutionary' act to draw a handful of militant workers outside of the masses, unite them on a dogma, and call it a revolutionary union." Its founding declaration clearly enunciated its mission: to take on "the reactionaries, incompetents, and crooks who occupy strategic positions in many of our organizations," and "to replace them with militants, with men and women unionists who look upon the labor movement not as a means for making an easy living, but as an instrument for the achievement of working class emancipation."

The TUEL attempted to bring about a universal "amalgamation of the trade unions" by forging alliances, organizing unity conferences, winning control of disparate local unions as well as city and state labor federations (such as the powerful Chicago Federation of Labor), and providing leadership for several local and regional industrywide strikes. By September 1923, eight international unions, 14 state federations of labor, and a number of central labor bodies had gravitated into the orbit of the TUEL. Yet the organization's growing influence was soon stifled by the persistent hostility and attacks of conservative regional and national craft union leaders, which led to a growing disaffection among many TUEL organizers with the policy of "boring from within." Thus, it was not surprising that many of the organization's leaders and rank-and-file members were quite responsive to new directives from the Communist International (Comintern) and the Moscow-based Profintern—directives that came in 1928 and that ironically encouraged a return to dual unionism.

Organizing Revolutionary Trade Unions

Even earlier, there were signs that TUEL members were charting a more independent and militant course—encouraged to do so by the Profintern head Alexei Losovsky. In 1927, in the midst of a failed TUEL-supported challenge to the dominance of John L. Lewis in the United Mine Workers (UMW), Losovsky wrote to William Foster, "THE QUESTION OF SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT UNION MUST BE RAISED, otherwise you will

never escape from this vicious circle." A year later, the Comintern finally encouraged League members to abandon their "boring from within" strategy. This was at the start of the so-called "Third Period," when the Comintern and the Profintern, anticipating a widespread crisis in world capitalism and the birth of a revolutionary labor movement, encouraged its members to create independent, Communist-led, revolutionary unions and to engage in mass strikes. Losovsky now condemned American trade unions, and particularly the AFL, as "schools of capitalism," incapable of stimulating revolutionary change. His comments were echoed by Earl Browder, the managing editor of the Communist newspaper *The Labor Herald*—and soon to be the head of the CPUSA—who declared in 1929: "Today the workers must be prepared for the actual organization of revolutionary trade unions separate from and fighting against the class-collaborationist, social reformist A. F. of L., organizationally and politically."

The TUUL placed its emphasis on building mass industrial unions and on interethnic and interracial organizing (it immediately established a "Negro Department"), and came forward with political demands that anticipated (but went further than) much of the unemployment relief, social insurance, and labor legislation of the New Deal. Beginning in 1928 and in 1929, when the TUUL was formally established, the organization helped organize between 40,000 and 60,000 workers and built more than a dozen unions: the National Miners Union (NMU), the National Textile Workers Industrial Union, the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, the Auto Workers Union, the Marine Workers Industrial Union, the Agricultural Workers Industrial League (later the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union), the Packinghouse Workers Industrial Union (also known as the Food and Packinghouse Workers Industrial Union), the Tobacco Workers Industrial Union, the Shoe and Leather Workers Industrial Union, the Laundry Workers Industrial Union, the Metal Workers Industrial League, the Tobacco Workers Industrial Union, and the Sharecroppers Union.

The TUUL was involved in a number of major conflagrations during the years of its existence. In 1929, the TUUL-affiliated National Textile Workers reluctantly led a bloody strike of thousands of textile workers in Gastonia, North Carolina—begun when management fired five union activists. A year before the official founding of the TUUL, in 1928, Communist leaders—after years of failed efforts to gain influence within John L. Lewis's United Mine Workers Union—decided to establish their own National Miners Union. In 1931, now affiliated with the TUUL, it took on the leadership of a strike that the

UMW had first called in Harlan County, Kentucky. The violent response of mine owners, the NMU's strong opposition to racial discrimination, and union leaders' overt support and identification with the Soviet Union (widely publicized by their opponents) made it difficult for the union to make headway among the many white, religious miners of Harlan County.

Elsewhere, the TUUL was far more successful. Its Food Workers Industrial Union organized New York cafeteria and restaurant workers; its members became major players within the AFL's Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union in New York. In the electrical industry, it helped build the foundations of the independent United Electrical Workers Union—actively organizing in industrial centers like Schenectady, New York (where GE had one of its largest works). The TUUL's Marine Workers Industrial Union helped lead the West Coast longshoremen's strike of 1934 and rejuvenated the moribund International Longshoremen's Association in San Francisco. The TUUL also enjoyed modest success in Michigan's steel and automobile industry, but perhaps its most successful efforts lay in organizing the unemployed—in Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and throughout the nation.

Legacies

In 1935, with the formation of the newly formed Committee for Industrial Organization (soon to become the Congress of Industrial Organizations) and with another shift in Communist Party policy, the life of the TUUL ended and the locus of industrial union struggles shifted to the newly established CIO. Communist trade unionists were instructed to enter the CIO industrial unions or to work within existing AFL unions to promote general labor unity and industrial unionism. John L. Lewis, who years earlier had purged his United Miners Workers of CP members, now embraced Communists and welcomed them into the CIO. Some, like Lee Pressman, became major national leaders in the organization (Pressman was its general counsel). Other TUUL activists became local and regional leaders in many of the newly emerging CIO unions of the late 1930s. They brought with them many of the organizational skills and much of the left labor culture that had characterized the TUUL. As the historian Edward P. Johanningsmeier noted, “the TUUL helped to establish a new type and style of Communist unionism, more suited to the organization of African-Americans, women, and mass-production workers.”

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See also **Congress of Industrial Organizations; Foster, William Z.**

TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

The Transport Workers Union of America (TWU) is one of two main unions in the United States—the other is the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)—that represents mass transit workers. It also represents groups of airline, railroad, utility, and university employees. The TWU grew out of an effort in the early 1930s to unionize subway, elevated train, trolley, and bus workers in New York City, later expanding to become a national union.

The Founding of the TWU

From the days of horse-drawn trolleys through World War I, the urban mass transit industry had turbulent labor relations. Transit workers, poorly paid and required to work inordinately long hours, banded together in periodic efforts to better their conditions. Employers vigorously resisted unionization, leading to strikes notable for their intensity and violence. Workers sometimes succeeded in improving wages and conditions and establishing ongoing organizations, but their victories often proved short-lived. By the 1920s, the Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees (later renamed the ATU), an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), managed to build stable organizations on some

transit lines. However, in much of the country, including New York, most transit workers lacked union representation and continued to work extraordinarily long hours for low pay.

The Great Depression worsened the already difficult working conditions in the transit industry. In New York, companies eliminated benefits, laid off hundreds of workers, and reduced hours and pay rates for those who remained. The cutbacks led to employee unrest and discussion of the possibilities for collective action. This sentiment crystallized through the efforts of the Communist Party (CP), which in 1933 declared transit one of its “concentration points” for organizing in the New York area. Though the Party had only a few members working in the industry, its organizers soon made contact with a scattering of workers interested in forming a transit union, who in turn began pulling together small groups of activists.

Irish workers played a particularly important role in the organization of the TWU. In the early 1930s, nearly half of New York’s transit workers had been born in Ireland. Some had been active in the republican movement during the Irish independence struggle and subsequent civil war. The republican veterans who joined the nascent union effort proved critical to its success. With an unusual degree of political experience, widespread respect among Irish workers, and in many cases a left-leaning inclination, they served as a link between the CP and Irish workers and took key positions in the union as it emerged.

The TWU was formally founded in April 1934 as an independent union, with the head of the Communist organizing effort, John Santo, as its initial leader. When the CP decided to move its union forces into the AFL, the TWU attempted to affiliate with the Amalgamated Association, but the groups could not agree on terms. Instead, in February 1936, the TWU affiliated with the International Association of Machinists (IAM). By then, the TWU had restructured its leadership, with the Irish-born transit worker Thomas H. O’Shea chosen to serve as the group’s first president but soon replaced by another Irishman, who like O’Shea had been active in the republican movement, Michael J. Quill.

The TWU’s initial clandestine effort soon led to open recruiting and a series of clashes with employers, including several short strikes at car barns and a power plant. In the spring and summer of 1937, the union won a series of representation elections and signed contracts with every major private transit company in New York City, giving it a membership of nearly 30,000 and beginning the process of upgrading pay, benefits, and working conditions for its constituency.

Becoming a National Union

Just before its sweep of representation elections in New York, the TWU left the IAM to accept a national union charter from the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) that gave it jurisdiction over “all workers employed on or about passenger transport facilities, excluding steam railroad systems.” The union set up a national structure, headquartered in New York, while converting its New York group into an affiliate, Local 100. In October 1937, at the TWU’s first national convention, delegates elected Quill international president, Douglas MacMahon, another New York transit worker, vice president, and Santo secretary-treasurer. Later that year, Local 100 elected Austin Hogan, an Irish-born Communist, as its president.

It took a while for the TWU to become a national union in more than name. Upon joining the CIO, the TWU established locals of bus, trolley, and taxicab workers in a number of small cities and towns. But its efforts to move into larger cities failed. Then, just prior to World War II, it began winning a series of organizing drives, including among bus and taxicab workers in Omaha, transit workers in Columbus, Ohio, and track workers in Chicago. Its biggest victory came in Philadelphia in 1944, when it beat out the Amalgamated Association and another group to become the representative of 9,200 employees of the Philadelphia Transit Company (PTC), who became the core of Local 234. After the war, the TWU’s expansion continued with new locals in Louisville, Houston, and San Francisco.

The TWU also began moving beyond mass transit. During the early 1940s, a variety of groups affiliated with the union, including truck drivers in New Orleans, gas workers in Brooklyn, and maintenance workers at Columbia University. More important, the TWU began organizing the rapidly growing passenger airline industry, beginning with Pan American Airways maintenance workers in Miami. In the immediate postwar years, the TWU’s Air Transport Division signed up airline mechanics, navigators, radio operators, flight attendants, fleet service workers, guards, and commissary workers employed by Pan Am and American Airlines. By 1948, only 35,000 of the TWU’s 68,000 members belonged to its original New York local.

The TWU’s expansion helped stabilize it as Local 100 confronted a threat to its very existence. When the union began, the entire New York transit industry was privately operated, except for one subway line. However, in 1940, New York City took over the two privately operated subway systems as well as some

bus and trolley lines, integrating the properties into a single system. The city takeover forced the TWU into a prolonged fight to maintain collective bargaining and union grievance procedures in what became a civil service operation. While the New York mayor, Fiorello La Guardia, did not forbid city workers from belonging to unions, he ruled out signing contracts with them, granting exclusive representation rights, or allowing municipal employees to strike. It took until the mid-1950s for Local 100 to regain the right to exclusive representation and to negotiate signed contracts with the New York City Transit Authority, which ran the public transit lines. Its success helped pave the way for the unionization of other New York City workers in the years that followed.

Political Re-Orientation

During its first 15 years, the TWU generally aligned itself on international affairs, national labor issues, and electoral politics with the Communist-led left. Though there were never a large number of Communists in the union, they were disproportionately represented in its leadership. TWU members generally held more conservative views than their leaders, but by and large they supported the officers who had played central roles in organizing the union and in its collective bargaining advances, to the frustration of Catholic anticommunists who targeted the union.

The situation changed with the onset of the Cold War. As anticommunist pressure grew inside and outside of the labor movement, the TWU president, Quill, decided to distance himself from the CP. Most other left-wing leaders of the union remained allied with it. A resulting civil war for control of the union culminated at its December 1948 convention, when Quill and his allies defeated the left. Many key leaders, including Santo, Hogan, and MacMahon, were pushed out of the union, which Quill steered toward more mainstream liberal politics.

During the 1950s, the TWU continued to grow, though modestly. In 1954, it absorbed the CIO United Railway Workers Organizing Committee, which became its Railroad Division. It also continued to organize airline and mass transit workers and eventually began signing up school bus drivers as well.

Most TWU contracts were settled without strikes, but the union did not shy away from militant action. The railway and airline industries were covered by the federal Railway Labor Act, which restricted the right to strike. Nonetheless, the union did occasionally lead walkouts in those industries. The most disruptive came

in 1960, when the TWU, in alliance with another labor group, led 40,000 Pennsylvania Railroad maintenance workers out on strike, shutting down the huge railway for the first time in its 114-year history.

TWU transit locals operated under a variety of state labor laws—New York State outlawed public employee strikes—and with differing degrees of militancy. Some locals rarely, if ever, struck. By contrast, Local 234 struck frequently when its contracts with the PTC (and later with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, which took over the PTC lines) expired. From 1946 to 2005, there were over a dozen major transit strikes in Philadelphia, including a 42-day walkout in 1978 and a 40-day strike in 1998.

In New York, Local 100 repeatedly threatened to strike the subway system and did hold occasional walkouts against privately run bus companies, but the first citywide transit strike did not occur until 1966. New York transit wages, though improved over the years, remained low, especially for the more skilled workers, who saw their standard of living slip behind workers doing equivalent jobs in the private sector. At the same time, as more African-Americans took transit jobs, many felt that they were not being given sufficient roles in the union leadership or access to the best-paid jobs. As various subgroups with the union became dissatisfied, the local fragmented. With Quill determined to re-unify Local 100 through a militant struggle and a rich contract and an incoming mayor, John Lindsay, committed to breaking the pattern of ties between the TWU and city leaders, no agreement could be reached. On January 1, 1966, TWU members walked off their jobs, all but paralyzing the city. Four days into the strike, Quill, Matthew Guinan, who had succeeded Hogan as the Local 100 president, and other TWU leaders were jailed for defying a court injunction. In jail, Quill suffered a heart attack. After 12 days, the strike ended with a settlement favorable to the union. Two weeks later, Quill died.

The Next Generation

After Quill's death, members of the founding generation of the TWU continued to hold leadership positions. But a transition already was under way to a younger generation of leaders, who soon found themselves facing a variety of challenges. In New York, the shifting racial, ethnic, and later gender makeup of the workforce, along with deteriorating job conditions as a result of the city's mid-1970s fiscal crisis, sparked

the formation of a series of rank-and-file opposition groups. Their militancy led to a second citywide transit strike, lasting 11 days, in 1980.

In the airline industry, the TWU lost members as a result of dissatisfaction among flight attendants and industry turmoil following the 1978 Airline Deregulation Act. As the women's movement of the early 1970s began influencing female airline workers, who faced a variety of discriminatory obstacles, flight attendants belonging to the TWU grew dissatisfied with how it represented them. In 1976, Pan American flight attendants left the TWU in favor of an independent group. Later, Pan American and Eastern Airlines went bankrupt and dissolved, costing thousands of TWU members their jobs. But through ongoing organizing, the TWU added members at other airlines. By 2005, the union represented nearly 50,000 airline workers at over two dozen companies.

Even as the demographic profile of the TWU membership and its leaders changed, the union retained its traditions of militancy, lively, sometimes fractious internal politics, and an unusually strong representation of left-wing voices. In Local 100, new rank-and-file dissident groups began organizing in the 1980s, growing in strength from year to year and merging under the umbrella of the New Directions caucus. In 2000, the New Directions candidate for Local 100 president, Roger Toussaint, a Trinidadian-born track worker, defeated the incumbent and another candidate. Though New Directions fractured after sweeping aside the old administration, under Toussaint, Local 100 took a more aggressive stance in collective bargaining, including conducting a three-day citywide transit strike in 2005. Toussaint portrayed himself as reviving the spirit of Mike Quill, highlighting the continuities in the history of the TWU, which from its start aggressively fought to upgrade the working and living standards of transportation workers, even if that required occasionally inconveniencing the public.

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See also **American Federation of Labor; Communist Party; Quill, Michael J.**

TREVELLICK, RICHARD F. (1830–1895) Labor Leader

Richard Trevellick, a Civil War-era labor leader who headed several trade unions and labor reform organizations, was an effective spokesman for a wide range of causes including shorter hours, greenback currency, temperance, and equal treatment for African-Americans.

Trevellick was born in 1830 to a Methodist farm family on the Scilly Islands near southwest England. Trained as a ship carpenter, at age 21 Trevellick took a job on the dry docks of Southampton, England, beginning a decade of global travel that introduced him to principles of labor reform. From 1852 to 1855, Trevellick prospected for gold and labored in shipyards in Australia and New Zealand. In these colonies, Trevellick joined in his first campaign for the eight-hour day. Following a brief stint in Peru's navy, Trevellick worked for a Panama-based mail company. In 1857, he moved to New Orleans. Building on past associations, Trevellick joined a temperance society and the local ship carpenters union, of which he quickly became president. In 1858, he led an eight-hour day strike. That year, Trevellick married Victoria, his landlady's daughter, with whom he raised five children. Opposed to slavery and the South's secession from the Union, in 1862, Trevellick moved his family to Detroit, Michigan.

Trevellick quickly moved up the ranks of Detroit's Ship Carpenters and Caulkers Union to become its president. In 1864, he helped organize a citywide trade assembly that claimed 5,000 members. The trade assembly influenced city politics and gave organized labor a stronger role in the city's economy. Its effectiveness whetted Trevellick's interest in building a national trade federation. In 1865, Trevellick won the presidency of the national ship carpenters union and led a successful strike against a Buffalo, New York, dry-dock company.

Despite leading several strikes, Trevellick disliked the tactic because better-funded employers usually prevailed. He preferred arbitration, boycotts, and legislative solutions to labor's concerns. The quest for shorter hours fit this strategy. In 1866, Trevellick led the Michigan Eighth-Hour League in a campaign for a state law shortening the workday. That same year, Trevellick quit the shipyards to work full-time as a labor reformer. He helped launch the National Labor Union (NLU) in 1866, and he headed a state-level counterpart, the Michigan Labor Union. Appointed as the NLU's Washington lobbyist, in 1868, Trevellick helped persuade Congress to mandate an eight-hour-day law for federal employees.

However, the law proved nearly unenforceable as did state-level eight-hour laws passed during the same period.

In 1869, the NLU elected Trevellick as its president, a post he held until the organization died in 1872. As NLU president, Trevellick advocated organizing African-American workers on the grounds of white economic self-interest; if African-Americans went unorganized, he argued, then they would break strikes and lower wages in competition with unionized white workers.

Although Trevellick organized approximately 50 unions during his lifetime, he pushed the NLU toward politics and away from trade-union activism. The National Labor Reform Party, the fruit of this effort, fared poorly in the 1872 presidential election, garnering less than 1% of the total vote. This weak showing reflected the persistent attachment of workers to the established parties and increasing fragmentation among reformers over issues related to class and race. The shift toward politics drove trade unions away from the NLU and contributed to its demise.

Like many contemporary labor reformers, Trevellick believed that credit and currency reform would alleviate labor's exploitation. As a member of the NLU and as a supporter of the Greenback-Labor Party in the late 1870s, Trevellick supported an end to private banking and the replacement of gold-backed currency with interest-bearing greenbacks. These reforms would lower interest rates and increase credit and thereby promote prosperity for both labor and capital. The Panic of 1873, the longest recession prior to the Great Depression of the 1930s, spurred interest in the broad-ranging economic change promised by credit and currency reform. In 1874, Trevellick attended a meeting to organize the new Greenback-Labor Party, which was dedicated to structural economic changes that neither Democrats nor Republicans would support. Trevellick chaired Greenback national conventions in 1878 and 1880. In 1878, Greenbackers won state and local offices but garnered no more than 3% of the vote in presidential contests from 1876 to 1884.

In 1878, Trevellick signed up with the Knights of Labor as an organizer and lecturer, a position he held for the rest of his life. He died in 1895. Trevellick was one of several leaders who helped revitalize and expand the labor movement after the Civil War.

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See also **Civil War and Reconstruction; Greenback-Labor Party; National Labor Union**

TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FIRE

The Triangle factory occupied the top three floors of the modern Asch Building on the corner of Washington Place and Greene Street in New York City's fashionable Greenwich Village. Constructed in 1900, the Asch Building was thoroughly modern in design and safety. Saturday, March 25, 1911, began as a typical Saturday at the Triangle factory. At 4:00 p.m., workers on the eighth floor (the factory occupied the eighth, ninth, and tenth floors) heard the watchman ring the bell, signaling quitting time. The young women raced for their pay envelopes and then off to the dressing rooms to begin what was left of their weekend. Five minutes after the bell rang, a fire was discovered under worktable 2 near the Greene Street windows, and it spread rapidly. The fire most likely started as the result of a discarded cigarette thrown carelessly on a pile of "cut-aways"—scraps of cloth that were saved and sold to scrap cloth dealers. It was common for Triangle to accumulate over a ton of scrap before it was carted away, creating a serious fire hazard. While it is impossible to know the exact amount of cloth on hand, there had not been a pickup for nearly three months. It is likely that over a ton of scrap cloth, plus much more uncut cloth, was on hand. The presence of that amount of cloth caused the factory to go up in flames within minutes.

The fire started on the eighth floor and a warning was given to the executive offices on the tenth. No one notified the workers on the ninth, many of whom jumped out the windows rather than burn. The vision of young women jumping to their death was a sight many New Yorkers would never forget. The *New York Times* reported that "girls rushed to the window and looked down at Greene Street 100 feet below them. Then one poor, little creature jumped. There was a plate of glass protection over part of the sidewalk, but she crashed through it, wrecking it and breaking her body into a thousand pieces. The crowd yelled 'DON'T JUMP!' But it was jump or be burned—the proof of which is found in the fact that fifty burned bodies were taken from the ninth floor alone."

TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FIRE

The city was thoroughly unprepared to cope with a fire of this magnitude. The *New York Times* stated, “Mostly all there was to do was to determine if life was extinct in the bodies on the pavement and cover them over.” At the time of the fire, New York’s Fire Department had at its disposal the latest in firefighting technologies. It had one of the nation’s first fully motorized units—still in an experimental stage. The Asch Building was located in one of the city’s few new high-water-pressure areas. The Fire Department dispatched to the scene one of its newest pump engines, as well as the new hook and ladder companies. When Fire Company 20 arrived with the city’s largest hook and ladder, witnesses recalled that the crowd screamed for them to “raise the ladder!” But “the ladder had been raised . . . it was raised to its fullest point. It reached only to the sixth floor.” “The [fire]men did the best they could,” according to Battalion Chief Worth, “but there was no apparatus in the department to cope with this kind of fire.”

In the fire’s aftermath, emotions in the city’s working-class communities ran high. To middle-class guardians of law and order, however, the scene at the fire’s site was that of a mob. All the city’s major newspapers reported that police pushed the extremely large crowds gathered in front of the building into nearby Washington Square Park. Police re-enforcements were needed to “hold back” the crowds, which gathered for many reasons: some were morbidly curious for the grisly details of the fire, others were searching for family and friends, and many were simply shocked.

The families of the victims spent most of the week following the fire arranging for burials. As is common in tragedies with a social subtext, these funerals became a catalyst for protest. The Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL) and the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) made most of the burial arrangements. The cloakmakers’ union announced that its members would symbolically work only a half day on the day of the mass funeral for the remaining unidentified victims and turn out in mass for the service. Other unions declared similar intentions. The 146 young women who died in the blaze were honored in one of the largest displays of class solidarity the city had ever experienced. In 1909, this very factory was the site of labor unrest. At the time, the ILGWU was a weak union, with a tiny membership. But the women in the shirtwaist industry gave it life. By 1910, the ILGWU was the largest union of garment workers in the country.

While families buried their kin separately, the union planned a mass service for the final seven victims who were not claimed by family because they could not be positively identified. The city would not

release the unidentified bodies. So, without bodies to bury or a permit to assemble, the activists decided on a mass public funeral—what the *Call* declared would be the “greatest demonstration of workers ever seen here . . . when the Triangle’s victims are laid to rest.” Over 30,000 marchers followed the empty hearses under the Washington Square Arch in Greenwich Village, just two blocks from the site of the fire. They followed the carriages to the Twenty-Third Street Pier, where they watched the bodies as they were ferried across to Brooklyn. A crowd of nearly 10,000 met the ferries in Brooklyn.

“Who is responsible?” the editors of the socialist *Call* had asked after the fire. Because the trial of the Triangle owners had been so unrewarding, and no agency seemed to take responsibility, the paper warned that workers should set their sights higher. Individuals were certainly at fault, but it was the economic and political system that permitted them to do what they did and get away with it.

The fire, more than many other events, made visible the plight of the working class to the public at large. The middle class was forced to view the conditions workers toiled under. They were appalled at the unsanitary and unsafe conditions and began to demand action. Middle-class reform groups pressed for change.

Yet, the lasting legacy of the fire was the work that young Tammany upstarts such as Alfred E. Smith and Robert F. Wagner accomplished, through the Factory Investigating Committee (FIC). The FIC existed for four short years, but in the process, it redefined the role of the state and labor. Wagner and Smith were transformed as well from local politicians to national leaders. They introduced new laws into the state, making it one of the most progressive in the nation. And in the end, they cemented the relationship between workers and the Democratic Party that would find its fuller expression during the New Deal.

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See also **International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) (1900–1995); Women’s Trade Union League**

TRUMKA, RICHARD L. (1949–) President, United Mine Workers

A third-generation miner born and raised in the Monongahela River community of Nemaocolin, Pennsylvania, Richard L. Trumka, at the time of his November 1982 election to the presidency of the United Mine Workers (UMW), became the youngest leader of any American labor organization.

Working summers in the mines while in college, Trumka was 20 years of age when the 1969 murder of the UMW reformer Joseph “Jock” Yablonski in Clarksville—a town but 10 miles distant from Nemaocolin—profoundly altered the union and the young student’s life. The killing of Yablonski, along with his wife and daughter, had been ordered by the then UMW president William “Tony” Boyle to silence his union election rival. Instead of quelling opposition, Yablonski’s death led to a surge of activism against the corrupt administration that resulted in the federal Labor Department invalidating the election, Boyle’s conviction, and a victory by the Miners for Democracy (MFD).

After graduation from Pennsylvania State University in 1971, Trumka studied law. Although in college during the height of the Vietnam War, Trumka drew more on the UMW traditions and Catholic New Deal legacies of southwestern Pennsylvania than on currents of New Left activism. Upon finishing law school at Villanova in 1974, Trumka worked in the union’s legal department for the MFD reformer Arnold Miller, whose UMW presidency was accompanied by democratic upsurge, unsanctioned strikes, and internal infighting. In the end, Miller proved unequal to the task of organizational consolidation and resigned in 1979. As a result of a leadership vacuum, the former Boyle loyalist, Sam Church, whose forces retained strength on the UMW’s International Executive Board (IEB), became president.

Disappointed with the circumstances and the looming return of the old guard, Trumka left his staff position in 1978 and returned to the mines. In June 1981, he won election to the IEB, unified his Pennsylvania base, and organized a geographically balanced slate against Church. Alarmed by the coalition arrayed against him, Church turned to conservative Republicans to try to retain his presidency and attacked Trumka for alleged “leftist” connections. Almost in tandem with Church, the Republican chairman of the Senate Labor Committee announced the Committee would investigate “subversives” in the union. The accusations made little difference, as Trumka, who pledged to rejuvenate the UMW, bested Church by a 2-to-1 margin. Commenting on

the victory, one labor lawyer said, “[the killing of] Jock Yablonski made Rich Trumka’s victory possible.”

Facing daunting tasks, which included the increased use of alternative energy sources, imported foreign coal, and nonunion western surface mining—combined with adversarial political power in Washington—Trumka turned to approaches favored by John L. Lewis when he built the CIO. Using Lewis’s very words, Trumka vowed “No backward steps” in contract bargaining. As did Lewis during the heady years of the CIO, Trumka hired a coterie of able and experienced working-class activists, and by 1984, the new UMW leader concluded a national agreement without making a single concession.

When Trumka settled the contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) without a major disruption, it won him great prestige. Typically, one newspaper headline asked whether Trumka was “The next labor giant?” Trumka prepared well, winning modest gains for his members in an era typified by union retreats in other industries. Nevertheless, he encountered trouble corralling recalcitrant companies like A. T. Massey, which refused to sign the BCOA agreement. Even there, however, Trumka found ways to pressure companies like Massey. Owned by Royal Dutch/Shell, Massey imported South African-mined coal. The UMW launched a boycott against the company and joined the battle against the apartheid regime, which won the UMW new friends in the social movements.

Innovative tactics such as boycotts aimed at energy titans like Shell, and the use of selective strikes that played one company off against another, cemented Trumka in place as the UMW head. A further test came in 1987 when the Pittston Company, as had A. T. Massey, announced its refusal to honor the BCOA agreement then being negotiated. Characteristically, Trumka’s union planned meticulously before striking Pittston in 1989. Building labor unity and using tactics of plant takeovers and mass mobilization inspired by the civil rights movement, the UMW gained nationwide support. Against a background of labor defeats elsewhere during the 1980s and in the face of hostile political authority that used arrests and injunctions in an attempt to subdue the organization, the union stood its ground. When \$65 million in fines was levied against the union by a state judge, the UMW waged a write-in campaign against the judge’s son, unseating the Virginia state representative. In the end, UMW solidarity prevailed, gaining additional health coverage for Pittston miners while limiting the company’s ability to contract out, which initially provoked the strike. Federal intervention helped

end the mounting conflict when it became apparent that the UMW would match Pittston's tactics of escalation.

Despite victories against long odds, Trumka's UMW experienced less success in unionizing western coalfields in right-to-work states where operators often paid surface miners above UMW minimums to keep the pits from being organized. Combined with large-scale mechanization and a downturn in coal usage because of steel-industry decline, membership of active UMW miners dropped precipitously, with the organization losing anywhere between a third to as many as half of its members. Moreover, while Trumka harnessed labor power to achieve contractual gains, he was unable to effect a merger with the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in 1988 that would have increased UMW membership and fused the two energy unions in their common battles with energy giants. The reversal proved to be a portent of Trumka's future difficulties in trying to marshal cooperation within the AFL-CIO.

Still, few could equal Trumka's achievements. During his 13-year UMW tenure, he concluded three agreements with the shrunken BCOA, enhancing his reputation as a militant union leader. When dissatisfied labor leaders ousted Lane Kirkland from his AFL-CIO leadership post and defeated his designee in 1995, Trumka was the overwhelming favorite in one rank-and-file poll to serve as the new head of the federation. Instead, that position went to John Sweeney, the head of a much larger union. Trumka won the post of secretary-treasurer. Believing in the need to bolster other reformers if labor was to grow once more, Trumka supported the 1996 re-election of the progressive Teamster president Ron Carey. When some said Trumka raised money for Carey's campaign illegally, his name became linked with a criminal investigation. He denied involvement, and Carey, while later barred from Teamster office by the Labor Department, was exonerated in a court of law.

Ultimately, the Sweeney-Trumka team, despite repeated efforts to change and revitalize the labor movement, could not exert the level of control over the Federation that they had exerted within their respective unions. Hence, they were unable to reverse the decline of union membership and influence or prevent self-styled reformers from leaving the AFL-CIO at the group's fiftieth anniversary convention in 2005.

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See also **Boyle, W. A. (Tony); Carey, Ronald; Kirkland, Lane; Lewis, John L.; Sweeney, John J.; United Mine Workers of America; West Virginia Mine War (1920–1921)**

TRUTH, SOJOURNER (1797–1883) Abolitionist, Women's Rights Advocate, Reformer

Born Isabella Baumfree in Ulster County, New York, sometime around 1797, Sojourner Truth was the child of enslaved parents who were owned by a wealthy Dutch patroon in the Hudson Valley. Her early life was marked by slavery's brutish handicaps and associated hardships—hired out to a parade of demanding masters. The young Isabella was especially maltreated by English masters until she became bilingual, learning English as well as her native Dutch. She became a valued worker in the household of John Dumont, a New Paltz farmer. While living on Dumont's estate, Truth gave birth to five children between 1810 and 1827, fathered by a fellow slave named Thomas. She left her children with her husband and fled to freedom, emancipating herself when her master failed to free her following his promise to honor New York's emancipation statute. In 1827, she took refuge with a couple named Van Wagener, adopted their name, and as Isabella Van Wagener successfully sued to have her son Peter returned to her, as he had been illegally sold away to Alabama.

As Isabella Van Wagener, Truth migrated to New York City in 1829, where she earned her living as a domestic, and became involved in a religious cult, settling into the household of Elijah Pierson in 1831.

Truth later removed with the Piersons to “Zion Hill,” a community near Ossining, New York, living under the spell of the “prophet” Matthias. After scandals and arrests following Pierson’s mysterious death in 1835, the group disbanded and Truth returned to Manhattan. She left behind her old identity and took the name Sojourner Truth—to signify her powerful conversion—striking out for parts unknown in June 1843. She spent the summer and autumn months of 1843 traversing Long Island and Connecticut, singing and preaching, offering spiritual counseling to listeners.

By the winter of 1843, she joined another utopian experiment when she became one of a handful of blacks to join the community run by the Northampton Association of Education and Industry. Truth befriended the Manhattan abolitionist David Ruggles, a community resident, and Frederick Douglass, another prominent black abolitionist and lecturer, who was a regular visitor to the commune. Through her contacts at Northampton, Truth was befriended by William Lloyd Garrison (a brother-in-law of the community’s founder, George Benson), who wrote a warm endorsement of her authorized autobiography, which was penned by Olive Gilbert and published in 1850.

Following the collapse of the Northampton cooperative in 1846, Truth took out a mortgage on one of the houses within the abandoned community. She went on the road to support herself as an abolitionist lecturer and to pay off her \$300 mortgage and the \$500 printing bill for her memoir. During the 1850s Truth used the offices of the Salem (Ohio) *Antislavery Bugle* as her midwestern headquarters during extensive lecture tours throughout Indiana, Missouri, and Kansas. She was often paired on the platform with Frederick Douglass or Parker Pillsbury. But she maintained her own separate career as well and opened her own performances with a song, ending with a pitch to the audience that they might purchase a copy of her autobiography for sale, offering as a motto, “I sell the shadow to support the substance.”

By 1857, Truth had paid off the mortgage on her Massachusetts house. She then gave this home to her daughter Sophia, and she moved with three of her daughters to Michigan, settling in a spiritualist community called Harmonia, located six miles from Battle Creek, the town that was her permanent home for the rest of her life.

Truth became a familiar face at women’s rights conventions, making a notable speech in Akron, Ohio, in 1851, where she challenged a male speaker’s concerns that women were too delicate for equality, allegedly responding with a speech that began, “Aren’t

I a woman?” Nearly six feet tall and with a deep, booming voice, detractors claimed Truth was too powerful a speaker to be a woman, and claimed Truth was a man in disguise. This controversy fueled an impromptu demand at a meeting in Indiana in 1858 that she demonstrate she was not a sexual imposter. Truth bared her breast on the occasion of this public challenge, offering a scathing speech that indicated that it was not her shame but her tormentors who shamed themselves with this “test.” She was a powerful critic of those who preached women’s inferiority and consistently pointed out women’s abilities and exploited talents as laborers.

When the Civil War broke out, Truth crossed Michigan to raise funds for soldiers. Her career was celebrated in a profile written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in April 1863 (and incorporated into the 1875 and subsequent editions of Truth’s memoir). She also appeared prominently in Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s *History of Women’s Suffrage* (1881). For years she was associated with the catchphrase, “Ain’t I a woman?” taken from a recorded white recollection of her speech at a convention. Truth might have uttered the phrase, “Aren’t I a woman?” but “Ain’t I a woman?” demonstrates the mythmaking of the era, whereby whites racialized and re-invented to conform to stereotypes. This catchphrase and its association with Truth was popularized in feminist revivals of the 1960s, before scholarship in the last decades of the twentieth century called into question the accuracy of this imagery. Truth’s career was intertwined with the folklore of early feminism and embellished by white women’s interest in demonstrating Truth’s emblematic exceptionalism.

She gave stump speeches for Lincoln’s re-election while moving East in the summer and fall of 1864 and was greeted at the White House by Lincoln himself on October 29. Following the war, Truth was tapped as a “counselor” for freedpeople, and settled in Arlington Heights, Virginia, to work for the government. She became enamored with plans for a “negro state” and campaigned for government resettlement of blacks onto western lands. These ideals never materialized with government programs, but African-Americans spontaneously mounted their own campaigns, and migrant groups, known as Exodusters, moved onto lands in Oklahoma and Kansas to form independent communities.

Truth was both witness to and an agent of change for both women and blacks during her lifetime. Although her legacy as been obscured by myth and symbolism, her legendary contributions cannot be diminished. Her remarkable voice and accomplishments continue to remind Americans of the complexity

of race, gender, and class in shaping the American narrative. Truth's death on November 26, 1883, was the occasion for the largest funeral ever held in Battle Creek, Michigan, before she was finally laid to rest at Oak Hill Cemetery.

CATHERINE CLINTON

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TUBMAN, HARRIET (1825–1913) Underground Railroad Worker, Reformer

Harriet Tubman became one of the best-known crusaders for black equality during the nineteenth century and was one of the most effective combatants in the fight to end slavery. Harriet Tubman was born to enslaved parents in Dorchester County, Maryland, in 1825 and given the name Araminta by her parents, Harriet Green and Ben Ross. From roughly the age of six until early adolescence, Araminta Ross was hired out to masters, several of whom allowed brutish punishment—including being struck on the head by an iron weight, a near fatal injury that left her permanently scarred. Following the death of her owner and threat of sale by his widow, Araminta decided to escape, making her way to Philadelphia in the fall of 1849.

She left behind a free black husband (John Tubman) and took the freedom name of Harriet. As Harriet Tubman, she moved from fugitive to liberator with her involvement in the Underground Railroad (UGRR). Working closely with both Thomas Garrett of Wilmington, Delaware, and William Still of Philadelphia, Tubman executed a series of raids into slave territory (beginning in 1851) and facilitated the flight of scores, perhaps even hundreds, of slaves. She was known as a “conductor,” someone who moved escaped slaves from a safe house (“depot”) to the next “station” on the “liberty line,” as these clandestine activities were described. But Tubman's

bold technique was extremely rare, as she was one of a small cadre of underground railroad agents who became “abductors,” those who ventured behind enemy lines to extract slaves and guide them to safety. Her fame as a liberator grew, and she became known popularly as Moses. Slave owners on the Eastern Shore of Maryland began to organize against losses caused by fugitive escapes, and especially the phenomenon of mass escape, with which Tubman, as Moses, became associated.

Tubman worked as an unpaid agent of the UGRR during the decade leading up to the Civil War, supporting herself by wage labor as a cook and domestic in Philadelphia and Cape May, New Jersey. All of her earnings subsidized efforts to liberate first her own family members, and then other enslaved African-Americans. She secured additional financing from abolitionists and philanthropists such as Gerrit Smith. At times, escaped slaves themselves would offer her money with a request that a family member be rescued. Tubman received donations from as far away as Scotland to support her clandestine, dangerous operations. After meeting with John Brown in Ontario in April 1858, Tubman devoted time and energy in support of his insurrectionary plans. She was unable to accompany Brown on his raid in October 1859 and mourned his death by hanging on December 2, 1859. His martyrdom inspired her to participate in (or perhaps even engineer) her first public rescue of a fugitive slave—Charles Nalle of Troy, New York, who was slated for return to slavery in Virginia in April 1860. An antislavery mob attacked his captors, which resulted in the death of several rioters. Nalle was liberated from a judge's chambers and sent to safety in Canada.

Tubman's activism and example were highlighted during speeches she offered at conventions in Boston during May and June of 1860. When the Civil War erupted a year later, Tubman believed it symbolized the moving of the Underground Railroad “above ground.”

Tubman volunteered as an unpaid worker at Ft. Monroe, Virginia, where she nursed and assisted the fugitive slaves, dubbed “contraband” by the Union general Benjamin Butler. In 1862, the governor of Massachusetts sent her to assist freedpeople in the occupied regions of the south Atlantic coast centered around Port Royal, South Carolina, characterized by the historian Willie Lee Rose as “rehearsal for reconstruction.” Tubman became indispensable to the medical staff of the federal army, posted as far south as Fernandina, Florida, to nurse Union soldiers who were “dropping like flies.” She taught freedwomen laundry skills and assisted Union physicians until her other talents were tapped by military leaders.

By the spring of 1863, both the Massachusetts abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson (head of a black regiment, the First South Carolina Volunteers) and James Montgomery, a former ally of John Brown in the Kansas border wars, urged Union command to take advantage of Tubman's skills as a scout and spy. She infiltrated enemy territory and collected intelligence for the military commander, Union General David Hunter. During the Combahee River Raid on June 2, 1863, over 750 slaves were liberated off Rebel plantations by federal troops. Valuable Confederate property was confiscated or destroyed during the inland invasion, which went off without a hitch due to Tubman's effective planning. The African-American soldiers were under the command of Montgomery but clearly followed Tubman's lead on this successful operation.

Following her retirement from the army in 1865, Tubman returned to her home in upstate New York, where she settled into the role of activist and philanthropist. She solicited funds for Freedman's Aid and veterans' benefits, while remaining active in the women's suffrage movement and other important reform campaigns. Tubman sought compensation from

the government, petitioning at first for back wages and then for a soldier's pension, a campaign that continued for over 30 years. She was awarded a monthly stipend of \$8 for widows—as she had remarried in 1869 the veteran Nelson Davis, who died in 1888. After a series of petitions, in 1899, she was granted \$20 per month, a lifetime pension, in recognition of her war work. Tubman died on March 10, 1913, in the Harriet Tubman Home, a charitable institution she had established to shelter and care for the needy within her Auburn, New York, community.

CATHERINE CLINTON

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UNDERCLASS

Media coverage of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 not only focused attention on the devastation of the Gulf Coast region, particularly New Orleans, Louisiana; but more than any other recent event, it also brought the interlocking issues of race and class to the center of public debate. Poverty-stricken African-Americans—members of the so-called urban underclass—comprised the largest and most visible segment of those who, unable to evacuate the rising floodwaters, crowded on rooftops and in sports arenas for days without food, fresh water, medical attention, or a timely federal response. Residents of the poorest wards in the nation's ninth poorest major metropolis, many had existed on the economic and social margins of U.S. society long before the disaster hit.

Over the past three decades, the underclass has emerged as a key metaphor for poverty in the United States, though it remains ill-defined. In popular accounts it refers to the most socially and economically isolated elements of the urban working class—the underemployed and chronically unemployed, menial laborers, ex-convicts, female-headed households receiving means-tested welfare programs, high school dropouts and young delinquents, drug users and dealers, public-housing tenants, violent career criminals, and hustlers. In the conventional wisdom, the underclass is distinguished not simply by its indigence, but more importantly by its deviant, self-defeating, and dependent behaviors. Typically associated with African-Americans and Latinos, who comprise a disproportionate share of the poor, the term is freighted

with moral assumptions about race, gender, class, and poverty.

Both liberals and conservatives have trafficked in underclass discourse. For liberals it has served a compassionate, yet condescending agenda: Because of their economic and social circumstances, the black and brown urban poor lack appropriate (white) middle-class values and therefore need proper education and stewardship as well as better structural opportunities. Conservatives on the other hand have used the concept of the underclass to explain away social inequality through attention to individual and group deficiencies. Their focus has been primarily on strategies of punishment and containment. Both liberal and conservative perspectives however view the black working-class poor from the outside and regard them from the standpoint of being different or more precisely, defective.

Although value-laden discourses about the dangerous classes and undeserving poor are hardly new, the historical context that gave rise to the underclass debate was certainly distinct. One immediate antecedent was the culture-of-poverty thesis elaborated in the mid-1960s by anthropologist Oscar Lewis. In *La Vida* (1965), his study of a Puerto Rican family in San Juan and New York City, Lewis argued that those mired in such a culture were qualitatively different from those who were merely poor. The former experienced high rates of illegitimate birth and often lived in unstable marriages or informal common-law unions. Female aggression and male emasculation were also commonplace, often leading to female-headed

households. Distrustful of mainstream institutions, dogged by feelings of social inferiority, and strongly present-oriented, this segment of the poor were trapped in a way of life that perpetuated itself across generations.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan's widely circulated Labor Department report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (1965), emphasized the role of matrifocal households in generating a "tangle of pathology" among the poor; in this he owed intellectual debts to both Lewis and sociologist Charles S. Johnson. Responding directly to the successes and evolving demands of the civil rights struggle, Moynihan observed that an economic gap was growing between African-Americans and most other groups, which he attributed to the deterioration of the black family. The central cause of this crisis was the rising rates of female single-parenting households, which begat increases in dependency on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). He maintained that the legacies of slavery, and contemporary patterns of male unemployment and low-waged work, had undermined the status of black men in the household and community, creating a matriarchal structure out of step with the rest of society.

Such beliefs about the social maladjustment and cultural deprivation of the black, urban poor underlay President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society programs aimed at inner-city communities. Hence job training and educational initiatives reflected an assumption that poverty, far from being endemic to the functioning of U.S. capitalism, could be abated by better preparing unemployed workers for opportunities. Johnson-era antipoverty programs responded most directly to the black, urban working-class riots of the period. Indeed the economic and social conditions of inner-city communities were a matter of federal emergency, since the participants in these rebellions—young, male, frequently jobless, and often high school dropouts—were potential recruits of emerging black-nationalist and radical organizations.

The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, initially convened for the purpose of determining the role of black-power activists in fomenting the uprisings, concluded in its report that the riots stemmed not from organized conspiracies. Rather the disturbances originated in a web of grievances that included unemployment and underemployment, overcrowded and squalid housing, poor educational facilities, exploitation by inner-city merchants, irregular municipal services, police abuse, and an unresponsive city hall. In forthright language that acknowledged the existence of a distinct black working-class poor, the Kerner Commission reported: "Our Nation is moving

toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." However the commission's recommendations for massive social reforms came at a moment of Republican retrenchment of Great Society programs, conservative reaction against progressive political movements, and the Oval Office's preoccupation with the war in Vietnam. The commission report was ignored, even maligned, as Richard M. Nixon won the White House on a domestic platform of law and order. Granted the Nixon administration promoted the Office of Minority Business Enterprise, the Small Business Administration, and a proposal for a national guaranteed annual wage as palliatives to urban rebellion; yet retrenchment in poverty programs, and benign neglect on matters of race, were the order of the day.

Scholars have credited Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal with coining the term underclass, which he used to describe the various urban and rural populations across the world who were being economically and socially dislocated by changes in global capitalism. By the latter part of the 1970s, other scholars had begun theorizing about a qualitatively new and persistent poverty. Chief among this cohort was William Julius Wilson, who argued that de-industrialization, and the ascendance of a highly skilled technological service sector, had undermined job prospects for unskilled and semiskilled black workers. "Given the internationalization of the economy, the automation of both manufacturing and service industries, and the hyper-mobility of capital," concluded Creigs C. Beverly and Howard J. Stanback, "the economy, left to its current devices, no longer has the capacity to periodically absorb a significant share of the black population" (*The Black Scholar*, 1986). In *The Black Underclass: Poverty, Unemployment and Entrapment of Ghetto Youth* (1980), Douglas G. Glasgow rendered an even bleaker assessment of the new postindustrial economy: Many among the black poor in fact held jobs, but remained "vocationally obsolete" and worse yet, fundamentally unwanted by society. In Wilson's view this was exacerbated by the growing spatial concentration and isolation of the black poor, particularly from more stable black families, whose flight from the nation's inner cities weakened neighborhood institutions and communal values. Thus he highlighted a widening divide between a secure black middle class that had benefited from civil rights reforms and a disorganized black majority.

At the same historical moment, another definition of the underclass emerged among social scientists and journalists. Centering less on cultural deprivation, and racism and other structural causes, it credited

defective behavioral patterns for the existence of the black urban poor. This included a disrespect for work, educational achievement, and playing by the rules and a fixation on immediate gratification, sexual and otherwise. Ken Auletta's *The Underclass* (1982), based on a series of articles for the *New Yorker*, helped to popularize this view. Perhaps the main avatar of this position was Charles Murray, whose book *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950–1980* (1984), connected the underclass to a cycle of dependency created by War-on-Poverty programs themselves. Rather than expanding, or even maintaining, social welfare programs for the poor, he argued, repealing them would stimulate a work ethic lacking among recipients. This trend was inextricably linked to a rightward shift in U.S. politics during the 1980s, characterized by the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Hence behavior-oriented interpretations of the underclass became the dominant discourse and the most influential in shaping subsequent policies, including the draconian welfare reform implemented during the administration of President William Jefferson Clinton.

In recent years some scholars have objected to continued use of the term underclass altogether. They argue foremost that it contains implicit racist sentiments and tends to overlook the realities of racial oppression in limiting economic opportunities for African-Americans and Latinos. This is particularly germane to most women of color, whose access to livable wages has been minimal; the addition of children and single parenthood simply compounds their exclusion on the bases of race, gender, and class. Moreover critics maintain, the discourse of the underclass has a distinctly patriarchal, antifeminist character. Taking as its point of departure the male-headed, two-parent household, such rhetoric devalues the importance of women being able to maintain autonomous households with or without a male breadwinner.

Detractors also contend that the underclass conceptually lumps together diverse groups of people with equally diverse circumstances, needs, and motivations. It assumes for instance that the inhabitants of public housing are homogeneous simply because they share similar statistical profiles; unemployment or female-headed households may stem from a number of factors. To the extent further that so-called underclass behavioral traits can be ascertained, they cannot reasonably be assumed to be either static or reflective of attitudes. More to the point they reveal little about the presence of any distinct population. That is, drug abuse, divorce, teenage fertility, female single-parenting households, educational underachievement, and

the pursuit of immediate gratification exist broadly across social strata. This being the case, they can hardly be construed as the cause of poverty.

Underclass discourses also misrepresent the history of black urban communities by drawing a causal link between the exodus of middle-class role models on the one hand and the moral and cultural degradation of those left behind. As scholars like Mary Pattillo-McCoy have maintained, middle-class families by and large did not flee black communities in the post-civil rights period. Nor did they ever singularly exercise the leadership and cultural authority romanticized by sociologists like Wilson. As well trumpeting black, middle-class success imbibes African-American professionals with the feeling, in Glasgow's words, that "exceptional individual capacity alone led to their success and that they thus need not identify too closely with the plight of the underclass" (*Black Picket Fences*, 1999). At the same time, it elides the matter of racial discrimination as experienced by black, middle-class professionals.

These objections aside, the term underclass persists as an archetype according to scholar Michael Zweig, precisely because it is vague and serves ideological purposes. The concept removes the poorest segments of the black working class from the mainstream of life and culture. Meanwhile it also legitimates political assaults on the working class by itself through the mobilization and exploitation of racial antipathy. As exemplified by welfare reform, the war on drugs, and a growing "prison-industrial complex," this has justified a range of punitive social policies that threaten the social safety net and civil liberties for all. Finally the underclass discourse narrows the range of discussion about welfare and dependency, limiting it to those programs targeted to the poorest citizens. Indeed public- and private-welfare benefits were responsible for most of the class mobility among Americans in the three decades following the Second World War. As illustrated by the Hurricane Katrina crisis, the rhetoric of the underclass obscures the widening inequities in wealth in U.S. society, the retreat of the federal state from a commitment to guaranteeing social welfare, continuing patterns of urban development, and their marginalizing effects on urban, working-class communities.

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UNEMPLOYED LEAGUE (1930s)

In response to extraordinary unemployment during the early 1930s, groups from across the political spectrum worked to relieve the suffering of the unemployed and to use their dissatisfaction to build a larger movement for social change. The Unemployed League, led by A. J. Muste (1885–1967) and his allies, was a counterpart to the Communist- and Socialist-driven movements of the jobless. Muste was one of the most important leaders of twentieth-century American pacifism and worked to unite pacifists, labor unions, and civil rights groups. In 1929, Muste called the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (CPLA) to reform the American Federation of Labor (AFL) from within. In 1930, the CPLA, with support from the Seattle Labor College, built the first Unemployed League in the nation in Seattle. The Seattle League claimed 12,000 members in that city in 1931, and 80,000 members across Washington State by the end of the next year. In 1932, Musteite organizers from Brookwood Labor College began to establish leagues in rural areas and small towns in Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. These

smaller communities formed the core of league influence, while Communist and Socialist groups made more headway in urban areas. Local leagues worked with varying success until 1936, when Muste distanced himself from leftist organizations and league organizers began to work for any of a number of burgeoning labor-oriented and civil rights groups.

The Unemployed League, like Muste himself, used diverse methods and had a changing relationship to Socialist workers' committees and Communist unemployed councils. Originally the Seattle Unemployed League promoted self-help strategies and was derided for it by leftist activists. However by 1933, unemployed leagues began to include direct action along with a dual emphasis on connecting the unemployed to the increasingly militant labor movement and reforming the state's role in providing direct relief and a safety net for the unemployed and elderly. Throughout their history, local unemployed leagues built rank-and-file membership through on-the-ground responses to individual grievances, such as hunger, unfair relief administration, and evictions.

Leaders searched for ways to knit together the disparate unemployed organizations. A number of gatherings from 1932–1936 succeeded in creating only regional organizations and only for a few years. In the end efforts to create a truly national unemployed organization suffered from ideological factionalism and a crumbling rank-and-file base. Members joined resurgent labor organizations or disappeared among the ranks of Americans receiving public relief.

Although the Unemployed League was short lived, its local branches were part of an important broad-based movement that tied grassroots collective action to the labor movement. In 1934, league members took part in three pivotal labor clashes: The Toledo Electric Auto-Lite strike, the Minneapolis Teamsters' strike, and the West Coast longshoremen's strike. The league also demanded many of the legislative changes that Congress eventually passed in more-or-less limited ways during the New Deal. Unemployed leagues, for example, anticipated the New Deal's attempts at government relief, public works, unemployment and retirement insurance, and child labor laws.

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See also **Brookwood Labor College; Communist Party; Muste, A. J.; Socialist Workers' Party; Strike Wave (1934)**

UNEMPLOYMENT

The term unemployment is commonly associated with the percentage of the labor force without work in a particular geographic region, the so-called unemployment rate. By this very coarse measure, the unemployment rate in the United States has been lower than in similarly industrialized regions, like Western Europe and Canada, for most of the twentieth century. This is often attributed to the flexibility and dynamism of American labor markets and to the significance of self-reliance in the national culture. The accuracy of this assessment notwithstanding, there is a great deal more to American unemployment than statistical representations of mobility and individualism. Attendant insecurity and hardship have of course always been a part of working people's everyday experience of unemployment, and these factors have been popularly understood to reflect collective economic health at least since World War I. Nonetheless it took the dislocations of the Great Depression to make it both an acceptable policy object and the key indicator of social welfare today.

Although economic historians have developed estimates for specific times and places at earlier times, reasonably consistent measures of U.S. unemployment are available from only 1929. These data demonstrate the historical volatility of the U.S. labor market and the employment experience of many American workers. In 75 years the national unemployment rate has ranged from 25% (May 1933) to 1% (October 1944) and moved from 4%–11% in the years hence. Most estimates of pre-1929 unemployment suggest it was generally higher and more volatile still, especially seasonally. Yet these measures are only the tip of the iceberg. The history of unemployment in the United States involves the relation between the contentious history of the concept itself, and the manner in which this history has helped shape U.S. unemployment policy. The first includes the various theoretical explanations of unemployment

in a capitalist economy; the second the efforts by various actors to naturalize, politicize, and manage the facts of joblessness.

What Is Unemployment?

There are important differences between being unemployed in this *de jure* sense and being without employment. The unemployment rate reported in the popular media represents slightly different measures in different countries. In the United States the rate is published monthly by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, based on data gathered through the Current Population Survey. These data have been collected by sample surveys since 1940 and are used to calculate the government's formal definition of level of unemployment: The percentage of respondents (16 years of age and older) who have not worked for any wages in the last week, yet who are able and available to work and have actively looked for employment in the last 4 weeks. If the respondent has a job but did not work in the survey week because he/she was ill, on vacation, working part-time, on strike, on parental leave, or dealing with other personal obligations, the respondent is considered employed. Those who meet the unemployment criteria together with all those with jobs, full or part-time, constitute the Civilian Labor Force (CLF).

Who Is Unemployed?

These measurement criteria have been standard in the United States since the Depression, yet they exclude many who are voluntarily and involuntarily jobless. For example if a person has not sought employment because he/she is a homemaker, a full-time student, in prison, discouraged (that is, has not looked for work in the last 4 weeks), or for reasons of mental or physical disability, the person is designated neither employed nor unemployed and thus outside the CLF. The CLF participation rate, which represents the CLF as a proportion of the (legally resident, non-incarcerated, nonarmed forces) population 16 years of age and older, thus suggests the scale of disparity between unemployment and being unemployed: Since consistent data were first collected in 1948, the CLF participation rate has slowly risen from around 59% to approximately 66% in 2005.

A history of unemployment in the United States that stayed within the bounds of the CLF would thus



Parade of unemployed. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-22194].

tell a very different story than one that did not. On the one hand since 1929, the earliest point at which large-sample data are available at the national level, there are some broad patterns in unemployment as measured by the unemployment rate. Nonwhite groups are statistically more likely to be unemployed, and the unemployment rate among African-Americans and American Indians has almost always been twice that of white workers. Workers under 20 years of age and new immigrants are also far more likely to be unemployed, and women of all heritages and ages have until very recently been more highly represented among the unemployed. These groups are also more vulnerable to economic cycles than white men, the differential in relative unemployment increasing with downturns and decreasing with upturns in the national economy. On the other hand beyond the populations for which unemployment data are collected, historical and sociological studies are the best source of evidence. These indicate that women, youth, and people of color are even more disproportionately represented among those excluded from the CLF by statistical stipulation.

Why Is There Unemployment?

While theories of unemployment try to explain both *de jure* unemployment and being unemployed, the

distinction between the two is based in liberal economic theory, which constitutes at the most general level the first of two types of unemployment theory appropriate to the capitalist United States. The first is comprised of a diverse set of economic explanations that has shaped virtually all American unemployment policy since the phenomenon was recognized as worthy of regulatory attention. The second theoretical form is associated with radical political economy and founded in Karl Marx's theory of the reserve army of labor.

Aside from the long-standing problem of seasonal unemployment, which afflicts some service and resource sectors in particular, liberal economists recognize three different types of unemployment, all of which can exist in a labor market simultaneously: frictional, cyclical, and structural. Frictional unemployment is joblessness associated with individual, sectoral, or economywide transition. It is temporary and inevitable in a dynamic economy, the result of workers looking for new jobs (search unemployment), industrial restructuring that induces a shift of labor from one sector to another, and so forth. Cyclical unemployment is a product of the business cycle in capitalist economies. As economies expand, workers enter the labor market and joblessness decreases; contraction leads to lay-offs and increased unemployment. Structural unemployment exists because of large-scale market failures or because of the failure

of the labor market to match workers and jobs effectively. This may be due to formal institutions, like government regulations, education systems, and firm organization; informal institutions like fair wage norms; or less apparently malleable market structures, like geography, and information asymmetries.

The theoretical differences among liberal economists—neoclassical, institutional, and Keynesian—are not based on the accuracy of these explanations, about which they generally concur. They also agree that some level of unemployment is natural in capitalist economies. They disagree however on the proportion of unemployment that is attributable to each of the three and thus the relative proportion of involuntary and voluntary unemployment among potential participants in the labor force. This distinction is the basis of the unemployment/being unemployed divide, for the latter is seen as a choice, and addressing it less a legislative obligation.

Institutional and Keynesian approaches, which have most influenced the field of labor history, argue that a significant part of U.S. unemployment is a product of macrostructural inefficiencies, all of which are long-term, and only some of which are remediable. Although frictional unemployment is natural, joblessness or job loss in excess of temporary adjustment is involuntary and thus politically relevant. Neoclassical economists, whose influence has increased considerably in political and intellectual circles since World War II, acknowledge the import of cyclical unemployment and the forces of technological change. They nonetheless emphasize the voluntary nature of much nonfrictional unemployment by assuming that unemployment often represents a rational response to the work-leisure trade-off. From this perspective, a large part of joblessness is attributable to the greater marginal utility of leisure or homemaking in the face of constrained intertemporal choice: people are unemployed because when they consider their options over time, the expected benefits of being unemployed outweigh those that a job would provide. Female workers provide a much-cited example: The higher frequency with which they enter and exit the labor force relative to men, by this logic reflects optimization decisions regarding potential household or personal utility. This explanatory frame means that neoclassical theory usually associates a much greater part of joblessness with the natural rate of unemployment than the institutional, Keynesian or radical alternatives.

Radical theories of the reserve army of labor under capitalism—also fundamental to the practice of many labor historians—begin from the premise that the regulatory distinction between official unemployment and

being unemployed is essential for the maintenance of social relations under capitalism. Radical economists are generally uninterested in the frictional-cyclical-structural explanations except to the extent that the reserve army is structurally critical to profit making. Instead they argue that the significance of unemployment lies not in its voluntary or involuntary nature, but in its function in the relations of production. In contrast to liberal economists, they suggest that the size of the U.S. labor force at any one time is endogenous to capitalist economies, that is, determined by the system of production itself, not by individual exogenous decisions to enter or exit the labor market. The relevant divide is therefore not between those inside the CLF and those outside it, but between those with jobs and those without. Unemployed workers serve as wage-depressing potential competition for the employed and as a ready source of labor, especially for short-term and low-wage work.

How Should We Deal with Unemployment?

The mechanisms identified as the cause of unemployment determine the form and extent of the policy response. The history of U.S. unemployment policy reflects the shifting hegemony of political economic theories and related conceptions of state intervention in the market. Prior to the Great Depression, in an era of faith in classical *laissez faire* liberalism, there was no national unemployment policy, either to mitigate its impacts through relief or to alter its macroeconomic effects. Limited relief was administered privately at the local and regional level. The crash of 1929 precipitated a revolution in unemployment policy, however, when President Herbert Hoover's failure to respond adequately to unemployment—a reluctance to break liberal taboos regarding government intervention and the extension of federal powers—helped cost him the election of 1932.

Franklin Roosevelt established the first federal unemployment program, the Civil Works Administration (CWA), in his first year after Hoover's defeat. In the spirit of the pragmatic institutionalism then dominant in U.S. economics departments through the work of scholars like John Commons, the Roosevelt administration believed the unemployed were victims of forces they could not control and were entitled to some relief and insurance against similar crises in the future. The object of the CWA was not primarily Keynesian, that is, to stimulate demand by injecting cash into the economy. Rather in combination with new legislation limiting the length of the workweek

and banning child labor, the government intended to create jobs that would allow individual workers to weather what was still expected to be a short-term crisis. Later New Deal programs, like the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration, served similar ends.

The persistence of the Depression pushed the government to pass the Social Security Act in 1935, which established the first national system of unemployment relief. The program of cash payments the act legislated was administered independently by each state, with funds and minimum program requirements provided by the federal government. The act also created the welfare system of Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC, terminated by welfare-to-work legislation of 1996), and the social security retirement reserves, neither of which were part of its unemployment program. The act was part of a suite of legislation, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the National Labor Relations Act, to protect waged workers' earnings and jobs from an unemployment threat that was increasingly believed to be permanent.

This set of statutes, founded as they are with an emphasis on involuntary unemployment, remains the core structure of extant worker protections. Yet it has weakened over time through policy shifts reflecting dominant political economic modes of explanation. In employment policy this sea change was effected during the clash between labor and capital in the years immediately following World War II. The prosperity and high levels of employment the United States enjoyed in the latter stages of the war, combined with the political power enjoyed by organized labor at war's end, stimulated popular demand for a permanent extension of New Deal state intervention in the labor market. The federal government and many states debated legislation that mandated full-employment programs, which would guarantee work for all who wanted it. Where such efforts succeeded however, the full-employment provisions as enacted were toothless. The federal Full Employment Act of 1946 requires the federal government to provide full employment but sets neither benchmarks nor criteria by which this endeavor might be organized or measured.

As such the policy interpretation of full employment has been progressively reshaped in ways that contrast sharply with New Deal institutionalism. Monetarist-neoclassical theory, increasingly dominant in policy and scholarly circles, attributes a significant proportion of unemployment to the realm of private decision making at the household level, beyond the appropriate reach of policy. Unemployment, formerly the key indicator of national economic

health, has thus been displaced by inflation, which neoclassical theory explains as inversely related to unemployment: Decreasing unemployment leads to increasing inflation. Neoclassical theory consequently de-emphasizes employment policy in favor of monetary policy and emphasizes the maintenance not of some socially acceptable level of employment, but of a constant and reasonable rate of inflation: this is sometimes called the "non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment" (NAIRU), estimated at around 6% at the end of the twentieth century. This explanatory shift is visible in the gradual dilution of unemployment and welfare services, such as was encoded in the workfare of the Clinton administration's Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The unabated attack on inflation, beginning in earnest during Eisenhower's presidency, has since become the principal tool of both employment and fiscal policy in the post-World War II United States.

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See also Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); Coxe's Army; Great Depression: 1930s; Strikebreaking; Underclass; Welfare Rights; Workfare; Works Project Administration

UNEMPLOYMENT, INSECURITY, AND THE DECLINE OF LABOR: 1970s

In the turbulent 1960s, the concerns of organized labor and working people rarely held center stage. The civil rights' crusade, the escalating antiwar demonstrations, and the women's liberation movement were in the vanguard of social and political change. American workers had come to be regarded as affluent and content members of consumer society. It was widely believed that despite the dissatisfaction associated with factory work, high wages enabled workers to enjoy a lifestyle once reserved for the middle class. American society had presumably become a middle-class society in which the vast majority of the population participated as equals.

At the close of the decade however, the notion of the prosperous, suburban, middle-class worker was questioned. Unemployment rose appreciably, and wages failed to keep pace with soaring prices. In 1970, the typical American worker earned \$9,500. This figure actually placed blue-collar workers closer to the working poor than to the affluent middle class. A rising discontent with working and living conditions was evident in the growth of rank-and-file militancy. The blue-collar blues caused a flurry of working-class studies that tried to determine the economic and social problems of workers. The debate centered on the alleged middle-class status, hawkishness, and political conservatism of the American worker.

The widely discussed blue-collar blues—often trivialized by the mass media—were a clear indication of the downward trend in workers' economic gains and the deterioration of working conditions. From 1966–1973, strike activity rose 40% over the relatively low level of the 1959–1966 years. The number of workers involved in walkouts rose steadily from just under a million in 1965 to 2.5 million in 1971. This strike wave reached a climax in 1970, when over 66 million days were lost due to strikes. Among the strikes of 1970 that best reflected the rank-and-file's discontent were the General Motors walkout; the wildcat strike of 40,000 coal miners in West Virginia,

Ohio, and Pennsylvania; and the national wildcat strike by postal workers and teamsters.

The 1970 walkout against GM was an expensive triumph for autoworkers. The conflict cost the United Automobile Workers (UAW) about \$160 million and almost bankrupted the union while the powerful multinational corporation lost millions of dollars in its attempt to resist the union's demands. At the end of the conflict, the UAW recovered the unlimited cost-of-living allowance that it had relinquished in 1967 and established the 30-and-out retirement principle, though not at any age, as the workers demanded.

Employees of the U.S. Postal Service are legally prohibited from striking. In 1970, however, pressured by inflation and tedious work conditions with no significant upgrading opportunities, postal workers in New York City walked off their jobs. Within days the strike spread across the country, closing down postal service in at least 200 cities. The strike lasted 2 weeks, and the postal workers won an immediate 14% wage increase as well as an improved upgrading system. Even before the wildcat postal strike ended, members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters began walking off their jobs as the National Master Freight Agreement expired on April 1. Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons asked workers to resume their activities, but many teamsters remained on strike for a long time, thus forcing their union leader back to the bargaining table.

In June 1970, 40,000 coal miners started an unauthorized strike in West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. This was an attempt to address problems that the United Mine Workers of America under President Tony Boyle refused to deal with. The workers demanded hospital and pension benefits for miners forced out of work because of disabilities. Although the move received the full support of the working miners, the demands were not won. Similarly the 1973 Lordstown auto strike in Ohio became the epitome of the young workers' rebellion against technology and the rank-and-file's rising concern over working conditions. There were wildcat strikes in Detroit auto plants in 1973 at the time as the UAW negotiations with the big three automobile manufacturers—the General Motors Corporation, the Chrysler Corporation, and Ford Motor Company. Yet they did not signal permanent escalation in rank-and-file militancy.

After the summer of 1973, the leaders and the rank-and-file both went into retreat. From 1974 onward, the number of strikes diminished considerably: Higher unemployment rates and the growing threat of layoffs and plant shutdowns had a strong disciplinary effect. Drastic changes in the structure of industry as well as the workforce soon followed, as management

adopted a more aggressive attitude toward their workers. Corporations started to move their fixed capital in manufacturing to regions where wages were lower and unions less influential. Antilabor consultants were hired to contest organizing campaigns, and in violation of the Wagner Act, union organizers were fired in an attempt to intimidate workers.

American business's determined assault on organized labor was eventually successful. According to the statistics of the National Labor Relations Board, the number of employer unfair labor practice charges tripled from 1960–1980, and the number of workers ordered to be re-instated because of illegal dismissals rose fivefold in the same period. The result was a drastic decline in union membership from 27% of private-sector workers in 1973 to 22% in 1979. Industrial unions would never recover the political and bargaining leverage that they had enjoyed in the 1945–1968 period.

The Unraveling of the Labor-Liberal Alliance

The 1968 presidential election signaled the end of the labor-liberal alliance that had sustained the New Deal order for over 30 years. Nevertheless Richard Nixon's margin of victory was extremely slim: 43.4% of the electorate voted for the Republican candidate compared to 43% who supported the Democrat and labor candidate Hubert H. Humphrey. The third-party candidate, George Wallace, eventually received the vote of only 13.6% of the electorate, his support having faded considerably from his high-water mark of almost 20%. According to nationwide data, 50% of blue-collar workers voted for the Democratic party ticket, 41% of white-collar workers, 34% of professionals and businessmen, and 39% of farmers.

If organized labor contributed to Humphrey's almost miraculous comeback, it was because unions fed into their members' fears of what a Nixon or Wallace administration could mean to the ordinary worker. Working-class voters had helped to transform a sure Democratic defeat into a very narrow loss. It was the tactical approach of business unionism rather than a revitalized labor movement that almost took Hubert Humphrey to the White House. Millions of voters, however, no longer felt it necessary to remain loyal to the Democratic party now constituted a highly volatile electorate. Moreover the Vietnam War remained one of the most divisive issues in American society.

In 1970, Nixon's decision to send U.S. ground troops into Cambodia further polarized American public opinion on the war. Violent protests broke

out immediately after the president's announcement, and there was serious unrest at a number of colleges and universities. But it was Kent State University in Ohio that made the shocking headlines on May 4, 1970. During a campus antiwar demonstration, the Ohio National Guard shot and killed four students and wounded another 12. The murder of peace demonstrators prompted more protest and eventually led to a violent physical confrontation between students and workers.

On May 8, 1970, about 200 flag-waving construction workers armed with hammers and lead pipes attacked a group of demonstrators who had gathered in New York's Wall Street district to honor the memory of the students killed at Kent State University. After the assault, the hard hats—as the mass media would call them—invaded City Hall, and then left to break into Pace College and attack some students there. The construction worker soon became the symbol of American labor: The hard hat was the middle American, the member of the silent majority who had finally decided to speak his mind. It would prove very hard for construction workers—and for organized labor in general—to recover their image as law-abiding citizens after the mass media had portrayed them as believers in God and country and intolerant of dissent.

The May 1970 events marked a turning point in organized labor's stance on the Vietnam War. A large number of leaders and rank-and-filers decided either to break openly with the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations' (AFL-CIO's) top bureaucracy's position or to embrace a prowar position by participating in patriotic demonstrations. Numerous unions made public statements against the war and distanced themselves from the official AFL-CIO's support of the war. But it was the New York hard hats' prowar demonstrators that made the headlines. The White House strategists would skillfully exploit this incident during the congressional election. Workers, they argued, backed Nixon on grounds of patriotism, support for law and order, and against the left-wing extremists in the Democratic party.

During the 1970 congressional campaign, the Republicans managed virtually to eliminate the Vietnam War as a political issue. But once the peace issue was obscured, the state of the economy assumed considerable importance. This was precisely what Nixon feared might prove the grand old party's undoing. A postelection Gallup survey showed that in 1970 blue-collar workers had voted even more strongly for Democratic candidates than in previous elections. It was evident that the business-dominated Republican party was finding it very difficult to win over a

blue-collar majority. It was also apparent however that the Democrats could easily lose the blue-collar vote if they ignored the workers' needs.

In 1971, Nixon's priority was to reverse the economic downturn. The administration's New Economic Policy (NEP) relied on three key measures: Tax cuts for business and individuals to stimulate the economy and bring down unemployment rates; a 4.7 million-dollar cut in federal spending along with a 90-day freeze on wages and prices to cool off the inflationary spiral; and the termination of the dollar-gold convertibility to protect the dollar and the U.S. economic position in the international scene. George Meany and other labor leaders were outraged at what they considered a highly discriminatory program that favored big business at the expense of workers. Wages were frozen, but there was no freeze on interest rates, profits, stocks, land prices, capital gains, and dividends.

Despite organized labor's harsh criticism of Nixon's NEP, the president's strategy to stimulate a pre-election economic boom in order to capture the blue-collar vote worked. By September 1972, the Nixon administration and the labor leaders that had formally adopted a neutral position in the presidential race were developing an increasingly cordial relationship. There were two cases in point: The International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the building and construction unions. The teamsters, who endorsed Nixon, were pleased by the administration's opposition to antistrike legislation in the transportation industry. The construction workers for their part applauded the president for his opposition to racial quotas in hiring.

The Democrats' self-destructing behavior also increased Nixon's chances for re-election. They nominated as their presidential candidate George McGovern, a liberal senator whom conservatives tagged as the proponent of the three A's: "Acid, Abortion, and Amnesty." It was not difficult for Nixon to portray McGovern as the candidate of a small minority. Many citizens probably shared the Democratic candidate's criticism of the tax system, the welfare system, and economic policies, but his proposals did not seem workable. In order to build a truly national base, McGovern needed to move toward the center. Yet the Democratic candidate could not jettison those positions that had rallied his ideological partisans.

Nixon's efforts to court the silent majority eventually paid off. The nation's blue-collar workers—who made up a third of the electorate and since the 1930s represented the core vote of all Democratic presidential candidates—went for Nixon over McGovern by the ratio of 57% to 43%. Moreover for the first time since the early 1930s, a majority (54%) of members of labor union families voted the Republican ticket.

Political analysts concluded that having captured 62% of the votes, Nixon had finally succeeded in his quest to create a new Republican majority.

Over a 2-year period, Nixon had in fact violated every single tenet of the conservative dogma, particularly deep deficits in the federal budget, militant opposition to major Communist powers, and nonintervention in the economy. In 1972, a well-known conservative won the re-election by presenting his party as the party of reform. While Nixon promised to bring the country together under the banner of the new majority, McGovern's new populism picked up the rhetoric of class, which fostered division rather than unity and consensus.

The AFL-CIO's decision not to back McGovern had deepened the rift within the labor leadership. It was impossible to predict that a year later organized labor would call for the impeachment of the president. In 1972, only 53% of the voters were familiar with the Watergate charges, and only 3% thought it important enough to list among their major concerns. The 1972–1973 economic downturn exacerbated Nixon's problems in office, but it was the Watergate affair that destroyed his administration and eventually led to his resignation in August 1974.

In the months that followed, the recession deepened, and public confidence in the government's ability to manage the economy collapsed. President Gerald Ford, furthering Nixon's conservative agenda, offered no measures to halt the recession. In the midst of an economic disaster, both the UAW and the AFL-CIO leadership directed their efforts toward the 1974 congressional elections. Rank-and-filers were unlikely to think that Congress could do much for them, but union leaders viewed the 1974 electoral returns as encouraging. The Democrats made sizable gains, picking up 43 House seats, four Senate seats, and four governorships. The disastrous state of the economy and the widespread job insecurity explain why Republicans lost so many votes. Nevertheless the labor-liberal alliance would never be reconstructed.

Old Expectations in a New Political and Economic Reality

After the Nixon and Ford administrations, liberal Democrats were hopeful that Jimmy Carter's election in 1976 would restore the New Deal agenda in the White House. However the former governor of Georgia came out of the most conservative wing of the Democratic party and had little in common with liberal Democrats like Hubert H. Humphrey, George McGovern, or Edward Kennedy. Faced with

one of the worst economic crises in the history of the United States, Carter endorsed many of the fiscal and economic policies that his successor, Ronald Reagan, would espouse.

By 1977, the combination of rising prices, persistent unemployment, and a stagnant economy came to be known as stagflation. Carter's proposed remedy included a minimum-wage bill, the creation of 200,000 jobs through public-works programs, 425,000 new slots in public-service employment, training programs, and a major youth program. These measures were well-received, but they would soon come to haunt Carter's economic advisers. The emphasis on unemployment and recovery pursued a combination of policies that accelerated the inflationary spiral. The cost of living leaped up at double-digit rates; the value of savings eroded; prices of meat, milk, and heating oil skyrocketed. In 1979, the annual rate of inflation hit 11.3%, and the administration appeared powerless to deal with it.

Despite the election of sympathetic senators and representatives to Congress and a friendly Democrat to the White House, organized labor was incapable of delivering any of the important public-policy initiatives it had proposed. The defeat of the Labor Law Reform Bill of 1977–1978 ended labor's most ambitious effort to strengthen American workers' eroded collective-bargaining rights under the National Labor Relations Act. The bill proposed to increase the penalties on companies that violated the law and to eliminate intricate appeal processes that business used to evade holding or accepting the results of union elections.

Labor law reform had become critical in holding together the fragile alliance between the Carter administration and organized labor. The House quickly passed the bill in 1977, but it got held up in the Senate in the winter and spring of 1978. With time on their side, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Roundtable, among others, quickly mobilized against the bill. Organized labor tried to defend its proposal, but it lacked the resources available to business interests. In the end the administration and its labor allies failed to obtain the 60 votes needed in the Senate to stop a filibuster by the bill's opponents. After the fifth ballot, Majority Leader Robert Byrd recommitted the bill to the Senate Human Resources Committee where it died.

In the wake of the 1978 legislative defeats, the new UAW President, Douglas Fraser, wrote a lengthy letter of resignation to the Labor/Management Group, a national committee chaired by former U.S. Secretary of Labor John Dunlop. The letter, which was widely circulated, became a kind of call to action for a renewed U.S. labor movement. Fraser attempted

to create a new coalition called the Progressive Alliance that would unite labor with the movements of the sixties. The AFL-CIO turned its back on his initiative, and Fraser's call went practically unheeded. The 1980 presidential election would find organized labor as divided as ever.

Three days after the U.S. embassy takeover in Iran, Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination. Fraser and other leaders of industrial unions, together with many consumer, civil rights, and community-organizing activists, backed Kennedy's challenge to President Carter. For his part Lane Kirkland—who had succeeded Meany in November 1979 just 2 months before the AFL-CIO president's death—endorsed Carter's re-election along with many other Democratic politicians. Carter eventually won the nomination, but he was forced to make many concessions to Senator Kennedy. The Democratic party's split paved the way for Ronald Reagan's landslide and final triumph of the so-called new Republican majority.

The broader labor-Democratic alliance had been breaking down throughout the late 1960s and 1970s. In these years, although the Democratic party managed to win large majorities in several congressional elections, it did not always prove to be pro-labor. As the U.S. economy began sliding into a sustained crisis and industrial relations appeared as a critical matter for government policy, unions were asked to restrain their collective-bargaining demands, and Congress turned a deaf ear to the unions' policy proposals. Furthermore the 1972 Democratic party's decision to adopt affirmative-action goals for its internal party deliberations also signaled the weakening of the labor-liberal alliance and the beginning of a new trend in American politics. The Democratic party would never recover its old commitment to economic planning and labor law reform, two key goals of the progressive industrial unions in the immediate post-WWII period.

In the early 1970s, as traditional industrial unions began to decline, the public-sector unions representing government workers and teachers increased their numbers dramatically. This was an important breakthrough for women, blacks, and Latinos, since they constituted a majority in these unions. In 1974, faced with organized labor's powerlessness and indifference, 1,200 women from all over the United States created the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), whose mission was to organize the unorganized, promote affirmative action, and increase women's political participation. John Sweeny's ascendancy as head of the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU) also marked an important power shift within organized labor. Through aggressive organizing

campaigns, especially among the working poor, SEIU eventually became one of the largest unions in the country. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) also began to grow. By 1979, 38% of the workers in the public sector were unionized and seemed to be pushing the U.S. labor movement in a new direction.

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UNION LEAGUE MOVEMENT

The Union League, or Loyal League, was the Republican party's organizational vehicle for securing the black vote during early Reconstruction. It also served to mobilize laborers against slaverylike conditions on southern plantations.

The league originated as a northern patriotic organization backing the Lincoln administration. As a secret society it had a ritual featuring oaths to support loyal candidates. With the end of the Civil War, the Republican patronage officials running the league turned attention to the ex-Confederate states. It initially secured a following among up-country Unionists,

absorbing local networks of draft resisters and anti-Confederate groups, like North Carolina's Red Strings. It became the political expression of the most intransigent white opponents of presidential Reconstruction. With enactment of Military Reconstruction in March 1867, congressional Republicans used this existing body to appeal to the newly enfranchised freedmen.

Agents of the Bureau of Freedman, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands, northern missionaries, native Unionists, and other Republican activists swore in vast numbers of freed people. Though white outsiders were the prominent organizers, local leadership was often African-American. League speakers offered basic instruction on politics and voting. It proved difficult for opponents to interdict the technique of holding nighttime meetings at secluded locations. An explosive politicization of rural freed people resulted in the summer and fall of 1867, as hundreds of thousands reportedly flocked to league councils and similar local groups. The general appeal was that conservatives essentially re-imposed slavery through the black codes. Though organization's Republican sponsors had narrow political goals, leagues generated martial drilling and other spontaneous militant actions throughout the countryside. Talk of land redistribution reportedly circulated freely as well.

The mobilization of the freed people had social roots in the plantation crisis. After emancipation large landowners resumed production under slaverylike conditions. In the leading crop of cotton, these included gang labor, tight supervision under overseers, women and children in the workforce, and even physical coercion if possible. The black codes wrote these practices into law. The freed people resisted, contributing to disastrous crops in the years after the war. Enfranchisement thus came at a crucial moment as the centralized plantation system gave way to decentralized tenant farming—especially family-based sharecropping. Labor force frustration with the survivals of slavery-fed insurgency and the politicization of the freedmen in turn undermined centralized management. It thus likely influenced the timing at least of the widespread transition to tenant farming.

The league mobilized virtually the entire black population, and so it contributed to the speedy approval of Reconstruction constitutions in most of the ex-Confederate states. But the organization was rapidly dismembered by the terrorist Ku Klux Klan and its offshoots in early 1868. In this climate the league's Republican sponsors concluded that the secret organization had served its purpose, though vestiges of the organization survived locally and as a paper organization at the national level. Though transient the

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Union League created a tradition of Republican voting, and it also encouraged lasting changes in the plantation system.

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UNION SUMMER

Union Summer is the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations' (AFL-CIO's) 5-week long internship program for those who demonstrated an interest in and wanted to gain union-organizing skills. Started in the summer of 1996, Union Summer sent cadres of college or college-age students to sites across the United States where they worked with local union members in a variety of ways. Participants received a weekly stipend and free housing at their site. They also participated in an initial orientation and education sessions. Typical tasks included visiting, surveying, and educating workers, organizing, and joining pickets and other demonstrations, and building union and community partnerships. The program did not require prior experience with unions. Ideally though, the AFL-CIO hoped that participants would use their experience to contribute further to the labor movement, be it through student-labor coalitions or as union organizers or researchers.

Union Summer began as a prototype based on the Freedom Summer of 1964, where a thousand college students went south to register black voters. The AFL-CIO President John Sweeney saw the nation's youth as an untapped pool that could assist in his efforts to reinvigorate the labor movement through widespread organizing. In that vein Union Summer was only a part of the labor organization's creation of a new organizing department and expansion of its Organizing Institute, which trained full-time organizers. Sweeney earmarked \$20 million for the organizing initiative, some of which went to Union Summer. Union Summer interns also represented the changing

face of labor with more than half being females and minorities, many of whom were the targets of new organizing drives. Most significantly though, U.S. youth had education and progressive enthusiasm that the AFL-CIO felt it needed to harvest.

Since its inception approximately 3,000 individuals have participated in Union Summer. As of 2004, the program accepted 200 applicants from a pool of over 600, each to participate in one of two 5-week cycles. In its first year Union Summer sent over 1,000 activists to 22 cities for 3 weeks each. During that time the program claimed to have registered over 3,000 voters, handed out 100,000 leaflets, participated in nearly 250 demonstrations, and spoken to almost 45,000 workers either at home or on the job. Over time, interns have helped win contracts for hotel and resort workers, joined the picket lines during the Detroit newspaper strike, and convinced a New York-based garment company to stop using sweatshop labor. Union Summer graduates created the student-labor action group United Students against Sweatshops, which led the charge against university contracting with sweatshops to produce collegiate wear. Others led the Harvard Living Wage Campaign, a successful student-worker coalition that led to wage increases for Harvard's nonacademic workers.

Despite these successes questions remain about the use of those outside of the labor movement to reinvigorate stagnant union growth. On the one hand students possess a number of skills the average worker may not, including time, flexibility, computer knowledge, and research abilities. They also assume less risk than workers, since they have little to lose by supporting a union. Some argue that these skills balanced with personal modesty and an open-mind can lead to productive and truly cooperative relationships between union members and outside supporters. This argument also holds that union members themselves must also be willing to sublimate personal gain, perhaps as elected officials for the local or international, for the good of the membership. Only then can bottom-up democracy thrive in any union. Indeed a study of the first Union Summer in 1996 demonstrated that unions committed to strategic organizing were able to incorporate interns most successfully.

On the other hand, others contend that outsiders, such as the Union "Summer-istas" and former student organizers lack the requisite first-hand knowledge of those who actually work on the shop floors and are used by unions as professional substitutes for membership-bred leaders. Unions who use this approach overemphasize the education and other skills of students to the point where staffing the union becomes more important than rank-and-file

involvement in the growth of the union. Union democracy and culture thus suffers for lack of workplace leadership and organization.

The 1996 study found that unions that struck a balance between site-specific education of their interns, an active membership, and open students had the most success in their local campaigns. The information gathered also suggested that the more direct exposure to social injustices, the more likely the Union Summer participant to continue involvement with the labor movement. Recognizing the factors important for success, the AFL-CIO altered the Union Summer program over the years to a more selective, longer internship for older students that was geared toward keeping interns involved in the movement beyond their summertime experience.

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See also **American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations**

UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS

See **Reuther, Walter**

UNITED BREWERY WORKERS

The National Union of Brewery Workmen (later International Union of United Brewery, Flour, Cereal, Soft Drink, and Distillery Workers of America) began an important union of the early American Federation of Labor (AFL) era that made the transition from craft to industrial unionism early on. A mostly

German-American organization, it had a strong socialist core membership during its first half-century. While industrial change had an impact on the union, it was Prohibition that posed the most massive threat to its members and helped the union seek alliances with unionized workers in related industries. The union survived after World War II and joined the Teamsters' Union in 1972.

Despite its roots in an ancient craft and its American history going back to colonial times, beer brewing was an increasingly mechanized, capital-intensive industry from the mid-nineteenth century on. From 1870–1890, the industry consolidated rapidly until it was dominated by a few large breweries at the turn of the twentieth century. By the 1880s, refrigeration, electricity, and introduction of scientifically controlled fermentation processes had made beer brewing one of the high-tech industries of its time.

Both workers and owners in the brewing industry had roots in Germany, with a minority coming from



Brewery. Workers inspecting beer vats. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Theodor Horydczak Collection [LC-H822-T01-1745].

UNITED BREWERY WORKERS

England and Ireland as well. Trained as craftsmen under the formal system of apprenticeship rules in central Europe, brewery workers in the U.S. post-Civil War era entered a workplace that was still governed by traditional European work hierarchies and practices. Eighty-hour workweeks, physical disciplining of workers, and financial dependency on boardinghouse keepers resulted in social isolation for the workers and contributed to mounting tensions in the industry. They erupted in two strikes in Cincinnati in 1879 and in New York City in 1881. The short-lived unions that resulted from these conflicts in each city dissolved after a few months due to blacklisting by employers.

But the brewery workers resumed organizing soon thereafter, mostly in secret. In many cities, such as Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, and Philadelphia, they joined the Knights of Labor (KOL) as local assemblies in the early 1880s. In New York City the reconstituted union went public in 1886, encouraged by the brewery owners who hoped that harmonious labor relations would give them an advantage in their struggle for a wider market.

Amid a lively national labor movement, the National Union of Brewery Workmen was organized in August of 1886 in Baltimore, comprising locals from New York, Newark, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Detroit, and St. Louis. The headquarters of the union was in New York City, and the head of Local 1 of New York, Louis Herbrand, became its first secretary. Virtually the entire membership of the early union was German-speaking. President Herbrand spoke only rudimentary English, and the union's paper, the *Brauer Zeitung* was published exclusively in German until 1917.

From this early period and through much of the first-half of the twentieth century, the basic structure and political orientation of the union remained similar. The union had no president, just a national secretary who was elected by all members. The union's board was also elected by members in a direct vote. Conventions were held every 3 years. The headquarters of the union, through most of its existence was in Cincinnati. The union offered relatively scant member benefits but low dues. Membership was open to all workers in breweries regardless of craft background or skill level. It was the heavily German culture of the brewery workers that limited its attractiveness to workers from a wider array of backgrounds.

The National Union of Brewery Workmen was chartered by the AFL 7 months after its founding. As the AFL became a more viable organization toward the late 1880s, the brewery workers' ties to the KOL became weaker during the late 1880s, mainly because of the KOL's widespread support of the

temperance movement. The union grew quickly within the next 2 years comprising 35 locals in 1888 with a membership of around 5,000. Local 1 of New York alone had 1,800 members. That year however brewery owners all over the country began a concerted campaign against the union, canceling contracts, locking out striking workers, and blacklisting union members. Within months the national union had shrunk to 1,800 members nationwide, with only 26 locals. Formerly mighty Local 1 had only 125 members.

A slow period of recovery commenced in the early 1890s when aided by the AFL, the National Union of United Brewery Workmen rebuilt its membership base slowly. A national boycott of the most powerful and largest breweries in the early 1890s forced Anheuser Busch of St. Louis and Pabst of Milwaukee to recognize the union and introduce the 12-hour workday. From St. Louis and Milwaukee the union spread to organize other locations in the Midwest, and in 1902 it finally achieved a contract for the workers in New York City. By the early twentieth century, employers and workers once again cooperated more closely.

As labor relations stabilized for the union nationwide, the political differences between the brewery workers' union and the AFL became more pronounced. From the beginning the brewery workers' union had had a large socialist membership, and its most prominent leaders were always articulate Socialists, such as Ernest Kurzenknabe, William Trautmann, Oscar Ameringer, and later Karl Fellner. True to its principles, the union had always organized all workers in breweries regardless of their craft background, and this policy brought them into conflict with the craft-oriented AFL and such unions as the firemen, the stationary engineers, and the teamsters. After a lengthy investigation and consultations, the AFL ordered the brewery workers to refuse admission to firemen and other skilled workers if a craft union existed in their trade. The brewers did not comply, and their charter was revoked by the AFL in 1907. After much debate the brewery workers union was readmitted a year later.

By the second decade of the twentieth century, it was Prohibition rather than jurisdictional disputes or labor conflicts that began to dominate the union's agenda. Cooperation with the brewery owners on this topic was important to the union. Because of the special predicament of their industry, the brewery workers found themselves relatively isolated within the U.S. labor movement in the early twentieth century, since neither the socialist movement nor the AFL took an anti-Prohibition stance.

The union survived Prohibition as a small organization that incorporated flour, cereal, and soft drink workers during World War I. After the passage of the Twentieth Amendment, the industry revived in the 1930s. Membership recovered, but jurisdictional disputes also revived, this time mostly with the teamsters' union. As a result of continuing disputes, the brewery workers were suspended from the AFL in 1941 and remained an independent union until 1946 when they joined the CIO. In 1972, the International Union of United Brewery, Flour, Cereal, Soft Drink, and Distillery Workers of America joined the International Brotherhood of Teamsters as a separate conference.

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UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA

Since its founding in Chicago in 1881, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBCJA) has stood among the strongest unions in the American labor movement. The role it has played however has been complex. Most historians of the union have divided its history into two distinct eras: the nineteenth century (personified by the leadership of Peter J. McGuire), in which the brotherhood was infused with social democratic ideals and positioned itself at the forefront of the labor movement; and the twentieth century (personified by the leadership of William L. Hutcheson), in which the union became a model of business unionism. Throughout its entire history the brotherhood has fought to achieve the best possible working conditions and wage rates for its members while remaining steadfast in its refusal to subordinate the interests of the national union to any other entity. Yet the union has also continually had to respond to technological, economic, social, and political developments.

The Founding of the UBCJA

The immediate impetus for the formation of a national carpenters' union resulted from successful

organization at the local level. As the nation recovered from the economic depression of the mid-1870s, carpenters in cities across the country organized unions in order to secure better wages and to halt the spread of subcontracting and piecework. It quickly became apparent however that success brought problems that independent local unions could not mitigate. After St. Louis carpenters successfully struck for higher wages in the spring of 1881, carpenters from cities with lower wage rates flooded the city. In order to preserve their gains, St. Louis carpenters urged outsiders to stay away from their city and issued a call for a national convention.

The driving force behind the movement for a national organization of carpenters was Peter J. McGuire. An indefatigable organizer who devoted his life to working-class causes, McGuire harmonized trade union principles with socialist beliefs. Although his primary allegiance was to his craft, McGuire was at the forefront of the 8-hour movement, a founding member of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), a founding member of the Social Democratic party of North America, and campaigned for the Greenback party. With McGuire as their general secretary from 1881–1902, the brotherhood would also play a central role in the late nineteenth-century labor movement. Along with resolutions demanding shorter hours, equal pay during lean winter months, and the elimination of subcontracts and piecework, the brotherhood's founding convention also issued wider calls for united action among all building trades unions, abolition of convict labor, and elimination of unfair monopolies. Under McGuire's leadership, the union's membership grew from approximately 2,000 in 1881 to 167,000 by 1903.

McGuire's influence over the direction of the brotherhood was not universal. For example the union's founding convention in Chicago was nearly torn apart by two factions that disagreed as to the degree of power that the national union was to assume. The protectionists, who most closely embodied McGuire's vision, desired a national organization that would provide benefits, regulate itinerant members, coordinate strike activities, and support local struggles for better working conditions and higher wages. The benevolents on the other hand envisioned a national organization whose sole function was to provide death and disability benefits for union carpenters. McGuire and Gabriel Edmonston brokered a compromise that enabled the union to pursue both paths, but debates over the role of the central union and its relationship with its locals would reoccur throughout the brotherhood's early history. In fact the issue was not fully resolved until 1916, when the national union, under the new leadership

of William L. Hutcheson, took decisive action against 61 New York locals after they initiated a strike in defiance of the general executive board.

Consolidation and Jurisdictional Disputes

Over the course of its history however the brotherhood's most serious battles were fought with external foes. One of its first challenges was to consolidate its representation of the woodworking trades, which involved bitter campaigns against the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners and the Amalgamated Wood Workers' International Union. To the brotherhood, the Amalgamated Society was a dual union pure and simple. Established as a branch of the British union, the society was concentrated in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. After a controversial battle that generated intense debate within the AFL, the society was forced to merge with the more powerful brotherhood in 1912.

The wood workers posed a different type of threat. Chartered by the AFL in 1890, the wood workers claimed jurisdiction over all factory and mill workers. As traditional carpentry work increasingly moved indoors during the first decade of the twentieth century, the wood workers' membership grew and the brotherhood protested. After a lengthy dispute that tested the patience of the AFL, the brotherhood absorbed the wood workers in 1912. By encompassing mill and factory workers, one historian of the brotherhood has suggested, the union adopted a unique blend of craft and industrial unionism. The brotherhood's industrial appeal had strict limits however, as the 1930s would attest. This time staking claim to lumber and sawmill workers in the Pacific Northwest, the UBCJA engaged in a bitter and violent fight with the Congress of Industrial Organizations' (CIO's) International Woodworkers of America. Although the brotherhood succeeded in organizing some of these workers, this time it was compelled to coexist with its CIO rival.

While the brotherhood consolidated the woodworking trades, it also aggressively pursued jurisdictional disputes that arose from technological developments in construction. This issue rippled throughout the building trades, and the industry's unions devoted considerable energy to adjudicating interunion disputes. When it became clear that local building trades councils were incapable of resolving jurisdictional battles, the largest construction unions joined together to remedy disputes on an industry-wide basis. In 1903, they organized the Structural

Building Trades' Alliance, which evolved into the AFL's Building Trades' Department (BTD) in 1908. Although it was instrumental in the BTD's formation, the brotherhood undermined the BTD's authority whenever it objected to the department's actions—which it often has in matters concerning jurisdiction and representation. On several occasions, most recently in 2001, the brotherhood left the department in protest—and in some cases the AFL altogether—only to later return.

The most contentious UBCJA jurisdictional disputes emerged in the early twentieth century as metal increasingly replaced wood in doors, window frames, and trim. Worried that new specialty unions would usurp their membership and strength, the brotherhood updated its jurisdictional claim from anything made of wood to include any work that once required wood. This policy soon led to long, drawn-out conflicts with the Wood, Wire, and Lather International Union and the Sheet Metal Workers' Union. In 1903, an agreement between the UBCJA and the lathers' union broke down when the brotherhood claimed jurisdiction over the installation of a new type of lathing material. The rivalry would not be fully resolved until 1979, when the UBCJA absorbed the lathers' union. The dispute with the sheet metal workers began in 1908 over the installation of metal trim and was not resolved until the two unions hashed out a compromise in 1926. Although these were two of the most significant jurisdictional disputes, the UBCJA would challenge numerous other unions in much the same way throughout the twentieth century.

Business Unionism and Defending the Closed Shop

As the UBCJA consolidated its power in the early twentieth century, it moved toward business unionism. In addition to strengthening the national organization *vis-à-vis* its locals, the brotherhood governed its craft through closed-shop agreements and the union label. The closed shop cultivated shared interests with union carpenters and contractors, while the union label extended urban strength to the hinterland and would cause the boycott to become a vital organizing tool. Particularly under the guidance of William Hutcheson, who led the union from 1915 to 1951, the UBCJA was sensitive to any interference in this craft economy. In the first-half of the twentieth century, the union expended considerable resources fighting injunctions in jurisdictional disputes

and boycotts. During World War I Hutcheson approved a strike for carpenters working in shipbuilding when the Wage Adjustment Board stipulated that they should be paid less than regular carpenters. Although the brotherhood lobbied hard for passage of the Davis-Bacon Act, Hutcheson even criticized the New Deal for being too invasive—although most local leaders and rank-and-file members welcomed Roosevelt’s relief measures and government-sponsored construction projects.

The open-shop movement of the 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s posed more serious challenges to the UBCJA and to building trades unions more generally. In the 1920s, local chambers of commerce, employers, corporations, and citizens’ committees across the country attacked the closed shop and union label with “the American plan.” The brotherhood battled against the offensive—most dramatically in San Francisco, where the national organization invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in a violent strike in 1926. But such efforts were unsuccessful, and as a result, the UBCJA’s national membership declined from 400,000 in 1920 to 345,000 in 1928. The brotherhood’s membership continued to decline during the Great Depression. Mass unemployment reduced membership rolls to a low of 242,000 in 1932. By 1933, less than a third of those members were able to find work as carpenters.

The brotherhood gradually recovered by securing work for its members on New Deal and World War II construction projects, and the union prospered during the postwar years thanks to the federal government’s investment in defense work and heavy construction. Indeed the postwar construction boom ushered in a golden age for building trades unions. By 1969, 80% of construction work was performed by union labor, and the brotherhood’s membership peaked at 850,000 in 1973. From 1945–1969, wages for union carpenters increased by 72%.

Amid this prosperity however, new problems arose. By the end of the 1960s, the decade’s spiraling building costs inspired attacks on union strength in the construction trades. Arguing that high labor costs posed the greatest threat to the building economy, large open-shop groups, most notably the Business Roundtable and the Associated Builders and Contractors, launched determined campaigns to weaken pro-labor legislation and open up the building trades to nonunion contractors and workers. These efforts were aided by the steady decline in federally funded construction projects throughout the 1970s. Because of the union’s preference for work on these larger projects during the postwar decades, the brotherhood allowed nonunion workers to gain a foothold

in suburban residential construction during the 1960s. In addition technological changes—particularly the increased use of prefabricated materials that needed to be installed only at the job site—also undermined the union’s ability to regulate the labor market through its apprenticeship and training programs. Largely as a result of these factors, in the early twenty-first century, less than one-third of construction work in the United States is performed by union labor.

The brotherhood has fought to oppose the advance of the open shop as well as its own declining membership. Since World War II, the UBCJA has increased its political activity (it had eschewed partisan politics at its founding convention) to fight antilabor legislation and politicians. In 1973, it launched two (unsuccessful) campaigns against the open shop—the Coordinated Housing Organization Program and the Voluntary Organizing Committee. More recently the brotherhood has restructured its approach to organizing, training, and politics in order to revitalize its position within the industry. Since becoming UBCJA president in 1995, Douglas McCarron has made organizing the union’s top priority. Under his leadership the union reduced its national headquarters staff from 250 to 18, increased its organizing staff from 50 to more than 700, and constructed new training facilities—including a new national training center in Las Vegas, Nevada—to adapt better to technological developments in the industry. So far these changes appear successful, and membership is on the rise—reaching 525,000 by the end of 2005. The UBCJA’s focus on organizing has also helped to diversify the union. While the brotherhood never did rank among the most racially exclusive unions of the building trades, by the time the civil rights movement targeted construction unions in the 1960s, the UBCJA leadership and rank-and-file consisted mostly of white males. In response to civil rights protests, pressure from the federal government, and the need to combat declining union membership, the union has increased its minority membership and beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, has opened its ranks to women.

McCarron has also urged organized labor to employ a bipartisan approach to politics instead of blindly supporting the Democratic party, and he has personally lobbied President George W. Bush on a number of issues concerning the building industry. The union’s revamped leadership ultimately led to a clash with the AFL-CIO over organizing and political spending—in addition to recurring jurisdictional disputes. In 2001, the UBCJA broke with the AFL-CIO over these issues and in June 2005 joined Change to Win, a coalition of seven labor unions committed to

organizing the unorganized who have also disaffiliated with the AFL-CIO.

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See also **Hutcheson, William L.; McGuire, Peter J.**

UNITED CANNERY, AGRICULTURAL, PACKING, AND ALLIED WORKERS OF AMERICA

The United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) emerged from the revolt in the American Federation of Labor (AFL) that launched the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). At its head stood an intense and energetic organizer named Donald Henderson. As a young economics instructor at Columbia University and a member of the Communist party, Henderson had served as the unofficial advisor to a left-wing student movement that mushroomed in response to the Depression and the rise of fascism in Europe. The instructor's activities did not go unnoticed, and in early 1933, he became one of a number of conspicuous radicals who lost their jobs because of their political convictions. Despite student protests, Henderson left academia. Joining the labor movement, he dedicated himself to organizing the country's agricultural workers.

Henderson initially worked in southern New Jersey with the Cannery and Agricultural Industrial Union, which was affiliated with the Trade Union Unity League, the Communist party's counter to the AFL. When the party abandoned its strategy of dual unions in 1935, Henderson became president of the National

Committee for Unity of Agricultural and Rural Workers, a loose coalition of small locals affiliated with the AFL. Unable to persuade the AFL to charter an international union of agricultural workers and increasingly drawn to the CIO's industrial union structure, Henderson and representatives from locals throughout the country met in Denver in July 1937 to form UCAPAWA, which promptly received a charter from the CIO.

From the beginning UCAPAWA represented a veritable rainbow of American workers. Mexican sugar beet workers from the Rocky Mountains; black sharecroppers from Arkansas and Missouri; cannery and farm workers from New Jersey; laborers from the Florida citrus groves; Filipino, Chinese, and Japanese cannery workers in Washington—these were only a few of the dozens of occupations and nationalities involved. In addition to the challenges involved in molding this multicultural constituency into a forceful international union, UCAPAWA faced an almost insurmountable organizing task. Agricultural labor was notoriously difficult to organize: Workers were migratory because of the seasonal nature of the industry; the relatively unskilled nature of the work created an oversupply of labor; most agricultural laborers came from minority groups that lacked social or political clout; and because labor represented a high percentage of the cost of production, employers fought hard to keep unions out. Yet despite these difficulties, UCAPAWA enjoyed some early success, thanks in part to active organizing by established locals and the financial support of the CIO. By 1937, Henderson could report a membership of over 120,000 workers in more than 300 locals.

Like a number of CIO presidents, Henderson relied heavily on activists affiliated with the Communist movement. Many of the UCAPAWA officers and organizers in the early days shared Henderson's political sympathies. Some had become unionists as a result of their politics; others had been drawn to communism as a result of their organizing experiences. They saw little difference between being good trade unionists and loyal party members. Other UCAPAWA leaders, while not party members, saw themselves as participants in a radical cultural and political project in which the party played an important, but not necessarily a defining role.

The UCAPAWA entered the South when the Arkansas-based Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU) affiliated with the new international. Organized in 1934 by black and white sharecroppers and tenant farmers under the leadership of storekeepers Clay East and H. L. Mitchell, the STFU focused public attention on the plight of southern

farmers. Infighting between Communist party leaders and the local Socialists who served as the organization's principal administrators, as well as personality and ideological conflicts between Henderson and Mitchell marred the alliance from the start. The STFU and UCAPAWA also differed over a fundamental issue: Whether agricultural workers could best be served by a protest organization or a trade union. Despite its name the STFU functioned more like the former; it was loosely structured, had an uncertain membership, and depended on outside sources for financial support. Mitchell contended that sharecroppers and tenant farmers were too uneducated to keep records and too poor to pay regular dues. Henderson argued that agricultural workers could be taught the rudimentary procedures for running the locals and that union members had to support their own organization.

In its early years UCAPAWA focused on organizing migrants, particularly in California. But employer resistance, the exclusion of agricultural workers from the provisions of the Wagner Act, and the seasonality of farm labor made it virtually impossible to establish permanent, self-supporting locals. Finding itself increasingly rushing to the aid of wildcat strikers who had no chance of winning collective-bargaining agreements, UCAPAWA temporarily abandoned its efforts in the fields and focused on the fisheries, canneries, and processing plants, where workers' stability made them better candidates for unionization.

By the early 1940s, this strategy had paid off, and UCAPAWA was setting an example for the union movement across the United States. Local 3 represented workers at a variety of food-processing plants in the Los Angeles area, a majority of whom were Mexican women. In Camden, New Jersey, UCAPAWA broke through at the fiercely anti-union Campbell's Soup Company to organize Local 80. Filipinos and other Asian Americans represented a majority of the cannery workers in Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco who made up Local 7. Even in Memphis, Tennessee, one of the South's most staunchly anti-union cities, UCAPAWA Local 19 organized hundreds of low-paid workers—most of whom were African-American—in the large cotton seed oil plants and in dozens of small companies.

In 1941, UCAPAWA decided to target tobacco-manufacturing workers. Among its charter members were a small number of cigar worker locals in New York and Florida, but the main impetus came from tobacco workers in Richmond, Virginia. In 1937, black stemmery workers struck at a local leaf-processing firm and with the help of organizers from the Southern Negro Youth Congress (SNYC), a youth group led by young radicals who had worked on

the campaign to free the Scottsboro Nine, organized an independent Tobacco Stemmers' and Laborers' Union (TSLU). Within a few years the union had agreements with a number of the city's smaller firms, and affiliation with the CIO provided the financial support needed to tackle the large manufacturers. The CIO awarded UCAPAWA jurisdiction over tobacco workers, and in 1942, the TSLU became UCAPAWA Local 24. Building on this base, the union started organizing among tobacco workers throughout the South.

Labor shortages and the active participation of the National Labor Relations Board and the War Labor Board in labor disputes greatly enhanced the bargaining power of American workers during World War II. As a result UCAPAWA membership swelled. The most dramatic campaign occurred in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, at the plants of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. A sit-down strike in 1943 led to the rapid organization of an overwhelming majority of the company's approximately 8,000 African-American workers as well as several hundred whites. That same year several thousand of the city's leaf house workers also joined Local 22. During the same period, workers at American Tobacco Company's cigar plants in Charleston, South Carolina, Trenton, New Jersey, and Philadelphia joined the union. This influx of tobacco-manufacturing workers led the union to change its name to Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied Workers of America (FTA) in December of 1944.

Local 22 became the jewel in the crown for FTA. In the heart of the Jim Crow South, this militant, black-led local with women in key leadership positions captured the imagination of the Communist Left. The Winston-Salem local registered thousands of black voters, revitalized the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and spearheaded the election of a minister to the Winston-Salem Board of Aldermen, the first African-American to defeat a white opponent in the South since the turn of the century.

Although it was still small compared to most AFL and CIO affiliates, UCAPAWA had nonetheless shown that it could organize among the nation's most vulnerable workers. It had also shown that women and minority groups were capable of playing an important role in the labor movement. In fact the union's active recruitment and promotion of women, blacks, Mexicans, and other ethnic minorities to positions of leadership was unprecedented among American trade unions. Among UCAPAWA's vice-presidents and executive board members in the mid-1940s were Luisa Moreno, a Latina organizer in Southern California; the Reverend Owen Whitfield,

a former African-American sharecropper from Missouri: Moranda Smith, Local 22's dynamic leader; and Armando Ramirez, a Cuban-born cigar maker. The union's Washington office was overseen by Elizabeth Sasuly, who served as legislative director from 1939–1950.

The postwar conservative attack on unions, led by the National Association of Manufacturers and its member corporations along with conservatives in both the Republican and Democratic parties cut deeply into FTA's strength. A forced strike wave in 1945–1946; the mechanization and automation of labor-intensive production processes; anticommunism; and the federal government's retreat on the rights of workers, women, and minorities—these were among the factors that put FTA on the defensive.

The Republican party's capture of both houses of Congress in 1946 allowed business interests to pass the Taft-Hartley Act, a piece of landmark legislation that prohibited unions from contributing to political campaigns; expanded employers' ability to dissuade workers from joining unions; and put the internal workings of unions under closer scrutiny. Taft-Hartley also required union officers seeking access to National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) services to file affidavits declaring that they were not members of the Communist party, and it allowed states to write their own laws governing union security and gave those laws precedence over federal regulations. Anxious to maintain labor's electoral support and convinced that Taft-Hartley went too far, Truman refused to ratify the measure. Undeterred, proponents marshaled the votes to override the president's veto.

Both CIO and AFL officials had been outraged by the affidavits' provision, which infringed on their civil liberties and put Communists and non-Communists alike in an untenable position. Initially most international leaders—including CIO President Phillip Murray—stood on principle, and the left-led unions urged the federation to wage an all-out fight for repeal, to shun the weakened NLRB, and rely on solid organization and the support of the rank-and-file. The CIO leadership however was unwilling to risk mass demonstrations, and within months most of the federation's international unions had capitulated. The FTA along with the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, the United Electrical Workers, and other left-led unions refused to comply. That decision meant that when FTA's contracts expired, the union would have to rely entirely on its own clout to bring companies to the bargaining table.

Throughout its history the CIO had accommodated a wide range of political views, and FTA had

always stood firmly on the federation's left wing. And until 1947, the CIO was united behind FDR's vision of world peace based on the continuation of the U.S. wartime collaboration with the Soviet Union as well as a renewal and expansion of the New Deal. The mounting antagonism between the two superpowers however dragged the federation into the international arena, bringing its factional rifts into sharp relief.

The FTA refused to go along with the conservative swing in foreign affairs. It did not endorse the Marshall Plan, the Truman doctrine, or the building attack on the Soviet Union. In December of 1947, former Vice-President Henry Wallace announced that he would run for president on the ticket of the newly formed Progressive party. That decision brought the deep conflicts in the labor movement to the surface, precipitating an ideological split that would have far-reaching reverberations. The clash came to a head when the CIO's executive board met in January 1948 and voted to maintain an officially nonpartisan position, which in practice meant strong-arming dissidents into supporting the Democratic party candidate.

Ignoring the CIO's directives, FTA's executive board endorsed Wallace, one of only five CIO unions to do so. In the end Wallace got few votes, and even FTA officers voted for the victorious Truman when it seemed that the Republican candidate might win. But the Progressive party campaign dealt the CIO's fragile unity a final blow. In its wake the CIO's executive board moved not only to curb the political autonomy that international unions and even locals within international unions had always enjoyed, but also to isolate and undermine FTA and other left-wing unions. It did so chiefly by insinuating unions sympathetic to the national CIO leadership into election campaigns where rival organizations competed for representation even if the raiding unions had little affinity with the workers involved.

In 1949, the CIO Executive Board charged FTA with forwarding the interests of the Communist party rather than those of the CIO. The evidence consisted primarily of FTA's criticisms of Truman's foreign policies. The charges also mentioned the union's support for Wallace as an additional link that helped to prove the union's adherence to the party line. The only charge related to FTA's trade union record was that it had lost members over the previous few years. The FTA's membership had declined, but the charge of underperformance failed either to take account of its commitment to organizing the most vulnerable of workers or to demonstrate that the CIO's mainstream internationals could or would do better.

In the summer of 1949, FTA announced that its officials would comply with the Taft-Hartley Act and sign the anti-Communist affidavits. It had little choice. Few of its locals had the economic muscle to win contracts with no federal protection, and raids by the AFL and CIO unions were taking a devastating toll. President Donald Henderson resigned his post as president and became national administrative director. The NLRB however refused to accept affidavits from other union officers as long as Henderson remained on the staff. Finally Henderson admitted that he had once been a member of the Communist party and signed an affidavit. The NLRB again recognized FTA as a legitimate union under the terms of the Taft-Hartley Act. But that was too little too late, since the union lost elections in plant after plant across the United States, including in Winston-Salem.

In a last-ditch effort to keep FTA alive, Henderson arranged a merger with two left-wing unions based in New York to form the Distributive, Processing, and Office Workers of America (DPOWA), which held its founding convention in New York City in early October 1950. Some of the locals lived on, but many were destroyed by employers and raiding CIO and AFL unions.

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See also Communist Party; Southern Tenant Farmers Union; Taft-Hartley Act

UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO, AND MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

The United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers' Union was founded in 1936 as a result of the grassroots worker-organizing surge that also established the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), of

which it was a charter union. Initially it represented workers in the eastern United States where the industry was concentrated but grew into a feisty union that expanded geographically and has withstood enormous political and economic strains. While it was once the third largest U.S. industrial union, factionalism, the Cold War, and then capital flight continually whittled away the union's numbers and power. Still it bequeathed an alternative model of union struggle that continues to inspire current union activists.

The disparate origins of the union and the legacy of radicalism in the electrical industry contributed to the unique development and decentralized structure of the union. In the early twentieth century, skilled machinists and toolmakers, some of them influenced by socialism and other forms of radical insurgency, faced the twin tools of scientific management and political repression, which weakened their ability to control conditions on the shop floor and establish strong unions. After World War I, the industry leaders General Electric and Westinghouse established control through company unions and corporate welfare programs. While these promised increased benefits for cooperation with the production regime, only a small segment of workers benefited from these promises. The oligopoly, like much of the appliance and radio industry, relied on wage rates produced by a political economy that depended on a constant surge of young workers, including significant numbers of young women, and high turnover to reduce costs. Workers resumed their efforts to organize as conditions plummeted in the 1930s. Among radio workers, NRA-era organizing established federal labor unions directly affiliated to the American Federation of Labor (AFL). This group, led by James Carey, sought to form a coalition to take on the industry and rebelled when the AFL sought to force them into a skilled trades union but without equal voting rights. At GE and Westinghouse, workers sought to take over company unions by running for office on union-oriented platforms. Another group of workers in the machine industry, affiliated with the International Association of Machinists, grew dissatisfied with that union's lackluster representation, joined the (UE) in 1937. Enrolling working people across the United States and Canada employed at such companies as GE, Westinghouse, General Motors Electrical, RCA, and Sylvania, as well as numerous independent shops, the UE attained a peak membership of 700,000 during World War II.

The structure set up at the founding convention and elaborated in the next 10 years directed the UE toward a grassroots style of unionism. The UE created a structure and recruited leadership that embodied more of the qualities of the decentralized

local movements that gave life to the CIO than most other CIO internationals did. Each local union of the UE was relatively autonomous from the district and national office. District directors were elected by the district convention or through direct election, not appointed. The officers of the international were prohibited from making more than the highest paid worker. All union negotiation committees were elected; contracts were ratified by referendum; and strikes were called and concluded with membership votes. The UE shop steward system sought vigorous representation on the shop floor. Official policy suggested a shop steward for every company foreman. Its culture of organizing and representation encouraged group grievances and shop-floor activism, working to rule, on-the-job slowdowns, and other forms of collective action inherited from the early twentieth-century radical organizing tradition. A recent study shows that more UE contracts empowered workers on such issues as the right to strike, management prerogatives, and grievance procedure than those of the USWA and UAW, the other large CIO unions.

A variety of ideological perspectives flourished and competed for the loyalties of members from the outset of the union's history, but the Left held the prime leadership positions at the national level. Carey, who became the first president of the organization, was a relatively conservative Catholic who believed in industrial unionism but was deeply influenced by notions of collaboration and efficiency. A significant number of leaders were radicals who were or had been members of the Communist party, Socialist party, or Industrial Workers of the World. The UE's constitution ensured the right to membership regardless of political beliefs, and this provision created a culture that allowed leftists to protect their positions. Julius Emspak and James Matles, the two other leading officials in the early years, had been associated with the Communist party but sought to hide their radical affiliations in order to ensure the survival of the union. But in District 8, headquartered in St. Louis, open Communist party member William Sentner was directly elected by the membership. Because it grew to represent so many workers, it was the most important union in the CIO influenced by radical perspectives.

Among the CIO unions, the UE was an important advocate for female workers' rights. In part this was due to the significant number of female workers in the electrical and machine-manufacturing field, but the influence of feminism within the Communist party, which in turn influenced a significant number of the union's leaders, also contributed to this development. During World War II, the union not only fought for equal pay for female workers, but also argued in a landmark War Labor Board case that most of the

jobs that women held were paid at artificially low rates, a challenge that preceded the women's rights struggle for comparable-worth demands by decades. One of the UE's staffers in the immediate postwar era was Betty Friedan, who by the 1960s was a leading advocate of the middle-class feminist movement of the 1960s. But in the context of the UE's culture, Friedan's pamphlets for the union placed working-class women at the center of an argument to change a workplace regime that undervalued women's work.

International politics and the resurgence of the right wing in the postwar era was a significant factor in the development of the union's politics and its factional rifts. Critics within and outside the union argued that the leadership conformed to the Communist party line on foreign policy issues. The right wing originated the argument that continued to influence political and scholarly discussion of the union for a generation: That the union was not a legitimate trade union, but rather a front for Soviet power in the United States that sacrificed workers interests to those of Moscow's. Later scholarship would point out that there was little evidence for these views. For instance when the Communist Party (CP) opposed U.S. involvement in World War II, the UE had not authorized any strikes. The UE's no-strike pledge during World War II was in line with the CIO's. It was no matter. In a culture unique in the Western World where radicals hid their political affiliations from workers, the idea that a secret cabal was in control of the union made the union particularly vulnerable. The high degree of local autonomy that characterized the union also made it practically impossible for autocratic style and repression of rebels, which in this case meant the right wing. Carey after 1940 became the spokesman for this group. Carey was ousted from the presidency in the union largely because he had alienated even the right wing by union negotiations' blunders. But by then he had been appointed secretary of the CIO, from which position he sought to keep the leadership of the UE from influence in the direction of the federation.

After the war an internal faction, the UE members for Democratic Action (UEMDA), sought to oust the Left from leadership. But without outside assistance, this group would not have met much success. Catholic anticommunism was an important influence among many workers in the faction, and labor priests who sought to purge the Left of influence in the UE played a major role in formulating policy, though they sought to avoid publicity. Father Charles Owen Rice of Pittsburgh used his contacts around the country to bring the UEMDA together and coordinated the first meeting. (Rice later expressed deep regrets for his involvement in purging

the labor movement of its most militant members). The Association of Catholic Trade Unionists provided the largest and best-organized group for the UE right wing; across the country the Catholic church intervened strenuously on the UEMDA's behalf. Another influence was that of Socialists whose factional disputes with the CP Left in other unions accelerated their anti-UE agenda. Socialist involvement helped mitigate the concerns of those who worried about Catholic church involvement and made liberals more comfortable with the idea that the purge was not a reactionary movement. However despite critical press support for the right-wing campaign, the internal movement was mostly unsuccessful between 1946 and 1949. If not for the influence of state repression and CIO efforts to purge the union, the internal efforts would not have been successful. The CIO refused to halt raids by other affiliates, especially the United Auto Workers. The UE's effectiveness was drained by these efforts, which escalated after the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, whose non-Communist affidavit provisions prevented the UE from being placed on union election or decertification ballots. The issue came to a head when the UE demanded that the CIO stop the raiding and boycotted the 1949 convention in response. The CIO in turn expelled the UE and nine other unions they accused of being controlled by the CP. It also set up a rival union, the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE), and appointed Carey as its leader. The CIO spent over a million dollars in campaigns to aid the IUE in wresting workers away from the UE. The UE held onto much of its base in machinery, but the heavy-manufacturing sector split between the two unions. Other unions also continued raiding, and this lent itself powerfully to arguments for relenting in order to become a legitimate union. Throughout all of this the state apparatus of repression, including FBI, House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), and other agencies, kept up a steady drumbeat of attack, joined by a style of yellow journalism that was difficult to counter. When critical union elections were held or strikes were taking place, government investigations of Communists' influence in UE often coincided. The accusations gained more salience as the electrical and machine industry became the heart of the defense industry in the postwar. The union's presence in the industry was considered a "dagger at the heart of our industrial system" according to the Senate's Internal Security subcommittee. By the 1950s, the Atomic Energy Commission ordered GE to refuse to accept the UE as a bargaining agent in any of its plants. As early as 1954, many were taking the initiative to defect to other unions. By the 1960, the UE's membership fell to 58,000.

The weakened state of the union and the fact that the power was split between two unions made it difficult to bargain against GE and Westinghouse or to combat the capital flight that dogged the union in the postwar era. Many predicted the demise of the UE, but it survived and continued to articulate an understanding of global capitalism that was different than most of the AFL-CIO unions. But the UE continued to express an alternative union that won respect among some quarters from the 1960s to the present. In the 1960s, it was at the forefront of an argument about a shorter hours movement. It was host to labor cartoonists Fred Wright, Mike Konopacki, and Gary Huck, whose work epitomized an anticorporate culture that the UE refused to accept. It devoted significant parts of its budget to organizing and education and sought to educate its members to the workings of global capitalism and the need to unite across borders. It initiated cross-border organizing with Mexican workers in the Frente Autentico del Trabajo (FAT), collaborating in organizing and educational projects. It was a major force behind the organization of the Labor party, arguing that the AFL-CIO alliance with the Democratic party had failed American workers. It sought a community-based style of organizing in contrast to the trendy blitz organizing of the AFL-CIO, which by the early twenty-first century produced some results in the Chicago-Wisconsin corridor.

ROSEMARY FEURER

UNITED FARM WORKERS OF AMERICA

The United Farm Workers of America (UFW) represents the most significant and enduring effort to unionize agricultural labor in the United States. Organizing farm workers presented special challenges for the labor movement. Workers were predominately nonwhite, seasonal, migrant, oftentimes from another country, undocumented, and marginalized. The ethnic and racial composition of the workforce has changed, including over time Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Hindus, Arabs, African-American, and displaced migrants from the Dust Bowl, among others. Since the 1940s, the majority of farm workers have been Mexican and of Mexican heritage. Regardless of ethnic background, agricultural workers experienced low wages, poor working conditions, inferior housing, limited benefits, poverty, and racism. Despite fierce opposition from employers, workers protested and joined unions to improve their circumstances. By and large the efforts were short-lived, often not

surviving beyond the harvest period. Emerging in the 1960s, more than a century after the earliest agricultural discontent, the UFW has managed to survive over 40 years of efforts to defeat it.

Early Labor Protests

Although attempts to organize agriculture did occur in the nineteenth century, they met with harsh resistance and were brief. Chinese labor was critical to the agricultural development of California. Racially, culturally, and linguistically distinct, the Chinese were identified as a cheap and docile labor source. Rejected by the white-dominated labor groups that supported skilled workers, the Chinese formed their own associations and engaged in strikes. During the depression of the 1870s, they experienced intense racism from broad sectors of society, including the Workingmen's party, which became a strong advocate for anti-Chinese legislation in California. This agitation culminated in the imposition of local and state restrictions and the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 by the Hayes administration. Growers searched for another compliant group of workers to replace them. Vulnerable and separated from the rest of society, the Japanese also encountered the same exploitation and hostility. Like the Chinese, they also organized associations and engaged in labor militancy, using strikes, slowdowns, and other tactics to improve their conditions. These actions were localized and did not create a permanent political base to achieve their goals beyond the harvest season. As in the case with the Chinese, Japanese labor protests encountered racist resistance in California and at the national level. In 1907, the administration of Theodore Roosevelt and the government of Japan concluded the Gentlemen's Agreement to restrict the immigration of skilled and unskilled laborers to the United States.

Another wave of labor protests erupted in the years prior to U.S. involvement in World War I. This labor strife centered around the struggles of the predominately white hops workers who rose up to achieve better conditions. In contrast to the Chinese and the Japanese, the well-known Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or Wobblies) orchestrated this uprising. The memorable 1913 Wheatland strike, deaths, and trial led to a government investigation and improvements in the fields. In addition to wage increases, workers called for the provision of drinking water, better sanitation in the camps, decent housing, and an 8-hour day. Better conditions proved temporary with the subsequent repression of the IWW and the onset of World War I.

The U.S. entry into the war created a labor shortage and consequently large-scale immigration of laborers from Mexico, who came to make up over 50% of migratory workers. Growers perceived them as a seasonal and an easily controllable work force and argued for the restrictions imposed by the Immigration Act of 1917 to be lifted to fill their insatiable need for labor. During the 1920s, agricultural landowners also began to recruit Filipino workers to satisfy their persistent demands for an abundant and submissive workforce. Filipinos were young, single, male, and could compete with Mexican workers in the event of labor unrest. Despite growers' beliefs that a competitive, ethnically divided workforce would quell labor troubles, Mexican and Filipino workers did strike for higher wages, better conditions, and the eradication of the derided contract-labor system. Growers preferred this arrangement because it removed them from dealing directly with workers and from being held responsible for workers' compensation and complaints. Workers objected to the system because it made them dependent on an intermediary who charged workers a fee for employment, housing, transportation, and other items and held a great potential for abuse and fraud. Increasing militancy in the late 1920s convinced growers to take action and call for stricter enforcement of immigration laws and quotas, and then to repatriate and later deport troublesome workers. As the impact of the Great Depression of the 1930s grew and mass unemployment created a surplus agricultural labor, these tactics accelerated.

Labor Protest during the Depression

The Depression decade recorded the most widespread outbreak of labor militancy in agriculture up to that point in U.S. history. A number of organizations participated in the upsurge of protest, including the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union (CAWIU), an affiliate of the Communist party. The CAWIU provided the leadership for the majority of the strikes in the early 1930s. Contrary to other labor organizations during this time, it was willing to work with migrant, nonwhites, including Mexican-heritage, Filipino, and black workers and organize on an industrywide basis. Directing over 20 strikes, including the well-known 1933 cotton strike in the San Joaquin Valley, which drew some 18,000 workers, the union not only pressed for better wages, but also for an end to the labor-contractor system; decent housing, drinking water, and camp sanitation. It faced vehement opposition from growers and their



Agricultural workers bunching carrots, Yuma County, Arizona. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF33-013258-M4].

allies, who resorted to such tactics as eviction, strike-breakers, harassment, arrests, and violence. Employers coordinated these activities through the formation of the Associated Farmers, a collection of vigilante groups whose goal was ruthlessly to suppress labor activity. The protracted turmoil caused state government to launch an investigation and to press for reforms. Although red-baiting, the lack of a union leadership well grounded in the nature of agriculture, and its relative isolation from the trade union movement in California weakened the CAWIU, it did achieve significant gains and provided an example of strategies for future organizers.

The CAWIU prepared the way for the emergence of another organizing campaign led by the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA), an affiliate of the Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO) during the late 1930s. The UCAPAWA's activities occurred in a more positive environment toward labor, ushered in by the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1935 during Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first term in office. The law guaranteed workers the right to join unions and to engage in collective bargaining with their employers. It prohibited employers from interfering with unionization efforts, from forming company unions, from showing preference toward one union over another, and from discriminating against union members. The act established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to oversee the election process and to investigate violations of the

law on the part of both employers and unions. The NLRA primarily benefited the industrial labor movement; it intentionally excluded agricultural workers. Nevertheless it provided tacit approval for their union aspirations. Even with this encouraging development, the establishment of a permanent farm labor union encountered great difficulty. The UCAPAWA achieved its greatest success with cannery and packing-shed workers but faced a greater challenge with field workers. Spontaneous strikes, which the union felt compelled to support, drained its resources. Its white, urban, educated, and more traditional leadership struggled to relate to its multicultural constituency, including Dust Bowl migrants and Mexican and Filipino workers. And despite the example in the industrial sector, agricultural employers felt no legal constraints to cease their activities to resist unionization. Growers evicted striking workers from labor camps, obtained antipicketing injunctions, harassed and assaulted workers, imported strikebreakers, created blacklists of union supporters, refused to negotiate with union representatives, and rebuffed mediation offers by government agencies. Finally the outbreak of World War II undermined union efforts.

The *Bracero* Era, 1942–1964

World War II caused a labor shortage and the imposition of a labor system that dominated agricultural

labor relations for over 20 years. Beginning in 1942 as a wartime measure, the so-called *bracero* (field-hands) program, an international agreement between Mexico and the United States, authorized the temporary importation of Mexican citizens to work during the intensive harvest season. The agreement stipulated procedures for the recruitment, employment, and return to Mexico of these guestworkers. In the initial agreement the United States, reimbursed by growers, paid for *braceros'* roundtrip transportation and living expenses in transit. Prevailing wage and piece rates, already established in the area, determined the compensation for the temporary workers. Separate clauses addressed meals, housing, and medical care. Ten percent of the *braceros'* earnings were transferred to an account in the Agricultural Credit Bank in Mexico, available when the worker returned to Mexico. Other provisions protected workers from discrimination and abuse. Significantly the agreement stated that *bracero* workers could not replace domestic workers, could not be used to depress wages, and could not be used as strikebreakers in the event of a labor dispute. Although this arrangement was intended as a temporary emergency measure, in fact the general outlines of this program remained in place long after the war. Public Law 78, passed in 1951 during the Truman presidency, institutionalized the program on a more permanent basis. It was renewed until 1964. The *bracero* program demonstrated the most long-term, systematic cooperation between government and growers in U.S. history. It provided tremendous benefits for agribusiness; it worked to the great disadvantage of domestic workers and labor unions during the time it was in effect.

The domestic farm labor force endured severe consequences as a result of the *bracero* program. This arrangement displaced non-*bracero* workers who had been leaving the migrant stream to establish more permanent residences and more stable employment in rural towns. Some moved to urban areas in search of work. Those who stayed found increasing competition for their jobs and a depressed wage scale. Working conditions declined with the introduction of the short-handle hoe and production quotas. Growers lacked incentives to improve living conditions. Threatened with replacement, domestic workers increasingly found it difficult to lodge complaints about their treatment.

The *bracero* program seriously undermined the unionization efforts of domestic farm workers. In contrast with the militancy of the 1930s, this period witnessed a decline in labor organizing activities. But even with the growers holding an advantageous

position, there were some union initiatives mounted immediately after the war. The National Farm Labor Union (NFLU), chartered by the AFL in 1946, launched a union drive. Led by H. L. Mitchell, the union organized several notable strikes against major agribusiness companies, such as DiGiorgio, where workers demanded a raise of 10 cents per hour, seniority rights, and union recognition. The workforce included domestic workers, undocumented laborers, and *braceros*. Although initially supportive of the walkout, under pressure from their employer, *braceros* and undocumented laborers returned to work, and the strike was broken. Another job action in 1949 involving several thousand cotton pickers was significant for the participation of a young César Chávez on a roving picket line. The protest won its modest demand that a wage cut be rescinded. The labor dispute illustrated the impact of the *bracero* program on depressing wages in agriculture. Although the NFLU achieved only moderate success in the fields, it helped focus attention on the deleterious impact of the *bracero* program on domestic farm laborers. Union staff, such as Ernesto Galarza, collected evidence of its damaging consequences and helped create the pressure for the termination of Public Law 78 that regulated the program.

Toward the end of the *bracero* era, the AFL, which had merged with the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations), financed another organizing effort. Established in 1959, the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC) carried out hundreds of strikes from its founding until the mid-1960s. It accomplished this feat while confronting several obstacles.

First it faced ambivalence from the AFL-CIO, which preferred a status quo in agricultural labor relations that favored protecting existing collective-bargaining agreements in the distribution, packing, and processing of agricultural products to the detriment of field workers. Second the top leadership of AWOC consisted of individuals who had no expertise in organizing farm laborers. Despite these difficulties AWOC kept the focus on the destructive *bracero* program and the increasing farm labor discontent it fomented. The AWOC was joined in its attack on the program by a growing alliance that went beyond the mainstream labor establishment to encompass religious organizations, liberal political groups, and the emerging civil rights movement. This broad coalition finally ended the *bracero* program in 1964 during the administration of Lyndon Johnson. Although AWOC left a mixed legacy, it proved to be a critical factor in the resurgence of farm labor activism in the mid-1960s.

The Revival of Farm Labor Activism in the 1960s

The struggle to unionize California's farm workers entered a new stage in the early 1960s in Delano, California. This grassroots fight, ideologically linked to the civil rights movement, started with the founding of the National Farm Workers' Association (NFWA) by the charismatic César Chávez and his passionate associate and former AWOC member, Dolores Huerta. The two colleagues had acquired valuable leadership skills and experience in connection with the Community Service Organization (CSO), a Mexican-American self-help group that had surfaced in the heightened civic mindedness and civil rights consciousness that developed in southwestern barrios in the aftermath of World War II. When the cautious and urban-based CSO declined to back an initiative to organize farm workers, Chávez and then Huerta left the group to devote themselves to addressing the problems of agricultural laborers. The two intended to spend years building a strong membership base before directly confronting agribusiness.

The 1965 Delano grape strike interrupted their careful planning. Although the Delano strike marks the emergence of the NFWA, it was actually prompted by a predominately Filipino AWOC local, led by Larry Itliong, Ben Guines, and Andy Imutan. A veteran labor activist, Itliong had participated in several strikes during the 1930s and had also served as a vice-president of a UCAPAWA local. When the AWOC leaders asked the NFWA to honor their walkout, the NFWA membership voted to support it. As the protest grew, it became increasingly clear that the NFWA enjoyed stronger backing. Consequently the two organizations merged into the UFWOC (United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee) in 1966.

Even with the two entities joining forces, the combined effort confronted the staggering power and resources of agribusiness. Initial actions had yielded important contracts with winery grape growers, like Schenley and Almaden, and a contract with a major table-grape producer, DiGiorgio, which was soon lost when the company chose to sell its holdings in order to negate the agreement. Although the UFWOC won the enthusiasm of the farm worker population, it was apparent that harvest strikes and picketing would not be able to overcome the financial resources and influence of corporate agriculture. It was evident that the table-grape industry would use all of its clout to resist unionization. Such entrenched power called for a more creative response and a massive demonstration of strength to challenge it. Framing its struggle in the

broader context of a social movement and forging its links with civil rights protest and the philosophy of nonviolence espoused by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., the union mobilized to reach a nationwide audience. The UFWOC promoted marches, demonstrations, rallies, masses, and fasts to capture the attention of the public. The union leadership issued urgent pleas to students, church groups, civil rights activists, and women's organizations, as well as to urban unions to support a national grape boycott.

Labor, religious, community, student, civil rights, and political advocates responded by volunteering to staff donated office space to mount an effective boycott. Striking farm worker families also packed up their meager belongings and headed to boycott centers that were springing up across the United States and then spreading to Canada and even Europe. Often traveling as family groups in caravans, the experience transformed agricultural laborers, many of whom experienced the civic and political life of the nation for the first time. The public appeals of farm worker men, women, and children picketing at grocery stores struck a responsive chord with middle-class consumers, especially housewives, who saw these activities as part of the broader struggle enveloping the country. At the same time *La Causa*, the farm worker cause, became an important symbol and expression of Mexican-American civil rights.

The convergence of so many reformist constituencies applied extraordinary pressure on agribusiness, culminating in the historic grape contracts in 1970. The agreements gave union recognition to the UFWOC, raised wages, improved working conditions, provided benefits, regulated pesticide use, and established the union hiring hall to replace the debased labor-contractor system. The UFWOC had little time to relish its achievement before it faced a strike by restive lettuce workers in northern California. The conflict became increasingly violent with the intrusion of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) into the dispute, a strategy that growers had also employed in the UFWOC's early years. The teamsters negotiated "sweetheart" contracts on more favorable terms with the vegetable industry. Table-grape growers also saw this tactic as a means to undermine the union, called the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), when it became a chartered affiliate of the AFL-CIO in 1972, whose 3-year contracts were due for renewal in 1973. Gallo winery also balked at renewing its contract. A violent confrontation ensued as assaults, mass arrests, and deaths filled newspapers and TV reports. The union intensified the boycott to compel a solution to the turmoil. The upheaval prompted

state government to mediate a settlement between growers and the UFW. Under the sponsorship of Governor Jerry Brown, the Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) became law in 1975.

The passage of the ALRA introduced a new era in labor relations in agriculture. Similar to NLRB founded 40 years earlier, the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) was established to supervise secret-ballot elections, to be held quickly, and to adjudicate violations of the law, grievances, and unfair labor practices. The union focused its resources on organizing workers. After 5 months of operation, the ALRB had conducted 423 elections involving the UFW, the teamsters, as well as the no-union option, and nearly 1,000 charges of unfair labor practices. Although the UFW was successful in winning a majority of the campaigns, growers frequently used the legal process to hold up certifications of the UFW as the collective bargaining agent for their employees. These delays led to innumerable frustrations on the part of the union and workers whose elections were left unresolved, sometimes for years. Furthermore as part of the compromise legislation, the UFW had given up its most effective tool against corporate agriculture, the secondary boycott.

While the ALRA did reduce the violence in the fields, it also hindered organizing efforts. Furthermore the UFW faced escalating internal discord regarding strategy and criticism of Chávez's rigid leadership style. The presidential election of Ronald Reagan in 1980s and later the governorship of George Deukmejian in California, both strong proponents of corporate agriculture, signaled a shift toward a more antilabor stance. In this unfavorable environment, the union looked to direct mail, computer-generated mailings, and the establishment of a radio station to restore its declining membership and sagging fortunes.

The Post-Chávez Era

The UFW suffered a startling blow with the sudden death of Chávez in 1993, during his return to San Luis, Arizona, to testify in a legal suit against growers. The unexpected demise of Chávez at age 66 raised questions regarding the survival of the union after 30 years of his leadership. Contrary to fears of its collapse, Chávez's passing revitalized the union, since his son-in-law, Arturo Rodríguez, succeeded him. A native of Texas, his father was a sheet metal worker and his mother a schoolteacher. The college-educated Rodríguez met and married Linda "Lu" Chávez while organizing the boycott in Detroit, Michigan. After assuming the presidency, he initiated

an effort to reverse the decline in union membership. On the first anniversary of Chávez's death, he coordinated a march to Sacramento commemorating the momentous 1966 pilgrimage led by the revered leader. He also launched an aggressive legislative and organizing campaign to unionize farm workers. His efforts resulted in over 25 contracts for workers in mushroom, rose, citrus, strawberry, wine grape, and vegetable companies. The contracts covered workers in California and also in Washington State and Florida. Under his leadership, the UFW continued to lobby against a renewed guest worker program and for amnesty for undocumented farm workers and their families. Although having less membership than its peak achieved in the 1970s, the UFW currently claims over 25,000 members.

Despite its hopeful beginning, in the view of some critics, the UFW has not fulfilled its earlier promise. The unionization of farm workers in the twenty-first century has not found a receptive audience in the conservative era of Republican President George W. Bush. The ALRA continues to impede field organizing. And legislative gains are achieved by persistent and drawn out compromises that do not contain the drama of a strike or boycott. While falling short of the highest expectations, the UFW has won important benefits for agricultural workers, including wages in 2000 that ranged from \$7 to \$8, well above the federal and state minimum wages of \$5.15 and \$5.75, respectively. The activism of the UFW forced growers to maintain higher wages as a means to forestall union organizing. While improvements in negotiating contracts, obtaining better working conditions, adequate health insurance, and the enforcement of existing laws require attention, the UFW has defied the odds and outlasted all other previous unionizing efforts in agriculture.

MARGARET ROSE

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See also Agricultural Labor Relations Act (1975); Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union; Chávez, César Estrada; Delano Grape Strike; Huerta, Dolores C.

UNITED FOOD AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS' UNION

With just under 1.4 million members, the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union (UFCW) is the largest private-sector union in the American labor movement and the nation's third largest labor organization. Formed in 1979 by the merger of the Retail Clerks' International Union and the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen, the UFCW's experience reflects many of the complex challenges that have confronted the labor movement over the last three decades.

The merger of the retail clerks (735,000 members) and the meatcutters (500,000 members) occurred at a time of increasing union consolidation, with the newly formed UFCW representing the largest merger to date in American labor history. The merger was prompted by growing consolidation in the meatpacking industry that had diminished the ranks of the meatcutters and undercut the union's effectiveness. These developments had led the United Packinghouse Workers of America

(UPWA), a militant Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) union that had organized most of the nation's packinghouse workers during the 1930s, to merge with the meatcutters just a decade earlier, while the retail clerks had also absorbed several smaller unions prior to the merger. The merger was regarded as a way to unify two unions that often had common employers, were facing industries bent on consolidation and reducing union bargaining power, and had frequently battled each other in disputes over jurisdiction. William Wynn, the retail clerks' leader, assumed the presidency of the new union, which also included workers employed in health care and manufacturing and subsequently added smaller unions that represented barbers and beauticians, insurance agents, chemical workers, and retail employees.

Although the differences can be exaggerated, the merger of the retail clerks and the meatcutters brought together two distinctive union cultures. The clerks were very much within the craft tradition of American unionism, negotiated mostly on a local market basis, and often tangled with other unions over jurisdiction. Their leadership structure was largely staff driven and not oriented toward extensive rank-and-file involvement. In contrast, the meatcutters union, and especially its packinghouse division, were more steeped in an industrial union approach. They bargained master and pattern agreements and coordinated centralized bargaining with rank-and-file participation on both the shopfloor and in strike actions. As the larger partner in the merged union, the clerks occupied the new organization's major leadership positions, and their approach to union governance dominated.

The new union was quickly tested amid a determined employer offensive to gain concessions in bargaining during the 1980s. In the wake of the breaking of the air traffic controllers' strike in 1981, a steep recession, and rising competitive pressures, many private-sector unions faced demands for contract concessions from their employers. The UFCW was one of the unions most severely affected by these developments, and it was directly challenged by employers in the meatpacking industry. Since the end of World War II, meatpacking had largely been governed by master and pattern agreements encompassing most of the industry's major employers, and workers enjoyed wages and benefits that were superior to those of most manufacturing workers. By the early 1980s, however, the meatpacking industry was reeling from a series of structural changes that threatened to undermine the union's ability to maintain the standards it had fashioned over three decades of collective bargaining.

Employers began to specialize by product and introduced technological changes that required less

skill and fewer workers. New entrants to the industry were determined to cut labor costs and operate non-union whenever possible. Due to consolidations and mergers, the industry began to fragment, with new plants dispersing into rural areas that lacked union traditions and were harder to organize. As a result meatpacking employers insisted on wage and benefit freezes, threatened to close plants, and attempted to free themselves from master and pattern agreements. In a strategy that it later acknowledged amounted to one of "controlled retreat," the UFCW leadership often agreed to concessions in an effort to keep plants open, stabilize the industry, and retain national and regional agreements. However many workers, especially those from old UPWA locals, began to question this strategy as demands for concessions from meat packers mounted. This disagreement exploded on the national stage in 1985 during a bitter strike at the Hormel Company in Austin, Minnesota.

The strike waged at Hormel by UFCW Local P-9 became one of the defining labor events of the 1980s. Hormel, which had built a new plant in Austin in 1982, sought major wage, benefit, and contract language concessions from the union. Led by its militant new president, Jim Guyette, Local P-9 rejected this offer, one that had been accepted by other UFCW locals representing Hormel workers. Instead the union hired Ray Rogers, the labor strategist whose corporate campaign had pressured textile giant J. P. Stevens to grant union recognition, to help it launch a multipronged attack on Hormel. The corporate campaign against a bank that had connections to Hormel had a limited effect however, and P-9 went on strike in August 1985. Although the UFCW's national leadership approved the strike, it questioned the efficacy of the corporate campaign and accused P-9 of undermining unity within the union's packing-house division by going it alone.

The strike not only divided the UFCW but also prompted fierce debate within the broader union movement. Local P-9 succeeded in mobilizing its membership, actively sought and received substantial support from unions and community organizations throughout the country, and sent out roving pickets who were able to persuade some workers at other Hormel plants not to go to work. Meanwhile the American Federation of Labor-CIO top leadership sided with the UFCW, while union President William Wynn and P-9's Jim Guyette, along with others from both sides, engaged in a vitriolic public debate about the local union's strategy and its implications. In P-9's view it was offering an alternative approach for the entire labor movement that had the potential to counter concession bargaining by widening the field of battle and making employers pay a social and

economic price for their actions. The UFCW leadership saw P-9's actions as badly timed amid a hostile political and economic climate and feared that the corporate campaign and strike would nullify efforts to keep national bargaining intact. After striking workers were arrested at Hormel's headquarters in March 1986, the UFCW's leadership placed P-9 under trusteeship, removed its leaders, and settled the strike largely along the lines of the company's prestrike offer. Two decades later the Hormel strike continues to generate controversy in labor circles, especially following what many observers cite as an ongoing decline in wages and working conditions in meatpacking and the UFCW's uphill struggle to re-establish its bargaining power in the industry.

The UFCW has also faced similar challenges in the supermarket industry where the bulk of its membership resides. During the 1980s and beyond, the industry has experienced numerous mergers and consolidations, penetration of the market by foreign-owned firms, and the rise of powerful new competitors in the form of superstores and discount warehouse clubs. Seeking to control labor costs and counter rising nonunion competition, supermarkets pressed during the 1980s for two-tier wage and benefit arrangements and gained reluctant union approval for these arrangements in many cases. The UFCW still retains bargaining power in many urban markets, but the supermarket labor force has bifurcated into a small group of full-time workers with good wages and benefits and a much larger cohort of part-time workers whose circumstances are less favorable and whose ranks turn over frequently. The looming presence of Wal-Mart, which as the nation's largest corporation is rapidly expanding its retail grocery capabilities while staunchly resisting unionization, has exerted a profound influence on collective bargaining and has emerged as the UFCW's most formidable adversary.

These circumstances have accelerated over the last 5 years and resulted in some major UFCW supermarket strikes. The most notable was a 2003 work stoppage involving nearly 70,000 workers in southern California that was the longest in the union's history. Citing Wal-Mart's plans to build superstores in the region, Safeway, Kroger, and Albertson's sought major concessions on health care and establishment of a two-tier wage and benefit structure for new employees, steps the companies claimed were needed to enhance their future competitiveness. After the union struck Safeway, the employers locked the remaining workers out. The union established spirited picket lines that attracted considerable public support and was able to affect Safeway in particular by pressuring the company through sympathetic pension

fund holders. The strike did succeed in preserving health care benefits for incumbent workers, but the union ended up accepting a two-tier system for new hires. The strike garnered widespread public attention, highlighted Wal-Mart's profound influence on the collective-bargaining process, and underscored how health care has emerged as the defining labor-management issue of early twenty-first century labor relations. Yet the strike was widely regarded as a setback for the UFCW, and some critics charged that the union's tactics lacked the scale and aggressiveness needed to defeat a group of determined employers. Perhaps not coincidentally Douglas Dority, who had succeeded William Wynn as the union's president in 1994, announced his retirement just days after the walkout's conclusion.

The union has had some notable successes however both in organizing new workers and waging high-profile campaigns against some of the nation's most prominent corporations. Against considerable odds the UFCW has made consistent efforts to organize in the South over the last three decades, especially in the poultry- and fish-processing industries. It won an especially significant victory in 1986 by organizing Delta Pride, a Mississippi-based facility that ranked as the largest catfish-processing plant in the world and employed a workforce of mostly African-American women. In the nation's expanding poultry industry that is dominated by such large corporations as Tyson Foods and Perdue Farms, the union has engaged in a broad outreach strategy by supporting "poultry justice alliances" that bring together workers, farmers, environmental, and community organizations in seeking more responsible corporate behavior. This growing commitment to alliances with community organizations resulted in an important triumph in 2002, when the UFCW joined with an Omaha, Nebraska, community affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation to organize workers at a ConAgra meatpacking plant, many of whom were Latino.

These initiatives recognize the growing diversity of the workforce in the UFCW's key jurisdictions and the need to mobilize broadly based community support on behalf of workers who often perform dangerous jobs under trying conditions. The union has focused on several issues in this regard. It has been a leading advocate for better safety and health conditions for workers in industries like meatpacking and chicken processing where increased line speeds have often led to high injury and accident rates. The union has also pursued an aggressive legal strategy in filing or supporting litigation charging such companies as Perdue and Tyson with wage and hour violations. These cases have resulted in settlements totaling millions, providing direct benefits to workers

while spotlighting employment policies that subvert the law.

The UFCW's most critical struggle however is with Wal-Mart, the world's largest corporation, whose power and influence have profoundly affected economic, labor, and community relations on a global basis. Since the late 1990s, the UFCW has devoted increasing attention to Wal-Mart, aligning itself with community efforts to halt its expansion, publicizing the company's relentless and often illegal opposition to unions, and attempting to organize Wal-Mart workers. These efforts have yielded limited results however. The union's first organizing success, an election victory in 2000 at the meat department of a Texas Wal-Mart, was blunted by the company's decision to close the department a week after the vote. And in 2004, a victory at a Wal-Mart in Quebec resulted in the company's announcement to shut down the store a year later.

Under its new president Joe Hanson, a meatcutter who replaced Douglas Dority in 2004, the UFCW is reshaping its Wal-Mart strategy. In 2005, Hanson and the UFCW joined other major unions in leaving the AFL-CIO and forming Change to Win, a new labor federation that has pledged to commit millions to organizing and providing the UFCW with both resources and technical assistance to bolster its efforts at Wal-Mart. Whether or not this alliance with some of the labor movement's most visionary unions will prompt broader changes in the UFCW's organizational culture remains to be seen. It is certain however that the future prospects of both the UFCW and the American labor movement will hinge on the union's ability to build a social movement capable of organizing at Wal-Mart and restoring private-sector unionism to a place of power and authority in U.S. social and economic affairs.

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UNITED GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

The United Government Employees (UGE), an independent union founded in 1936, fought for a variety of causes on behalf of its African-American members who were employees of the federal government and District of Columbia. It emerged during a period of active union organizing among African-Americans by such groups as the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and the Negro Labor Committee, formed by African-American Socialist Frank Crosswaith and others in 1935. The UGE competed for membership with the United Federal Workers of America-CIO, which also encouraged African-Americans to join, unlike its American Federation of Labor counterpart, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). The AFGE locals expressed apathy, and often hostility, toward black membership during the 1930s and 1940s. Although UGE's members represented workers in all occupations, it had a strong following among employees in the lowest government grades. One of its first initiatives was an effort to increase the pay of various low-wage workers, including custodians. Within a year it succeeded in raising their salaries from a minimum of \$1,080 per year to \$1,200. In 1938, it supported a minimum wage of \$1,500 a year for all federal and district workers, along with automatic promotions, extension of the merit system to employees in New Deal emergency agencies, an appeal board for civil servants, equal pay for equal work regardless of creed, color, or race, and the appointment of African-American administrators to the Civil Service Commission as well as to the executive office of the president. In 1939, the union lobbied President Franklin D. Roosevelt to appoint an African-American to the Supreme Court.

The latter objectives reflected the priorities of UGE's founder and president, Edgar G. Brown, who was a Negro affairs specialist in the Civilian Conservation Corps. Brown, a Chicago native and World War I veteran, was the only president of UGE and his personality guided the organization. Flamboyant and outspoken, Brown avidly supported

the New Deal and President Roosevelt during the 1930s. He became part of the black cabinet, a group of African-American administrators in the Roosevelt administration who met regularly and was very active in Chicago politics, unsuccessfully running for numerous local and national offices from the 1920s to the early 1950s.

Brown and his union focused on the need of the federal government to hire more African-Americans in prominent positions, and to raise the pay and improve the working conditions of the lowest paid federal workers, many of whom were African-American. It also saw its mission as helping other poorly paid workers. For instance the union advocated training for domestic workers, taking 31 women from federal relief roles and teaching them home economics and domestic management in an effort to elevate their marketable skills. Intense lobbying by UGE President Brown resulted in a provision dedicating money to this program as part of a \$3.7 billion work-relief measure passed in 1938. The UGE also pushed for nondiscrimination policies and put its weight behind the establishment of a training program for African-American pilots during World War II.

Like other general government unions, such as the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) and AFGE, UGE did not favor use of the strike. It had significant membership among Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers, but when WPA workers struck in 1939, UGE leaders refused to sanction the work stoppage. Instead UGE President Brown called a national conference in Chicago for all WPA workers to discuss pay scales, especially regional wage differences, hours, as well as race and political discrimination within the agency. It likewise demonstrated no interest in supporting collective bargaining, preferring, again like NFFE and AFGE, petitions and lobbying Congress. Indeed as president of UGE, Brown testified in front of Congress over 75 times on issues ranging from police protection in DC to wage increases to poll taxes from 1937-1944.

Over 300 people attended UGE's first anniversary ball held in November 1937, and by the time of its 1940 convention, UGE claimed 30,000 members in over 30 states. In 1940, the union called for all-black military divisions, the construction of ships for all-black crews, training programs for black pilots, and black advisers in various agencies, including the War Department and Civil Service Commission. By 1944, however, the union seems to have folded, perhaps because of lack of money and/or membership support. The UGE's infrastructure did not appear to be very strong, and it never provided much evidence

that it had as many members as claimed. Like the National Negro Council, of which Brown was also president, UGE largely seemed to be Brown's organization.

Brown and UGE's support for President Roosevelt defined much of its early work, but over time Brown's political allegiances shifted. In April 1940, Brown attended a CIO conference as a UGE representative. There he found himself booed for defending President Roosevelt's foreign policies and civil rights track record. By 1943, however, he expressed frustration at what he perceived to be President Roosevelt's failure to live up to his promise of racial equality. Brown then threw his support to the Republican party. Although a number of factors contributed to this shift in political loyalty, the failure by Congress to provide a nondiscrimination clause in an economic stabilization measure and President Roosevelt's appointment of James Byrnes as director of the Economic Stabilization Board seemed to provide the impetus for Brown and UGE's break with the Democratic party. Thereafter Brown became a Republican activist, campaigning for Republican candidates and running himself as a Republican candidate for Chicago alderman. Curiously in 1941, former UGE organizer Andrew Wicketts established a new organization for black workers, the National Employees' and Tenants' Union, which was fiercely loyal to President Roosevelt. There is no evidence however that Wicketts built this union to counter Brown and UGE's increasing criticism of the Roosevelt administration. During the short life of UGE, Brown remained focused on UGE's mission to represent federal workers and promote racial equality within the civil service. The UGE succeeded in raising awareness of race discrimination in the federal government and publicizing the plight of many of the civil service's most poorly compensated workers.

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See also **Randolph, A. Philip; United Public Workers of America/United Federal Workers of America**

UNITED HATTERS, CAP, AND MILLINERY WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION

The United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers' International Union (UHCMW) was founded in 1934 when the two leading international unions in the headwear industry amalgamated. These two unions, the craft-oriented United Hatters of North America (UHNA) and the largely Jewish and socialist Cloth Hat, Cap, and Millinery Workers' International Union (CHCMW), had been engaged in jurisdictional warfare on and off for almost two decades. The newly formed UHCMW, led by right-wing Socialist Max Zaritsky, would come to wield a disproportionate degree of influence within the American labor movement considering the union's relatively small size. Zaritsky would play an important role in the founding of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) (although he and his union never left the American Federation of Labor [AFL]), and the UHCMW was frequently cited in the 1940s and 1950s as a model of responsible, anti-Communist, progressive unionism.

The United Hatters of North America was founded in 1896, when the national unions of Hat Makers and Hat Finishers amalgamated. The hatters drew on a long tradition of craft unionism, stretching back to the earliest hatters' unions in the 1820s. The hatters engaged in two major campaigns, the first in opposition to prison labor and the second in favor of the right of unions to encourage the boycotting of nonunion goods. In the late nineteenth century, prison labor became an increasing threat to a number of trades, including that of hat makers. Because of the low wages paid to convicts, many hat makers came to rely on prison labor over traditional sources of labor, leading to widespread unemployment among hatters. The hatters' unions responded with both economic and political measures, calling for boycotts on hat manufacturers who used convict labor and running their own candidates for political office throughout New England on an antiprison labor platform. These campaigns were largely successful, and by the mid-1880s, many states had passed laws banning convicts from making hats.

The hatters' campaign in favor of the boycott however was a resounding failure. In 1902, a local of the UHNA went on strike at the D. E. Loewe & Co. plant in Danbury, Connecticut. The hatters called for a boycott on Loewe's products, and many unions from around the country joined the effort. Then in 1903, Loewe sued the hatters under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, arguing that the call for a boycott was

a conspiracy to restrain trade. The Danbury hatters' case wound through the courts for the next 12 years until it was finally settled by the Supreme Court in 1915. The Court found in favor of Loewe, awarding over 200,000 dollars in damages to the hat manufacturer. This decision placed severe limits on the activities of unions until labor unions were explicitly exempted from the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by the Norris-LaGuardia Act in 1932.

The Cloth Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers are particularly interesting because despite their long history of socialist activism, they proved remarkably resistant to a series of takeover attempts by left-wing organizations. Among the radical Jewish immigrants who worked in the cloth cap industry, the Marxist ideas of German radical Daniel DeLeon were quite popular, but the leadership of the CHCMW repeatedly opposed giving DeLeon and his followers control over the union. This resistance to left-wing leadership re-emerged after the founding of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Initially friendly to the idea of the Wobblies, the CHCMW quickly turned against the radical union and was even forced to defend itself against an IWW dual union. Most importantly however was the staunch anti-Communist leadership of the self-avowed Socialist Max Zaritsky. Zaritsky, who served as a leader in both the CHCMW and the UHCMW from 1911 until his retirement in 1950, violently opposed efforts by Communists to take control of union locals in the hat industry. This anti-Communist orientation would continue even after Zaritsky's retirement, and the UHCMW would go on to take such rather extreme anti-Communist positions as opposing the visit of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev to the United States in 1959.

The decline of the U.S. hat industry during the 1960s caused a dramatic decline in the UHCMW's membership. By the 1980s, the union had less than one-fifth of its membership during the 1940s, and in 1983, the UHCMW joined the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union, which has been succeeded by UNITE!-HERE.

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UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

Throughout much of its long history, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) has been one of the largest and most powerful labor unions in the United States and Canada. The union was among the first to work actively against racism among its members, organize its workers without regard to their craft, and use the legal system and politics to defend its gains in the workplace. The UMWA achieved such significant advancements for mineworkers as the 8-hour day (1898), collective-bargaining rights (1933), health and retirement benefits (1946), and federal coal mine safety and health standards (1969). The union produced many of labor's most significant leaders: John Mitchell, John L. Lewis, Mary "Mother" Jones, William B. Wilson, John Brophy, William Green, Philip Murray, and Richard Trumka.

In the 1930s, the UMWA under the leadership of Lewis led the campaign to organize industrial workers who had been neglected by the craft-based American Federation of Labor (AFL). Lewis and other leaders created the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) as an alternative to the AFL. The CIO quickly organized thousands of workers in the auto, steel, rubber, chemical, and other industries. Therefore the beginnings of many major unions and their leaders have their roots in the UMWA.

In the nineteenth century coal became the major fuel used in homes and much of American industry. Because of the abundance of coal in many sections of the country, there has been an overproduction throughout much of the industry's history. This overproduction has led to periodic economic downturns during which workers lost their jobs, were required to work in unhealthy conditions, and were forced to take pay cuts.

During the early years of the coal industry, miners had a great deal of autonomy in hours worked and amount of coal mined. That autonomy was an issue between miners and mine owners from 1865-1925. Attempts to curtail miner independence as well as disagreements over hours of work and wages were a major impetus for the founding of unions. Coal miners lived in isolated communities where they were at the mercy of mine owners. They were forced to live in company houses, buy goods at company stores, were paid in scrip rather than cash, and were

often cheated in how their coal was weighed. These isolated workers quickly realized that they had to unite for their protection. In order to improve their work conditions, living conditions, and wages, miners created unions. Miners organized first at the local level, then into regional organizations, and finally in large national organizations like the UMWA. Early unions included the American Miners' Association (1861), Workingmen's Benevolent Association (1868), Miners' National Association (1873), the Amalgamated Association of Miners of the United States (1883), and the National Federation of Miners and Mine Workers (1885).

The UMWA was founded in Columbus, Ohio, in January of 1890 through the merger of the National Progressive Union of Miners and Mine Laborers (organized 1888) and National Trade Assembly No. 135 of the Knights of Labor. John B. Rae, a leader of the knights from Pennsylvania was elected as the first president. Rae served for 1 year and was succeeded by John McBride, who served for 2 years before becoming president of the AFL. The union established the *United Mine Workers' Journal* as a vehicle to unify and educate miners and affiliated with the AFL.

The union's constitution barred discrimination based on race, religion, or national origin because the miners realized the destructive nature of those practices and the common divisive practice used by mine owners of playing ethnic groups off against each other. The founders of the union believed that miners and employers could work together to resolve disputes at the bargaining table. The Declaration of Principles adopted by the UMWA's first convention stated that disagreements should be settled by all means short of a strike. The union was forced to resort to strikes in 1894 and 1897 when economic conditions led to dramatic wage cuts and the owners were unwilling to bargain.

Early in its existence the UMWA adopted the tactic of working with state and national governments to secure safety laws and other codes to improve the lives of miners. Many miners also became active in politics. The UMWA worked through existing political parties and refused to support a Labor party like the one in England.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, a majority of miners were immigrants from the British Isles who had been coal diggers before they came to the United States. By the time the UMWA was founded, there was an increasing number of workers from southern and Eastern Europe in the states near the Atlantic seaboard and a large percentage of the miners in southern states were African-Americans. As time passed members of other nationalities entered

the mines: Workers from Germany, France, Belgium, Greece, Finland, and Mexico composed significant segments of miners. The immigrants brought with them different religions and styles of life, and they lived in communities that were divided by race and religion. African-Americans in particular were often segregated from other workers. The coal operators attempted to exploit ethnic and racial differences, so union leaders worked to achieve solidarity among all groups as a means of challenging the operators. The union was not always successful in its efforts, but it did attempt to bring all miners into the union on an equal basis. Eventually members of these individual groups moved into leadership positions in the union.

The integration of African-American miners into the union was more difficult because of prevailing social conditions in the country and because African-American miners were often used as strike-breakers by the operators. African-American miners faced particularly difficult situations in the South where they were often given the most dangerous and lowest paid jobs and were denied leadership positions. In some cases African-American miners created their own locals that were separate from the white workers. Although the union tried to create solidarity among all workers, the operators were able to exploit prevailing social conditions in order to defeat the union during strikes in the early 1900s. African-American miners were eventually integrated into the union, and many assumed leadership positions at the local and national levels.

The union worked to achieve a common wage for all miners. Its actions led to the creation in 1886 of the Interstate Joint Agreement, which set wage rates for the Central Competitive Field, consisting of Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania. The agreement broke down from 1889–1898 because of rivalries between the Knights of Labor and the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers. The UMWA re-instituted the agreement in 1898, and it was renewed each year until the 1920s. That agreement required all miners to honor the contract. Those who did not were eliminated from the union. This practice led to a belief in the sanctity of the contract and ensured that all union locals and districts were under the control of the International Executive Board (IEB). The need for unity among workers in mines led to the Scranton Declaration of December 1901, in which the AFL agreed to allow the UMWA to organize all workers in and around the mines no matter their job. The AFL unions were organized based on the worker's craft, so the UMWA was the only major union in the federation that was allowed to practice this form of industrial unionism.

Early presidents served brief terms before accepting other positions. Mitchell was the first president to serve for an extended period of time. Mitchell became president in 1898 when he was only 28 years old and successfully led the miners until 1909. He also was the first strong leader who was deeply revered by the miners during his term and after he left the presidency. Mitchell oversaw the expansion of the union across the United States and into Canada, often overcoming difficult local situations to establish the organization. One of the organizers he relied on was the woman known as the miners' angel, Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, one of the most colorful individuals in the history of labor. He also developed a system of national collective bargaining that became a model for many industries, and under his leadership the union won the 8-hour day.

Although the bituminous miners were organized under the Central Competitive Field, the anthracite workers in Pennsylvania remained unorganized although a series of unsuccessful organizing efforts had been led by a miner named John Fahy. These efforts were unsuccessful because operators were unwilling to deal with unions. The poor working conditions led to a series of strikes from 1897–1902 during which the UMWA organized the workers. The Lattimer Massacre of striking miners in 1897 also helped build solidarity among miners because they shared anger and frustration because of actions of the coal companies. Those feelings inspired miners to join the union as a vehicle to oppose the companies. Strikes in 1900 led to an increase in wages, but not a recognition of the union. They were successful in building solidarity among miners that was crucial in later strikes. Continued frustration led to a walkout in 1902 that became one of the most famous in American history. At the end of a 5.5-month strike, mine owners under strong pressure from President Theodore Roosevelt accepted arbitration from a presidential commission. The commission raised wages and reduced the number of hours of work, but it did not recognize the union. The mine owners did however negotiate with the UMWA, and most workers became members. Mitchell led the union during the strike, and the victory only enhanced his reputation with the miners. In 1920 the anthracite operators officially recognized the UMWA as a bargaining body.

From 1908, when Mitchell stepped down as leader, to World War I the union faced divisive internal disputes and vicious battles with operators. Some of the fights with mine owners led to violence, such as the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado in 1914. The union also had to deal with serious health and safety issues caused by new mining methods and technologies. Because of the internal and external pressures, the

union did not grow until World War I when the need for coal dramatically increased.

In 1919, Lewis became acting president of the union. He immediately found himself involved in a confrontation with the federal government. The union had made a no-strike pledge during World War I, but strikes in 1919–1920 led to the creation of the Bituminous Coal Commission by the federal government. That body awarded the miners a significant wage increase. Many miners were not happy with the raise, but Lewis called off the strike rather than lose a fight with the government. Lewis learned that the government had the power to either help or hinder the union in its goals, a lesson that he remembered in future dealings with political leaders. He also learned that a militant rank-and-file membership could help a union leader in his fight with politicians and leaders of the coal industry. The difficult problem however was to channel the workers' militancy in the desired direction. In 1920, Lewis was elected president and held the position until he retired in 1960.

Once he became president, Lewis worked to consolidate all power in the national office. He eliminated strong opponents from the union and appointed his supporters to the presidency of the union's districts in violation of the union constitution. In 1926, John Brophy challenged Lewis for the presidency. In a highly questionable election, Lewis defeated Brophy. He was never again seriously challenged, and he so dominated the union that there was no strong leader to replace him when he retired.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Lewis faced a difficult situation in keeping the union intact. An immense surplus of capacity and declining demand for coal led to layoffs among miners and forced the union to accept wage reductions. Lewis affiliated himself with Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover in an attempt to gain support from the federal government to aid the mineworkers. He supported Hoover's election to the presidency in 1928 and his bid for reelection in 1932.

With the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932, Lewis sensed an opportunity to re-energize the union. He and his advisers were largely responsible for the addition of Section 7a to the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) that gave unions the right to organize. The union organized virtually all miners in the country within a year. The UMWA became the largest and wealthiest union in the country.

Lewis began calling on the leadership of the AFL to organize industrial workers in mass-producing industries. He realized that those workers were ready for organization and that their large numbers would greatly enhance the power of labor in the country. The AFL leadership balked, so Lewis and the other

union leaders met in 1935 and formed the organization that became the CIO, with Lewis as its president. In 1937, the CIO was expelled from the AFL. In 1937, the CIO conducted a series of successful massive organizing efforts. Many of the organizers and most of the money came from the UMWA.

Lewis backed Roosevelt's re-election in 1936 but eventually broke with him for a variety of reasons, including a disagreement over foreign policy, and supported Wendell Willkie in 1940. Lewis publicly announced that he would resign as head of the CIO if Roosevelt were re-elected. After the election he resigned and was replaced by Murray, the president of the United Steelworkers, and a former UMWA vice-president. In 1942, the UMWA withdrew from the CIO.

The UMWA refused to take a no-strike pledge during World War I or World War II. A strike in 1943 forced the government to seize and operate the mines. After World War II, Lewis led a series of strikes that cost the union large amounts of money because it violated an injunction barring the union from striking. In 1946, the UMWA rejoined the AFL but left in 1947.

In 1946, Lewis created a national emergency that again caused the federal government to seize the mines. Lewis forced the government to create the UMWA Welfare and Retirement Fund, a benefit that coal companies refused to grant. The government also implemented safety codes that the operators had to accept once control of the mines was returned to them. A strike in 1950 led to a significant change that created a trust fund that administered the welfare and retirement funds. In the past the funds had been tied to the length of the contract; they now became permanent. Those retirement and health care benefits continue into the present and are seen as one of Lewis's most significant achievements. In 1969, the union helped pass the federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act that implemented changes in mining practices that threatened miner safety and provided funds to compensate workers suffering from black lung disease.

The 1950 strike was the impetus for the creation of the Bituminous Coal Operators' Association (BCOA), a national association of operators. After that date all contract negotiations would be with this one body. Lewis worked with the leadership of the BCOA to implement changes in collective bargaining so there would be fewer confrontations. Lewis became a labor statesman who helped create the National Coal Policy Conference as a vehicle for the industry to deal with politicians and the public with a united front. He even invested UMWA funds in coal companies.

Lewis remained as president until 1960 and was replaced by his long-time, vice-president, Thomas Kennedy. Kennedy died in 1963, and he was succeeded by William Anthony "Tony" Boyle. Lewis died in 1969, but he still is revered by union members today.

Boyle was a weak leader who dominated the union through threats of violence, bribery, control of the union's hierarchy, and manipulation of the union's election machinery. He remained close to the leaders of the coal industry and lost touch with the rank-and-file, especially on issues of health and safety. In 1969, he was challenged by another member of the union hierarchy, Joseph A. "Jock" Yablonski. In a highly corrupt election, Boyle defeated Yablonski, then had Yablonski murdered. Yablonski became a labor martyr.

Yablonski's followers organized in a group called the Miners for Democracy (MFD). The MFD worked to have the 1969 election invalidated, and a new election was held in 1972. Arnold Ray Miller, a Yablonski supporter, defeated Boyle in that election. Miller immediately set out to reform the union. He replaced Boyle's appointees, stopped Boyle's pension, and reduced the salaries of union officials. In 1972, Boyle and other union officials were convicted of making illegal political contributions with union funds. Boyle was convicted of Yablonski's murder in 1974 and spent the rest of his life in jail.

Miller made significant attempts at returning democracy to the union, in reforming the collective-bargaining process, and on issues of health and safety, but eventually his administration bogged down in internal disputes. Miller resigned in 1979 and was replaced by his vice-president, Sam Church. Church was unable to re-energize the union and was defeated in 1982 by Richard Trumka.

Trumka entered office at a difficult time. The Reagan administration was not friendly toward labor, there was a downturn in the use of coal, and the number of nonunion miners continued to grow rapidly, so the union faced difficulties in negotiations with the industry. The Trumka administration made changes in the bargaining process to put pressure on the BCOA through the use of selective strikes and negotiations with independent operators separately from the BCOA. The tactic was successful. The union also undertook a highly publicized strike against the Pittston Company in 1989 that involved the use of many innovative tactics. The union continued to face serious health and safety issues, issues of the environment, and changes in the membership as many female miners became members of the union. As in the past these new members were welcomed as equals.

UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

In 1989, the UMWA re-entered the AFL, and Trumka became a member of the federation's executive council. In 1995, Trumka was elected secretary-treasurer of the AFL and was succeeded by Cecil Roberts. Under Roberts' leadership the union faces a long-term reduction in the number of miners and the percentage of miners who belong to the union. Since World War II, increasing automation, the popularity of other energy sources, and the growth in nonunion mines has cut the number of UMWA from approximately 500,000 in 1945 to 240,000 in 1998, and the numbers continue to decline. In addition to those problems, the UMWA increasingly has to fight massive conglomerates whose coal-mining operations are a small part of their holdings. These changes in the industry will force the UMWA to create new approaches to unionism. The union has also been active in international affairs.

The UMWA has a rich legacy of adapting to changes in American society and the coal industry. Although the history of the union has not always been one that miners could view with pride, the UMWA has improved the lives of workers in one of the most dangerous professions in the country. The union has been a leader in workers' rights, health and safety, political change in the country, and an innovator in union management relations. The UMWA has been led by powerful leaders who had a significant effect on the history of the United States. The miners have traditionally responded with great loyalty to the union and its leaders. The union faces a difficult future, but based on its past history, its leaders will continue to work to improve the lives of miners and their families.

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UNITED OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL WORKERS OF AMERICA

From the late 1930s to late 1940s, the United Office and Professional Workers of America (UOPWA) provided an important union base for office workers, an ever-larger and increasingly female workforce that the labor movement had mostly ignored.

While clerical work was originally a male preserve and stepping-stone to business success, beginning in the late nineteenth century, corporate consolidation, mechanization, scientific management, and feminization transformed the nature of office jobs. At the end of World War I, women were already nearly half of all office workers in the United States; clerical work would become only more feminized and mechanized in subsequent decades. By the 1930s, offices had become an increasingly stratified world, with male managers overseeing largely female, white-collar workers performing routine tasks. Whether private secretary or typing-pool member, clerical workers, especially women, often endured low wages, little autonomy, and few opportunities for advancement.

Labor leaders and organizers traditionally viewed clerical workers as too closely identified with management to unionize. The fact that so many were women also discouraged interest from union leaders, who generally believed that women were less organizable than men. The UOPWA represented a breakthrough,

though a temporary and limited one, in the labor movement's quite limited history of organizing the clerical labor force.

From AFL to CIO

In 1904, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) began chartering clerical unions as federal locals directly affiliated to the federation, many of them for trade unions' own office employees. By 1919, there were at least 40 office worker locals within the AFL. One of the most important was the Bookkeepers, Stenographers, and Accountants' Union (BSAU), Local 12646. The BSAU was formed in New York City in 1909 and claimed 3,000 members by the early 1920s. The AFL temporarily exiled the left-leaning BSAU and then expelled 23 of its members in the 1920s for Communist links. Despite the federation's enmity, BSAU proved more durable and influential than other office worker locals.

During the Great Depression, the growth in white-collar unionism that began in the 1920s quickened and so did local union leaders' requests that the AFL charter a national union for office and professional workers. The AFL leaders ignored these requests however. As a result at the 1936 AFL convention, BSAU president Lewis Merrill and others took matters in their own hands by organizing a National Committee of Office and Professional Workers. The AFL suspended the group and threatened expulsion, but the dissidents left before the federation could evict them. On May 30, 1937, 14 of the AFL's white-collar unions, including BSAU, and nine independent unions formed the United Office and Professional Workers of America International, with some 8,600 members. Merrill was elected president. UOPWA quickly secured a charter from the newly organized Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). (That same year, the CIO also chartered the United Federal Workers and the State, County and Municipal Workers, unions for government office workers along with other public employees.)

The AFL responded by continuing to charter federal locals of office workers—150 by 1942—and then finally offering them an international charter. In 1945, the AFL established the Office Employees' International Union (OEIU, later renamed the Office and Professional Employees' International Union). The OEIU largely relied for its appeal to clerical workers on simply being an anti-Communist alternative to the left-leaning UOPWA.

Organizing Successes

While UOPWA's jurisdiction was potentially broad, the CIO restricted its ability to organize clerical employees in manufacturing, where nearly 1 in 7 workers was an office-based employee in 1938. Bowing to the wishes of some of its large industrial unions, including the United Steel Workers and United Rubber Workers, the CIO decided that the office workers of manufacturing firms whose factory workers were unionized should be represented by those same industrial unions. After UOPWA was thus forced to give up some of its newly organized members in steel and rubber, the major industrial unions proceeded to do little to organize offices under their jurisdiction. The clerical labor force of large manufacturers then remained largely unorganized. The UOPWA went after office employees of smaller manufacturers, where there were no other CIO unions with which to jostle. But it also looked to other sectors with substantial clerical workforces, most of which had no history of unionization of any kind: Banking, insurance, nonprofits, graphic arts, publishing, and advertising. The UOPWA managed some considerable organizing successes in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

The UOPWA put particular effort into wooing agents and clerical workers in the insurance industry. Building on earlier failed efforts of BSAU to organize at the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in New York City in 1927, UOPWA concentrated on the three insurance giants: Metropolitan, John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance, and Prudential Insurance Company of America. Aggressive organizing campaigns resulted in successes at all three. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, UOPWA gained bargaining rights for employees of Metropolitan and Hancock in and around New York City. The UOPWA enjoyed an even greater breakthrough at Prudential on February 1, 1943, when it signed a national agreement covering workers in more than 30 states.

By the 1940s, UOPWA had also established a small but notable foothold in the nonunion world of banks and had organized at a broad array of other firms, including Arthur Murray Dance Studios, CBS Radio, Maidenform Brassiere Company, and Remington Rand. The UOPWA represented 6,500 private-agency social workers organized in locals of the Social Service Employees' Union. The UOPWA found fertile ground, too, in some of the large factorylike offices of credit bureaus, direct-mail houses, and directory and catalog publishers. In 1941, a major campaign in New York City targeting the direct-mail industry brought 4,000 workers under a

UOPWA contract. At the end of 1937, its first year, UOPWA had claimed a membership of 22,000 in 40 locals; by 1943, it had almost doubled in size to 43,000 members in 118 locals. While the wartime ban on strikes that most unions adopted, UOPWA included, dampened the militancy that fed the union's growth, a postwar surge of organizing swelled UOPWA membership by half again from 1946–1948, when it claimed 75,000 members. Though its strongest base was in New York City, UOPWA had locals in cities all over the United States.

Though UOPWA did more to improve the lot of working women than most other unions could have claimed at the time, there were limits to its progressiveness, as historian Sharon Hartman Strom has shown. Trying to represent both higher-status professionals and lower-level clericals in the same industry and even workplace, as UOPWA did in many cases, led to a pattern of privileging largely male professionals' goals and needs over those of largely female clericals. Though in social work locals the professionals were often female and low-paid themselves and eager to make common cause with their colleagues, in insurance locals, at the other extreme, male agents insisted on organizing separately from clerical coworkers and rarely supported them in dealing with management. The UOPWA was perhaps less compromised in its stance against racism. The UOPWA not only supported racial equality in principle, like many other CIO unions, but organized black insurance workers and struggled to integrate direct-mail houses.

Internal Disputes and Taft-Hartley

Growing internal disputes and militant anticommunism in the post-World War II years brought UOPWA's precipitous demise. The UOPWA had always included a substantial left-wing group in its membership, especially in New York and other large cities, and its leadership generally supported Communist causes. During the later 1930s' popular-front era and the war years, Communists' cooperative ethos kept ideological friction to a minimum. After the war however leftist influence increasingly brought conflict and controversy within UOPWA, while the larger labor movement's tolerance of Communists evaporated. In 1946, UOPWA President Lewis Merrill, who had long-standing Communist links himself, began to criticize what he considered undue Communist influence within the union. When Merrill resigned the following year for health reasons, James H. Durkin, whose support for the party line was firmer, replaced

him. The hardening leftist stance of the leadership, just as national anti-Communist sentiment was growing, alienated more conservative elements of the membership.

But it was the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 that signaled the beginning of the end for UOPWA. The act required union leaders to sign affidavits saying they were not members of the Communist party; if they refused, they forfeited their union's rights under the National Labor Relations Act. The UOPWA leaders would not sign. The UOPWA leaders angered the CIO and many members further by endorsing the left-wing, third-party candidacy for U.S. president, Henry Wallace in 1948.

The UOPWA was among the 11 unions singled out for expulsion as the CIO purged its left-led internationals. The CIO suspended UOPWA in 1949 and in 1950 permanently expelled it for "Communist domination." By that time disgruntled members were already leaving as UOPWA became vulnerable to raiding by other CIO and AFL unions. The staunchly anti-Communist United Paperworkers' Union of the CIO, for instance, created an insurance division to accommodate defectors from UOPWA's insurance locals, while AFL sought to move them into its new Insurance Agents' Council. As membership dwindled, UOPWA's leftist leadership came under investigation.

In October 1950, UOPWA merged with two other left-led unions that had been kicked out of the CIO, the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied Workers and the Distributive Workers' Union in October 1950. The merger created the Distributive, Processing, and Office Workers of America, which endured only for 4 years, when the Distributive Workers re-entered the CIO fold.

The demise of UOPWA left office workers either without unions at all or with representation by more conservative white-collar unions, such as the OEIU, dominated by male professional workers and their agenda. It was not until the 1970s that office worker organizing revived significantly in the private sector. When it did, it was the women's movement more than the labor movement that provided the spark.

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Taft-Hartley Act

See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Clerical Work and Office Work; Taft-Hartley Act

UNITED PACKINGHOUSE WORKERS OF AMERICA/PACKINGHOUSE WORKERS’ ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The meatpacking industry contributed significantly to the growth and development of several midwestern cities, especially Chicago, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Yet most meatpacking workers had little power and were generally poorly paid for their labor before the 1930s. The fact that oligopoly characterized the industry by the late nineteenth century contributed to workers’ difficulties. The so-called big five, consisting of Armour, Swift, Cudahy, Wilson, and Morris, which then became the big four in 1923 with Armour’s purchase of Morris, exerted tremendous power over the industry and workers’ conditions, particularly in the large stockyard cities where these companies had most of their packing plants. Divisions among workers along skill, ethnic, and racial lines also stymied early labor organizing efforts. From the 1880s to the early 1920s, the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor’s (AFL’s) Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen (AMCBW), founded in 1897, and the Stockyards Labor Council in Chicago, all faced these organizing challenges. Corporate power and packing workers’ internal divisions were significant causes of failed meatpacking strikes in 1886, 1894, 1904, and 1921–1922. In addition the growing packing plants outside the Midwest’s large cities,

many of which were in Iowa and Minnesota and owned by independent packers, such as Morrell, Hormel, and Rath, were largely unorganized before the World War I era.

By the early 1930s, successful union building in the meatpacking industry required organization across racial and ethnic lines in the major cities’ packinghouses and successful recruitment of the growing numbers of packinghouse workers in the rural Midwest. The CIO’s Packinghouse Workers’ Organizing Committee grew out of three major organizing efforts in Austin, Minnesota, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Chicago. Austin, the small-town headquarters of Hormel, experienced one of the most successful independent union movements of the 1930s. The Independent Union of All Workers (IUAW), formed in 1933, grew out of the sense of isolation, frustration, and poverty that workers in this small city perceived during the depths of the Great Depression. Jay Hormel, son of founder George A. Hormel, also exerted heavy paternalist pressure on workers. A core group of militants, particularly Joe Ollman, a Trotskyist hog splitter, and Frank Ellis, a foreman in the hog-casings department and former Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) member, guided the IUAW’s growth. The IUAW garnered support once Hormel mandated a paycheck deduction policy for pensions, life insurance, and the Community Chest in July 1933. Success in a November 1933 strike, partly due to Minnesota’s Farm-Labor party Governor Floyd Olson’s support for binding arbitration, spurred the IUAW’s ability to gain affiliates in several communities in southern Minnesota, eastern South Dakota, North Dakota, and much of Iowa. Before narrowly agreeing to join the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) movement in 1937, the IUAW had consolidated its power in the Hormel plant, published a weekly paper, organized a variety of cultural activities, and organized workers in several other Austin businesses.

In Cedar Rapids, AMCBW Local 206, organized in August 1933, aggressively bargained with Wilson to gain a written contract in 1934 and even went on strike in May 1934, but the company refused to negotiate with an international representative. The local then broke from the AMCBW in January 1935 to form the Mid-West Union of All Packing House Workers (MUAPHW). Lack of seniority recognition and irregular employment were major concerns of Milo Barta and Lewis Clark, the two most important union pioneers in Cedar Rapids. They recruited heavily among the many Bohemian workers in the Cedar Rapids plant. Led by the aggressive, ambitious, and strongly anti-Communist Clark, the MUAPHW attempted to organize affiliates throughout the Midwest beginning in early 1935. Barta and Clark



Apple packinghouse worker. Camden County, New Jersey. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-026636-D].

recruited MUAPHW members from packinghouses in Des Moines, Waterloo, Mason City, Davenport, Ottumwa, and Omaha. Their greatest success outside Cedar Rapids was probably in Omaha.

In Chicago radicals, especially Communists, paved the way for the eventual emergence of the Packinghouse Workers' Organizing Committee on October 27, 1937, as the cementing force among the new union movements. The AMCBW continued to organize, but increasingly its membership strength was in smaller packing plants and among retail butchers. Herb March, a Young Communist League organizer from Brooklyn, arrived in Chicago in 1933 and led Communists' colonization efforts in the major packing plants. By 1934, there were at least five different unions in Chicago's packinghouses, including the Packing House Workers' Industrial Union and a revived Stockyards' Labor Council led by Arthur Kampfert. Communist organizers successfully unified Polish and other East European immigrants with African-Americans and Mexicans in the industry. Union leaders built on white and black workers' shared grievances over their employers' poor industrial relations practices during the 1920s and 1930s. Many of the leading radical organizers were black, such as Henry Johnson, an organizer for the steel

workers before moving to packing, who passionately and persuasively argued for racial equality. Johnson and others were also keenly aware of the important strategic positions that many blacks held in crucial departments, particularly on the kill floors. March, Kampfert, Johnson, and others joined forces to pull Chicago meatpacking workers into the newly formed CIO. By fall 1937, the CIO issued charters to nine Chicago locals with a membership of 8,200. Chicago's locals along with the former IUAW affiliates, including the large John Morrell and Company union in Ottumwa, Iowa, and the MUAPHW groups, formed the core of the new Packinghouse Workers Organizing committee (PWOC).

Organization during the PWOC Era

From 1937 to the formation of the United Packinghouse Workers of America on October 16, 1943, Chicago and nearly all the major packinghouse cities in the Midwest became CIO strongholds. In Chicago blacks and whites worked together in the PWOC to make significant changes, with blacks often assuming crucial leadership positions. By 1939, African-Americans

were presidents of nine of 15 Chicago PWOC local unions, and by 1943, all of the city's major plants were organized, and most had collective-bargaining agreements. No small part of this success was the union's efforts to equalize white and black workers' wages. Blacks' wages were almost equal to whites' wages by 1940 and were much better in this respect than nearly any other industry in the North.

Organizing efforts in Kansas City, the nation's second-largest packing center, followed a pattern similar to Chicago's. Socialists and Croatians formed the activist union-building core of Kansas City's workers in the 1930s. As in Chicago the Armour plant in Kansas City was organized first during 1936 and 1937 before the CIO local won a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) certification election in August 1937, actually predating the Armour-Chicago CIO local's election by over a year. Although the PWOC-CIO then organized and won elections at other Kansas City plants, they did not succeed at the Swift plant. There unlike the case in Chicago, the National Brotherhood of Packinghouse Workers (NBPW), the former Swift company union, won certification and represented workers.

Omaha's packing community was composed mostly of native-born East Europeans and blacks. African-Americans were recruited into the CIO movement during the late 1930s but less aggressively than in either Chicago or Kansas City. Anticommunism was rampant among Omaha packing union leaders and white ethnics in general, and radical organizers, unlike the case in Chicago and Kansas City, were not well-received. Nonetheless the Armour packing plant was organized first, and a CIO local won a certification election there in fall 1939. At Swift the PWOC won a tight election against the NBPW in August 1941, and Cudahy's PWOC local was granted a contract in 1941 based on a union membership card count.

The PWOC organized virtually all the major plants in the other midwestern stockyard cities during the late 1930s and early 1940s. As was true in Chicago, Kansas City, and Omaha, new immigrants and blacks worked together to build local unions in East St. Louis and Milwaukee. In these cities the only major non-CIO affiliated packing work force was the Swift plant in East St. Louis. There, the AMCBW won a tight certification election against the NBPW in December 1941. In the stockyard cities that had growing numbers of black workers and few new immigrants or smaller numbers of both groups, the PWOC was also successful. African-American workers' support for the CIO in Indianapolis was especially significant. In fact the PWOC defeated the AMCBW in July 1941 in Indianapolis's Kingan plant after the AMCBW

had initially been given a contract in June 1937, and the PWOC won a certification election there in April 1938, largely due to the PWOC's ability to sway blacks to its racial-equality platform. The UPWA then continued to win certification away from the NBPW in such cities as south St. Paul through the end of World War II. By 1951, the UPWA-CIO had signed master contracts representing 60,000 workers in 70 of the big four's 99 plants.

After the union movements in the rural midwestern segment of the industry began in 1933 in Austin and Cedar Rapids, other smaller packing communities were rapidly organized. Before the 1930s, unionism had played only a minor role in these workers' lives, chiefly during and immediately following World War I. Two of the earliest NLRB certification elections in the packing industry, resulting in victories for the PWOC, occurred in Ottumwa, Iowa, in October 1937, and Mason City, Iowa, in November 1938. The IUAW originally organized Ottumwa's Morrell workers, and then the city's packing workers pursued IUAW-style community organizing by forming affiliates at the Ottumwa Steam Laundry, Barker Ice Company, and Swift poultry plant. Although not the first CIO packinghouse union movement, Ottumwa's workers received the first CIO charter in the industry. Then United Packing House Workers Local Industrial Union No. 32 became PWOC Local 1 in 1939. By 1943, local affiliates of the PWOC-CIO represented workers in not only Austin, Cedar Rapids, Ottumwa, and Mason City, but also Albert Lea in Minnesota; Des Moines, Fort Dodge, and Waterloo in Iowa; and Topeka, Kansas. The AMCBW represented meat-packing workers in Dubuque, Iowa, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Madison, Wisconsin.

The United Packinghouse Workers of America's Achievements

From 1943–1968, the UPWA significantly improved packing workers' lives in their workplaces and communities. The union's master contracts with the big four and major independent packers typically provided workers with departmental (but not plantwide) seniority, paid holidays, vacation time, guaranteed work hours and days, severance pay, clothes-changing and tool-repairing time—crucial benefits given the extreme temperature variations and brutal working conditions—and largely equalized wages for workers who did the same jobs not only in the same plants but across the country. In the late 1940s, meatpacking's average wages had improved tremendously but still lagged behind the

average for all manufacturing and were considerably lower than auto workers'. However calculated on a weekly basis, because of the relatively long hours clocked by meatpacking workers compared to workers in such industries as auto, packinghouse employees earned more money on average than other workers beginning in 1946. By the mid-1950s, meatpacking workers' wages were 11 cents per hour higher than the average manufacturing wage nationwide.

The transformation of packing workers' status from poor people to a respected and prosperous working class was especially notable around the rural Midwest's packing cities. Unlike the larger stockyard packing cities that really experienced only a 10–15 year period of prosperity before they started to shut down, the smaller packing communities' workers generally experienced 30–40 years of prosperity. Cheri Register's memoir of growing up in post-World War II Albert Lea, Minnesota, as a packinghouse worker's daughter illuminates what this meant. Her father, Gordy Register, a millwright in the Wilson plant from 1943–1974, saw his hourly wages increase nearly eightfold, and the family was able to buy a new house west of town. Greater affluence and community respect transformed the status of families like the Registers.

The UPWA's contracts generally signaled more stable and improved workplace conditions. The industry's two major postwar strikes, one in 1946, which involved both the UPWA and AMCBW, and the other in 1948, which included the UPWA only, affirmed unionism's hold on the industry. Hormel's guaranteed annual wage for Austin workers was one of the most acclaimed contracts of the period. Although the guaranteed annual wage probably contributed to Austin workers' tractability, packing workers often continued to struggle, particularly after the 1948 strike, against employer initiatives aimed at exercising greater control over their jobs. At the Morrell-Ottumwa plant, Local 1 contested the company's initiatives to restructure job loads based on industrial engineering studies. From 1949–1951, in particular, the local used wildcat strikes to combat such changes. In 1951 alone, workers walked out on 88 separate occasions. Although union building improved many elements of packinghouse work, the industry itself was not much safer than it had been when Upton Sinclair described it in the *Jungle*. Even in the late 1950s, when meatpacking's overall wage and benefit levels peaked relative to manufacturing industries in general, the injury frequency rate was still twice that of manufacturing as a whole.

The UPWA was also a major driving force behind several community reform movements, such as the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council in Chicago,

founded in March 1939. But the UPWA's most ambitious effort to improve workers' lives was probably its aggressive antidiscrimination and civil rights program that was implemented in all its plants but which made the greatest headway in the major stockyard cities that employed most of the industry's black workers, particularly in Chicago. The UPWA's progressive agenda following the 1948 strike that stemmed from its locals' democratic shop-floor cultures promoted antidiscrimination and civil rights efforts. The anti-discrimination and civil rights program was then established at the union's 1950 national convention under the leadership of UPWA Vice-President Russell Lasley. The program had three interrelated concerns: Breaking down all-white plant departments; ending discriminatory practices in the communities, especially in terms of restrictions against blacks' access to bars, restaurants, and public facilities; and facilitating work with other civil rights community organizations, such as the NAACP. In Chicago especially changes in application procedures helped to eradicate plant-wide segregation. There UPWA members also helped African-Americans move into new neighborhoods and public housing. In Kansas City UPWA efforts gradually eroded many local Jim Crow customs and resulted in the opening up of Kansas City, Kansas's, main retail district to black shoppers.

The UPWA's antidiscrimination programs created considerable tension in locals where whites were unwilling to adopt them. Among the major stockyard cities, this was most notable in Omaha, where some white union leaders believed the antidiscrimination program was part of a leftist agenda, and anticommunism among many workers, especially those with Czech and Polish backgrounds, was common. Indeed tensions between Communists, particularly from Chicago, such as Herbert March, and anti-Communists had existed since the 1930s and were a central part of the UPWA's history through the 1950s. Omaha-Armour local president Nels Peterson was one of the most outspoken anti-Communists in the UPWA and became a strong opponent of the antidiscrimination program in the city.

The UPWA also attempted to make women's workplace equality a central feature of its social agenda. Although never so prominent as antidiscrimination, during the 1950s women's activism focused particularly on ending men's and women's wage differentials. Ending discrimination against pregnant women workers became an important UPWA goal in the 1950s that resulted in women receiving unpaid leave for up to 1 year, and half-pay for up to 8 weeks, under the union's sick-leave provisions. Cultural pressures against women's participation in the union, especially at the local level, were probably the greatest

difficulty that women faced in securing further gains. Another problem was the introduction of new technologies in the 1950s and 1960s that eliminated jobs in many traditional women's departments. The UPWA's reliance on departmental seniority meant that women had difficulty gaining jobs elsewhere in the plants against more senior men. Attempts to bump less senior men often created tensions. Women in many UPWA-organized plants used Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to challenge workplace biases. Although the UPWA tried to respond to these challenges by creating a new job-classification system, women in some plants, especially in the smaller cities of the Midwest, sued the union for sex discrimination. The legal challenges of the mid-to-late-1960s showed not only the union's shortcomings in recognizing women's equality, but also demonstrated considerable differences among women in terms of their own perceptions of gender equality. Older women were often satisfied with their situations and unwilling to support their younger colleagues' protests.

During the post-World War II era, Iowa's UPWA was at the forefront of several larger political efforts. The CIO unions in Iowa, especially the large Waterloo-Rath and Ottumwa-Morrell UPWA locals, worked with the Iowa Farmers' Union, led by President Fred W. Stover, a strong social democrat and Henry A. Wallace supporter, on a variety of cooperative efforts. Lee Simon, the UPWA's farm relations' director, also encouraged political collaboration in the early post-World War II years. Particularly in Iowa counties with meatpacking and other significant manufacturing, farmers and laborers voted together for Democrats in increasing numbers. Democrat Herschel Loveless, a former railroad worker, Morrell employee, and mayor of Ottumwa, won the gubernatorial race in 1956 and 1958. Democrat Harold Hughes, a former trucker, won the governor's office and then a U.S. Senate seat in the 1960s. With Democratic majorities in the state legislature for much of the 1960s and 1970s, working people benefited from improvements in workmen's and unemployment compensation, industrial development, greater school aid, property tax relief, abolishment of the death penalty, improvements in state government organization and planning, increased highway patrol and traffic safety programs, and more state facilities for the mentally ill and physically handicapped.

The closing of almost all the big four's plants in the larger midwestern cities during the 1950s and 1960s, due partly to the emergence of Iowa Beef Packers (IBP) and its aggressive cost-cutting measures, brought a sudden halt to the tremendous improvements that unionism had made in workers'

lives. These plant closings were particularly devastating to African-American workers. While the UPWA was generally successful in securing transfers for workers who chose to relocate to other plants—though a strike against Armour in 1963 was necessary to enforce this—many black men and women who did not transfer and lost their packing jobs entered labor markets that were not only much less receptive to racial equality but also demanded more formal education than many had received. Shutdowns of big four and major independents' plants in the rural Midwest accelerated during the 1970s and early 1980s after the UPWA merged with the AMCBW in 1968 to form a new AMCBW, AFL-CIO. Despite constant battles over plant shutdowns, through the late 1970s, the AMCBW was able to maintain the strong commitment to master agreements that had resulted in considerable economic benefits for meatpacking workers from the 1940s on, one of many prominent UPWA legacies.

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UNITED PARCEL SERVICE STRIKE (1997)

On August 3, 1997, the teamsters launched a 15-day strike against United Parcel Service (UPS) and won one of labor’s biggest victories in years. The key to the union’s success was a year-long contract campaign followed by a strike strategy that involved a national mobilization of popular support.

Like most large corporations these days, UPS is a global company with huge assets that would allow it to withstand the lost profits from a strike in order to win concessions from its union workforce. In 1997, the corporation made over a billion dollars in profits a year. However unlike many multinational corporations, UPS is not diversified. The UPS makes its money from one business, delivering packages. Ninety percent of its profits derive from its U.S. operations. As well it would have been very difficult for the company to hire scabs to continue production and break a strike as is increasingly common in major U.S. strikes. Since UPS employed 185,000 union workers, hiring scabs as replacement workers would have been a formidable task. All of this made the company potentially vulnerable to a teamsters strike.

The company’s strategy was to count on the union imploding on itself. The company was counting on divisions erupting between part-time and full-time workers that would end the strike. The part-timers work in the warehouses getting packages ready for delivery. Their wages were half those of the full-time workers. The full-timers tend to be truck drivers who deliver the packages. The two groups of workers had very different contractual priorities. The company was counting on internal union divisions erupting and dividing the workforce. The union was sharply divided between reformers who supported newly elected president Carey and the old guard unionists who controlled many of the UPS local unions and who had opposed Carey in the last union election. The company sought to use the weakness in the union’s finances to pressure striking unionists to cross their picket line by the thousands, thereby causing the strike to collapse. The company knew that the union’s

treasury was low and that it could not long afford to pay strike pay to 185,000 workers. And the strike pay, while the workers received it, was just \$55 a week and did not cover workers’ bills.

However the company badly miscalculated. The teamsters remained unified throughout the contract campaign and the strike. In the end the teamsters won the 2-week strike and got just about everything they wanted. In the course of the strike, two separate polls showed that two-thirds of the American people supported the striking unionists. This type of support for strikers is unprecedented in the last 30 years. It is reminiscent of the support unions had from the public in the 1930s.

The union did not win because of a brilliant strike strategy during the 15-day strike, although the strike was extremely well-organized and well-led. The teamsters won because of the contract campaign they had successfully carried out for nearly a year prior to the strike. They won because they had worked systematically to involve the membership in every stage of the contract campaign. They won because they had transformed the internal life of their union.

The union began by surveying its members. Just asking the members what they thought when they had not been asked in previous contract negotiations had a big impact. Next the union began to establish a Member-to-Member Action Network among its 206 local unions. The network recruited hundreds of union members who were not local union officers or stewards to each stay in regular touch with 20 members, giving them information about the progress of negotiations and the union’s stance, answering their questions, listening to their views, and publicizing the union’s mobilizations.

The union produced and distributed a series of videos on the company’s demands and the union’s need to respond. As well the union set up and regularly updated a website to keep the members notified of the status of negotiations. While this is not uncommon today, in 1997 this was noteworthy. Corporations use the Internet to monitor their global operations. Virtually every social movement, most notably the student antisweatshop movement and the global justice movement, uses the Internet to organize and share information. The Internet is a valuable tool in the struggle for social change. Political parties use the Internet for publicity and fundraising. Yet the labor movement has been slow to use this tool fully.

The union’s Education Department organized training throughout the UPS locals on how to set up the action network. Nineteen staffers, including a number of rank-and-file workers brought temporarily off their jobs to be union staffers, worked full-time on helping the local unions build the network. These rank-and-file

workers also became spokespersons for the union at national press conferences and rallies.

Workers began to hold meetings on breaks to talk about the action network and to build member support for the contract campaign. The UPS spent more than \$1 million on newspaper advertisements, but the teamsters put all their money into organizing the members.

Whenever a union negotiates a contract, the bargaining committee has dozens of issues to propose to management. As a result of surveying the membership, the teamsters knew what the UPS workers' top priorities were in the contract negotiations. Among those priorities the union chose one issue to make its central, public campaign theme: The demand that part-time workers be offered full-time jobs with full-time pay and benefits. Sixty percent of the UPS workforce were part-time workers, and not by choice. The part-timers earned less than half of what the full-time workers made—starting pay was just \$8.00 an hour. There were UPS workers who had been employed by the company for many years but were still forced to work part-time hours. There were part-time workers who often worked 30 or more hours a week but were not considered full-time by the company.

The union made this issue its theme. The two positions could not have been clearer or more counterposed: 60% of the company's workers were part-time, and the company was determined to increase that number substantially. The union was just as determined that things would move in the opposite direction, away from part-time and toward far more full-time jobs.

The union talked about the part-time issue as one that affected not just UPS workers, but all U.S. workers. The union's slogan became "A part-time America just won't work." The slogan and the campaign theme appealed to American workers, millions of whom work low-wage, part-time jobs. According to the 2000 census, roughly 17% of the U.S. workforce, or 23 million workers, hold part-time jobs. Two-thirds of these workers are women.

Thirty percent of the 135 million U.S. workers (as of 2000) held nonstandard positions—part-time, temporary, or independent contractor positions. Only 6% of part-time and temporary workers get employer-paid health care. Temporary work alone is skyrocketing; the number of temporary workers rose 535% from 1982 to 1997, and in 1997 (since surpassed by Wal-Mart) the largest private employer in the U.S. was the temporary employment agency Manpower.

So in 1997, there was a ready audience in the country sympathetic to a union struggle around the issue of part-time work. The union's contract campaign

became an attack on corporate greed, not just on UPS. United Parcel Service, with its policy of moving full-time jobs to part-time, was portrayed as a symbol of everything that was wrong with the corporate United States. The union reinforced its campaign by releasing research reports on the crisis of part-time work and how it affected all Americans.

As Rand Wilson and Matt Witt, who served as director and coordinator of the teamsters' Communication Department before and during the UPS strike, have wrote: "From the beginning, the union's contract campaign at UPS was designed to build broad public support that would be needed to either win a good contract without a strike or win a strike if that became necessary. For nine months, union communications stressed that the campaign was not just about more cents per hour for Teamsters members, but about the very future of the good jobs that communities need. Teamster members, in turn, emphasized the same message when talking to the news media and to family, friends, and neighbors." The UPS spokesperson John Alden captured the popularity of the union's campaign theme when he later told *Business Week*, "If I had known that it was going to go from negotiating for UPS to negotiating for part-time America, we would've approached it differently."

Beginning in the fall of 1996, the union's action network carried out a series of actions to mobilize the membership in the contract campaign. A petition was signed by 100,000 workers in support of the demand for more full-time jobs. The UPS drivers gave out union flyers to customers and explained that they did not want to strike but hoped the customers would understand that they were fighting for full-time, good paying jobs for all the workers. The union held T-shirt days, button days, and sticker days. The union had actions where all the workers were encouraged to file grievances. For example 5,000 grievances were filed in a short period over safety issues. Plant gate rallies, each with a different theme, were called virtually every month. There were family day rallies. There were "blow the whistle on UPS" rallies protesting the company's contracting out of union jobs to low-wage, nonunion contractors. There were rallies for the part-time workers. Special educational materials were distributed with a focus on safety. The "don't break our backs" information was sent to the local media across the country, explaining the unfairness of forcing workers to lift 150-pound packages and noting that UPS pays out \$1 million a day in workers' compensation. The teamsters 1997 UPS contract campaign was in short a model campaign. It demonstrated what labor could achieve when it has the vision and the strategy to

educate, organize, and mobilize the members in support of workers' rights.

In their article on the UPS contract campaign and strike, Wilson and Witt sum up the keys to the teamsters' success. They asserted that the UPS contract campaign succeeded because first it was a movement of the workers—not just the union officials; second because it was a movement for all workers—not just for the union's members; and third because it was a social movement of workers and their supporters—not a bureaucratic-run organization, not a union run like a business, not a top-down run union, and not a union in bed with management.

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See also **International Brotherhood of Teamsters**

UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS OF AMERICA/UNITED FEDERAL WORKERS OF AMERICA

The roots of the United Public Workers of America/United Federal Workers of American (UPWA/UFWA) belong in the New Deal. In 1932, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) chartered a new government employee union, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) to rival the newly independent National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE). The AFGE received a boost in 1933 with the establishment of a host of New Deal agencies that attracted young, left-leaning union sympathizers to government jobs. These workers joined the AFL union, hoping in many cases to mimic the goals and objectives of the private-sector labor movement.

From 1933 to 1935, a number of AFGE lodges began to agitate for the use of more aggressive tactics than their conservative leaders felt comfortable supporting. Employees were especially concerned with negotiating grievances, which often involved disputes over promotion practices and policies. The National Recovery Administration's (NRA) AFGE lodge for

instance found itself in frequent conflict with NRA head Hugh Johnson over hours and promotions. Tension between the union lodge and Johnson escalated over a promotion grievance that led to the dismissal of an employee. When the AFGE lodge persisted in asking for a meeting with Johnson, the NRA chief fired the AFGE lodge president, John Donovan. His firing inspired picketing of NRA headquarters, resulting in a split between AFGE rank-and-file and its leadership, which supported Johnson's decision. Another rift emerged when several agency lodges banded together in a Committee against False Economy to protest President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1937 budget cuts. In 1936 and 1937, AFGE leaders expelled numerous lodges, including those in the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Social Security Board, the Works Progress Administration, Labor Department, Interstate Commerce Commission, and Agriculture Department for alleged Communist ties and for engaging in actions deemed embarrassing or illegal to the national leadership.

Members of these locals turned to the newly established Committee (later Congress) of Industrial Organizations (CIO) for assistance. In June 1937, CIO head John Lewis agreed to charter a new union, the United Federal Workers of America. Lewis appointed Jacob Baker, a former assistant administrator of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, as president. Eleanor Nelson, an economist in the Women's Bureau, president of AFGE Lodge 12, and daughter of a former Republican congressman from Maine, became secretary-treasurer. At their 1940 convention, UFWA delegates elected her to the executive board, and in 1944 she became the first female president of a CIO union.

Membership and Objectives

The original core of the UFWA therefore consisted of the ousted AFGE lodges. By August 1937, the union boasted 4,200 members. A year later organizing campaigns brought the number of members to 14,000 in 131 locals scattered across the nation. Although the organization forbade strikes and adhered to President Roosevelt's policy denying collective-bargaining rights for public employees, it actively sought the creation of formal agency-based grievance procedures and employer-employee policies, as well as recognition of the right of the union to represent employees and to negotiate with agency administrators. Indeed the union considered its grievance work a form of collective bargaining. Collective bargaining as practiced in the private sector had long

been considered anathema in the federal civil service because taxpayers, through their representatives in Congress, paid the salaries of government workers. President Roosevelt had made a distinction between public- and private-sector employment and reiterated his opposition to public-service collective bargaining in a letter he wrote in 1937. The UFWA President Baker, along with the presidents of NFFE and AFGE, was present at a meeting in which Roosevelt discussed the contents of this letter.

Nevertheless UFWA's constitution reflected its commitment to private-sector union tactics and ideals. Its 1944 constitution listed as its objective the promotion of "rights of Federal employees equal to those of employees in private industry," and noted that it was the "right of all people in the United States in both public and private employment to organize into unions of their own choosing for purposes of bargaining collectively with their employers." In addition to the traditional support public-service unions gave the merit system, creation of a classification system for the field service, salary increases, retirement plans, and a 5-day work week, UFWA committed itself to pushing promotion from within, opposing racial discrimination, supporting women's issues, and seeking a general civil service appeals court for aggrieved employees. It innovated in making presentations to the Bureau of the Budget to advocate for agency appropriations.

As part of its effort to promote the labor movement, the UFWA established a Federal Workers' School in 1937. For \$2 (\$2.50 for nonmembers), students could take a course on topics ranging from union organizing to principles of economics to contemporary literature to group singing. Among the instructors were Dr. Caroline Ware, associate professor of social economy and social history at American University and wife of New Dealer Gardiner Means.

From its founding through the 1940s, the union continued to press its employee-rights agenda and to advocate for women and African-American workers. It worked to organize messengers, many of whom were African-American, and welcomed African-American workers of the United Cafeteria Employees union into its ranks in 1942. Its recreation committee refused to use segregated facilities, and in 1943, the union organized a Conference on Negro Discrimination in the Federal Service. A year later, largely at the behest of Nelson, the union held a national Conference of Working Mothers to address childcare and other matters. The Office of Price Administration, which had large numbers of female and African-American employees, had a lodge particularly active in promoting civil rights. Black employees successfully used the union to initiate an unprecedented racial

discrimination grievance against a branch chief. Similarly in the late 1940s, the union represented black workers denied promotional opportunities in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in a multiyear case brought before the Fair Employment Board (a civil service successor to the Fair Employment Practices Committee).

UPWA/UFWA and Anticommunism

The union's militancy and association of many of its members with left-wing causes and organizations led to numerous allegations that the UFWA-CIO was a Communist organization. In 1939, Congress passed the Hatch Act, which included a provision denying federal employment to individuals belonging to organizations supporting overthrow of the government. It followed with appropriation bill riders refusing wages to employees deemed subversive. These initiatives along with others led by various congressional committees were aimed at undermining the UFWA-CIO, a union that many conservatives and white Southerners found troublesome.

Among CIO unions, the UFWA/UPWA had a reputation as a leftist organization. In the 1930s and 1940s, it attracted young, progressive-thinking federal workers, many of whom sympathized with socialist and Communist ideals. Although it was never controlled directly by the Communist party, UFWA/UPWA members shared a common agenda with the party, especially in the area of worker and black civil rights. Some UFWA/UPWA members and supporters held membership in the party, some did not. After passage of the Hatch Act in 1939, which severely curtailed the political activities of federal employees, UFWA hired lawyer and Communist party member Lee Pressman to press a constitutional challenge to the law. Albert Bernstein began organizing for the union in the 1930s and joined the party in the early 1940s, although he never considered himself a devout member. Thomas Richardson, who became a vice-president in the union, was also a party member. Prior to joining the federal government and the UFWA/UPWA, he had worked with the Southern Negro Youth Congress, an organization with close ties to the Communist party. Richardson's sister, Marie, also active in the union and a party member, went to jail in the 1940s for falsifying an application for temporary federal employment because she signed a loyalty oath even though she was a party member. Many UFWA/UPWA members did not join the party but sympathized with Communist ideals and worked closely with party members on issues of mutual

concern. Typical of this type of union member was Coleman Young, the future mayor of Detroit. Active in the labor movement, he worked as an organizer for UPWA in 1940s. He publicly denied allegations that he belonged to the Communist party but openly voiced his sympathy for Communist aims and admitted to working closely with party members. While party members who belonged to the union strengthened its internal commitment to progressive aims in the areas of worker, black, and women's rights, they made the union the target of vigorous anti-Communist attacks.

Allegations of Communist ties grew with the union's re-organization in 1946. Facing falling membership and in an effort to shore up resources, UFWA leaders agreed to a merger with the CIO's State, County, and Municipal Workers of America. The newly formed United Public Workers of America (UPWA) claimed over 70,000 members and was headed by Abram Flaxer, formerly with the State, County, and Municipal Workers. At the April convention creating the new union, members clashed over a foreign policy plank. Eventually the union adopted a resolution calling on the United States to end its isolation of the USSR and to withdraw troops from Greece, China, the Philippines, India, and other nations deemed friendly to the United States. Resolutions also supported disarmament, the work of the United Nations, and the continuation of rent and price controls, then a controversial issue facing President Harry Truman.

The UPWA critics focused on the Soviet resolution and on what they considered the UPWA's endorsement of the right to strike against government. State, local, and municipal workers had a longer tradition of striking, and thus the convention had adopted a more flexible strike provision than the unequivocal no-strike policy adopted by other federal service unions. Consequently the union stipulated that while UPWA supported a no-strike policy, it recognized that when all other methods of negotiation failed, a strike could be called but only if members had obtained permission from the UPWA president and its governing body.

After the merger federal employee membership continued to stagnate, with 20,000 federal worker members in 1947, 15,000 of whom were employees in the Panama Canal zone. In 1948, the union moved its headquarters from Washington, DC, to New York City and soon reduced the number of vice-presidents from six to one. Caught up in the postwar Red Scare, the UPWA spent much of its energy fighting allegations of Communist party influence. President Truman's Federal-Loyalty Security Program, created in 1947, intensified scrutiny of the

union. In 1950, the CIO expelled the UPWA for its alleged ties to the Communist movement. Two years later Senator Pat McCarran's Internal Security subcommittee labeled UPWA President Flaxer a "fanatic" Communist and linked other top officials to the Communist party. The union folded that same year. During its 15-year existence the union served as the most progressive voice among federal worker unions. Its focus on interracial organizing, race discrimination, women's issues, and collective bargaining distinguished it from other government unions, but it also made it more difficult for the union to survive the postwar anti-Communist movement.

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See also American Federation of Government Employees; Anticommunism; Lewis, John L.; National Federation of Federal Employees; United Government Employees

UNITED RUBBER WORKERS OF AMERICA

When the United Rubber Workers of America met in Pittsburgh in 1995, the delegates should have been celebrating the union's sixtieth anniversary. Instead they were deciding on the union's future. By a slim three-vote margin, the delegates agreed to merge with the United Steelworkers, thereby giving up the URW's long, proud, independent, militant history within the labor movement. The delegates had little choice. With membership decreasing and finances



Buffalo, New York. Recently employed women being sworn into the rubber workers union at a Sunday meeting. Most of them have never worked before and know little about trade unionism. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USW3-028180-D].

wrecked by a crippling strike during the so-called “War of ’94,” the rubber workers bowed to the inevitable, hitched their future to the larger steelworkers’ union and banked on the trend toward unions that cut across industries.

The United Rubber Workers of America organized in the heart of the rubber industry—Akron, Ohio—in 1935. The union faced formidable odds: Meager financial resources, inexperience, and powerful corporate opponents committed to destroying any independent labor organization. For almost 50 years rubber companies had crushed attempts by labor to organize. In 1887, the Knights of Labor tried unsuccessfully to organize the rubber workers in New Jersey. In the early years of the twentieth century, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) faced similar results when it tried to organize the rubber workers in the East. Strikers in Trenton, New Jersey, were fired and blacklisted. The union did not recover. By the end of 1905, the AFL’s executive board revoked the charter of the Amalgamated Rubber Workers of North America. In 1913, labor discontent moved into Akron in the biggest labor dispute the city had ever seen—and the rubber companies were ready for it. According to author Harold Roberts, the 1913 strike, led by the Industrial Workers of the World,

was a “landmark in the technique of strike breaking.” After the Firestone workers walked off the job, rubber workers from across the city joined them. Rubber companies, with the support of community citizen committees and law enforcement, began tactics that were similar to those associated with the Mohawk Valley formula of the 1930s. The 1913 strike failed.

During the Depression, times were hard for the rubber workers in Akron and across the nation. Unemployment was high; rubber companies were not interested in negotiating for better conditions. But a new president—Franklin Delano Roosevelt—thought he had a New Deal to benefit workers and industry alike. In 1935, the Wagner Act encouraged collective bargaining and protected workers as they negotiated.

The United Rubber Workers came from this environment. Although the rubber companies were opposed to any worker organization except their own, the rubber workers were ready to press their case. The AFL sent union organizer Coleman Claherty to Akron with orders to organize the rubber workers. But the AFL soon discovered that the rubber workers had minds of their own. When the AFL tried to dictate the new union’s leadership and constitution, the proud, independent rubber workers refused to go along, electing Sherman Dalrymple, one of their own,

UNITED RUBBER WORKERS OF AMERICA

as their first president. Frustrated with the AFL's continuing commitment to crafts as opposed to industrial unions, the United Rubber Workers of America (URW) formally affiliated with the (CIO) in 1936.

A constitution and a leadership did not guarantee rubber worker union success. Rubber companies were still reluctant to negotiate. The rubber workers however were innovators when it came to organizing—and striking. The rubber workers introduced the sit-down strike to the labor movement in 1934 when General Tire workers in Akron sat down on the job until the company agreed to re-instate the workers, consider seniority in layoffs, and meet with union representatives. The maneuver did not bring union representation—nor did the 1936 Goodyear sit-down strike.

In late 1936, the URW was pushing hard to organize the Goodyear plant in Gadsden, Alabama. The URW President Dalrymple directed the organizing personally but was beaten by a crowd of Goodyear supporters and became “the highest ranking labor leader to be so violently attacked in the 1930s,” according to the URW historian Bruce Meyer. Dalrymple would not be the last URW representative to be beaten in Gadsden. That plant would not be organized until 1941.

Benefiting from World War II production demands, the United Rubber Workers thrived during the 1940s. Membership grew from 55,000 in 1940 75,000 in 1941—or about half of the industry's workers. By the end of 1941, the union had 93,000 members, 63% of all rubber workers. By 1945, the union had 190,000 members in 222 locals. That same year the union expanded its jurisdiction to include cork, linoleum, and plastic workers and officially became the United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum, and Plastic Workers of America, although the press and rubber workers continued to use the URW name.

In 1945, Dalrymple retired, and Leland Buckmaster, president of powerful Firestone Local 7, was elected president. At the negotiating table, Buckmaster achieved the first master contract, which established pattern bargaining across the big four (Firestone, B. F. Goodrich, Goodyear and U.S. Rubber). Membership was increasing—up to 209,000 in 1947. Nonetheless Buckmaster ran into trouble with the union's executive board, which attempted to remove him from office, but the membership would have none of it. Buckmaster remained president until his retirement in 1960.

That year the URW turned to its organizing director, George Burdon, for leadership. Burdon's tenure as president was brief. A new vice-president, the charismatic Peter Bommarito, had his eye on the top spot. Running as an expert in contract negotiations, Bommarito, “the bomber,” easily swept into office in 1966.

Bommarito's 15-year reign was marked by adversarial dealings with the rubber companies, strikes (143 in 1973 alone), and substantial decreases in union membership (from 178,000 in 1978 to 132,141 in 1982). Nonetheless Bommarito brought genuine financial gains to the membership. Wages increased, pensions improved, and as a result of the bitter strike of 1976, the cost-of-living allowance was put in place. Bommarito was also committed to improving the health of the rubber workers. The URW was the first union to hire a full-time industrial hygienist.

By the end of his tenure, Bommarito was also facing the harsh realities of shifts within the tire marketplace. In 1980, Firestone announced it was closing five tire factories and its synthetic latex plant. Milan “Mike” Stone, Bommarito's handpicked successor who was elected in 1981, had to deal with the plant closings, the layoffs, and the steadily declining membership. Part of this was due to imports. Aggressive foreign tire producers were making inroads into the lucrative North American replacement-tire market. Moreover foreign manufacturers were buying out American tire makers. Bridgestone acquired Firestone; Germany's Continental AG bought out GenCorp's General Tire; the French giant Michelin bought out the merged BFG and Uniroyal.

But the bigger reason was the shift in demand away from bias-ply tires to the new radials. The U.S. and Canadian tire plants had been slow to convert to radial tire production—that required updating and retooling old factories. In the end rubber companies found it cheaper to close factories and construct new ones. From 1975–1986, 30 of the 65 tire plants in the United States closed; all but one had been organized by the URW, costing 30,000 members their jobs. During the same time period, five new factories were constructed; URW could not organize any of those plants. To keep plants open, Stone agreed to concessions, and it was those concessions that ultimately led to his defeat as the URW president in 1990.

In 1990, the URW wanted a leader to “energize them, activate them, and make them feel like a union again,” wrote Meyer in his history of the URW. Kenneth Coss, the grandson of an organizer for the steelworkers' union, seemed to fill the bill, and he soundly defeated Stone.

But Coss was unable to stem the downward spiral. Membership continued to decline (from 104,721 in 1990 to 91,304 in 1993); tire plants continued to close; companies wanted more concessions. Then came the War of 1994. There were a number of URW strikes that year: Against Dunlop, Pirelli Armstrong, and Yokohami Tire; but it was the crippling, extended, bitter strike against Bridgestone/Firestone that led to the merger with the steelworkers.

Bridgestone/Firestone was losing money and refused to accept the master contract approved by Goodyear without some concessions in wages and benefits. Local URW workers were in no mood to compromise, and Coss could not convince the local leaders to keep their members on the job. In July 1994, Bridgestone/Firestone workers walked out. In August the company put in place its final best offer and began hiring. In December the company started hiring permanent replacements. Finally in May 1995, the URW—worried that the replacement workers would vote to decertify the union—ordered its members back to work with no conditions. Only a minority of the strikers got their jobs back.

Four days later, the URW's executive board voted to merge with the steelworkers. All that was needed was a two-thirds vote of the membership, which was not necessarily assured. The URW members complained about the loss of identity and the increased dues. In the end however the merger was approved 617 to 304, three votes more than needed.

The United Rubber Workers is now a part of the Rubber and Plastics Industry Conference of the United Steelworkers' Union, a small part of a giant union. Ron Hoover, who has a 40-year history with the rubber industry, is now head of the conference, replacing John Seller, another long-time URW member. Little is left of the URW's identity in its hometown of Akron or nationally. An abbreviated version of the union's history is located on the steelworkers' website (http://uswa733.freesevers.com/urw_history.htm), many layers below the home page. The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) is now the organizer, the settler of strikes, and the negotiator of the master contracts in the rubber industry; but the rubber workers are only one small part of the union's constituency.

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UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Although Congress did not formally create a federal employment service until 1933, the origins of the U.S. Employment Service (USES) lie in Progressive Era reform efforts to establish publicly funded and administered labor exchanges. Public employment exchanges began at the state level, with one of the first opened in Ohio in 1890. By 1917, 20 states had at least one publicly funded employment office. At the federal level, the first foray into employment services began in 1907, when Congress established the Division of Information within the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. This division advertised job opportunities to recent immigrants as a means of settling recent arrivals in communities across the country.

In 1915, the term U.S. Employment Service had come into informal usage, and a year later, the first secretary of labor, William B. Wilson, created USES to address war emergency needs. During and immediately after the Great War, USES functions expanded, and in March 1919, it boasted 854 offices, 4,079 employees, and 3,075 volunteers. Nevertheless the agency lacked formal congressional approval, largely because of disagreements over whether to create a centralized national office that operated separately from state-level offices or a federal office that shared authority with, and coordinated activities of, state offices.

During the 1920s, USES experienced significant funding cuts, operating as an information-clearing house with a skeletal staff. Pressure to expand, reinvigorate, and reorganize USES began as unemployment rose in 1929. President Herbert Hoover preferred to use administrative rather than congressional authority to revamp USES and pocket-vetoed a measure passed by Congress in March 1931 that would have given USES permanent status, streamlined and clarified its functions, and coordinated its efforts with state offices.

After the election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932, Senator Robert Wagner (D-NY) and Representative Theodore Peyser (D-NY) re-introduced

employment service legislation. With strong support from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, the Wagner-Peyser Act was signed by President Roosevelt on June 6, 1933. The AFL had become a strong advocate of public-employment exchanges, criticizing private, for-profit exchanges as ineffective and exploitative. The AFL President William Green encouraged local unions and state-level federations to lobby for the law and perceived it as part of a larger program aimed at addressing widespread unemployment.

The USES authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act replicated the federal approach built into many of the New Deal programs. Although USES had permanent status and a home in the Department of Labor, the agency shared authority with states. Officials used matching federal grants to encourage state offices, which carried out the actual placement work, to affiliate with USES. States accepting these grants agreed to abide by federal standards. If a state refused to establish a public-employment service, USES had the ability to establish an office directly. As it had done previously, USES continued to collect and distribute information on employment. In its first year it had 125 affiliated state offices and in its second year, over 2000. By the end of the decade, all 48 states, along with Hawaii, Alaska, and Washington, D.C. had public-employment offices linked to USES.

Despite strong support for the legislation from the AFL, union members and leaders remained wary of USES's potential as a strikebreaker. They worried that employers would use state offices to procure replacement workers during work stoppages, as seemed to have occurred during agricultural strikes in the 1930s. In 1939, USES officials adopted a rule—later weakened—mandating that all affiliated state offices refrain from supplying workers to firms engaged in labor disputes, defined as any controversy involving terms or conditions of employment, including conflicts over unionization.

During World War II, the Roosevelt administration centralized USES functions and placed the agency within the War Manpower Commission. Both labor and civil rights groups preferred this national system to the previous federal system. Labor leaders believed that centralization would facilitate a national economic plan for maintaining full employment. Although National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) leaders objected to USES's capitulation to employer requests for employees from specific racial groups, they recognized that decentralization had allowed state officials to discriminate blatantly against black job seekers by continuing that practice, as well as opening separate offices for black and white applicants and referring

blacks only to menial, unskilled jobs. The AFL leaders agreed with the NAACP regarding centralization, but they did not support the NAACP's call for Washington, DC to discontinue operating separate employment service offices for black and white applicants. Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) leaders, on the other hand, joined the NAACP in objecting to this practice and helped organize pickets of the DC offices.

In 1946, decentralizers succeeded in returning USES to its federal structure. From then on USES's mission became increasingly entangled with the distribution of unemployment benefits, and then in the 1960s, with job training. After passage of the Social Security Act in 1935 establishing unemployment insurance, some factions insisted that recipients of benefits be required to register with the employment service, and they mandated that state employment service offices be combined with unemployment-compensation offices. Once USES returned to its decentralized organization after the war, it saw its funding increasingly come from unemployment compensation taxes, thus linking it more firmly to this program.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, USES came under frequent criticism from all sides of the political spectrum for its rather poor placement record and oversight of state offices. It made fewer placements in 1957 than it had in 1947, and whereas only 17% of its job referrals were short-term in 1947, they increased to 30% in 1957. In the 1960s and under the Great Society, reformers sought to tie the service more closely to job training. This stress accompanied a decoupling of the unemployment-compensation program from the USES, which was largely accomplished by 1964. Nevertheless USES found itself in the middle of new debates over its role in welfare-to-work programs. Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act, including the 1982 Job Training Partnership Act and the 1998 Workforce Investment Act, continued to stress training and coordination with welfare-to-work programs, as reflected in USES's administrative placement within the Labor Department's Employment Training Administration. The 1998 act also focused on the creation of one-stop state-level employment services that once again tied the work of USES to unemployment insurance claims. In the latter part of the twentieth century, USES's increasing identification as an agency furnishing low-wage jobs to low or unskilled workers from economically disadvantaged groups tended to weaken its connection to organized labor. It also separated USES's mission and functions from a national economic policy, which was the original intent of its framers in 1933.

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See also **Department of Labor; Great Society; Perkins, Frances**

UNITED STATES INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION (1898–1902)

Established in 1898 by President William McKinley, the federal United States Industrial Commission in 1898 investigated corruption and greed in railroad pricing policy, industrial monopolies, and the impact of immigration on labor markets. The commission continued its work after McKinley’s assassination in 1901 and provided his successor, Theodore Roosevelt, with recommendations to pursue more aggressive antimonopoly policies.

Andrew L. Harris, a former Ohio governor known as the farmer-statesman, led the commission’s list of predominantly political participants. Two labor leaders sat on the commission: M. D. Ratchford, president of the United Mine Workers and F. B. Sargeant, leader of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. The high-profile targets of investigation were oil, railroad, and steel tycoons John. D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and Charles M. Schwab. A growing contingent of businessmen and civic leaders complained that the trusts squashed healthy economic competition through hostile buyouts or by peddling political influence with state and local governments. Small businesses and farms could not compete against the new billion-dollar corporations like U.S. Steel or Standard Oil. Official protests or legal recourse against the trusts were dismissed or easily overridden by their political and judicial cronies who made decisions at the state and local levels.

While Congress focused primarily on the railroad and steel industries, the commission’s final report revealed insights into other economy-related policy,

including prison labor, transportation, the Chicago labor disputes of 1900, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, education, foreign legislation affecting U.S. labor, and comparisons to European industrial models. The final report consisted of 19 volumes of investigations, studies, hearings, and legislative recommendations undertaken from 1899 to 1902.

At the end of the nineteenth century, poverty, the issues of economic depression, and competition from immigration generated considerable public concern. It appeared to many that the nation’s wealth and the chances for opportunity were concentrated in the hands of an elite group of men, including Carnegie and Morgan, who appeared to amass an enormous amount of cash and land wealth through the powerful trusts they controlled at a time when many American workers lived in poverty. In addition the unprecedented influx of immigrants at the turn of the century enabled companies to take advantage of cheap labor and ignore dangerous working conditions.

Armed with the commission’s findings Roosevelt revived the moribund Sherman Anti-trust Act of 1890 and the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 to curtail monopolies he believed to be in possession of too much power. In effect this gave the federal government and specifically the office of the president stronger regulatory powers over corporations. During his presidency Roosevelt supported investigations into antitrust suits against the beef, oil, sugar, tobacco, and steel industries and continued his attacks on the railroad barons. In 1902, he urged Congress to create a Bureau of Corporations to regulate big business. Then he brought suit against J. P. Morgan’s Northern Securities Company, an act that dismayed the corporate world. The action against Northern Securities initiated a period in which Roosevelt brought more than 40 legal cases against trusts. In a 1904 decision, the Supreme Court invoked the Sherman Antitrust Act and ordered the Northern Securities Company to dismantle its railroad holdings. The Supreme Court also found Standard Oil Company in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act. Deemed guilty of strangling trade through buyouts and predatory undercutting of competitors’ pricing, Standard Oil was also ordered to fragment its corporate empire.

Roosevelt’s use of the commission’s findings broadened executive power in dealing with labor-management issues, yet the policy had mixed results. While business railed against his strong-arm tactics, labor complained that his reforms did not go far enough in addressing the rights of workers. However the commission supported labor’s right to arbitration, which stated that “the rule of local and national trade unions, almost without exception, provides for

conciliatory negotiations with employers before a strike may be entered upon.”

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See also Gompers, Samuel; Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890

UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA

The United Steelworkers of America was a union of workers in basic steel and related industries. In the mid-twentieth century it represented the vast majority of such workers. Through mergers it also came to represent workers in many other industries, such as aluminum and rubber. The union was formed in May 1942, when a convention of the steelworkers’ Organizing Committee and the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin, and Steel Workers reformed themselves into the new union.

Before the Union

In the first three decades of the twentieth century, the steel industry was generally able to keep unions out. Workers’ defeats in major strikes in 1892, 1901, and 1919 guaranteed nonunion status. The Amalgamated Association (the AA) carried on with a few thousand members in tiny, specialized parts of the industry but did little to organize the mass of steelworkers.

The coming of the Great Depression and the New Deal changed things. The Depression undermined workers’ trust in the steel industry’s managers. The National Industrial Recovery Act gave workers the

right to organize unions. There was considerable conflict in 1933, 1934, and 1935. Some workers joined independent or Communist unions. The biggest group joined the AA and formed an activist wing (the Rank-and-File Movement) that far outnumbered the forces behind the faint-hearted elected officials. However the officials were able to prevail in a cautious course, and tens of thousands of disillusioned steel workers streamed out of the union. At the same time most steel companies tried to forestall unions by setting up company-dominated employee-representation plans (ERPs), which nominally included nearly all of the workers in the main companies.

The Steelworkers’ Organizing Committee

In late 1935, John L. Lewis, the president of the United Mine Workers (UMWA), intervened to help the steelworkers. Lewis wanted to see a strong movement of industrial-style unions, especially in the steel industry. He believed in industrial unions in principle and believed such a movement would help his own union. Lewis led several other union leaders to set up the Committee on Industrial Organizations (CIO) in late 1935 to promote industrial unionism. A few months later Lewis was able to strong-arm the AA into joining the CIO. In June 1936, the CIO set up the Steelworkers’ Organizing Committee (SWOC) to organize the steelworkers. The miners gave the organizing committee \$500,000 to get started.

Formally the SWOC leadership was a committee made up of several union leaders, some from the mineworkers and some from other CIO unions. The chairman was Philip Murray, a vice-president of the UMWA. In reality the leadership committee rarely met and left most decisions up to Murray. Although Murray was willing to encourage democracy at the local union level, he kept the main power in SWOC firmly in his own hands. He could appoint district leaders, hire organizers, approve or turn down proposed contracts, and veto proposed strikes.

He began the job of staffing the union by appointing three regional directors. Clinton Golden was put in charge in the East (including Pittsburgh). He was a labor intellectual, organizer, and former government bureaucrat. The UMWA officers Van A. Bittner and William Mitch were appointed to oversee the Midwest and Canada, and the South, respectively.

The union cast a wide net to find its organizers. Many came from the UMWA. Roughly one-third came from the Communist party (CP) after Lewis and the CP’s leaders came to an understanding. The full-time organizers were supplemented by part-time



Representatives of steel talks leaving White House after session. Left to right: Arthur J. Goldberg, general counsel, United Steel Workers; Philip Murray, president, USW; John Stephens, vice president, U.S. Steel; Ben Morrell, Jones & Laughlin; David J. McDonald, Secy. Treas., USW; and Charles White, President, Republic Steel. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-100673].

workers from inside the mills, including many leaders from the ERPs. The organizers worked both inside the mills and in steelworkers' communities. They tried to gain support for the union in ethnic organizations and neighborhood churches. They also promoted President Roosevelt's re-election.

The SWOC followed a policy of being racially and ethnically inclusive but met a lot of skepticism in the black community. Here the UMWA's reputation as a racially inclusive union proved to be a big asset to its offspring. In many locals the union leaders encouraged racially mixed slates to run for office. Blacks often served as vice-presidents. The SWOC also hired many black organizers.

The results were mixed. Despite widespread sympathy, actual members were hard to come by. In early 1937, the SWOC claimed to have 125,000 members, but that was a very soft figure. The tide turned in SWOC's favor after U.S. Steel voluntarily signed a written contract in March 1937. The U.S. Steel managers had been impressed by the autoworkers' sit-down strike against General Motors in January and February. They were also worried by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) rulings against the company's ERPs. The contract mostly

restated the current arrangements, but it gave a 10-cent-an-hour raise, and allowed the SWOC to represent its members in grievances and negotiations, with binding arbitration as a final (but voluntary) step.

Although the contract was not strong, getting any written agreement at all was seen as an advance. For a few months the organizing staff was flooded with new members and new locals. By October the claimed membership was over 535,000. The SWOC was able to win recognition at Jones and Laughlin Steel after a short strike.

The happy period came to an end with the little steel strike. Several steel companies including Bethlehem, Republic, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, and Inland decided to resist the union. Republic locked out workers at plants in Canton, Ohio, where the union was strong. The union struck Republic in protest, and the struggle soon spread to plants of all four companies. The SWOC was not so strong in the little steel companies as at U.S. Steel, and so the little steel companies decided to keep their plants operating during the strike. This led to considerable violence among union workers, procompany workers, and police.

The most famous episode took place at Republic Steel's plant in South Chicago. On Memorial Day 1937, the union held a large rally to protest police harassment of pickets. When the workers marched toward the plant entrance, they were blocked by Chicago police. The police fired on the marchers, and then charged and beat them. Ten union supporters were killed, and at least a hundred more were wounded.

Republic workers met with police violence or pro-company mobs in Canton and Massillon, Ohio, and Monroe, Michigan. Bethlehem Steel helped organize procompany mobs in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. By late June the strike was defeated in most locations. Many pro-union workers were fired, and SWOC spent several years struggling in the NLRB and in court to win their re-instatement. The only slightly bright spot for SWOC came in Indiana Harbor (in East Chicago, Indiana). The governor of Indiana was able to negotiate an end to the strike that involved *de facto* recognition of the union's right to represent its members at Inland and Youngstown Sheet and Tube.

After the defeat of the little steel strike, the union went into a slump, mostly due to the Roosevelt recession of 1938 to 1940. While the union still claimed to represent hundreds of thousands of workers, many of those workers were laid off for weeks or months. In 1940, there were fewer than 180,000 dues paying members. The union leaders cut the staff and took the opportunity to get rid of many of the Communists and leftists.

The World War II Era

World War II and the economic boom that came with it gave the union the chance to finish organizing the steelworkers. In 1940, Van Bittner was put in charge of the effort to organize Bethlehem Steel, the second largest steel company. This campaign bore fruit in early 1941 with successful strikes at Bethlehem's plants at Lackawanna, New York, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The company agreed to hold elections at all its plants, and SWOC won. The other little steel companies agreed to NLRB-administered card counts that the union generally won. The contract negotiations for these companies dragged on until after the United States was in the war.

The union also used its new-found strength to improve its contracts with U.S. Steel, to win NLRB elections at several U.S. Steel plants, and to persuade big steel to take grievances to binding arbitration.

By the spring of 1942, Murray felt that the organization of the steelworkers was nearly complete.

The union claimed over 650,000 members. In response to rank-and-file complaints, a convention was called, and SWOC was transformed into the United Steelworkers of America. The union was open to all steelworkers. Its top-down internal structure and governance revealed its descent from SWOC and the United Mine Workers. The president still had the power to appoint staffers. The International Executive Board, made up of the national officers and the district directors could veto proposed strikes, negotiate contracts, and control the local unions' finances. Unlike most unions, the USWA's national officers and district directors were to be elected by the membership except that in 1942, they were selected by the convention.

Expansion during the war led the union into new areas. It began organizing locals of white-collar steel employees and plant guards. In 1944, the Aluminum Workers of America merged into the USWA. Further in 1940, Murray replaced John L. Lewis as the president of the CIO, while keeping his post as head of the SWOC.

The energy and growth of the era was reflected in a spurt of books and ideas in the early 1940s. In 1940, *Organized Labor and Production: Next Steps in Industrial Democracy* was published by Murray and Morris Cooke (though Murray basically just lent his name to the venture). The book argued that business would operate better with strong unions as cooperative partners. In 1942, Murray proposed a similar scheme when he suggested that American industry should be governed by a series of industrial councils made up equally of business and labor representatives to increase war production. Very little came of Murray's plan.

Also in 1942, Clinton Golden and Harold Ruttenberg (the USWA's director of research) published the *Dynamics of Industrial Democracy*. The book advanced the same theses as Murray and Cooke's book but in more detail. Most famously *Dynamics* described and justified a steel union local that tried and expelled one of its founding members when he criticized the way the officers were cooperating with company management. It seemed as if one could not achieve industrial democracy if there were too much union democracy.

There was a lot of dissent because once the United States entered the war, the CIO unions pledged not to strike. The union lost its strongest weapon against management. Even striking in violation of the pledge was considered a bad idea because it would alienate the government and public opinion.

The union made up for its weakness by winning favors from the government bodies running the war effort. In 1942, the national War Labor Board handed

down a decision that defined the contents of the union's contracts with the little steel companies. The union won the right to maintenance of membership, which put new hires into the union and made it hard for them to leave later. There was also a modified dues check-off. The contracts included the so-called little steel formula that put a wartime cap on all workers' wage increases in the name of limiting inflation. After the union won those (usually meager) raises for most of its members, it concentrated on winning such nonmonetary benefits as vacations. In 1943, the USWA pushed the government into enforcing a mandatory 6-day workweek in most areas as one way to raise incomes. Workers flocked to the union to gain representation in government councils. However workers also went on wildcat strikes as a way to defend themselves in ways the union could not agree with. Union officials spent a lot of effort trying to end wartime strikes.

Postwar Prosperity

The 30 years after the war saw the USWA reach its maximum size and power. It grew to over 1.4 million members and was a power in several industries. In the early postwar years, the key challenges involved trade union issues. The union wanted to expand on wartime gains with union shops and dues check-offs. For the members the biggest issue was winning a raise to overcome the inflation of the period. The union struck in early 1946, and 750,000 workers stayed out for 26 days. The workers won a hefty raise. One of the union's gains from this strike was that it forced the companies to finish the reclassification and rationalization of tens of thousands of jobs to promote equal pay for equal work. Another union gain from the 1946 strike was the *de facto* emergence of pattern bargaining (that is, industrywide bargaining). Later the union went on big strikes five more times in 15 years in 1949, 1952, 1955, 1956, and 1959. The strikes were substantial and culminated in the 1959 strike, which lasted 116 days. Though the workers felt that they did not win high enough raises, their standard of living improved. Workers also won improvements in health insurance, pensions, and supplemental unemployment benefits (SUB pay). The union was also able to eliminate the wage differential between the South and the rest of the country. The postwar strikes were largely nonviolent, and the settlements usually involved significant intervention by the federal government.

The long 1959 strike led to a decade of settlements without strikes. In 1973, the USWA and the major steel companies agreed to the Experimental Negotiating

Agreement (ENA). This guaranteed an annual 3% wage increase and regular cost-of-living raises. In return the union agreed ahead of time not to strike. This settlement brought major improvements in wages but also led to a lot of dissension by rank-and-file activists.

Postwar Problems

The union faced several problems after the war. The most immediate was what to do about the Communists in the union. They had helped build the union and held offices in many major locals. With the growing Cold War the anti-Communists in the USWA leadership felt that was unacceptable. After the Taft-Hartley Act banned Communists from holding union offices, some district directors began to hold trials of officers suspected of being Reds. In 1948, the USWA convention voted to ban Communists from holding union office. A couple years later the CIO expelled several Communist-led unions. The USWA began raiding and red-baiting the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers' union and severely weakened it. In 1967, the remnants merged into the USWA.

The issue of rank-and-file democracy and dissidence also emerged. When Murray was alive, dissent was usually muted. Murray died in late 1952 and was replaced by David J. McDonald. McDonald had been one of Murray's chief aides but had never been a steelworker. Some workers felt that McDonald was too distant, too friendly to management, and lived too opulently. They accused him of practicing tuxedo unionism. In 1956, a group called the Dues Protest Committee arose to call for lower dues. In the 1956 elections they ran Donald C. Rarick, a grievance man, for the international presidency. McDonald beat the unknown candidate by 2 to 1, but the fact that a virtual unknown could win so many votes indicated serious rank-and-file unhappiness.

By 1964, unhappiness with McDonald had spread to the top ranks of the leadership. I. W. Abel, the union's secretary-treasurer ran against McDonald on a platform of increased militancy and rank-and-file input. Abel won in 1965.

A more liberal dissident came forth in 1973. Ed Sadlowski, a staff man in the Chicago-Gary district, ran for district director against the candidate favored by the national leadership. Sadlowski also called for greater militancy and rank-and-file power. Sadlowski lost the 1973 election, but won the court-ordered rerun. In 1977, Sadlowski ran for USWA president on a militant program. He was beaten by Lloyd McBride, the official candidate.

Another long-term problem for the union was the issue of racial justice. Initially the union had upheld multiracial unity and had opened up some jobs to black workers. That process continued during World War II with union approval. However as the union grew stronger, the issue grew tougher to deal with. Many white union members did not want to open up their jobs to black workers. As the union developed seniority rules, it often ended up approving seniority systems that pushed blacks into low-paying, dead-end jobs. In the basic steel industry, this took the form of having seniority systems based on a worker's service in a small department rather than his plantwide service. These systems minimized disruption at times of layoffs, but they also kept workers penned up in particular departments. When workers were slotted into low-wage departments, it was nearly impossible for them to move to better jobs, no matter how much seniority they had. The companies used these rules to discriminate against black workers, often with the consent of union locals. The union tried to evade these issues by supporting civil rights in national politics and ignoring equal rights in the mills.

During the 1960s, a wave of black protest broke out in the steel mills and the steel union. Many suits were filed in court, and some included the union and the companies as codefendants. Much of this black militancy was channeled through the National Ad Hoc Committee, a nationwide group of black workers inside the union created in 1964. The racial issues were largely resolved in 1974 with the approval of a consent decree between the union, the steel companies, and the federal courts. The decree called for measures to defeat past discrimination and to pay black workers something to make up for potentially lost wages. Most importantly the consent decree made it easier for all workers to move from one department to another.

Another civil rights issue was getting a black voice into the top union councils. In 1976, the USWA created a new office, vice-president for human affairs. The union picked Leon Lynch, a black staffer, for the job. In the 1977 elections both slates fielded blacks for the post.

Industrial Decline

Just as many of the union's problems were being dealt with, the steelworkers and their union were hit by de-industrialization. From the late 1970s onward, the steel industry shut down many factories and drastically cut employment at the

remaining mills. Union membership dropped from about 1.4 million in 1979 to 490,000 in 1991. The losses were especially sharp for female and minority workers. The steel industry insisted that the union make substantial concessions in wages and benefits. After some initial resistance, the union agreed. To sweeten the pill, a variety of labor-management cooperation schemes were tried in an effort to raise productivity. In addition the steel companies had forced the union to end pattern bargaining by the mid-1980s.

By the early 1990s, the remaining mills were operating far more profitably and efficiently with a much smaller workforce. In the early 2000s, another wave of mergers and shut-downs hit what was left of the industry.

The USWA responded to the harsh industrial climate by merging with other, smaller, unions. The most notable was a merger with the United Rubber Workers in 1995. On its 2005 web site, the union claims 850,000 members in the United States and Canada. Its official name was the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Energy, Allied-Industrial and Service Workers' International Union.

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UNITED TEXTILE WORKERS

The United Textile Workers (UTW) originated in 1901 primarily among the skilled, white, male workers in the New England textile industry along with scattered remnants of the National Union of Textile Workers in the South. Skilled workers in the textile industry had specialized jobs, including fixing weaving looms, operating mule spinning frames that turned out high-quality yarn, and sharpening blades on carding machines that separated and straightened cotton fibers early in the production process. These skills had not yet been broken down into smaller tasks, thereby subject to replacement by machines. Relatively difficult to replace, skilled workers had some leverage when bargaining with mill owners. The UTW belonged to the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which had been formed in the 1880s to protect the interests of skilled workers in many occupations. In 1901, the UTW's membership was roughly 10,000, less than 2% of the industry's workforce. Most textile employees were relatively unskilled women and children, who were either recent immigrants from southern and Eastern Europe in the North, or from white, Piedmont farm families in the South. Blacks were excluded from textile production jobs in the South.

Not necessarily seeing themselves as having common interests despite working in the same industry, UTW members were often reluctant to unite with other skilled workers. Unity was made more difficult because the textile industry was highly unstable in the early twentieth century. Textile production was a decentralized sector of the economy, far more competitive than most core industries. This was true in the North but even more so in the South, which had hundreds of independent mills. The industry had begun a long migration from North to South, with low-labor costs the major comparative advantage for southern mills. Anything that increased labor

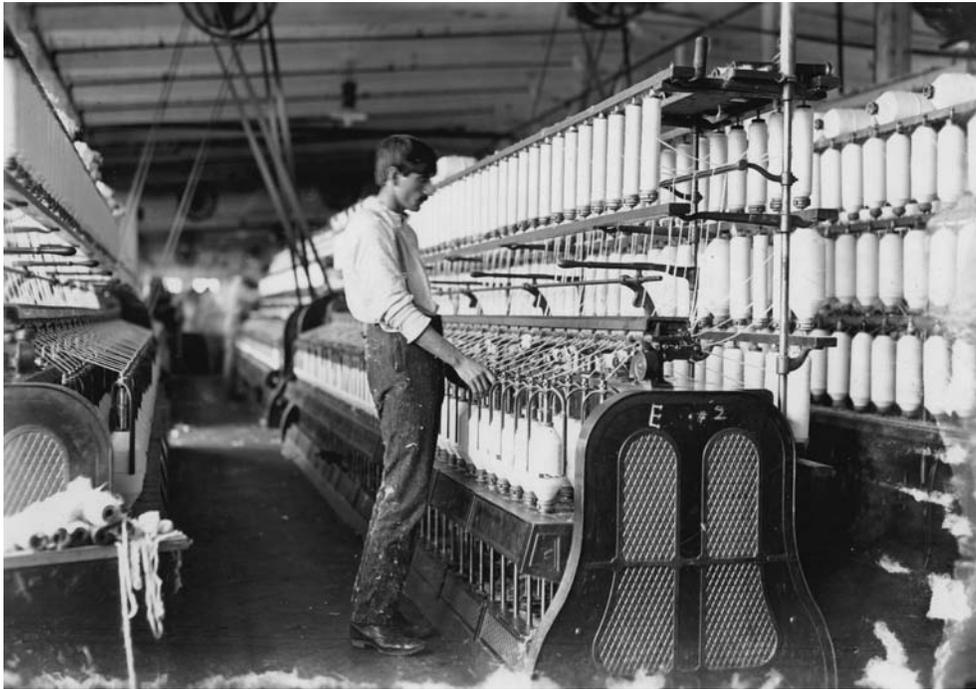
costs in the North, like unionized skilled workers, met harsh opposition from northern mill owners. After an unsuccessful strike by skilled workers in Augusta, Georgia, in 1902, the UTW gave up on the South for over a decade and focused on the North, making relatively strong progress, especially among weavers in rug and carpet mills.

Conflicts developed within the union however when locals negotiated with the national leadership over dues. Expanding union membership and influence required resources, but locals with large numbers of dues-paying members often resented paying for campaigns in other regions, especially when many locals barely collected any dues. Lack of money bedeviled the UTW throughout its existence, especially when existing or potential members went on strike and needed financial assistance.

The UTW also experienced competition from rival unions. Some UTW members defected in the 1910s to the National Amalgamation of Textile Operatives, which fought against skill dilution from both mechanization and fraternizing institutionally with other trades. The radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) competed with the UTW, most famously during a strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912. The IWW hoped to represent all textile workers, skilled and unskilled, native-born and immigrant, a goal that anticipated industrial unionism in the 1930s, but one that most UTW members opposed in the 1910s. Indeed UTW leaders applauded the federal government's crackdown on the IWW after World War I. Nevertheless craft unionists gained no favor with mill owners, who strongly resisted the UTW.

A Brief Heyday

World War I marked the heyday of the UTW. The wartime combination of labor scarcity and abnormally high demand for textiles placed workers in a strong bargaining position. Government emphasis on democracy, including industrial democracy, resonated with mill workers. The UTW membership skyrocketed by nearly 70,000 during the war and in the immediate postwar years, peaking in 1920 at about 105,000, or roughly 10% of the nation's textile labor force. Significantly most new recruits were relatively unskilled, white women and young men, obviously not the original membership profile. Strikes erupted throughout the textile industry when the war ended as industrialists, faced with a completely different economic environment, sought to reverse what they saw as the peculiar and temporary increases in wages and job security their workers had enjoyed.



It seems a pity that some of the spinning frames are so large that the children cannot operate them. Catawba Cotton Mills. Location: Newton, North Carolina. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, National Child Labor Committee Collection [LC-DIG-nclc-01536].

Both northern and southern workers resisted re-trenchment. Most strikes began without the blessing of UTW leaders, who knew that the union could not replace strikers' earnings and who realized that lost strikes could poison future prospects for textile unionization. Nevertheless the UTW had to be involved, or it would risk being perceived as irrelevant to, or even opposed to, workers' desires. The UTW organizers reached several tentative agreements with southern mill owners in 1919, which angered business leaders but gave hope to thousands of workers. By the end of 1919, the UTW claimed 43 chartered locals in North Carolina alone and a record number of dues-paying members. Although worker support for unionization was real, dues collection was often wildly exaggerated. In any event when the textile market turned down in 1921, the UTW could not protect its membership. Grudgingly the UTW struck to protest rollbacks in wages and working conditions, but its leadership knew that the union's prospects were dim. The UTW was somewhat more successful in the North, especially in a 1922 strike wave that halted most New England textile production. Significantly these strikes limited the number of hours per week for textile laborers. But ironically these victories increased the competitive advantage of southern mills and helped spur the movement of the industry

in that direction, which undercut the UTW's prospects where they looked brightest.

Futile Efforts

The UTW gained a fair amount of publicity but few positive results through its participation in a strike wave that swept southern textile communities from the late 1920s through 1934. In 1927, UTW organizer Alfred Hoffmann proved to be a popular motivator when he assisted mill workers in Henderson, North Carolina, attempt to re-instate a 3-year-old wage cut. Hoffmann offered \$125 for strike relief and claimed to have recruited 600 members. His contribution however could hardly replace the mill's \$9,000 weekly payroll. The strike faltered when workers could not pay their bills and the company evicted selected union activists.

Two years later the UTW attempted to lead a strike at a German-owned rayon plant in Elizabethton, Tennessee. Strikers, mostly young women, received more relief assistance from their families small merchants than from the chronically impoverished union. As strikebreakers appeared from the countryside, the UTW tried to settle the conflict long before most mill workers seemed ready. Better to cut losses than fight

to the finish, the UTW appeared to say, and the message received by many workers was that union activists might not be worthy of trust.

Also in 1929, the UTW found itself in the midst of an enormous strike in Gastonia, North Carolina, one complicated by the presence of the Communist-led National Textile Workers' Union (NTWU). Although the UTWA presented itself as the moderate, anti-Communist alternative to the NTWU, business leaders, clergy, and government officials failed to make the distinction and fought hard, including the use of state troops, to defeat the strike while conveying the impression that all labor conflict was subversive. Later that year in Marion, North Carolina, textile workers received vague assurances of assistance from UTW organizers and walked out in protest over the stretch-out. The UTW representatives led a contingent to meet with mill owner R. W. Baldwin, who sneered at them. With the clever use of a staged incident, the company received support from the national guard, and the strike soon ground to a halt, again with no lasting gains for the union's efforts.

The same story repeated itself but on a much larger scale during the 1934 general textile strike. Spurred by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal support for labor organizing, some 400,000 workers, North and South, struck in the late summer, primarily to oppose the hated stretch-out system. The UTW rode the back of this tiger, unable to provide adequate relief for such a vast number of strikers and also unable to diminish the formidable powers aligned against them. Hunger, mass firings, and violence eventually smashed the general strike and with it, the long-term prospects of the UTW.

By the end of the decade, the original UTW had been refashioned as first the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee, and then the Textile Workers' Union of America, affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). In 1939, however, a group of disaffected textile unionists reorganized the UTWA-AFL, but they were never again a major factor in textile unionism. The UTW existed into the 1970s, occasionally locking horns with the Textile Workers of America (TWUA) and serving in the 1950s as a harbor for disgruntled former TWUA leaders who hoped to challenge the CIO union. All this occurred however in the context of a declining industry and increasingly dim prospects for organization in textiles under any union. Always underfinanced, and never willing or powerful enough to challenge the military might of the state, the UTW crumbled before formidable opponents throughout its troubled history, yet no union in textiles has fared considerably better. This is tragic because

hundreds of thousands of textile workers clearly wanted more control over their working lives.

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See also American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations; Gastonia Strike (1929); National Union of Textile Workers; Textile Workers' Union of America; Textiles

UNITED TRANSPORT SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF AMERICA

See International Brotherhood of Red Caps/United Transport Service Employees of America

UPRISING OF THE 20,000 (1909)

The Uprising of 20,000, the largest strike of female workers in U.S. history started in 1909. This 14-week general strike had profound effects on the union



Two women strikers on picket line during the “Uprising of the 20,000” garment workers strike, New York City. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-49516].

and reform movements of the day. The strike started when Rosen Brothers factory refused to pay the negotiated price and sought to renegotiate the rate. The 200 workers walked out demanding a just price. The workers turned to Local 25, the shirtwaist makers’ local of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGWU) and the United Hebrew Trades (UHT) for assistance. Yet in the face of insurmountable odds, and after a 5-week struggle, Rosen Brothers settled with the union. The workers gained union recognition, a 20% piece-rate hike, and, more importantly, a shop-floor committee to give workers a democratic voice. The first significant victory for Local 25 was achieved, and with it, workers streamed into the union and strike talk spread.

As the Rosen Brothers’ strike was being settled, strike fever spread to other shops throughout the city. These strikes were unorganized and spontaneous in that workers went out first, then like the Rosen strike, contacted and joined the union. Two of these strikes, at the Leiserson and Triangle shops, were the two biggest shops.

By mid-October it appeared to union leaders that unless something drastic was done the strikes at Leiserson and Triangle would be lost. Both firms hired thugs to disrupt pickets and kept their factories open with scab labor. Under these circumstances, Local 25 and the UHT began to contemplate a general strike. However it was a risk. Local 25 had approximately 500 members and only \$4 in its treasury. Still the

workers were driven by a hyperpassion for unionism that just might sustain a call for a general strike. Local 25’s 15-member executive board (including four women, one of whom was Clara Lemlich) met to discuss the idea of a general strike. At a general meeting of the local on October 21, the union voted for a general strike and appointed a committee of five (three men and two women) to put it into effect. As talk of a general strike spread from shop to shop, picket-line violence, police brutality, and use of thugs hired by shop owners increased. The union was in a precarious position.

Early in the strike middle-class reform women became increasingly visible. Many seeing these mainly young immigrant women strikers as sisters in the larger women’s rights struggle ran to the picket lines in a show of feminist solidarity. Others operated under an older sense of *noblesse oblige*, an effort to protect these fragile young female strikers. Middle-class female reformers, whatever their motivation, stepped up their activity as the strike wore on. The focus of these reformers’ activities was the New York Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL). The national WTUL was founded at the American Federation of Labor’s (AFL’s) Boston convention in 1903 by the noted socialist William English Walling, labor organizer Mary Kenny, and Hull-House’s Jane Addams, along with others. The WTUL saw itself as filling a necessary void. The leaders believed in labor unions as a democratic necessity. But unions had

ignored women workers. The WTUL's goal was to aid local and national unions in organizing women. It quickly established branches in Boston, Chicago, and New York (NY). The NYWTUL therefore saw the 1909 strike as its opportunity.

On the night of November 22, an overflow crowd had to be directed to other halls throughout the city, Beethoven Hall and the Manhattan Lyceum among them. "For two hours," the *New York World* reported, "attentive audiences were cautioned to use deliberation, to be sober in their decision, but to be loyal to each other, and when they did decide to strike to stand by their union until all demands were granted."

After listening for 2 hours, Lemlich rose to speak. She was a member of Local 25's executive board, a leader of the Leiserson strike, and an equally fiery Socialist. Rising and taking the floor, she said: "I am a working girl, one of those who are on strike against intolerable conditions. I am tired of listening to speakers who talk in general terms. What we are here for is to decide whether we shall or shall not strike. I offer a resolution that a general strike be declared—now." What Lemlich wanted was action, not words. With that, "the big gathering was on its feet," according to the *New York World*: "Everyone shouting an emphatic affirmative, waving hats, canes, handkerchiefs, anything that came handy. For five minutes, perhaps, the tumult continued; then the chairperson, B. Feigenbaum [of the *Jewish Daily Forward*], made himself heard and asked for a seconder of the resolution. Again the big audience leaped to its feet, everyone seconding."

The next day 15,000 shirtwaist makers walked out. The first few days were simply chaotic as thousands of workers tried to crowd into Clinton Hall, Local 25's headquarters, to join the union. Clinton Hall had the atmosphere of a religious revival meeting. In one corner workers were dancing; in another, signing union cards; and in yet another, talking strategy. Local 25 sent strike committees from location to location trying to settle all the strikes shop by shop. By November 26, 2,000 workers had settled and returned to work, but another 1,200 had walked out on strike.

The 70 large manufacturers that dominated the trade, led by Triangle and Leiserson, however, stayed firm. Rather than go it alone or attempt to negotiate with the union, the owners of Triangle, Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, circulated a letter in early November to all shirtwaist manufacturers suggesting the formation of an Employers' Mutual Protective Association "in order to prevent this irresponsible union in gain[ing] the upper hand . . . [and] dictating to us the manner of conducting our business." According to most newspaper accounts, by the evening of

November 24, 2 days after the call for a general strike, more than 20,000 workers remained on strike.

Following Triangle's call, the new Association of Waist and Dress Manufacturers (the association) met on November 25 and 26 at the Broadway Central Hotel. It elected I. B. Hyman as chair and Charles Weinblatt as secretary and legal counsel. Declaring open war on the union, Samuel Floersheimer, speaking for the association, stated that any contract signed with the ILGWU or Local 25 was not "worth the paper it was written upon . . . [for] the men connected with the union are a lot of irresponsible black guards." The organization further called for all manufacturers who had already signed contracts to openly break them and lock out their workers. Firms then that joined the association, according to Floersheimer, would be striking a blow for liberty. Yet few small shops took this advice. During this brief chaotic period, these settled firms were doing a brisk business picking up the orders left unfilled by the larger shops, and they were not going to jeopardize it for the larger shops or for any matter of principle.

Large manufacturers hired private security agents, mainly to keep their factories open with mostly non-union Italian labor. In their circular letters, these agencies included the names of known gangsters, thugs, and toughs. These services performed two main functions: To disrupt picketing and break the morale of the strikers, and to allow the use of scabs to keep their production going. On August 12, before the general strike, Rosen Brothers hired detectives to remain inside the shop. During an altercation in front of the shop, several picketers were badly beaten. The *Jewish Daily Forward* published photos of the girls and the names of the toughs. These detectives all had lengthy criminal records.

Increased violence against young and teenaged women, coupled with the injustice of the court system, finally worked to the strikers' advantage, since it gained the waist makers public support among the middle class. By the end of October, the police had arrested 77 strikers; by January 1, the number had reached 707.

On October 23, the police arrested Margaret Johnson, a middle-class ally and member of the WTUL, for picketing. With this, the activity of the WTUL increased. One incident that sparked a sustained controversy was the arrest of Mary Dreier on November 4. Working-class women had demanded that their allies in the WTUL fully participate in the strike by scheduling themselves for picket watches around the clock. Dreier, a socially prominent woman and WTUL president, had been persuaded to picket in an effort to protect the strikers. Many working-class members of the WTUL believed that the mere presence

of the middle-class women would be enough to end the violence or more specifically, to shield them. Picketing peacefully in front of the Triangle factory, Dreier tried to convince some of the scabs not to cross the lines. One of their escorts called her a dirty liar. With that, Dreier approached a police officer and said, "You heard the language that man used to me. Am I not entitled to your protection?" The policeman replied that he could not be certain that she was not a liar. When a scab then accused her of assault, it was Dreier who was arrested. She was brought to the Mercer Street station, but when the police discovered who she was, they released her immediately. The arrest of Dreier brought heightened press coverage and a more intense WTUL effort to end police brutality and legal injustice.

Negotiations to end the strike began as early as the strike's second month but without much success. While much is known about the picketing, curiously little is known about the process of negotiation. What made this strike different from others were not just the number, age, and gender of the strikers, but the style of bargaining that developed. Early on both sides created elaborate new organizational structures for collective bargaining. In addition individuals and groups outside the New York garment industry and union shaped the bargaining process. The forces behind the new structures were led by men from within the union and elite women and men from without. One reason given for the need for this new, more bureaucratic structure was the youth and gender of the strikers. The strikers' inability to overcome the biggest stumbling block, combined with the manufacturers' absolute refusal to deal with the union, led many to believe that the details of bargaining should be handled by professionals—union leaders and reformers.

On December 6, a break in the stalemate came in the form of John Mitchell, ex-president of the United Mine Workers, and Marcus M. Marks, president of the Clothiers' Association. Both of these men embodied a new spirit of industrial relations. They saw labor relations as involving more than just workers and managers. They argued and used their collective influence to gain a position for the public at the

bargaining table. Acting on behalf of the National Civic Federation (NCF), Mitchell and Marks offered their services to help break the deadlock and end the strike. Their solution called for a six-member board of arbitration, each side choosing two members and the four choosing the remaining two, that would represent the public's interest. They argued that the current situation would hurt both sides and "prove only which side is stronger, not which side is right."

The union quickly responded to the NCF call and appointed union adviser Morris Hillquit and Mitchell as their chosen representatives. Management however refused the services of the NCF, announcing that they would have nothing to do with the union.

On February 15, the ILGWU called off the New York general strike. In reality it had all but ended at least 2 weeks before. Yet the union declared the strike a victory, and in many ways, it was. What was gained came from individual shop contracts with small and medium-sized shops, not the industrywide agreement that was hoped for. Of the 320 contracts signed, 302 recognized the union. Membership in the local went from 500 members in August to over 20,000 by February. The union had also survived to fight another day. To be sure without an industrywide agreement, these shop agreements were weak. However the strikers were able, at least for the present, to end the most noxious features of their servitude and begin to claim their rightful place as industrial citizens.

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V

VAN KLEECK, MARY (1883–1972) **Social Researcher and Reformer**

In a career that spanned over 40 years—from the high tide of Progressive Era optimism to the low-water mark of McCarthyite cynicism—Mary van Kleeck’s work, mostly at the Russell Sage Foundation, encompassed social settlements, women and labor, workers’ rights, social insurance, and economic planning—work fueled by Christian idealism disciplined by reason and science.

Van Kleeck was born in Glenham, New York, the daughter of an Episcopal minister, a common vocation in her family. In 1892, following her father’s death, the family moved to Flushing, New York, where Mary attended public schools. At Smith College, from which she graduated in 1904, she already demonstrated what would become a lifelong involvement with social investigation—the YWCA’s “industrial work”—inflected by the social gospel. The missionary zeal of the enterprise is captured well in her writing. In a 1917 book on the millinery trade in New York City, she wrote, “To the social reformer today,—and by social reformer we mean every man and woman who has a vision of what the social order ought to be and who believes that it can be made like that vision,—to recognize an evil is to set about changing it. Nothing socially disastrous is inevitable. Such faith, however, if it is to be fulfilled, must be particularized. It must apply wherever the conditions of modern industry press heavily upon the

workers,—in an artificial flower factory and in the mammoth steel works, in subway construction, and in the making of a woman’s hat” (*A Seasonal Industry*, p. 26).

A year after graduation, van Kleeck went to work at the College Settlement Association on New York’s Lower East Side, where she joined and was mentored by women whose province of action encompassed such groups as the Women’s Trade Union League, the Consumers’ League of New York, and the New York Child Labor Committee—vital parts of a women’s public culture that promoted cross-class alliances in pursuit of social justice for working people. The city was a laboratory for social investigators—its vast immigrant population filling the teeming tenements and finding employment in small- and medium-scale enterprises such as the garment trades as well as in homework—and van Kleeck began her work there with studies of child labor and of overtime by women workers.

In 1910, van Kleeck began her association with the Russell Sage Foundation, established in 1907, that lasted almost without interruption until her retirement in 1948. Charged by its benefactor with “the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States,” the foundation underwrote important social scientific investigations, including a continuation of van Kleeck’s studies of women workers. As the head of its Committee on Women’s Work, van Kleeck, with her mostly female staff of investigators, undertook important studies of the bookbinding, artificial flower, and millinery trades

in New York, exposing the problems caused by night work and seasonal unemployment, which led to legislative action by the State of New York. In 1916, her remit was expanded as the director of the foundation's new Division (later Department) of Industrial Studies to include studies of male workers. In these years she also taught at the New York School of Philanthropy and at the School for Social Work at Smith College, and returned to lecture at the YWCA's annual student conference at Silver Bay, Lake George (which she had attended as a Smith undergraduate).

Her growing reputation as an expert on women and work led to her recruitment during World War I to establish employment standards for women in war industries. In Washington, she served in the Ordnance Department of the U.S. Army, as a member of the War Labor Policy Board and then as the director of the Women in Industry Service of the Department of Labor (which became the Women's Bureau in 1920). She resigned in August 1919 and returned to her position at the Russell Sage Foundation.

Her service during the war secured her national reputation in labor matters. She was appointed to the President's Conference on Unemployment in 1921 and to the Committee on Unemployment and Business Cycles in 1922–1923. The 1920s also saw a new emphasis in van Kleeck's work that had already been evident before the war intervened. Through her studies of the sweated trades, she had concluded that government regulation of working conditions alone was inadequate to address the variety of problems that workers faced, especially irregularity of employment. Instead, adopting the ideas of Frederick W. Taylor on scientific management, van Kleeck (with others in the Taylor Society) began to interpret unemployment and underemployment as waste, something to be eliminated by the same technocratic approach that Taylor had used in ordering factory production processes. The insistence on a more rational industrial organization, she argued, would redound to the benefit of all—employer and worker alike.

Van Kleeck's advocacy of protective labor legislation and minimum-wage laws for women inevitably brought her into conflict with feminists supporting the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1920s, whose emphasis on individual freedom, sometimes asserting liberty to contract issues, imperiled the gains working women had made collectively ("Woman and Machines"). Under the onslaught of the Great Depression, however, van Kleeck acknowledged the need for a larger government role in relieving the economic distress facing all workers, authoring in 1934 an unsuccessful Unemployment and Social Security

bill, sponsored by Congressman Ernest Lundeen of Minnesota, whose expansive coverage and funding out of general revenues rather than payroll taxes brought down the ire of supporters of more moderate schemes, including the American Federation of Labor (AFL) leadership.

The New Deal, in fact, bitterly disappointed van Kleeck, especially the Roosevelt administration's failure to challenge corporate power. Her interest in Taylorism and planning had led her during the 1920s to participate in some of the national planning initiatives of Herbert Hoover, but her idea of "social-economic planning" found greater resonance internationally through the International Industrial Relations Institute (where she met Mary Fleddéus, with whom she lived the rest of her life). Increasingly, it was the Soviet Union that attracted her attention—and eventually admiration—for its centralized planning and social ideals. Her six-week visit in 1932 only confirmed her convictions. Until her death, she remained a fierce defender of the regime and a sympathetic ally of the American Communist Party, attracting the attention of the FBI and Senator Joseph McCarthy's Committee on Government Operations.

Her contributions as a social researcher and advocate for reform have not received the attention they deserve. Lesser figures in her world have attracted the attention of biographers, but scholars have seemed uncertain what to make of someone who was a member of the Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross *and* an apologist for the Soviet Union. Van Kleeck would probably be disappointed, as she spent much of her retirement organizing her papers.

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VIETNAM WAR

The Vietnam War (1965–1973) proved as much of an ordeal for U.S. organized labor and working people as for the country at large. Indeed, divisions over the war significantly weakened American unions, causing bitter fissures that lasted decades. U.S. labor's involvement in Southeast Asia, however, was deeper and more complex than is popularly understood.

The interest of U.S. trade unionists in Indochina, in fact, dates back to the 1940s. During the postwar period, strongly anticommunist elements had emerged in leadership positions in both the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). In the aftermath of World War II, both organizations sent representatives to Western Europe to rally anticommunist unionists against the communist threat.

In this context, neither the AFL nor the CIO raised much objection to the initial re-imposition of colonialism upon Indochina, a move supported by virtually all political sectors in France, including initially the Communist Party. By 1949, however, AFL and CIO officials, certain that Ho Chi Minh and his followers were dedicated agents of Moscow, grew increasingly worried that harsh French rule was aiding

the Communist cause. U.S. trade unionists began to call for an end to colonialism and the formation of a noncommunist, nationalist government, respectful of the rights of workers. At the urging of the AFL international representative Irving Brown, in 1950, the newly formed International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) sent a delegation, including John Brophy of the United Mine Workers of America, to Southeast Asia. In Vietnam, the group met with a nascent movement organized by French Christian trade unionists. Over the next several years, American trade unionists forged ties with the Vietnamese movement, which soon took the name the Vietnamese Confederation of Christian Labor (CVTC), under the leadership of Tran Quoc Buu, a nationalist previously allied with the Viet Minh.

During the dangerous days following the division of Vietnam in 1955, U.S. labor provided valuable assistance as the CVTC worked to relocate thousands of trade unionists fleeing the North. That same year, Jodie Eggers, formerly of the CIO International Woodworkers of America, arrived in Saigon to serve as the U.S. Operations Mission's labor advisor. Eggers quickly became a tireless advocate for the CVTC. American trade unionists meanwhile leaned on U.S. government officials to protect the CVTC as the Ngo Dinh Diem administration grew increasingly oppressive.

In 1961, Irving Brown traveled to Vietnam to size up the situation for himself. While he was dismayed by Diem's heavy-handedness, he quickly came to appreciate the CVTC as an independent force with much potential. In his report to the AFL-CIO, Brown was so laudatory of the CVTC that he touted it as a potential "paramilitary" force. After his return, from his offices in Paris, Brown began encouraging dissident Vietnamese. Meanwhile, in Saigon, Buu actively conspired against Diem.

In the aftermath of the 1963 coup against Diem, however, Buu went into hiding temporarily to avoid the threat of arrest from Saigon's new leaders. Eventually, Brown returned to Vietnam in mid-1964 to press directly South Vietnam's new leadership to recognize the rights of labor. Brown also made connections with USAID in Saigon, hoping to harness funds for AFL-CIO-sponsored programs to aid the CVTC.

While Buu's organization remained vulnerable, it increasingly took more of a public posture and drew closer to its American sponsors. In turn, the AFL-CIO, committed deeply to the anticommunist cause in Southeast Asia, began planning a permanent presence in Saigon to aid the CVT (which dropped the designation "Christian" from its name in 1964). The CVT, U.S. trade unionists hoped, might be transformed into a vehicle for much-needed reform in South Vietnam. Thus, when President Lyndon

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Johnson, who had bonded closely with U.S. labor leaders, decided to intervene militarily in 1965, the AFL-CIO strongly applauded the move, offering its “unstinting support.”

Yet from its beginnings, the war proved a source of painful controversy and tension for American labor. In the fall of 1965, antiwar protesters disrupted the AFL-CIO convention. Although a majority of delegates supported the war, dovish voices also were heard on the convention floor, including the United Auto Workers (UAW) official Emil Mazey, who decried South Vietnam as “a corrupt military dictatorship” unworthy of American support.

As the war progressed, so too did antiwar sentiment among trade unionists. In February 1966, the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) officially questioned the “burden of expense” of the war and complained that “the sons of workers. . . are being drafted first for military duty.” A few smaller unions, such as New York City Hospital Workers Local 1199, took similar positions. Meanwhile, polls showed union members often less likely than the general public to support escalation of the war—perhaps a reflection of the “working-class” roots of many of those fighting in Southeast Asia. An internal poll taken by the Communication Workers of America in the summer of 1966 showed 56% of respondents favoring withdrawal or negotiations in Vietnam, while only 40% supported the status quo or escalation. Yet concurrently, some trade unionists insisted that Johnson take a tougher line in Vietnam and with America’s allies who traded with North Vietnam. The presidents of the three major AFL-CIO maritime unions, in early 1966, sent Johnson a blistering letter threatening to boycott vessels of foreign nations trading with North Vietnam. The Johnson administration arranged a compromise, but positions on both sides were hardening and opponents were increasingly talking past each other. When antiwar trade unionists held a public meeting in Chicago in the fall of 1967, Meany assailed the gathering as “planned in Hanoi.”

Wedded to the war, AFL-CIO leaders moved forward with plans for a permanent Federation presence in Saigon to be sponsored by AID dollars. But the Tet Offensive dealt a sharp blow to such plans. Even before the actual Viet Cong attacks, the CVT entered crisis mode when Saigon authorities violently broke a strike by CVT-affiliated electrical workers. As the dust from Tet settled, it became clear that U.S. organized labor faced shifting political terrain at home and mounting challenges in Vietnam.

In 1968, Walter Reuther pulled his United Auto Workers out of the AFL-CIO in part due to the Federation’s uncompromising stance on Vietnam.

The violent and tumultuous presidential campaign that year saw the Vietnam War play an ever more divisive role as well. In the end, the AFL-CIO spent unprecedented funds and energies supporting the doomed candidacy of prowar Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

While most trade unionists were distrustful of President Richard Nixon, his struggle to find “peace with honor” won the support of large segments of the rank and file and the AFL-CIO leadership, who also needed Nixon’s support for its newly minted Saigon labor office (founded in 1968), the Asian American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI). But Nixon’s brazen invasion of Cambodia in 1970 again divided the ranks. While Meany and virtually the entire AFL-CIO leadership praised the attack, Nixon’s move deeply angered dovish trade unionists. Walter Reuther, in a statement made the day before his death, warned Nixon the invasion represented “a repudiation of your oft-repeated pledge to bring this tragic war to an end.” The ACWA president, Jacob Potofsky, sharply denounced both the invasion and the war at his union’s 1970 convention. Elsewhere across the country, grassroots coalitions such as the San Francisco Bay Area Labor Assembly for Peace began working closely with the mainstream antiwar movement.

Yet concurrently, the Cambodian invasion also invigorated hawkish trade unionists. In Lower Manhattan, hardhat construction workers attacked doves protesting the Cambodian invasion; related “hardhat” demonstrations quickly flared in other cities. Seeking political advantage, Nixon invited the leaders of New York City’s construction trades unions to the White House.

Although the immediate tumult settled quickly, acrimony remained as the 1972 elections approached. Asked if he wanted to see Nixon defeated, Meany responded, “I don’t want to see him defeated by somebody who is advocating surrender. I don’t believe in surrender in Vietnam.” The Democratic Party’s nomination of dovish Senator George McGovern thus created a crisis for the Federation. For the first time, the AFL-CIO Executive Council, primarily reacting to McGovern’s call for immediate withdrawal, voted not to endorse a presidential candidate. In response, some dovish trade unionists grew more aggressive. The Teamster general secretary, Harold Gibbons, in the spring of 1972, joined a delegation of antiwar trade unionists on a high-profile trip to Hanoi. That summer, peace-minded trade unionists formed Labor for Peace, an organization dedicated to pressing for immediate withdrawal. Still, the new organization remained divided as to whether to adopt militant measures and work directly with radical elements in the antiwar movement.

While the peace settlement in January 1973 ended the most immediate divisiveness, the AFL-CIO remained a vocal supporter of continuing aid to South Vietnam. Through AAFLI, the Federation continued its mentoring relationship with the CVT. As Saigon tottered, Meany cautioned that the end of the war would hardly bring peace. "While the fighting might stop, the killing would not," he warned. When the end came in late April 1975, Meany scrambled to ensure CVT officials were included among the evacuees. Buu and several hundred did escape, although thousands of those left suffered retribution from their country's new rulers.

By 1975, organized labor in the United States was a divided force, alienated from its former liberal allies and facing the most severe economic downturn since the Depression. Acknowledging some of the lost ground, Meany appeared on the *Dick Cavett* television show. Referring to his support for Johnson and Nixon on Vietnam, he confessed, "If I'd known then what I know now, I don't think we would have backed them."

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VOLUNTARISM

Voluntarism refers to the American Federation of Labor (AFL) strategy of securing gains through collective bargaining instead of through legislation. It reflects the primacy of economic over political struggle as the best strategy for workers to pursue their self-interest. According to voluntarist principles, the

benefits workers can achieve through their own voluntary organizations are superior to those they can achieve politically because unions are more familiar with the needs of workers than government, voluntarism requires workers to take initiative on their own behalf, and finally, legislation promotes "big government," which threatens workers' freedom and independence.

Voluntarists have a profound distrust of the state and believe that workers can only improve their circumstances through the strength of their own self-organization. Consequently, the AFL opposed welfare state measures, such as unemployment insurance and minimum wage laws, which would have undermined and competed with unions' own efforts on behalf of their members. While skeptical of benefits derived through legislation, voluntarists are not opposed to all political activity. Such activity may be necessary in order to prevent the government from restricting the ability of unions to pursue their members' interests, such as passing laws that restrict the right to strike and organize. Political activity may be necessary so that unions can achieve results outside of it.

The strength of voluntarism within the AFL, its reliance upon economic as opposed to political power, has been attributed to many factors. The AFL's voluntarism reflected the lowest common denominator of workplace solidarities around which workers could ally. Political unity beyond issues of wages and hours was precluded by ethnic, religious, and racial cleavages among workers. Its grip upon the AFL also has been attributed to the institutional structure of American government. The separation of powers among the different branches of government created multiple veto points for opponents to block social legislation. Unions adopted voluntarism because of the institutional roadblocks they encountered that defeated their legislative efforts. Finally, it is argued that voluntarism was so dominant because it served the interests of trade union leaders. Members would be more dependent upon their union leaders if their benefits were derived through economic and not political struggle.

As much as voluntarism may have "fit" certain conditions, its strength within the AFL rested upon the degree to which it coincided with the strategic interests of skilled workers who composed the AFL. Skilled workers are particularly attracted to voluntarism because their craft unions have market power they can employ in group conflict with employers. Craft unions can leverage the skills of their members in collective bargaining with employers. In addition, frequent political defeat did not give skilled workers much confidence that politics was a fruitful arena from which rewards could be obtained. Finally,

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skilled workers were reluctant to work through politics because their relatively small numbers would have required them to ally with unskilled workers in order to be politically successful. But skilled workers were intent on maintaining and not reducing distinctions between themselves and the unskilled. The contrast between the shop-floor power skilled workers possessed and the lack of political resources such workers could command focused their hopes and ambitions on collective bargaining and their union rather than on political action and the state.

The decline of voluntarism in the American labor movement coincides with the organization of unskilled workers into industrial unions under the banner of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s. The power of unskilled workers rested upon a different principle than skilled workers. Unskilled workers enjoyed the power of numbers. They could leverage this into political power to gain legislative relief, which was in contrast to their lack of market power due to their lack of skills. The voting power of millions of unskilled workers made CIO unions more apt to support welfare benefits and workplace protections through the government and not depend exclusively on collective bargaining to achieve them. The ideology of voluntarism faded within the labor movement as the power of industrial unions grew and the influence of craft unions declined within it.

ALAN DRAPER

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See also **American Federation of Labor**

VORSE, MARY HEATON (1874–1966) Journalist

As the foremost pioneer of labor journalism in the nation, and as a correspondent covering international events from 1912 through the 1940s, Mary Heaton Vorse produced impassioned reporting that exposed

her audience to a wider vision of democracy. She was also an important strike organizer, feminist, suffragist, peace worker, and fiction writer. The issues raised by economic inequality, labor battles, gender conflict, and war and peace compose the core of her thought and work and address the fundamental questions of her age.

Vorse was born into a wealthy family that later disowned her, due to her Bohemian lifestyle. As an editor of the *Masses* and a founder of the Provincetown Players, she was a key member of the group of intellectuals and radicals centered in pre-World War I Greenwich Village. Twice widowed, she learned to write romantic short stories for the women's magazines in order to support her three children. Her struggle to balance the demands of motherhood with those of her profession became a central theme of her life. Her experience in the suffrage movement and in women's peace work also shaped her feminist vision. The 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire in which more than 100 female garment workers died because exit doors were locked brought Vorse into direct contact with the brutal conditions facing working-women.

Vorse began her labor reporting at the 1912 Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike, where she wrote of the terrible human cost imposed on the poor by uncontrolled profit making. For the next 40 years, she demonstrated her uncanny ability to sense the moment and find the center where action would occur. She went on to report labor battles at the 1916 Mesabi Range and at the Great Steel Strike of 1919.

Vorse believed that her work as publicity director for the Passaic, New Jersey, textile strike of 1926 revolutionized union tactics and prefigured tactics that contributed to the victories of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the late 1930s. She successfully solicited endorsements for the strike from recognized liberal leaders, artists, and intellectuals. When police attacked peaceful strike marchers as well as journalists and cameramen, liberal indignation about Passaic turned white hot. Her publicity helped to make Passaic a national sensation. She reported the southern labor struggles at Gastonia in 1929 and at bloody Harlan County in 1931, where she was run out of state by night riders. Vorse was present at every major unemployed march and farmers' strike and reported the Scottsboro Boys trial in the 1930s.

She was present at the crucial labor battle in Flint, Michigan, in 1937 and was wounded at Youngstown in the Little Steel Strike of 1937. Vorse was perhaps the oldest war correspondent in World War II. Her last big story to receive national attention was the 1952 expose of crimes in the waterfront unions. In her 80s she wrote of the danger of toxic waste dumps and of nuclear

bomb stockpiles. In 1965, at age 91, one year before her death, she backed her local minister, who was one of the first to march against the Vietnam War.

Unlike most labor journalists, Vorse was often a strike participant, in the thick of battle, with intimate knowledge of union strategy combined with a fervent commitment to honest, accurate reporting. She provided the news coverage that bridged the gap between union leadership and the reading public. Her writing was remarkable for its emotional re-creation of the human drama within a context of factual detail. Under her hand, the workers become visible and noisy, and one feels the fear on the picket line or the strength of marching protesters. Vorse's unique contribution to the labor journalism of her time was her consistent attention to the special concerns of women. The immigrant wife, the starving children, the harsh tenement home—these constituted the raw material for her dramatic power to make the reality of labor history come alive. Her accounts found easy entry into major journals, yet she also wrote for intellectuals and reformers in journals like the *Nation* and the *New Republic*. Her biggest audience was the workers themselves, in her hundreds of dispatches to union

newspapers, newsletters, and broadsides for the union press.

Vorse eluded political categorization. She rejected liberals' belief that reasoned appeals would cancel the capitalist repression of worker rights as an illusion. Nor did she share the faith of the Communists. She rejected Communist dictatorship earlier than many of her liberal and radical friends, but she also stood in opposition to the Cold War. For over 50 years she fought for economic democracy, world peace, and feminism—a union of ideas far too radical for most of her contemporaries to consider. Although Communists knew her to be unreliable and unreasonable, the FBI in 1944 placed her on the list of dangerous citizens to be jailed immediately on presidential order, and even maintained an active surveillance file on her until she was 82 years old.

Mary Heaton Vorse brought to the American public the intimate stories of the workers who fought for fair pay, decent hours, and the right to a union. Her appeal to every class of readers was a call for commonsense application of traditional national ideals—liberty, equality, and justice for all.

JOHN LEGGETT

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WAGE LOSSES AND UNION DECLINE: 1980s THROUGH THE EARLY 2000s

The U.S. workers entered the 1980s facing a much less supportive environment than they had enjoyed for many decades. From World War II into the 1970s, a confluence of events had brought a steadily rising standard of living to most working families, although significant numbers of minorities and women did not share fully in the prosperity. Unscathed by the world wars, and sitting astride a mighty economic engine that had grown rapidly during the war, U.S. businesses from 1945 through the 1960s moved across the globe and established the United States as the center of a global economic empire.

A massive upsurge during the Depression era 1930s and a consolidation of newly won unions during World War II created a sizable U.S. labor movement. Unions represented large percentages of workers in industries like auto, steel, construction, telephone, long-distance trucking, and other important economic sectors. High unionization rates and a measure of political influence enabled workers to demand a share of the nation's growing prosperity. The New Deal coalition (workers, minorities, urban populations, Catholics, liberal intellectuals) had dominant influence in the country, and it facilitated union survival and a degree of social welfare for many working-class people.

Adjusting figures into 2003 dollars so that comparisons show the real change in the purchasing power, average weekly earnings in the United States grew from \$340.01 in 1947 to \$547.82 by 1973, an increase

of more than 61%. Productivity grew at a similar pace during this 26-year period.

During this same period unions were able firmly to establish and improve a variety of benefits for their members beyond wage rates. Healthcare and pension benefits plans were the most important; since these were established and increased in unionized industries, they spread to nonunion segments of the economy in (usually less generous) forms.

Reversal of Labor's Fortunes: A Statistical Portrait

Compare the earlier experience to occurrences in the subsequent decades. From 1973 to 1996, while productivity grew about 40%, average weekly earnings (in 2003 dollars) actually declined 12% from \$547.82 to \$481.74 per week. By 2003, average weekly earnings had increased to \$519.56 per week, still below what they were in 1973. Sometime in the 1970s, wages no longer rose in tandem with productivity; new wealth went to owners and financiers, not to workers.

The declining economic fortunes of American workers coincided with the shrinkage of their primary instrument for economic defense, unions. Unions had emerged from World War II in a strong enough position to retain the major gains they had made previously. Different statistical sources on union density (the percentage of the nonagricultural labor force that is in a union) in the immediate post-World War II

years vary, but all give density figures from 31%–36% in the 1945–1955 period. All place peak union density from 33%–36%.

By 1973, union density was down to 24%. By 1980 it stood at 23%, and subsequently plunged rapidly. By 2000, it was down to 13.5%, and by 2004, it dropped to 12.5%. Thus by 2004, union density was barely more than one-third of what it had been 50 years earlier.

The overall decline in union density masked differing fortunes for unions in different economic segments. Heavily unionized industries like manufacturing and construction experienced extreme declines, as did the entire private sector. Public-sector unionization rates held steady. Table 1 illustrates the difference from 1973 to 2004.

By 2004, the union density in manufacturing was less than one-third of what it had been in 1973, and it had dropped 61% in the construction industry. The entire private sector experienced a similar decline from almost a quarter of all workers to only 8%. From 1973 to 1980, public-sector unionization continued a surge that had begun in the 1960s and then leveled off. By 2004, union density in the public sector was 4.5 times as high as in the private sector.

Changing union density rates were reflected in the size and prominence of various national unions. In the 1950s and 1960s, the prominent unions were industrial unions, like the United Auto Workers (UAW), the United Steelworkers (USWA), and the International Association of Machinists (IAM); or they were construction unions organized around a specific craft, such as the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (UBC), or the United Association of Plumbers and Pipe fitters (UA).

Changes from 1980 to 2000 and beyond changed this picture. Public-sector and/or service-industries unions surpassed the old style unions in size and prominence. The UAW dropped from a 1.4 million

member peak in the 1970s to less than half that (654,657) by 2004. The USWA and the IAM, both over one million at their late 1970s to early 1980s peaks, were down to 535,461 and 610,605, respectively, by 2004. Meanwhile the Service Employees' International Union (SEIU), once an obscure and relatively small union representing doormen and janitors in a few large cities, grew to be the largest union in the AFL-CIO by 2004 (1,702,639 members), now representing public- and private-sector service and health-care workers. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the main union for nonfederal public-sector workers, grew from less than 100,000 in 1955 to 1,350,000 members by 2004. Consequently the center of gravity in organized labor shifted to public-sector and service-sector unions in this period.

Changing Demographic Profile of the U.S. Worker and U.S. Unions

Women increasingly entered the workforce after 1980. This became more necessary as men's wages stagnated and declined. From 1980 to 2003, the percentage of women participating in the workforce (that is, working or looking for work) jumped from just over 51% to over 61%, almost a 20% increase. Women also lessened the wage gap with men: In 1980, women on average earned just over 60% of what men made; by 2000, the percentage had jumped to 76%. While some of the improved percentage was due to real increases in women's wages, much of it could be attributed to losses in men's real earnings (that is, earning adjusted for inflation).

During this period unions enrolled increasing numbers of women in their ranks. By 2003, women comprised 43% of all union members, still below their 48%

Table 1 Union Density in Different U.S. Economic Sectors, 1973 to 2004

Sector	1973 Union Density (%)	1980 Union Density (%)	1990 Union Density (%)	2000 Union Density (%)	2004 Union Density (%)
All	24.0	23.0	16.1	13.5	12.5
All private nonagricultural	24.6	20.4	12.1	9.1	8.0
Private manufacturing	38.9	32.3	20.6	14.8	12.9
Private construction	39.5	30.9	21.0	18.3	15.4
Public sector	23.0	35.9	36.5	37.5	36.4

Source: www.unionstats.com.

share of the entire workforce but much improved over previous periods. Union membership definitely benefited women during this period; in 2004, female union workers earned an average of 34% more than female nonunion workers. This union wage advantage exceeded the 28% advantage for all workers in that year.

Immigrants also entered the U.S. labor force in massive numbers during this period. From 1980 to 2004, the percentage of the U.S. population that was foreign-born jumped from just over 6% to approximately 12%. Over 40% of the entire growth of the labor force in the 1990s was composed of immigrants, and this percentage increased to over 50% in 2000–2003.

Most immigrants came from Latin America or Asia. Some held high-income jobs in the United States, but most were confined to the lower rungs of the job market. Immigrants were overrepresented in the private household worker occupations (child care, house cleaning), in agricultural labor, in construction, and in a variety of leisure and hospitality and other low-wage service-sector occupations.

The influx of immigrants eventually prompted a historic shift in the stance of U.S. labor unions toward immigration. Since the 1920s, the official labor movement had usually taken the anti-immigrant side of political immigration debates. The AFL-CIO supported the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which contained provisions to fine employers who knowingly hired immigrants who had entered the country without proper documentation and who therefore were in the country illegally.

In the years after 1986, both documented and undocumented immigration grew rapidly despite this provision. The law had no apparent impact on either legal or illegal immigration, and it was virtually never used to prosecute employers. Instead it locked undocumented immigrants into a perpetual illegal status, making them vulnerable to employer abuse. Immigrant workers demanding their rights (to be paid or to form a union, for example) found the employer could simply call the federal Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) office to have the workers arrested and deported. This had a chilling effect on workers' assertion of their rights. This undermined worker rights in general in the country, especially in low-wage occupations.

In 2000, the AFL-CIO changed course and called for an amnesty for all undocumented U.S. workers, providing them with a path to citizenship. It also called for the repeal of the ineffective employer sanctions, to be replaced with a policy of full legal protection (including the right to unionize) for all workers in the country regardless of legal status. The federation also called for whistleblower protections and

sanctions against employers who recruit workers from abroad for the purpose of exploiting them. Many of the largest efforts by unions to organize unorganized workers in the early 2000s involved immigrants in such industries as hotel and lodging, home health care and nursing homes, and construction.

African-American blue-collar workers fared rather poorly in the 1980s and 1990s, as those unionized industries in which they had gained a significant foothold were decimated through plant closings. Entire communities that were predominantly African-American, such as Detroit and Gary, Indiana, were devastated when massive plant closures and downsizing in the automobile and steel industries occurred. In 1982, a quarter of African-American workers were employed in factories; by 2000 this percentage had declined to 14%. By the 2000s, government employment became one of the main avenues for African-Americans to gain middle-income status, and the large percentage of African-Americans in the memberships of public-sector unions reflects this fact.

Changing Political and Social Environment and Response

The year 1980 was a major political turning point for the country and also for U.S. labor. In that year Ronald Reagan was elected president, espousing a free-market and antigovernment perspective that was very unfriendly to labor's interests. Reagan fired the nation's air traffic controllers at the nation's airports and destroyed their union in 1981. He also appointed leaders to the federal agency charged with interpreting and enforcing the nation's labor law, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), who had previously expressed contempt for, and opposition to, the very law they were to uphold. One compared union demands in the collective-bargaining relationship to organized criminal extortion of a business. The Reagan NLRB from 1980 to 1988 reinterpreted labor law in ways that made more and more union tactics illegal while making a wide variety of union-busting tactics by employers legal.

The labor movement was unprepared for the onslaught. In the decades preceding 1980, it had lost much of its attractiveness for many former allies who had helped it prosper in the 1930s through the 1950s.

The 1960s Civil Rights and later Black Power movements had challenged a number of unions to incorporate more African-Americans, both as members and as leaders. The predominantly white craft

unions in the building trades initially opposed the pressure to integrate, causing considerable hostility from many in the black community. The building trades' unions did eventually change; by 2001, unionized construction workers were more likely to be African-American than were nonunion construction workers. In time unions became among the most integrated institutions in American society, but some unions' unfriendly initial adjustment to the revolution in race relations had at least temporarily separated the labor movement from some of its former allies in minority communities.

Likewise the modern women's movement originating in the 1960s and 1970s faced indifference or even opposition from some, although not all, unions. Previously all-male enclaves of the workforce often did not receive new female entrants with open arms—the skilled trades in manufacturing plants and the building trades' craft unions were prominent examples. Unions with already established female memberships, such as the Communications Workers of America (CWA) or the teachers' unions (American Federation of Teachers [AFT] and National Education Association [NEA]) made a much smoother transition to the growing centrality of women in the labor force.

The student and antiwar movements of the 1960s and 1970s had even more problematic relations with the organized labor movement. Cultural clashes over perceived moral deficiencies of the young activists regarding sexuality and drug usage and other aspects of youth culture and differences over the Vietnam War drove the labor movement apart from many of its former allies among university-educated people who considered themselves liberal or progressive. Likewise the environmental movement ended up in conflict with those unions that were primarily interested in jobs when there was a perceived trade-off between jobs and environmental protection. Middle-class progressives in all of these movements often developed an indifferent or even disdainful attitude toward organized labor as a result.

Consequently the labor movement faced the hostile political climate of the 1980s in a more isolated position than it had been in for many decades. Differences over racial, gender, lifestyle, Cold War, and Vietnam War issues had torn apart the New Deal coalition that had governed the country for the most part since the 1930s. In the 1980s and 1990s, the ascendant right wing consolidated a new enduring coalition of corporate and wealthy interests with religious, cultural conservatives and patriotic/militaristic elements among working-class people. By the early 2000s, non-union, white, working-class males were voting heavily for political candidates (usually but not always in the Republican party) who attacked the living standards

of working-class people. So did working-class members of the Christian right, even though doing so meant the transfer of wealth from them to the very richest segments of society.

Thus from 1980 into the 2000s, conservative Republican presidents with unfriendly relationships with organized labor ruled with the exception of 1992 to 2000, when centrist Democrat Bill Clinton was in office. Clinton also disappointed the unions by failing to push for substantive change in labor law to make union organizing easier, while he used all of his political influence to push the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) through Congress without enforceable labor standards to protect workers' rights. Clinton did appoint to the NLRB individuals who attempted to return it to its earlier role of facilitating union organizing under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) and did undertake a few other relatively minor prolabor initiatives, but his presidency was by no means a return to unabashedly prolabor measures.

The election and re-election of George W. Bush to the presidency in 2000 and 2004, respectively, represented a return to stridently antilabor politics. The post-2000 NLRB issued rulings so restrictive toward labor and permissive to antiunion business behavior that increasing numbers of unions refused even to use the agency to enforce labor rights. Bush also used the tragic airplane attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, in an attempt to deny unionization and collective-bargaining rights to increasing numbers of federal employees.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the AFL-CIO and most member unions responded to the hostile political climate by creating a close-knit insider role within the Democratic party. But they found this strategy to yield ever more meager results, both because Democrats lost control of the U.S. Congress in the mid-1990s and because many Democratic politicians distanced themselves from organized labor in an attempt to attract Republican-leaning nonlabor voters. In the second-half of the 1990s and in the early 2000s, organized labor's political apparatus did become more effective. Even as union density fell into the low teens as a percentage of the labor force, union families accounted for more than 20% of the vote in both the 2000 and 2004 elections, but it still was not enough to reverse the conservative antilabor tide.

Changing Economic Environment and Employer Responses

Changes in the U.S. economy also affected U.S. workers and their unions during this time. By the 1980s,

European and Japanese competitors had recovered fully from World War II devastation and had become major rivals of U.S. corporations. Imports penetrated key domestic markets where U.S. corporations were accustomed to uncontested control. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the U.S. market for apparel and electronic consumer goods had shifted heavily toward imported goods, and in the 1980s and 1990s, the same thing happened in durable-goods markets, such as automobiles, steel, and a wide variety of other manufactured products.

The U.S. manufacturers responded in ways detrimental to the interests of U.S. workers. They funded and supported heavily the rightward political trend in the country described in the last section, bankrolling antilabor politicians. They also demanded massive concessions from unionized workers. Concession bargaining became the watchword for unionized labor relations in numerous manufacturing plants, many of them located in the industrial Midwest. For a while in the 1980s, union workers' pay increases actually were lower than those for nonunion workers.

Companies also frequently closed unionized plants. Sometimes this was simply giving up when faced with competition from foreign or other competitors, but often companies re-opened facilities either in nonunion locations in the southern United States or abroad. The objective was lower labor costs, union avoidance, or both. Another favorite response was downsizing, where a plant's workforce was slowly reduced over a number of years as it was phased out of the company's production plans.

When closing proved impractical, companies sometimes attempted to destroy the unions representing their existing workforces. A favorite 1980s tactic was to provoke a union strike by demanding totally unacceptable measures during contract negotiations, hiring replacement workers, re-establishing production with the new workforce, refusing to accept returning strikers even if the union surrendered, and getting the strikebreaking workers to vote out the union 1 year later, when the law allowed a union-representation election to occur. Strikes, which had once been the main weapon of labor unions to win improvements in pay and working conditions thus became in the 1980s a way for employers to destroy unions.

When unions attempted to organize workers at nonunion establishments, employers almost always strongly opposed the organizing drive. Union busting became a massive industry, with numerous lawyers and specialists offering employers their services in helping employers remain union-free. One academic study in 1990 concluded that the total amount of money spent yearly on these union-busting activities at that time was approximately one billion dollars.

Employers also outsourced work by shipping it to foreign suppliers on an accelerating basis throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Originally this occurred primarily in industrial sectors that were more likely to be unionized, although by the 2000s, news accounts noted that even traditionally high-end and nonunion tasks, such as computer programming and engineering tasks, were being outsourced. In the 1980s and 1990s, the U.S. economy was hollowed-out—basic manufacturing moved abroad, leaving in the country those service jobs (such as those in healthcare and personal services) impossible to export.

This globalization of operations by U.S. corporations meant that they were less anchored in, and accountable to, a national U.S. economy. Bargaining power by U.S.-based unions declined correspondingly. The U.S. balance of trade also shifted: In 1970, the country actually exported \$2.25 billion more goods and services than it imported. But by 1980, a small trade deficit of \$19.4 billion mushroomed to almost \$81 billion by 1990, over \$378 billion by 2000, and over \$617 billion by 2004. This meant the loss of millions of U.S. jobs, mostly in (frequently unionized) manufacturing industries. From February 1998–December 2004, the country lost 3.3 million manufacturing jobs.

To some degree unions responded by attempting to become more internationalist. Cross-border ties with labor movements abroad increased, and the AFL-CIO moved away from its previous foreign policy role of being a Cold War tool of the U.S. government, which had alienated it from many unions around the globe.

The deregulatory and free-market political trend of the period also affected the economic realities of such previously regulated industries as the airline industry. In 1978, airline industry deregulation allowed previously controlled ticket prices, schedule and service levels to be controlled by the market. In the following 25 years, ruinous fare wars and the entrance of low-cost, no-frills competitors, such as Southwest Airlines and JetBlue, caused periodic crises of overcapacity, destruction of some historic legacy carriers, like Pan Am and Eastern Airlines, and near-bankruptcy or bankruptcy for the industry's major players, like Delta, U.S. Airways, United Airlines, and American Airlines.

The airlines responded by demanding or forcing massive concessions from airline unions. In what had been one of the most heavily unionized industries in the country, the craft airline unions found themselves stripped of much of their power. By the early 2000s, unions were reeling backward in an industry hemorrhaging billions of dollars.

The economics of healthcare and pension coverage also changed during this period. In 1980, the United

States spent 8.8% of its Gross Domestic Product on healthcare; by 2000, this had risen to 13.3%, and to 14.9% by 2003. Employers responded by attempting to shift an ever-increasing share of healthcare costs onto employees. By 2000, battles over healthcare were the primary cause of contentious negotiations and work stoppages.

Employers also attempted to shift risk in pension-plan retirement income to employers by switching from defined-benefit plans guaranteeing a set retirement income for each year of employment to defined-contribution plans guaranteeing payment only into some type of investment, with the employee taking the risk for how the investment fared or how large the final monthly pension would be. In 1980, over 80% of private-sector pension plans were the guaranteed defined-benefit type; by 2005, this percentage was down to 40%. Meanwhile the riskier defined-contribution plans grew from under 20% of total plans in 1980 to around 60% by 2005. Unions managed to retain the more secure defined-benefit plans for 79% of their members (as of 2005), but it was increasingly difficult to resist the trend toward shifting the risk to the worker.

Major Labor Struggles, 1980 to 2000

In August 1981, 13,000 members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers' Organization (PATCO) at the nation's airports went on strike in defiance of a 1955 law making such strikes illegal. Two days later President Ronald Reagan fired the 11,359 controllers who had failed to return to their jobs. The strike was broken, with public opinion polls showing popular support for the president's action. Seventeen months later PATCO called off the strike in complete defeat. The debacle was widely seen as a public declaration that U.S. employers could declare war on their unions with the federal government's blessing.

The remainder of the 1980s and 1990s featured numerous confrontations between employers and unions, with the unions attempting to resist assaults. In 1983, the Phelps Dodge copper mining company intentionally provoked a strike in its 30 mines in Arizona and the Southwest, promptly replacing them with permanent replacement workers. Despite community support and the involvement of the wives and families of many of the striking miners, the strike was crushed. One-and-a-half-years later, the United Steelworkers of America was decertified and driven from all 30 mines.

In 1984, the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 4620 faced a similar attempt by the

BASF Corporation in Geismar, Louisiana. An intentionally provoked strike was losing badly until the union changed tactics and began to run a corporate campaign against the company by allying with environmentalists, politicians, federal government enforcement agencies, foreign politicians and unions and companies against BASF in its various business and environmental affairs. Five-and-a-half years later, the union returned to the plant intact with a contract. BASF had been badly damaged by the corporate campaign, and the union's return was a belated victory.

In August 1985, Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) in Austin, Minnesota, went on strike and conducted a corporate campaign against the Hormel meatpacking company, which was demanding massive concessions. An incredible amount of solidarity from union members and sympathizers from around the country failed to turn the tide for the union however, and the strike went down in defeat when the national union forcibly removed the local's intransigent leadership, called the strike off in June 1986, and imposed a concessionary contract on the local in August 1986.

In 1987, the International Paper Company demanded massive concessions from its workers despite having made \$407 million in profit that year. The 1,250 members of United Paperworkers' International Union (UPIU) Local 14 in Jay, Maine, went out on strike and were soon replaced. The local began a corporate campaign and attempted to get other locals of the company to join the strike once their own contracts expired. But solidarity fell apart, the strike was defeated 16 months later, and the union was destroyed.

From 1989–1990, the United Mine Workers' (UMW) union conducted a 10-month strike against the Pittston coal company that involved unprecedented family and community involvement and nationwide solidarity with the strikers. The settlement preserved benefits for retired and disabled miners and widows, a partial union victory.

From 1989 into 1991, the International Association of Machinists (IAM), supported by the pilots' and air flight attendants' unions, conducted a monumental battle with Eastern Airlines and its rogue owner, Frank Lorenzo, over massive demands for concessions that would have meant an end to the union. Lorenzo sold profitable parts of the company to other entities he owned or controlled at a fraction of their true value and eventually destroyed the company in his attempt to defeat the union. Lorenzo's reputation was so damaged by this behavior that he was later barred from reentering the airline industry.

In 1990, the SEIU Justice for Janitors' campaign in Los Angeles made national news. Instead of targeting individual employers, the campaign aimed to unionize all the janitors in the downtown Los Angeles area at once. An inventive multifaceted campaign aimed at building tenants, building owners, contractors, the public, and public officials reached a climax during a June 15 savage beating by the Los Angeles police of peacefully protesting janitors in the city's Century City complex, creating widespread condemnation. The union soon won a union contract covering multiple janitorial contractors in the downtown area. The 2000 movie *Bread and Roses*, starring Academy Award winner Adrian Brody, was based on this struggle.

In 1990, the Ravenswood Aluminum Company in Ravenswood, West Virginia, attempted to provoke a strike from USWA Local 5668, which represented its 1,700 employees. The union refused to strike, so the company locked them out and replaced them with nonunion workers. The union began a corporate campaign to convince customers to boycott its products and traced company control to Mark Rich, a fugitive from U.S. tax evasion charges living in Switzerland. Targeting Rich, the union eventually toppled the company's chairman and won a union contract in 1992.

Decatur, Illinois, had so many labor struggles in the 1990s that it became known as the war zone. From 1991–1998, the city's Caterpillar earthmoving equipment plant went through a series of strikes and confrontations over the company's attempt to force concessions from the UAW local. The long battle ended with a union contract heavily dictated by the company.

The Staley corn-processing plant in the same city experienced a major work-to-rule campaign (workers doing only as ordered) by the union, followed by a company lockout of union workers while operating with replacements from 1993–1995. An impressive solidarity campaign and a corporate campaign in support of the Staley workers failed to win the struggle, which ended when the national union (UPIU) forced the local to accept a concessionary contract. Few of the original strikers returned to work. Mutual recriminations between the national union and local militants ensued.

A strike followed by a national corporate campaign at the Bridgestone-Firestone tire company in Decatur in 1994–1996 ended much more successfully when the USWA got the company to offer a decent contract through a domestic-tire boycott and international labor-solidarity actions. However a subsequent rash of failures of Firestone tires on

Ford Explorer vehicles caused the company to close the plant in 2001.

The teamster's union strike against the United Parcel Service Company in 1997 was a bright spot for organized labor. Strong internal preparation well before the strike plus a clear message about the need for well-paying full-time jobs rather than part-time ones rallied the public solidly behind the union and won its major demand for a larger percentage of UPS jobs to be full-time.

The company exemplifying the business model of the new era was Wal-Mart, which pursued a single-minded pursuit of lowest cost whatever the consequences. Stridently anti-union, Wal-Mart spread rapidly throughout the country (and the world), destroying small local competitors and eventually encroaching on the markets of unionized grocery store chains. Wal-Mart spent millions yearly to fight unions and even closed entire stores in Canada whose workers had chosen to unionize. The company also provoked opposition from environmentalists, global-justice advocates and movements, numerous neighborhoods concerned about traffic congestion, women's rights groups, minorities, and others. Together with these organizations and individuals, the labor movement in the early 2000s took part in a nationwide movement to expose the company as harmful to the American public. One ultimate goal of this growing anti-Wal-Mart campaign among others was the eventual unionization of this company, whose workers were paid so little and charged so much for healthcare benefits that many were forced to use government assistance to meet their basic living and health needs.

The preceding struggles garnered national media attention; some of them inspired books. Together they defined the major contours of labor relations in the 1980 to 2000 period. Usually employers won, although a few union victories were achieved. In general unions did best when they broadened their struggles to issues relating directly to the public good, developed multiple avenues of pressure over employers, created alliances with progressive community organizations, and aggressively organized.

New Responses to Labor Decline

Union decline stimulated a number of responses. Workers' centers, independent community-based organizations addressing low-wage worker issues, grew rapidly in the 1990s. By 2004, at least 133 such centers existed in 80 cities. Many work exclusively

with immigrant workers; all relate to low-wage workers for whom conventional unionization is extremely difficult. Workers' centers provide services (especially legal representation for back wages and workers' rights), advocate for change in public policies, and organize for collective empowerment. They have been most successful at winning back wages and changing public policies, as well as developing leadership among traditionally marginalized workers.

The living-wage movement also addressed the needs of low-wage workers. From 1994 to mid-2005, at least 130 municipalities, counties, and other public entities passed living-wage requirements. These laws require service contractors (and often the government itself or others tied to public money/land, such as airports) to pay at least a living wage on work done for the public entity. Most laws set the living wage at or above the federal government's poverty level for a family of four, well above the federal minimum wage, and some require health care benefits or a cash equivalent or other benefits.

Most living-wage laws are won by a broad-based coalition of community and labor organizations. The coalitions usually include unions, churches or faith-based community social-justice organizations, civil rights groups, human-services providers, community-organizing groups, and the like.

The declining fortunes of organized labor also stimulated internal union debate about organizational behavior and strategy. Some unions attempted less adversarial relationships with employers. Widely publicized examples like the General Motors–UAW partnership at the Saturn auto plant in Tennessee and the AT&T–CWA partnership in the telephone industry seemed to hold promise. But lack of employer commitment to these partnerships undermined most of them by the end of the 1990s.

An alternative strategy aimed to make the labor movement more of a social movement. Involvement in living-wage campaigns and the national organization Jobs with Justice exemplified this perspective. A partial reflection of this approach was the election in 1995 of the New Voice slate led by SEIU president John Sweeney to top leadership of the AFL-CIO, toppling old-guard leadership seen as too timid, conservative, and unimaginative to lead.

Sweeney pledged to make organizing the unorganized labor's top priority and worked to rebuild relationships with former allies alienated by business union behavior. But despite exhortations few of the federation's national unions aggressively organized the unorganized, and union density after 1995 continued to slide, although more slowly.

In 2005, seven unions calling themselves the Change to Win coalition demanded a major structural change

in the AFL-CIO and more emphasis on organizing. In the summer of that year, the three largest unions in the Change to Win coalition (SEIU, the teamsters, and the UFCW) left the federation, taking more than a third of its 13.5 million members with them. Thus the official labor movement entered the early years of the new millennium divided both organizationally and strategically.

The future of U.S. workers may depend on four factors: (1) Prospects for social movement activism addressing increasing inequality and worker marginalization; (2) political trends away from or toward a supportive atmosphere for worker interests; (3) unions' ability to transform themselves and their internal cultures toward aggressive organizing of the unorganized; and (4) the ability of U.S. workers and unions to create ties of solidarity with workers elsewhere in the world. Trends from 1980 into the new millennium have been primarily unfavorable, but similar periods in the nation's past were followed by labor upheaval and permanent institutional and legal gains for workers and their families.

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See also **American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; American Federation of Teachers; Gender; Immigration; National Education Association; North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); Service Employees' International Union**

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

Wages for Housework is a demand, a political perspective, and a Marxist-feminist organization founded in 1972 by Selma James, third wife of the Trinidadian Socialist C. L. R. James. It grew out of the 1970s debates over the relationship between feminism and the Left, and in the United States, it was most visible during that decade. Despite a small membership, the International Wages for Housework Campaign and its affiliate organizations—including Black Women for Wages for Housework, the U.S. Collective of Prostitutes, Wages Due Lesbians, and a men's support group called Payday—have had a significant influence on feminist thinking about unpaid work.

Wages for Housework emerged in response to the once-common socialist position that unionized (male) industrial workers were the vanguard of the working class, while housewives were politically unreliable, and feminism was bourgeois. In the *Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community* (1972), the founding document of the Wages for Housework campaign, James and Italian feminist

Mariarosa Dalla Costa criticized the orthodox Marxist position that the housewife's labor was unproductive and was merely a personal service to her family. Instead they argued, housework was productive labor in the Marxist sense that it produced surplus value and capitalist profits. The home and community functioned as a social factory in which women-housewives produced a unique and highly profitable commodity: The worker on whose labor power (ability to work) capitalism hinged. Marxists recognized the exploitation of the wage laborer as the foundation of capitalist society, but Dalla Costa and James argued that unwaged laborers were also exploited through the wage relation, although their exploitation was hidden because they were unwaged. Their definition of housework was not limited to chores, such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry, but encompassed the entire feminine role—serving, shopping, nurturing, looking attractive, and performing sexually—that enabled the wage laborer to work and live. Men did some housework, but all women were housewives, even when they worked at a paying job. By demanding wages for housework from the state, supporters sought to expose women's hidden labor so it could be separated from their nature and refused.

In *Sex, Race, and Class* (1974) and several later publications, James elaborated on the concept of the social factory as it applied internationally. International capital created a hierarchy of labor power and wage scales, she argued, but that hierarchy—of race, gender, age, and nation—appeared unrelated to class or capitalism because the work done by people at the bottom was unseen and unwaged. In calling for compensation for unpaid work and labor stolen over generations, Wages for Housework was essentially a demand for reparations, not unlike the campaign for slavery reparations.

In the 1970s, the demand for wages for housework sparked a spirited and astonishingly bitter debate. Leftists challenged the group's reading of Marx. Insisting that the creation of labor-power was not part of, but a precondition to, the capitalist labor process, they urged women and men to challenge capitalists at the point of production (for example, factories). But the most significant and heartfelt criticism came from feminists who feared that Wages for Housework would institutionalize women's place in the home. In focusing exclusively on the capitalist exploitation of women's labor, some feminists argued, James and Dalla Costa failed to acknowledge the benefit that individual men derived from housework. Wages for Housework thus reinforced the assumption that housework was naturally women's responsibility,

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

making it more difficult to get men to share the chores and worsening the psychological pressures on housewives. In the heady days of 1970s feminism, many young women imagined that housework could be eliminated (or at least socialized) through child-care centers, cafeterias, and communal living. They worried that Wages for Housework would strengthen the very gender roles they were attempting to subvert and undermine their efforts to abolish the housewife role.

In its everyday work the Wages for Housework campaign did not lobby for direct government payments for caregiving but engaged in specific campaigns around issues of poverty and unpaid work. Members participated in several local welfare struggles and gained national visibility and an important early success at the 1977 National Women's Conference in Houston. Working with welfare rights activists, they killed a resolution backed by the Carter administration and got delegates to pass a substitute resolution that called for increased welfare funding. Delegates resolved that "the elimination of poverty must be a priority of all those working for equal rights for women.... [H]omemakers receiving income transfer payments should be afforded the dignity of having that payment called a wage, not welfare."

Wages for Housework also organized for prostitutes' rights. Prostitution exposed both women's poverty and their unwaged work, since most women became prostitutes because they were desperate for money, and prostitutes got paid for the sex work other women did for free. Prostitutes' collectives affiliated with Wages for Housework campaigned for better services so women could avoid prostitution and for the abolition of the criminal laws that made sex work unsafe.

Since 1980, Wages for Housework has lobbied vigorously for the inclusion of women's unpaid work in international economic measures. Using a much-quoted statistic—women do two-thirds of the world's work but receive only 5% of its income—Wages for Housework pressed its agenda at a series of conferences and won a significant victory at the 1985 U.N. Decade of Women Conference in Nairobi. Delegates called on governments to count women's unremunerated work in agriculture, reproduction, and household activities in the Gross National Product (GNP) and other economic measures. However little has come of the resolution.

Despite its relative invisibility and in the United States, limited political success, Wages for Housework has contributed to a significant change in attitude. The principle of counting women's unpaid work in the GNP has been endorsed by many economists, and many feminist welfare advocates now call for the recognition—and compensation—of women's

caregiving work. The growing attention to caregivers' economic rights owes much to the Wages for Housework campaign.

MOLLY LADD-TAYLOR

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WAGNER ACT

See **National Labor Relations Board**

WAITRESSING AND WAITING/FOOD SERVICE

Waitresses and waiters are the stars in what William F. Whyte, in his 1948 study of labor in restaurants, called "the great American drama of food, hospitality, and personal service offered to the public every day by the restaurant industry." Food service was one of the great growth areas of the expanding service sector in the twentieth century, with an estimated 75 million meals served daily to American diners by century's end. More than two million waitresses and waiters dished out those meals. Of the more than two million, nearly 4 out of 5 were female. The growing ranks of women in the craft over the twentieth century evidenced the deep and, for waitresses, double-edged associations of food provision with feminine nurturing and sexuality. Life at the front lines of food service has rarely if ever been easy. For striving to meet customers' bodily needs and emotional longings, wait staff earned gratitude, admiration, and generous gratuities but perhaps more often suffered abuse, disdain, and stinginess from employers and customers alike.

The First Waiters and Waitresses

The modern restaurant emerged from its roots in taverns and inns in the first-half of the nineteenth

century in the United States. Maturing first in post-revolutionary France, the practice of dining out for pleasure soon took hold in larger American cities alongside the ancient need to eat out while traveling. The luxury hotels that became fixtures in nineteenth-century cities fed wealthy travelers' desire for fine dining by opening posh restaurants on site. Independent restaurants, led by New York's famous Delmonico's, also whetted elite urbanites' appetite for lavish cuisine. But a greater spur to the food service industry came from workers' changing lifestyles over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With the growing separation of residential from commercial areas in cities, a swelling number of industrial and white-collar workers were no longer able to return home for a midday repast. In addition single men and women in cities began abandoning more traditional boarding arrangements for apartments and rooming houses, which did not include meals. By the early twentieth century, more informal restaurants, including cafés, diners, lunchrooms, cafeterias, and automats (with coin-operated food service), flourished as a result.

Waitressing and waiting of course emerged in tandem with restaurants, evolving from food serving in private households as well as taverns and inns. In the nineteenth century men predominated in restaurant table service, especially in finer restaurants, following European standards. Women, though food servers in the home and in boardinghouses, were marginalized in restaurant work due to Victorian moral strictures on women in mixed-sex commercial spaces, especially where liquor was served. The Victorian disdain for exposing women to liquor also made the more lucrative allied trade of bartending a male preserve. The female minority who worked in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century restaurants was widely suspected to be of dubious morality. The Harvey girls were a celebrated exception to the poor reputation of waitresses. The Harvey House chain, which served gourmet fare to southwestern rail travelers, employed a fresh-faced waitress workforce and cloistered them in dormitories.

Though only female food servers were suspected of loose morals, everyone in the occupation suffered from low status due to the job's association with servitude. Uniforms for many waitresses and waiters were basically the same as for domestic servants. The practice of tipping, which originated with household servants, encouraged the association of waiting tables with servitude and reinforced the status inequality between giver and receiver. Despite resentment and protest from servers themselves and critics who decried gratuities as un-American, tipping was firmly entrenched by the late nineteenth century. For

better and worse, tips provided a major portion of most waiters and waitresses' income—and still do.

A Changing Workforce

Most waiters and waitresses historically were immigrants or children of immigrants from northern and central Europe. Large numbers of waiters claimed German, French, Italian, and Slavic roots, and many waitresses claimed English, Irish, German, and Scandinavian heritage. Employers were biased toward Euro-Americans because they wanted servers who spoke good English and whose appearance would not make customers ill at ease or provoke their ire. In some cities foreign-born food servers were in the firm majority in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as immigration to the United States generally swelled. In 1910, more than 55% of waiters in San Francisco and more than 71% in New York City were foreign-born. But as immigration dropped after restrictionist legislation in the 1920s, so, too, did the number of foreign-born waitresses and waiters.

Into the twentieth century, waiters and especially waitresses were more likely to be white as well as native-born. African-American men held a disproportionate share of early waiter positions, reflecting their role as household servants in the South and the shortage of white male labor. By the twentieth century however, the proportion of black waiters began to decline from 33% in 1910 to 12% by 1940. Black men's hold in the occupation slipped first due to more competition from white men but more so due to competition from white women after the First World War. Employers' preference for whites was more evident from the start in the waitress workforce. In 1910, less than 9% of waitresses were African-American and by 1940, a mere 4%. African-American food servers received significantly lower wages as a rule.

The most dramatic change in the restaurant food-server workforce in the twentieth century was its feminization. In the 1920s, women became the majority. By the 1970s, more than 90% of those waiting tables were women. Feminization reversed somewhat in the last decades of the twentieth century, but women were still nearly 80% of food servers by century's end. There were multiple causes for the gender shift. Older taboos about women serving men in commercial establishments dissipated (as did much of the moral stigma attached to waitresses). In particular prohibition of the liquor trade from 1920 to 1933 eliminated concerns over the impropriety of women serving alcohol. Perhaps more important was the

rising number of family-style and other moderate- to low-priced restaurants. In these establishments employers favored women as a cheaper and friendlier labor source. Employers increasingly valued women for their presumed ornamental potential, too, as evident in the rise of sexually provocative uniforms in more daring eateries and an enduring bias toward younger, attractive hirees. Though men maintained their predominance in the most expensive, formal restaurants, women became more numerous in higher-end table service as well. During the labor shortages created by the world wars and sporadic episodes of labor strife, many employers turned to women as a stopgap but then kept waitresses on permanently.

For women waitressing provided some important benefits, which helped put it in the top 10 female occupations by 1940. Employers did not require any prior experience or specific credentials, making waitressing one of few such options for young women. Though considered unskilled by outsiders, many waitresses found excitement and took pride in mastering their craft and belonging to a distinct sisterhood.

Exploitation and Unionization

Waiting tables was often exhausting work, with longer hours than other jobs, hectic stretches at peak times, and rock-bottom wages. Until World War II, most employers required wait staff to live on-site, and 7-day workweeks were common. Room and partial board helped offset low wages, but also reinforced the problem of long periods on call. Meals for servers were also typically the cheapest, least appealing food the restaurant had available and were often consumed in cramped, unsanitary backrooms. Uniform purchases and upkeep taxed already meager wages, as did the widespread practice of fines for breakage, unpaid checks, and various breaches of serving procedure. Tipping boosted waitresses' and waiters' income but lowered their status in many Americans' eyes. Worse, gratuities were at customers' whim and enabled employers to justify low wages; and waitresses' tip income tended to decline with age, despite growing experience and efficiency. While hard to quantify, waitresses have perhaps suffered more sexual harassment than any other group of female workers.

Waiters and waitresses countered these various forms of exploitation by unionizing. They succeeded in building durable, often powerful, labor organizations that significantly improved wages and working conditions for many for several decades. Waiters began organizing in the 1880s. In 1891, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) chartered the Waiters'

and Bartenders' National Union, later to become the mixed-sex Hotel Employees' and Restaurant Employees' International Union (HERE). By the First World War HERE had organized 65,000 workers. At the turn of the century, waitresses began to organize themselves as well, defying stereotypes that cast women as unwilling and unfit to unionize. Some waitresses joined mixed-sex locals with waiters, but many preferred craft- and sex-segregated locals of their own. Within two decades of the founding of the first waitress local in Seattle in 1900, there were 17 such locals on firm footing, and 70% of HERE's waitress membership belonged to separate locals. Waitresses' preference for separate organizations endured until the 1970s.

As in many other industries, the 1930s and World War II era brought dramatic union growth and a shift toward industrial- rather than craft-style organizing. The HERE mushroomed from around 25,000 members in the early 1930s to more than 400,000 in 1946, and to 450,000 at the start of the 1960s. Waitresses' presence in the union grew apace, with women constituting nearly half of HERE's membership at mid-century and the waitress locals surpassing those of waiters and bartenders in size and influence. During the postwar peak of union strength, about a quarter of waitresses in the United States were unionized. In longtime union stronghold Seattle, 90% were organized.

Waitresses' work culture enabled such remarkable union strength, and the two were mutually reinforcing. As historian Dorothy Sue Cobble has shown, waitresses developed a strong sense of craft solidarity based on shared experiences as restaurant insiders and demographic commonalities. Not only were waitresses relatively homogenous ethnically, they were also more often primary wage earners than other working women, heading households or living on their own; they were generally older, too, and more likely to be married than other female wage earners. Waitresses' work culture stretched across workplaces, promoting continuity and unity among workers who switched jobs frequently but tended to remain in the occupation for many years. Waitressing generally called for assertive behavior, which also helped foster union activism.

Though located within a male-dominated international, waitress locals within HERE enjoyed considerable autonomy and used it to forge a distinct working-class feminist agenda. They pursued gender equality when it made sense for waitresses; at other times they stressed gender difference when it was more beneficial, such as protective legislation for working women. Waitresses' work culture and union culture proclaimed their skills as worthy of respect as

other crafts and promoted their entitlement to the male prerogative of a family wage adequate to support a household.

Job Boom, Union Decline

After midcentury the restaurant boom brought dramatic employment growth for waiters and waitresses but did not bode well for their unions. Growing incomes, leisure hours, and mobility made eating out a regular activity for middle- and lower-income Americans across the nation in the postwar years. Since the 1970s, the rising number of dual-income families and the upward creep of working hours for many have encouraged still more reliance on restaurants. In 1954, there were about 127,000 restaurants total in the United States with sales of about \$7 billion. A half-century later there were 900,000 restaurants in the United States with sales topping \$400 billion. Americans by then were spending nearly half their food budget at restaurants, and the restaurant industry had become the largest private employer in the United States, with 11 million workers in total and more than two million waiters and waitresses. Among them was a growing portion of part-time workers. While only one-fifth of waitresses and one-tenth of waiters worked part-time in 1940, by 1970 a majority of wait staff did. Not counting tips, wait staff earned the lowest average wages of any occupational group at the turn of the twenty-first century.

As the industry flourished waitresses' and waiters' unions struggled. The postwar boom saw restaurant density spread from older urban areas on the West Coast and in the Northeast to the Sunbelt (the Southwest and Southeast) and to suburbs throughout the United States, areas that tended to be more anti-union. Restaurant growth after World War II also depended in part on the rise of chains and eventually of multinational conglomerates like McDonald's, which fiercely resisted unionization. Part-time workers, with less sense of craft solidarity and occupational commitment than earlier generations, proved harder to organize. Some restaurant growth bypassed waitresses and waiters altogether with informal self-service restaurants and coffee shops and take-out. By the mid-1990s, the union's total membership was down one-third from its postwar peak to about 300,000. Its main growth area, offsetting losses elsewhere, was in casinos.

But if the heyday of union protection had passed for nearly all waitresses and waiters, they became even more representative of the changing workforce in the United States. In an economy increasingly

reliant on selling services based on low-wage, insecure, and largely female labor, food servers were—and are—at the leading edge of employment trends and of struggles for dignity and respect in the service sector.

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See also **Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International Union; Sexual Harassment; Working-Class Feminism**

WALSH, MIKE (1810–1859)

New York State Politician

Mike Walsh was among the earliest U.S. working-class politicians. Born near Cork, Ireland, in 1810, he came as a child with his family to New York City. Walsh apprenticed as a lithographer and worked as a journeyman in New York and New Orleans. After his return from New Orleans, he turned his attention to forging a political career. He joined a volunteer fire company, a traditional stepping-stone for ambitious young men in the city. Handsome and charismatic, Walsh's angry oratory championing the city's workingmen soon attracted a coterie of followers, and in 1840 he formed

the Spartan Association, a combination political club and street gang that at its height had almost 500 members. The organization included many respectable supporters but also enlisted neighborhood bullies and prizefighters whom Walsh used literally to strong-arm his way to political influence in the Democratic party. The Spartan Band, as it was called, forcibly expelled rivals from nominating caucuses, and on Election Day the Spartans would seize and destroy ballot boxes in precincts where rivals were strong. By the mid-1840s, the Spartans were a political power in every ward in New York. Walsh shrewdly steered his own course around the myriad city and state factions of the party, most of the time remaining independent of Tammany Hall. A Protestant, he considered himself a true American, and often allied his gang with native-born elements of the party against the Irish.

Walsh was in many ways the last of the Jacksonian labor radicals. The Spartan banner showed a workman breaking the chains of ignorance and servitude and was inscribed, "Arise now, man, and vindicate thy right." Independent artisans, Walsh believed, were the backbone of the republic but were threatened by the increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. His blazing rhetoric was a peculiar mixture of a republican attack on luxury and defense of virtuous producers combined with profane vilification of those who were the enemies of the working classes. Walsh's favorite causes were for the most part traditional Jacksonian ones, such as rotation in office, specie, abolition of imprisonment for debt, and an end to state-sponsored monopolies. Central to the elevation of the workingmen, Walsh believed, was the election to office of candidates who were true friends of labor. In 1841, Walsh attracted national attention when he and some of his supporters traveled to Rhode Island to join the abortive Dorr War.

Walsh's reputation as a tribune of the people was only part of the reason for his fame. A ceaseless and creative self-promoter, he shrewdly appealed to the city's young working-class male population by portraying himself as a man among men, a drinker, fighter, and hell raiser. Walsh suggested that those who belonged to the Spartan Band were real men who used their hands at work and were not afraid to use their fists in politics. His boisterous persona was enhanced by his well-publicized friendship with Thomas Hyer, American heavyweight prizefighting champion. One part of Walsh's critique of capitalism was that the sober, businesslike ethos of the age was suffocating the tavern-based artisan lifestyle he so loved. Walsh strongly defended traditional masculine

revelry from criticism by clerics and temperance advocates.

The *Subterranean*, Walsh's famous newspaper, was founded in 1843 and boasted it was "independent in everything, neutral in nothing." Walsh's combative personality was reflected everywhere in its pages. Even by the no-holds-barred journalistic standards of the day, the *Subterranean* stood out. What caught popular attention was not Walsh's articulate defense of the rights of workingmen but the newspaper's vituperative attacks on those Walsh deemed hostile to labor, which seemed to include at one time or another anyone not named Mike Walsh. Its invective was personal and relentless: Antagonists were blockheads, scoundrels, and shysters (a word Walsh may have coined). One foe was "a beastly and polluted old vagabond," another "a lecherous lover of black wenches" (Walsh threw racial slurs around freely). Abolitionists and temperance supporters were favorite targets of abuse. Walsh's four arrests and trials for libel provided New Yorkers with continuing entertainment. When he was released from prison after an 1843 conviction, 50,000 (or so he claimed) of "the subterranean populace of New York" gathered in City Hall Park to greet him. Walsh never shied from writing about himself, and for the edification of *Subterranean* readers, he recounted his late night tavern jaunts and his attendance at cockfights and prizefights. An advocate of land reform, Walsh merged the *Subterranean* with George Henry Evans's *Working Man's Advocate* in 1844, but the alliance was short-lived. The constant libel suits eventually took their toll, and in 1847, the *Subterranean* ceased publication.

Walsh ran for the New York State Assembly in 1841 but was defeated. In 1846, he received the Democratic nomination for the state senate and won and was re-elected in 1847 and 1851. Boasting he was "the tool of no political clique," Walsh advocated protection for apprentices and a shorter workday, but he antagonized Albany legislators with his erratic habits and bombastic rhetoric and seems to have accomplished little. In 1852, Walsh was elected to Congress as the Tammany candidate. A supporter of John C. Calhoun in the 1840s, Walsh now allied with the prosouthern Hunker faction of the New York State Democratic party. He gave few speeches on serious issues and seems to have been regarded as something of a comical figure. His rhetoric elevating independent, native-born artisans was increasingly out of date by the mid-1850s as the city's factories filled with semiskilled immigrants, and in 1854 Walsh was defeated for renomination to Congress by future Tammany boss "Honest" John Kelly. Walsh retired

from politics. Drinking too heavily to be steadily employed, he worked as a freelance journalist and engaged in speculations of various sorts, including a silver mine in Arizona. He collapsed and died on the street on March 17, 1859.

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See also **Dorr War**

WALSH-HEALEY PUBLIC CONTRACTS ACT (1936)

Enacted under special political and constitutional circumstances as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal in 1936, the Walsh-Healey Act set minimum labor standards for manufacturers and "regular dealers" who provided "materials, supplies, articles, and equipment" to the federal government under contracts worth \$10,000 or more. The act prohibited child and convict labor; fixed maximum work hours at 8 per day and 40 per week; banned "unsanitary and hazardous" work conditions; and most importantly, required contractors to pay at least the "prevailing minimum wage" as determined by the secretary of labor based on wages received by persons in similar work or in "similar industries or groups of industries currently operating in the locality," exempting clerical workers, subcontractors, and suppliers of farm perishables, originally produced goods, and commodities purchased on the open market.

The law originated in the U.S. Department of Labor early in 1935, when Secretary Frances Perkins directed departmental lawyers to draw up legislation to replace National Recovery Administration codes mandating maximum hours and minimum wages under the New Deal's troubled National Industrial Recovery Act. At the time Perkins and President Roosevelt hoped to counteract Depression-era employer proclivities to cut wages, reduce worker purchasing power, and subject workers to sweatshop conditions. When the U.S. Supreme Court's *Schechter v. U.S.* decision in May 1935 struck the National

Industrial Recovery Act down and raised doubts about the constitutionality of other federal laws regulating private-sector employment, the Roosevelt administration advanced Perkins's labor department bill covering publicly contracted work. Emulating the 1931 Davis-Bacon Act governing federally sponsored public-construction projects, administration officials reasoned that the national government had constitutional authority to regulate work conditions under which goods for its own use were manufactured.

First introduced in the U.S. Senate by Massachusetts Democrat David I. Walsh in June 1935, the labor department's public-contracts measure stalled in Congress until Democratic Massachusetts Congressman Arthur D. Healey proposed a revised House version in March 1936. Led by the National Association of Manufacturers, employers delayed the bill and persuaded Congress to raise Walsh's \$2,000 contract threshold to \$10,000, but the measure secured support from the American Federation of Labor as a public standard for collective-bargaining agreements in the private sector and from women's groups seeking relief for underpaid female workers. Most importantly the Roosevelt administration denominated the now-called Walsh-Healey bill as "must" legislation for its upcoming 1936 presidential campaign, reassuring working-class voters that the administration aimed to establish "a floor under wages and a ceiling upon hours." Congress finally approved the Walsh-Healey Act, and President Roosevelt signed it on June 30, 1936.

Determination of prevailing minimum wages emerged as the focal point of Walsh-Healey administration, especially after the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 superseded Walsh-Healey provisions on child and convict labor. The labor department issued its first wage determination in February 1937 for garment workers, and soon thereafter Secretary Perkins created the Public Contracts Division under L. Metcalfe Walling to extend minimum-wage findings to public contractors making textiles, hats and gloves, paper, steel, cement, and fertilizer. Manufacturers promptly disputed the labor department's use of the statutory term locality to designate regional minimum-wage differentials. Yet in *Perkins v. Lukens Steel Co.* (1940), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Walsh-Healey Act did not grant employers legal standing to secure judicial review of such decisions, leaving the labor department to interpret locality as it saw fit. In contrast to the Davis-Bacon Act's designation of local cities, towns, and villages consequently, Walsh-Healey allowed the labor department to embrace an industrywide conception of

locality, focusing more on competitive markets than on geography. By 1940, the department had prescribed minimum wages for public contractors in 30 industries covering almost 900,000 workers. Departmental investigation of Walsh-Healey violations in 1941 forced employers to pay more than \$500,000 in fines and overtime.

Suspended during World War II, Walsh-Healey proceedings became very legalistic when administrators branched out to determine prevailing minimum wages in the coal, chemical, and rubber industries in the postwar years. The labor secretary now had to reconcile Walsh-Healey wage determinations with the Fair Labor Standards Act's minimum-pay requirements. Moreover a 1952 amendment to the Walsh-Healey law sponsored by Democratic Arkansas Senator J. William Fulbright applied the 1946 Administrative Procedure Act's judicial review and procedural requirements to Walsh-Healey wage determinations. This Fulbright Amendment made subsequent Walsh-Healey proceedings cumbersome, even though a federal circuit court in *Mitchell v. Covington Mills* (1955) sustained the labor department's industrywide definition of locality for textile manufacturers, and another in *Ruth Elkhorn Coals v. Mitchell* (1957) upheld the labor secretary's interpretation of open market for the coal industry. The circuit court ruling in *Wirtz v. Baldo Electric* (1964) requiring the labor department to open confidential wage surveys to competing employers, however, brought Walsh-Healey wage determinations virtually to a halt.

Over the 28 years of its active administration, the Walsh-Healey Act attracted increasing employer opposition but steadfast labor defense. Nonetheless analysts contend that the law had minimal effect on wage levels, though there were exceptions in industries like bituminous coal mining. Observers complain that Walsh-Healey wage administration became excessively bureaucratic over the years, compared at least to efficient wage proceedings under the Davis-Bacon law. In addition unlike Davis-Bacon's mandate for prevailing wages that administrators often pegged to union wage rates, the Walsh-Healey Act's standard of the prevailing minimum rarely increased wages, but only mirrored existing minimums in the marketplace. The high contract threshold of \$10,000, moreover, excluded small suppliers prone to lower wages. Most important Walsh-Healey's functions were absorbed by subsequent legislation: Hours regulation by the 1962 Contract Work Hours Standards Act, safety and sanitation by the 1970 Occupational Safety and Health Act, and especially minimum wages by the broader 1938 Fair Labor Standards

Act. The Walsh-Healey Act remains in effect today, but commentators wonder about its future usefulness.

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WASHINGTON, BOOKER T. (1856–1915) African-American Leader

Booker T. (Taliaferro) Washington was an African-American educator and author who is generally considered, along with W. E. B. DuBois, as one of the two predominant African-American leaders in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In regard to labor history, Washington is perhaps

best-known for his belief that African-Americans were best served by focusing on industrial and vocational skills rather than fighting for equality and civil rights.

Washington was born a slave on a small farm in Franklin County, Virginia. After emancipation his family moved to Malden, West Virginia, where extreme poverty forced him, beginning at age nine, to work in salt furnaces and coal mines rather than attend school. At age 16, determined to get an education, Washington enrolled at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia, where he worked as a janitor to help pay expenses. Washington noted the centrality of work in his formative years in his autobiography, *Up from Slavery*: “There was no period of my life that was devoted to play. From the time that I can remember anything, almost every day of my life has been occupied in some kind of labour” (2003).

After graduating with honors in 1875, Washington taught in Malden for 2 years, then studied briefly at Wayland Seminary in Washington, DC, before joining the teaching staff at Hampton in 1879. In 1881, he was asked to found Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, a newly proposed normal school for African-Americans in a small, rural Alabama town that was part of the black belt of the South. Washington considered Tuskegee to be his life’s work. In his 34 years at the helm before his death in 1915, Washington grew the school from a one-room shanty with 30 students into an established university with 100 fully equipped buildings, 1,500 students, and a faculty of 200.

Washington firmly believed that African-Americans in the post-Reconstruction era were best served by focusing on self-reliance, hard work, and thrift. Washington believed that an industrial education was the key to escaping the difficult life of sharecropping and could lead to self-employment and ownership of land, homes, and small businesses. Thus in addition to a strong emphasis on personal hygiene and character building, his educational mission was focused on teaching industrial skills, trades, and crafts. “All of these teach industries at which our men and women can find immediate employment as soon as they leave the institution,” he wrote. Tuskegee offered training in such areas as carpentry, printing, cabinetmaking, tinsmithing, farming and dairying; women were offered training in such domestic skills as cooking and sewing. In addition students helped supply the labor needs of the school and helped the Tuskegee expand by building new buildings and sleeping cabins.

As Tuskegee grew, so did Washington’s influence. A strong network of Tuskegee graduates, employees,

and Washington’s associates, along with African-American social institutions that were influenced by Washington, became known as the Tuskegee machine. The Tuskegee machine impacted African-American hiring practices, collected and distributed philanthropic funds, worked to influence public opinion, monitored the press, and served as a center of African-American research. DuBois noted that few African-Americans were appointed to political positions without his consent. Washington was generally considered the most powerful African-American in the United States at this point.

A key point in Washington’s ascent was a famous address at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta in 1895. Speaking before a predominantly white audience, Washington declared for African-Americans, vocational education and economic security were more important than social equality, traditional higher education, or political office. Washington offered that African-Americans would accept segregation and social inequality if whites would encourage their economic and cultural progress. Washington summarized his approach thusly: “In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress” (Atlanta Compromise, 2003). This address became known as the Atlanta Compromise.

Washington’s success and growing reputation were not without controversy however. Although his approach was hailed by white leaders, African-American critics took aim at his emphasis of work skills and economic independence over equality and civil rights, especially given the social backdrop of harsh Jim Crow laws, segregation and discrimination, regular lynchings of African-American men, and political disenfranchisement. African-American intellectuals, led by W. E. B. DuBois, viewed Washington as an accommodationist, whose pragmatic philosophy would condemn blacks to permanent subservience to whites.

Although Washington’s views lost out to DuBois’s more progressive and integrationist stances, he remains a historical giant for his emphasis on economic self-reliance and his founding of Tuskegee University.

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See also **African-Americans; Du Bois, W. E. B.; South**

WEBSTER, MILTON PRICE (1887–1965) Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

Milton Price Webster, a Pullman Sleeping Car porter, was a key figure in the formation and founding of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), the first national labor union of African-Americans that was recognized by the leaders of a major American corporation. As director of the Chicago district for the BSCP, Webster, working closely with A. Philip Randolph, the head of the brotherhood, helped build the BSCP from a small group of Pullman porters in 1925 into a major labor union that secured a contract with the Pullman Company in 1937, long known for its anti-union management policies. He served as first vice-president of the BSCP for the rest of his life. He was also an active participant in the historic March on Washington movement and was appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Fair Employment Practice Committee in 1941. From 1925 until his death in 1965, Webster was a pioneer on the labor front fighting for the economic and civil rights of African-Americans.

Webster, born in Clarksville, Tennessee, in 1887, migrated north with his father when he was just a boy and began working as a Pullman porter out of Chicago during his teens. After working for the Pullman Company for almost 20 years, he was fired in the

early twenties for his part in trying to organize porters in the Railroad Men's Benevolent Industrial Association. As a result of his connections with the black Republican machine in Chicago, he was able to land a job as a bailiff and also a position as Republican head of the Sixth Ward. He was not looking for work when Randolph approached him in the fall of 1925 about organizing a union to represent the interests of Pullman porters in negotiations with the Pullman Company.

Chicago was headquarters for the giant Pullman Company and over one-third of the porters were based in the area. Yet the fledging union faced major resistance in the black community from middle-class leaders who felt the Pullman Company had done much more for black Chicagoans than any labor union. For the next several years, Webster and Randolph worked to break down resistance not just from managers of the Pullman Company but also from black leaders and the institutions they controlled. When Webster began trying to organize Chicago's Pullman porters, he declared that “Everything Negro was against us.” After approaching 45 or 50



M. P. Webster, first international vice president, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-97539].

prominent citizens about endorsing the porters' union movement, only five agreed to speak at the first meeting, and only one showed up. If the brotherhood wanted its union to succeed, it had to win support from Chicago's black leaders.

Starting with a small network consisting of prominent clubwomen and a minister, Webster organized a Citizens' Committee to break down resistance within the community. In January 1928, he launched the first Negro Labor Conference in Chicago to challenge Pullman paternalism and educate the community about the politics of patronage. At that first labor conference, Webster asserted that Pullman porters and maids had a right to choose who represented their interests at work that was as basic as that guaranteed under the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. By 1937, when Pullman officially recognized the BSCP, Webster and Randolph had also won the hearts and minds of much of black America.

In January 1941, when the United States economy was shifting its forces to defense production, Webster and Randolph began organizing black America to March on Washington in protest against discrimination in the job market and the armed forces. In June after President Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802, prohibiting discrimination in defense industries and agencies of the federal government, the March on Washington was canceled. Shortly thereafter Webster was appointed to the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC), the first federal agency in history to deal exclusively with job discrimination, and he spent the war years trying to put some teeth in the proclamations of Executive Order No. 8802. Webster, initially one of only two black members of the FEPC, distinguished himself on that body, keeping employers on the defensive with his hard questions and frontal attacks against job discrimination. His scrutiny of industrial relations influenced policy; his leadership helped break down stereotypes about the abilities of African-Americans held by white government bureaucrats; and his questioning white witnesses in southern cities challenged the racial status quo in a fundamental way.

After the FEPC folded in 1946, Webster devoted the rest of his life to the BSCP. He died of a heart attack during the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations convention in Bal Harbour, Florida, in 1965.

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See also **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Randolph, A. Philip**

WELFARE CAPITALISM

The term welfare capitalism has been used to refer to the overall structure of Western and U.S. economies comprised of a varied mix of state- and private-welfare programs that provide a safety net of economic and social security to workers and that help stabilize and rationalize employment. Historically however welfare capitalism has generally been applied much more specifically and narrowly—as it will be here—to the private aspect of economic and social-welfare programs.

In practice welfare capitalism is historically associated with a specific and extensive movement of industrial reform emerging in the late nineteenth century and extending well into the twentieth. Profit-sharing and employee-representation plans were at the heart of its ideological formulation though in practice rare. More prevalent and characteristic in practice were such corporate-welfare services and provisions as company housing, free education in company kindergartens or grammar schools, recreational facilities and corporate athletic programs, company stores providing relatively inexpensive foodstuffs to employees, factory cafeterias, sickness and injury insurance wholly or partially subsidized by firms, and company-built hospitals providing free medical care. In essence as Louis A. Boettiger noted in 1923 in *Employee Welfare Work*, welfare capitalism included any "voluntary effort of the employer, in excess of the requirements of law, of the market, or of custom, directed toward the improvement of employment practices respecting working conditions, hours of work and wages, together with the general conditions of community life of the workers." As a movement welfare capitalism contributed considerably to the revision of traditional *laissez faire* capitalism and played both a transitional and supplemental role in the development of the welfare state.

As a collection of particular reforms and programs, welfare capitalism has been considered by

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some recent revisionist scholars as little more than fringe benefits, and—as a percentage of total corporate expenditures—hardly amounting to much at all. Yet the volume, intensity, timing of—and promotional activity associated with—corporate-welfare work suggests the rise of welfare capitalism represented far more than the sum of its parts. What most now refer to as job fringe benefits, certainly eroding in recent years, undoubtedly had their origin—in part—in welfare capitalism: Health insurance and medical care (in the United States far more dependent on employers than on the state), pensions, vacations, corporate gyms and athletic facilities. All were championed in the early years of the movement by one or another advocate. All became a part of the expectations of workers in many corporations as a result of a century of formal and informal negotiations between employers attempting to build an efficient, harmonious and loyal labor force and employees seeking to extract, expand, and preserve services and facilities.

The writing on welfare capitalism from the 1880s to the present is voluminous. Industrialists, magazine writers, churchmen, labor leaders, muckrakers, economists, and historians all wrote extensively on the subject, though few until recent decades employed the more academic term welfare capitalism. Most of those who wrote about the obligations of employers or industrial paternalism or welfare work wrote about a movement of labor-management reform motivated by sometimes idealistic, more often pragmatic, motives. Among them were increasing productivity and efficiency, reducing labor turnover, attracting a desirable grade of labor, advertising the business, reducing strikes, providing palliatives for low wages, averting state regulations, disrupting union activities, and warding off charges of corporate “soullessness.” A few saw it in terms of pure philanthropy.

The history of welfare capitalism in the modern United States follows an evolutionary track, starting from the familial, intimate, and patriarchal regimes that arose in the nineteenth century to the large, bureaucratic, corporate-welfare firms of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The movement was neither static nor temporary, as some have suggested, but an evolving strain in modern capitalism itself—one that rose and fell, and reshaped itself as society, economy, and the state evolved. Welfare capitalism was first and foremost an ideology, expressing the ideas and ideals of reform-minded capitalists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and possessing both conservative and liberal elements. Hardly unique to the United States, its origins lay in a variety of sources—some domestic, some foreign. In

Europe welfare capitalism was clearly tied to feudal paternalistic traditions and was adopted in societies where class conflict was a constant theme as an implement of social control—designed to ensure labor discipline and a stable social order. Pre-industrial and precapitalist traditions established long-lasting expectations and obligations that were associated with all forms of master-servant relationships, but with the coming of market capitalism, they came under great strain; welfare capitalism was one way of addressing such strain.

In the early nineteenth century such industrial experiments as the Lowell system, associated with Francis Cabott Lowell and the mills owned by the Boston Manufacturing Company, anticipated the growth of welfare capitalism. Convincing young women to leave their rural New England families and enter a highly suspect industrial community—and persuading their parents to let them do so—required special protections, enticements, and amenities: Boarding houses, strict supervision, schools, hospitals, churches, corporate-sponsored cultural events, and relatively generous wages. Through the middle of the century, the need to overcome Jeffersonian reservations about American industrial development—with its associated fear of the growth of an insurgent, dependent laboring class—fueled some of the nation’s earliest experiments with corporate-welfare reforms. Industrial regimes became concerned not merely with enlarging corporate profits, but also, in varying degrees, employee welfare.

Yet overall the triumph of industrial capitalism and the ideology of *laissez faire* overwhelmed Jeffersonian fears and undermined industrial paternalism. The existence of plantation slavery further strengthened and promoted a faith in free-market capitalism in the industrializing North. In the mid-nineteenth-century United States, the celebration of free labor over slave labor and plantation paternalism fueled rejection of all paternalistic models of labor-capital relationships. This was reinforced by the success and expansion of the American industrial behemoth in the decades following the Civil War. *Laissez faire* capitalism was offered a new vocabulary and paradigm when conservative social Darwinist William Graham Sumner promoted and celebrated the inequality and struggle of the American marketplace as the most effective means of social and economic progress. Sumner gave voice to the inchoate views of a generation of mid-to-late-nineteenth-century American employers.

Still in the midst of the success of late nineteenth-century capitalism lay plenty of evidence of failure; the facile adherence of Americans to mobility ideologies and Horatio Alger myths was challenged by

the obvious signs of poverty and destitution that accompanied industrial growth at the end of the century. In the context of a rapidly industrializing United States increasingly dominated by large monopolistic business firms and plagued by periodic bouts of economic recession and depression, dissident voices arose countering the message of Sumner and his ideological brethren. Social gospel proponents, Populists, labor unionists, Socialists, anarchists, and concerned liberals began to question economic orthodoxy and conservative strains of social Darwinism and looked for ways to reconcile industrial growth and efficiency with long-cherished democratic and egalitarian ideals and institutions. While Populists called for the nationalization of certain key economic sectors (to destroy the reign of corporate plutocrats) and the revival of Jeffersonian self-sufficiency in others, and socialists advocated the abolition of the wage system and the construction of a co-operative commonwealth, social gospel ministers called on businessmen to humanize their practices and to reconstruct the fellowship between social classes that was perceived to have existed in the U.S. pre-industrial past.

Of all the criticism leveled against corporate capitalism in the late nineteenth century, that which came from the Social Gospel movement had the greatest impact on the business community; after all it did not call on business leaders to abandon their leadership roles in society and in the economy. It did not challenge their power. It merely called for the application of fundamental Christian values and principles to social and economic affairs. Social gospel proponents Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong, Edward M. Sheldon, and Walter Rauchenbusch all sought, in the words that Gladden first penned in his *Working People and Their Employers* a year before the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, to “bring the truth of the New Testament to bear directly upon matters now in dispute between labor and capital.” Gladden and his fellow clergymen called for the corporate assumption of a sense of guardianship and Christian obligation toward employees. Christian obligation included such things as care for the physical health and comfort of workers (providing medical facilities and care, and ensuring a safe workplace), polite and considerate treatment by supervisory personnel, and responsibility for the intellectual improvement of workers (company-built schools, teachers, cultural activities, libraries). But that was not the ultimate aim of most social gospel advocates. For many of them the ultimate goal was to pave the path for escape from the dependency of wage labor and to achieve a more egalitarian society overall, though not necessarily through socialism (though Gladden and other

reform clergymen did promote worker cooperatives). As Gladden suggested, the aim of reform is to decrease the number of wage laborers, to promote their passage into the ranks of capitalists, and to give employees in general a more proprietary interest in the economic engines of the nation.

In many ways many of the social gospel debates around industrialization of the late nineteenth century recapitulated those of the early nineteenth century. Now it was not a nascent capitalism that promoted such debates, but a maturing and thriving one. The Social Gospel movement’s advocacy of corporate paternalism (though often mixed with a warning to avoid overly intrusive and obtrusive initiatives) did encourage many businessmen to begin experimenting with various corporate-welfare schemes. Gladden and Josiah Strong both became very strong promoters and propagandists for welfare capitalism, encouraging employers—for humanitarian, practical, and public-relations reasons—to adopt corporate reforms. Strong in 1896 for example spoke to Procter and Gamble stockholders, praising the extensive welfare work undertaken by the firm (including one of the earliest profit-sharing plans in the country). He became involved in the work of the American Institute of Social Service, an outgrowth of Strong’s League for Social Service, one of several organizations founded at the turn of the century that actively promoted welfare capitalism.

Initially many employers scoffed at the idea of private-welfare initiatives on behalf of their employees. For some besieged by trade unions and labor militants, it was difficult to abandon the Sumnerian view of industrial-labor relations as necessarily fraught with constant conflict. Welfare programs carried out in an obtrusively paternalistic manner also seemed to ignite hostile working-class reaction (the Pullman Strike of 1894 was in part blamed on precisely this factor) and hardly encouraged reform. Finally the depression decade of the 1890s posed an economic obstacle to the adoption of welfare programs. However with the recovery of the economy in the late 1890s and with labor conflicts continuing, more and more businessmen began to grow responsive to secular and religious welfare-capitalist advocates and looked to business-welfare schemes to assuage labor strife and ward off public criticisms of corporate abuses.

It was truly in the first decade of the new century that the movement toward welfare capitalism became a movement. In those years new advocates and critics arose, reviving once again the old conflict between democracy and corporate dependency and authoritarianism. The final years of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth centuries witnessed

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a large number of individuals and institutional efforts aimed at spreading employer-welfare work. Such individuals as Toledo's reform mayor "Golden Rule" (Samuel Milton) Jones, Edward Filene, the progressive Boston merchant, Harold Fowler McCormick of International Harvester, Clarence Hicks at International Harvester (also active in Colorado Fuel and Iron and Standard Oil), John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Gertrude Beeks (active in private, institutional, and government-work), and the Chicago newspaper editor Ralph Easley all took strong advocacy roles in the movement. In books, newspaper articles, magazine stories, and promotional publications, early twentieth-century advocates represented and promoted business welfarism in a variety of ways, suggesting the mix of pragmatic and ideological factors behind its growing popularity. When advocated by theologians, particularly social gospel ministers active in the League for Social Service, it was posed as a solution to the materialism and selfish corporate practices of *laissez faire* capitalism. Under the auspices of the National Civic Federation (NCF), welfare capitalism was a central element in a grand design: The rationalization and stabilization of the relationship between workers and managers. Both the League for Social Service (later the American Institute of Social Service) and the NCF actively and heavily promoted welfare work in the first two decades of the twentieth century, arguing for both its moral and practical benefits. The Department of Industrial Betterment of the League for Social Service, under the directorship of William Howe Tolman, initiated a decade-long promotional drive on behalf of welfare work in industry.

By far however a much more powerful and influential endorser of corporate-welfare work was the NCF, the institutional arm of the progressive corporate community—and one supported by such labor leaders as Samuel Gompers and John Mitchell. The organization's Welfare Department was established in 1904 to help forge an identity of interests between working people and their employers. From 1904 until World War I, the NCF with its Welfare Department were the nation's most aggressive advocates of welfare work. Representatives of United States Steel and International Harvester Corporation, two of the largest and most prominent welfare-capitalist firms in the country, often took the lead in such promotional work.

By the middle of the second decade of the twentieth century, scores of industrial firms took on welfare work. Estimates varied depending on the extent to which companies adopted welfare programs from 119 in 1905 to 1,500 to 2,000 companies in 1917. Among some of the most comprehensive programs

were those adopted by Amoskeag Mills in New Hampshire; Remington Typewriter in Iliion, NY; General Electric in its various plants; Colorado Fuel and Iron in Pueblo, Colorado; Goodyear and Firestone Tire companies in Akron, Ohio; Plymouth Cordage in Plymouth, Massachusetts; Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati, Ohio; and Solvay Process in Solvay, New York. Solvay Process provided employees with a profit-sharing plan, discretionary bonuses, pensions, sickness and accident insurance, educational benefits (the company ran a half-time mechanic's school and occasionally assisted students in obtaining a college education with low-interest loans), a day nursery for infants, and numerous recreational and entertainment programs (many of the latter were made available to community residents, and not merely employees). A number of firms, like the Endicott Johnson Company in upstate New York, manufacturer of leather and shoes, adopted welfare work during or after the war and constructed incredibly comprehensive systems—building hospitals, sanitariums, athletic and recreation facilities; adopting profit-sharing plans; and providing support to surrounding working-class communities in the form of schools, church, and local charity funding. John Paterson, president of National Cash Register (NCR) and another of the pioneers in industrial welfare, provided employees and their families with kindergartens, libraries, an extensive recreation program (including a golf course, a children's playground with a wading pool, family camping grounds, tennis courts, a dance hall, a basketball court, and much more). He also, beginning in the 1890s, focused a great deal of attention on factory beautification and safety—increasing natural light through the extensive replacement of masonry walls with glass, using light-colored paints in interiors and on machinery, installing dust-collection systems, providing clean baths and restrooms for women, and adding on-site hospitals and first-aid stations. Some of the earliest implementations of welfare capitalism came in firms that employed large numbers of women, employees viewed as particularly vulnerable and requiring specialized services. The NCR, for example, employed many women and targeted many of its earlier welfare programs toward them; it organized a Woman's Century Club, a literary and social organization, and a Domestic Economy Department, which taught female employees cooking, sewing, housekeeping and domestic hygiene, basic nursing skills, and dancing.

Increasingly welfare capitalism began to be rationalized and bureaucratized; welfare departments were soon established in larger firms, and welfare secretaries were hired to staff them (often specially

trained and highly educated young women from such colleges as Bryn Mawr and Smith). These changes constituted the foundations of modern personnel management. The professionalization of corporate-welfare work could be seen in the growth of specialized training; universities for example began to offer courses in practical industrial-welfare work as early as 1906, when the Chicago Institute of Social Science began to teach the subject. In 1908, Yale University provided a course in Industrial Service Work, and by 1916, over 150 engineering schools were offering such courses. State and federal agencies, too, began to employ trained employee-welfare personnel. The administrations of Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson all supported corporate-welfare work under various institutional and practical guises. The federal government in fact sent Gertrude Beeks to Panama to supervise welfare work among the Panama Canal workers.

World War I was an important catalyst for the movement's expansion; the need for rapid industrial mobilization and for increasing industrial productivity was in part answered by welfare capitalism's promise. The Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense, created by Congress in 1916, soon established a Committee on Welfare Work that sought to convince employers to adopt welfare reforms as a means of stimulating efficiency and boosting production of war materials for the Allied powers. The war, too, had a profound effect on private industry's receptiveness to welfare capitalism. Responding to the disruption of a relatively stable prewar labor market, industries adopted and expanded welfare programs as a hedge against labor militancy and as a means of stabilizing employment. Contented workers, they believed, stayed with their employers and chose loyalty to the firm over loyalty to a union. Finally the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 fueled existing fears of domestic social revolution and expanding working-class radicalism and offered employers yet another incentive to adopt welfare capitalism.

In the 1920s, a decade that witnessed immense industrial expansion and consumerism, the doctrine of corporate welfare expanded even more dramatically than in the previous decade. The survival of Russian communism did offer a constant reminder of the threat of domestic revolution, but more significantly, an almost religious faith in industrial expansion and in the mutuality of interests between capital and labor propelled the movement forward. The notion of industrial democracy, stimulated by Woodrow Wilson's idealism and by Progressive reformers, began to take hold and expand, but in the realm of corporate United States, it was interpreted and applied in a

conservative manner. Unlike trade union and socialist notions of industrial democracy—emphasizing independent and autonomous organizations engaged in collective bargaining with employers—businessmen looked for reforms that would give workers some voice in employee-employer relations but would essentially preserve management's right to manage and control. The solution was a variety of employee-representation plans and company unions. By 1923, according to one contemporary study, over 80 major firms had adopted one form or another of employee representation—often using elected employee committees and shop councils. Such half-way reforms, as union and socialist critics, and such progressive intellectuals as Walter Lippman, Herbert Croly, and Walter Weyl frequently pointed out, were hollow indeed. All too often shop councils and employee committees were easily intimidated, coerced, and controlled directly or indirectly by autocratic employers.

As welfare capitalism spread through the 1920s, as open shop movements grew, and as organized labor's ranks began to shrink, more and more strident criticism of welfare capitalism could be found in the labor and socialist press. Gompers's association with the NCF and the latter organization's heavy promotion of corporate-welfare work brought on him the wrath of the American Federation of Labor's (AFL's) left wing. But Gompers was by no means accommodating to the NCF's promotion of various welfare programs—and grew increasingly skeptical and finally downright hostile to welfare capitalism in general. As early as 1899, he had singled out profit sharing—an important element in corporate-welfare ideology and practice—as a ridiculous attempt to resolve society's most pressing social and economic problems. In 1908, he called International Harvester's profit-sharing plan a sham, since the firm had cut wages after initiating the plan. By 1916, there was little doubt that Gompers had come out squarely against corporate welfarism; the pages of the AFL's monthly publication, the *American Federationist*, were filled with critical articles on welfare work in industry. In the September 1923 issue of the periodical, Gompers asserted that the "paternalistic idea is the child of autocracy." Other issues echoed and elaborated on that charge. Welfare capitalism actively competed with unions for the loyalty of workers.

William Green, who succeeded Gompers to the leadership of the AFL on the death of the latter, continued Gompers's crusade against corporate paternalism, emphasizing corporate welfare's unfortunate encouragement of employee dependence. Throughout the 1920s, a decade of declining union membership, union leaders recognized in welfare capitalism a major

threat to the continued existence of trade unions. New members were difficult to attract, and old members were difficult to hold. It is not surprising thus to find the AFL Executive Council and the officers of various railroad labor unions adopting resolutions in the mid-1920s condemning employer group-insurance plans as subversive to trade unionism.

Similarly Socialists repeatedly condemned industrial-welfare work as merely another weapon in capital's arsenal against labor—an attempt to buttress the traditional exploitative relationship between labor and capital with minimal and insignificant reforms. What socialist and Communist critics of welfare capitalism most feared was the movement's ability to destroy class consciousness and to cloud workers' recognition of the divergent interests of labor and capital. The socialist League for Industrial Democracy for example discussed industrial-welfare work extensively at its 1926 annual conference, and members echoed the previously summarized fears. Socialist Abraham Epstein, who attended that conference, published a study of welfare capitalism in that same year. He found, to his chagrin, that indeed class antagonisms were being effectively assuaged by corporate-welfare reforms.

While such critics as Epstein were sensitive to the class dimensions—and motives—behind welfare capitalism, recent scholars have examined some of the other aspects of the movement. In terms of questions of success and failure, they have refocused on the workers themselves rather than on trade union and socialist critics, asking what welfare capitalism meant to rank-and-file workers—and how workers were able to manipulate welfare regimes to maximize benefits and rewards. Certainly welfare capitalism contained many elements that went beyond motives of social discipline and control. It was also, as many scholars—and welfare-capitalism promoters—repeatedly pointed out, designed to boost industrial efficiency by enhancing labor incentives. Many employers undoubtedly adopted and abandoned welfare practices precisely for reasons of efficiency and productivity—and not because they were overly concerned about labor militancy or Bolshevism. The strongest advocates of welfare capitalism in the early twentieth century rarely missed an opportunity to remind their audiences that welfare capitalism paid off. Welfare capitalism paid off not only internally, because workers gave loyalty and willing and efficient labor to the firm, but also because consumers viewed the firm in more favorable light when its generous treatment of employees was widely publicized. The public relations functions of welfare capitalism have been emphasized by some scholars, most notably by the late Roland Marchand.

In terms of the persistence and long-term development of welfare capitalism, the scholarship is divided. Unfortunately few historians have examined welfare capitalism in detail beyond the Great Depression, and even fewer beyond World War II. Most scholars until recently argued that welfare capitalism died as a movement in the 1930s as a result of one or more of the following: The economic pressures that accompanied the Great Depression, the rise of industrial unionism and the adoption of New Deal labor reforms, and the growing competition of the welfare state. They pointed out that the government in the late 1930s even actively challenged some important features of many welfare regimes, like employee-representation plans and company unions. The National Labor Relations Board for example began to take on company unions, relying on Section 8 of the NLRA (calling corporate support of company unions an “unfair labor practice”). Similarly—though not as a result of government pressure, welfare work and welfare departments began to disappear. Personnel management departments began to take on more and more responsibilities formerly associated with welfare departments. Additionally as union membership began to expand as a result of support from the National Labor Relations Board in the 1930s, the National War Labor Board (NWLB) during World War II, and the continuing aggressive organizing drives of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the postwar years, former welfare benefits became items of negotiation in contract disputes. Unions began to bargain as much over welfare benefits, such as pensions, as they did over wages. This tendency was strongly reinforced by the Supreme Court's 1949 *Inland Steel* decision, which let stand a ruling of the Chicago U.S. Circuit Court that pensions were a proper matter for collective bargaining.

Increasingly though modestly scholars have slowly begun to probe more deeply into the fate of corporate welfare in the post-Great Depression era. Though many historians concur that the depression of the 1930s began to slow and reverse the tide of corporate welfare, as companies—often under great stockholder pressure—jettisoned all nonessential expenditures, including welfare work, there is extensive evidence—most recently marshaled by historians Sanford Jacoby and Jennifer Klein—that industrial welfarism came back to life after the Depression and expanded in tandem with the welfare state. Health insurance and pensions for example remained incredibly important sources of security for workers in the post-World War II era. Workers who had grown accustomed to them under welfare regimes had also come to recognize their limits during the Depression; because they retained the expectation that such benefits were a

right of employment, they pressured employers to expand them—and many did. Some because they feared a growing welfare state and a mushrooming corporate tax burden, others because they sought labor loyalty and industrial harmony above all else.

The New Deal had provided workers with a rhetoric of economic justice and security. Growing expectations of basic economic security from government and private employers yielded a system in which public- and private-welfare systems coexisted and mutually limited one another. Some have even explained the absence of a national health care system in the United States as a product of the expansion of privately funded group-insurance plans widely adopted by American big business. Jennifer Klein for example argues that collective bargaining over workplace-based health insurance helped undermine a more aggressive pursuit of real and more comprehensive health security—one not tied to individual employers. The persistence of welfare capitalism only created “islands of security”—and in the final decades of the twentieth century, even these islands were becoming increasingly vulnerable.

Still the essential ideas and ideals behind welfare capitalism persist. Those same concerns—and contradictions—that lay behind the Lowell system, behind social gospel notions of labor-management cooperation, and behind the earliest NCF promoters of welfare capitalism continue to shape labor-management decisions in the nation’s more enlightened corporations today. Even as U.S. capitalism in recent decades continues to swerve between seeking new and cheaper labor markets (corporate flight) and finding new ways to hold onto valued workers and increase efficiency, even as corporate contributions to pension plans decline, even as both public- and private-welfare systems come under fire, a significant number of progressive firms—often high-tech and heavily capitalized—continue to experiment with corporate-welfare reforms. Many have come to rely heavily on social and behavioral scientists to understand what their employees need and expect. They provide childcare for employees, medical benefits to same-sex partners, often generous vacation plans; they continue to offer profit-sharing plans and stock options; they make available to employees expanded educational opportunities. Lest we prematurely declare welfare capitalism dead, we might recall that even in its heyday, it was never the dominant movement within the U.S. business community. It was always a movement of a progressive minority, and it remains so today.

Perhaps most significant—from a global perspective—in the last four decades modern corporate-welfare firms have redefined the community of labor

they serve. The nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century firms that once contributed benefits to their workers and to the immediate community of their host communities (in the form of schools, churches, recreation parks) have now become the national and global good citizens that establish charity foundations, fund hospitals and museums, sponsor concerts and athletic competitions, provide scholarships and grants, and offer relief services during national and international disasters (such companies as Microsoft, PepsiCo, EMC, Intel, and General Electric). These are expanded directions for welfare capitalism; such general service functions and actions have little directly to do with employee security and well-being, but they do have much to do with the public perception of the corporation and with the belief that a good corporate reputation is important in today’s global marketplace. While it is ever more tempting to declare that welfare capitalism is once again dead, given the fundamentally fluid nature of corporate-labor relations and the ebb and flow of economic and ideological cycles, it would be wrong to exaggerate the demise of welfare capitalism and equally wrong to ignore how it has changed or how it might change in the future as global labor markets evolve.

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WELFARE RIGHTS

The term welfare rights represents both the rallying call and the philosophy of a group of mostly female welfare recipients and their allies who began in the 1960s to demand higher grants, better treatment, a voice in welfare's administration, and ultimately the replacement of the American welfare system with a more generous and dignified guaranteed income program. Such activism culminated in a briefly influential national Welfare Rights movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, while local activists and recipients continue to this day to organize, lobby, and protest under the banner of welfare rights.

Origins of a Welfare Rights Movement

A variety of factors encouraged welfare recipients to begin organizing in the early 1960s. In response to rising welfare rolls in the postwar years, state and local legislators and administrators placed restrictions on receipt of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the federal grant-in-aid program for poor children deprived of parental (usually male breadwinner) support. Residency requirements, employable-mother rules, and man-in-the-house and suitable-home tests were aimed at keeping rolls and costs down, ensuring a ready supply of low-wage workers, denying grants to nonwhite women, and protecting taxpayers from subsidizing indolent male breadwinners, immoral women, and illegitimate children. In the early 1960s, informal discussion of shared problems in local welfare offices or solo-parent groups sparked organizing. Most likely recipients and their occasional allies among social workers and religious organizations responded as well to an increasingly

liberal political mood and the growing momentum of civil rights activism. While the first welfare rights groups formed before the Johnson administration declared a legislative war on poverty, federal antipov-erty efforts, like Legal Aid (which provided disadvantaged communities with professional legal help) and community action agencies (which sought to include poor people in the administration and consolidation of social services), channeled organizers and resources into poor communities, furthering welfare rights organizing.

The AFDC recipients usually led local welfare rights groups, sometimes with financial, logistical and moral support from churches, and less often, liberal and radical groups. In the Los Angeles Watts area, Johnnie Tillmon, mother of six, applied her experience as a union shop steward to organizing fellow welfare recipients in her public-housing project. Washington, DC, leader Etta Horn, mother of seven, had a history of activism in church and the PTA. Local groups usually formed in response to specific problems: Detroit recipients organized to demand locks on public-housing mailboxes to prevent theft of welfare checks and to demand that local utility companies waive deposits for recipients, while grant cuts in Ohio sparked a coalition of recipients, church, and social welfare agencies to organize and lobby for more adequate benefits. Welfare rights groups advocated for individual applicants and recipients, publicized regulations in easy-to-read form, lobbied legislators, and conducted demonstrations. Special grants campaigns proved their most effective tactic. Welfare caseworkers rarely informed recipients that they were entitled to one-time special grants for household equipment, school clothing, or winter coats. Welfare rights groups publicized lists of available grants, gathered applications, and presented them *en masse* at local welfare offices, a tactic that was remarkably successful in achieving material rewards and recruiting members.

By 1966, some middle-class activists saw in local welfare rights organizing the potential for large-scale institutional change. In "A Strategy to End Poverty" in 1966, academics and social activists Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward estimated that for every AFDC recipient in New York, another person was eligible. They argued that by encouraging massive welfare enrollment, welfare rights organizing could precipitate fiscal and political crisis, which would finally force federal lawmakers to replace categorical public assistance with a federally funded guaranteed-income program. They shared their interest in welfare rights with George Wiley, who had been seeking to convince first the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE, a civil rights organization) and then the Citizens'

Crusade against Poverty (CCAP, a UAW-funded private antipoverty coalition) to commit to grassroots organizing among the poor. In 1966, Wiley set up a Poverty/Rights Action Center in Washington, DC, to pursue his model of an integrated grassroots movement for economic justice. He helped turn a welfare-recipient march in Ohio into a national media event and called a meeting of welfare-recipient activists from across the country, social workers, and organizers who decided to form a National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO).

Welfare Rights as a National Movement

While not broadly representative of the country's AFDC recipients, the NWRO for a time provided welfare recipients with a national voice. Wiley with many friends and contacts acted as executive director from 1966 to 1972 and proved an adept fundraiser, collecting three million dollars from individual contributors, foundations, and churches (particularly the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organizing and the United Church of Christ's Welfare Priority Team) during his directorship. The NWRO also had brief success in recruiting members, growing from 5,000 dues-paying members in 1967 to over 24,000 at its height in 1969, or from 1%–2% of the AFDC population. While more than half of AFDC recipients were white, the NWRO was 85% African-American, 10% white, and 5% Latino, with a small proportion of Native Americans. The racial make-up reflected the organization's largely urban base, while its overwhelmingly female membership (98%) reflected its focus on the AFDC program. The NWRO was less successful in garnering powerful political allies. On a local level some unions, civil rights organizations, and civic and women's groups allied with welfare rights activists, and by the early 1970s, the NWRO boasted 3,000 middle-class members of its Friends network. Nationally though coalitions with other organizations proved tenuous at best.

The NWRO's four stated goals—adequate income, dignity, justice, and democratic participation—structured its activities. Theoretically it sought to replace AFDC and other categorical public-assistance programs with a guaranteed income at poverty level for all Americans. On a more practical level, its affiliates used sit-ins, demonstrations, and special-grant campaigns to pressure welfare departments. Their efforts resulted in a considerable liberalization of welfare and significant increases in AFDC rolls, which experienced their steepest increase (220%) during the decade of the NWRO's existence (1965–1975).

Scholars have estimated that in 1966, only one-third of those eligible were receiving AFDC, while by the 1970s, nearly 90% were. Lawyers proved the movement's most valuable allies, helping recipients to challenge and overturn a variety of restrictions, from residency requirements to substitute parent rules, to establish recipients' right to a fair hearing before termination or reduction of a grant and in general to establish a legal right to welfare.

At the same time welfare recipients demanded dignity—the end to invasions of privacy, better treatment from caseworkers, the right to control their own sexuality, and recognition of their important role as mothers. Several years before largely white, middle-class feminists articulated a demand for reproductive choice; welfare recipient activists insisted on their right to decide when to become parents, fighting both against involuntary sterilization and for access to birth control and abortion. Activists rejected society's denigration of poor, black women by drawing on their moral authority as mothers, holding Mother's Day marches and appealing to other women's organizations for support. Poor women's experience in the labor market—often in physically onerous, low-wage jobs that failed to bring them out of poverty—led welfare rights activists to vociferously oppose forced-work requirements. They insisted that society value their work as mothers and give them the right to choose whether to combine motherhood with wage labor. At the same time they insisted that many AFDC mothers wanted education, training, childcare, and good jobs. Over time childcare became a high priority for the organization.

The NWRO achieved the height of its influence during debate over the Nixon administration's Family Assistance Plan (FAP) from 1969 to 1972. The FAP would have replaced categorical public-assistance programs like AFDC with a very low guaranteed income for American families. Many liberals supported the plan: They wanted to establish the precedent of a guaranteed income and to extend federal aid to two-parent families, the so-called working poor. On the other hand the NWRO deplored the plan's low-benefit level, which would have meant reduced benefits for most of its members who lived in relatively high-benefit urban areas outside the South. It also opposed the FAP's forced-work provisions and its revocation of a host of legal rights the movement had only recently gained. The NWRO garnered some support, getting its own much more liberal guaranteed-income plan introduced into Congress and convincing several congressional families to participate in its Live on a Welfare Budget campaign. In the end many liberal organizations joined the NWRO's Zap FAP campaign, which combined with Nixon's abandonment

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and powerful conservative opposition, doomed the plan.

Various tensions between Wiley and other mostly male (and often white) staff members on the one side and recipient leaders on the other, along with welfare's unpopularity and crisis on the U.S. political left, led to the NWRO's demise. As legislatures began to crack down on welfare spending, Wiley hoped to broaden the movement to include low-wage and unemployed men, a way to neutralize racist and sexist attacks and return to his original vision of a broad, integrated poor people's movement. Recipient leaders feared this would dilute the needs of female AFDC recipients. Wiley resigned in 1972 to form the Movement for Economic Justice, and Tillmon became NWRO's executive director. The organization took on a more explicitly feminist cast, symbolized by Tillmon's article in a 1972 issue of *Ms. Magazine*, "Welfare Is a Women's Issue," in which she referred to AFDC as a "super-sexist marriage." While feminist organizations began to pay more attention to welfare and poverty during the 1970s, the NWRO folded in 1975.

Welfare Rights to the Present

Local welfare rights organizing continued however. Some former welfare rights organizers followed Wiley's lead, seeking through groups like Jobs and Justice to organize more broadly, while some professionals and academics, like those in the Center for Social Welfare Policy and Law, concentrated on welfare's legal dimensions. Hundreds of local recipient groups continued to lobby and protest into the 1990s (some of them formed the National Welfare Rights Union in 1987), ignored by the mainstream press. Their goals remain the same even as the political context changes: Adequate income, dignity, justice, and democratic participation.

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WEST VIRGINIA MINE WAR (1920–1921)

The West Virginia Mine War was a protracted struggle fought between miners, who sought to join the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), and mine owners, who were determined to keep the union out of the southern West Virginia counties of Mingo, McDowell, and Logan. By unionizing and gaining recognition from the coal operators, miners collectively sought protection from the operators' control, wielded through the autocratic system of the company town and mine guards. As labor historian David Corbin notes, the miners engaged in "battles for timeless and universal values and principles: industrial democracy, social equality and political rights." The war involved numerous acts of violence committed by both sides and resulted in several declarations of martial law in West Virginia, as well as the occupation of its southern counties by federal troops. The duration of the miners' fight and the degree of violence make the events of 1920 to 1921 extraordinary; however in the end the coal operators' unity of purpose and domination of both local and state political machinery not only maintained an open shop in southern West Virginia, but forced the collapse of the union throughout the state. The mine war represents another case of the manipulation of legal systems by owners of capital during capital-labor conflict, as well as the proclivities

of state and federal authorities to intervene to defend only the rights of property. The significance of the mine war lies in its dramatic expression of interracial, working-class solidarity: Rank-and-file miners demanded their right to join a union as the fundamental issue rather than the more traditional demands of wages or hours. Grassroots participation drove the direction and temper of the fight, as the union became the mode for political action.

The drive to unionize mine workers in the southern West Virginia counties of Mingo, McDowell, and Logan sits against the national backdrop of post-World War I economic conditions and the relative strength of the UMWA. On November 1, 1919, 425,000 mineworkers struck; the union's officials had called the national strike only in the face of its members' insistence. Miners in the bituminous and anthracite coalfields experienced inflationary pressures in the immediate postwar years that had eroded the wage gains and steady working time seen during the war. The national strike included unionized workers in the bituminous coal areas of the Central Competitive Field, which comprised those mines in Illinois, Ohio, much of western Pennsylvania, and the northern and central counties of West Virginia. The UMWA was weaker in the southern part of the state and had withdrawn its organizers with the country's entry into World War I in 1917, as the union and coal operators conformed to federal stipulations of the War Industries Board. The time was ripe then for organization of West Virginia's southern mines. Nationally as well as locally, miners considered their efforts integral to the war, and union miners demanded action from their leaders while nonunion miners sought their rights through union representation.

More than one-third of West Virginia's nonunion miners worked in Mingo and Logan counties, and when UMWA organizers were ousted from those counties in September of 1919, the first armed march of thousands of angry union miners formed just south of Charleston. The UMWA District 17 President Frank Keeney urged the miners to disband, having learned from West Virginia's Governor John J. Cornwall of his determination to call for federal troops. The aborted march was a prelude to the events of 1920–1921.

Medieval West Virginia

The civil war that erupted in southern West Virginia and the collective insurgency demonstrated by rank-and-file miners also must be understood within

its locale, or “medieval West Virginia,” as Mother Jones called it. Pro-union sentiment ran high in the counties of Mingo, McDowell, and Logan, and miners belonging to West Virginia's UMWA District 17, which covered most of northern and central part of the state, sympathized with the exploitation endured by miners of those southern counties, since District 17 had struggled for unionization and bargaining agreements just a few years earlier during Paint Creek-Cabin Creek Strike of 1912–1913. Then the anti-union coal operators had used blacklists, intimidation, and violence to resist the strike, to break previously signed contracts, and to drive all union sympathizers from their mines in the Kanawha and New River coalfields. Miners throughout West Virginia also remembered the Bull Moose Special, an armored short train, specially chartered by the Kanawha Coal Company and carrying the company's owner, local sheriff, armed guards, as well as a manned Gatling gun mounted to one of the car's roofs, which opened fire on a tent colony of striking miners and their families in February of 1913. Common experience of injustice and familiarity with mining life informed the local UMWA leadership. District 17 President Frank Keeney was a West Virginia native and mineworker who had participated in the strike of 1912–1913, as did organizer Bill Blizzard and the district's secretary-treasurer, Fred Mooney, and all pledged their support to organize the state's southern counties. Ninety percent of Mingo County's miners were quickly organized in the spring and summer of 1920 into 34 locals and District 17 began a strike on July 1.

Bituminous coal mining in southern West Virginia had recently and rapidly developed since the turn of the twentieth century. Coal operators in southern West Virginia paid notoriously low wages to its miners to offset these interior fields' disadvantage relative to the Central Competitive Field in transporting coal. During World War I, tonnage increased significantly as new transportation lines connected the mines with East Coast ports. After the war operators retrenched and formed associations jealously to guard their rights to set pay scales and working time, paid local law officers for extra protection, and attempted to assert total control over their workforces through the system of company towns. Coal operators were employers of miners as well as their landlords and store merchants; companies paid miners in scrip (redeemable only at company stores) and hired private police forces to guard their operations. The mine guards, called thugs by mining families, questioned any visitor to the company town; spied on worker gatherings; and beat, verbally harassed, and even

murdered those sympathetic to union organization. Mine owners hired the Baldwin-Felts detective agency, and its guards assumed the power of the law: Detectives forced miners to sign yellow-dog contracts, maintained blacklists, and evicted families from company housing. By the fall of 1920, operators in Mingo County locked out union workers, and its guards then provided armed escorts for trainloads of arriving strikebreakers. If coal tonnage becomes the measure of the mine owners' success, then the operators had already won the war by December. Operators also waged a legal war by filing suits, gaining court injunctions, and aiding the numerous county and state prosecutions during and after the West Virginia Mine War, which would ultimately bankrupt UMWA District 17.

The Mingo County War

On May 19, 1920, 11 Baldwin-Felts detectives evicted union miners from company houses in the town of Matewan, Mingo County, on the West Virginia-Kentucky border. When questioned by local sheriff Sid Hatfield and Mayor C. C. Testerman, one of the Felts shot Mayor Testerman, and a gunfight erupted between Hatfield, the miners, and the detectives. The result of the Matewan Massacre was the deaths of three miners, the mayor, and seven detectives. For the next 16 months and until the Battle of Blair Mountain in early September of 1921, the violence made national headlines. Reporters from the *Nation*, *Leslie's Weekly*, and most notably, Winthrop D. Lane of the *New York Evening Post* described dynamited mines, hijacked trains, attacked tent colonies, murdered strikers, arrests, and beating in the renamed county of Bloody Mingo.

Sheriff Hatfield, though charged with murder, became a local hero. Most local law enforcement efforts antagonized the peace. Notorious in brutality was Sheriff Don Chafin of Logan County, whose determination to keep the union out was funded by the Logan County Coal Operators Association, enabling him to hire dozens of deputies and train and arm hundreds of the local middle-class, merchants, teachers, lawyers, to help defend mine owners' interests. The press condemned the law in West Virginia and exposed the state's anti-union tactics. The UMWA sponsored hundreds of tent colonies for evicted mining families, and operators flatly refused to recognize union representation; Governor Cornwall declared martial law in November of 1920—enforced by state police, a re-organized state national

guard, and 250 citizens, or special police, supplied with arms by the coal companies.

A little more than 6 months later when the newly elected Governor Ephraim F. Morgan appealed for federal troops in May of 1921, President Harding refused until West Virginia's own resources proved inefficient. June saw renewed violence as a tent colony of 10,000 at Lick Creek was terrorized by state and special police who murdered a striker. In July state police jailed union leaders, closing the UMWA's office in Williamson, and on August 1, as Sheriff Hatfield and friend Ed Chambers climbed the McDowell County courthouse steps, Felts detectives murdered them both. Outraged miners gathered in protest as they had in 1919. Keeney urged them to wait for his call to mobilize, which came on August 20, and for several days miners streamed into Lens Creek, about 10 miles south of Charleston, to form a citizens' army. Their intent was to march south to Logan County, to hang Sheriff Chafin; and then move onto Mingo County, to free jailed miners, overthrow martial law, abolish the mine guard system, and complete the unionization of the southern counties. Thousands of union miners (estimates range from 7,000 to 20,000) from all over West Virginia joined the 60-mile, armed procession. They ignored Mother Jones who begged them to turn back but met with Keeney and U.S. Brigadier General Henry Bandholtz, sent by President Harding after increasingly frantic appeals from Governor Morgan. It was however a peaceful march until they reached the 25-mile ridge of Blair Mountain at the border of both Logan and Mingo counties. The miner's army met in a weeklong battle over 2,000 county defenders, including state police, Sheriff Chafin's local law enforcement with newly deputized citizens, Baldwin-Felts guards, and strikebreakers (who had been ordered to take up arms against the strikers or be fired). The press likened the terrain along 10 miles of the ridge to Belgium and the battles to those of World War I. They searched for the general of the miners army, described the lines of combat, skirmishes, and guerilla tactics, and surveyed the weapons of war that included rifles, machine guns, bombs. On September 1, 2,500 federal troops arrived along with General Billy Mitchell's air squadron, which never (fortunately) dropped its payload. Although some fighting continued until September 4, most miners returned to their homes at President Harding's direction, since their fight was not with the federal government. The largest armed conflict in American labor history was over.

Local grand juries handed down 1,217 indictments against Frank Keeney and 550 others that included murder and treason against the state of West Virginia,

and over the course of several years, these cases were dismissed or dropped. Without a union wage rate, the coal industry expanded to its own detriment. Non-union mines undercut competition, union mines reverted to the open shop, and new production levels contributed to depressed coal prices. The UMWA collapsed in West Virginia: In 1922, when it formally ended the strike, its membership of over 40,000 had dropped by half, and by 1932, counted only several hundred union members.

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See also **Blacklists; Company Towns; Collective Bargaining; Jones, (Mother) Mary Harris; Lewis, John L.; Mining, Coal; Miners for Democracy; National War Labor Board (WWI); Spies, Labor; Strike Wave (1919); Strikebreaking; United Mine Workers of America; World War I; Yellow Dog Contracts**

WEST, DON (1906–1992) Cofounder, Highlander Folk School

Donald (Don) L. West, cofounder—with Myles Horton—of the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee, was born in 1906 to a poor mountain farming family in Devil's Hollow, near Elizay in Gilmer County, Georgia. He was a sharp and gifted poet and writer, a Congregationalist preacher who cultivated and practiced an early strain of liberation theology, and a political and labor radical—sometimes working as an organizer for the Communist

party (CPUSA). Throughout his years as a student, teacher, preacher, writer, and political and labor activist, West celebrated the culture and history of progressive southern highlanders. He attempted in his life to accomplish the task of grafting Marxism-Leninism onto southern religious and cultural traditions.

West's rebellious youthful streak (which had led to two school expulsions) first found direction at Vanderbilt Seminary, where he studied under Alva Taylor. There he obtained degrees in education and religion. It was while at Vanderbilt that West was first introduced to Myles Horton. Horton and West soon became partners in a venture to help create a progressive, cooperative folk school—the Highlander Folk School. The school became a major center of radical and progressive activist training in the South (it was where Rosa Parks later obtained some of her training in nonviolent resistance). Yet as the school began to participate in labor-organizing drives in the South, a rift began to emerge between Horton and West. West, apparently drawing closer to the Communist party and further and further from Horton (due to growing ideological and personal divisions between them), decided to leave the school and chart his own path.

West's admiration of the aggressive organizing strategies of the Communist party led him into its orbit. He joined the party sometime in 1933–1934—though he had been gravitating toward it for some time. Already as a student at Vanderbilt in education and religion, an increasingly radical perspective was evident in his work. His thesis "Knott County, Kentucky: A Study" (1932) was a regional study of culture and class in the South and demonstrated clear socialist sympathies. By the early 1930s, he had already become acquainted with a number of Communist organizers, including Clyde Johnson, a Communist National Student League activist who had come down to Rome, Georgia, to assist in a student strike at West's former school, the Martha Berry School. In 1933, after a harrowing motorcycle ride on his 1932 Indian Chief up to New York City (the cycle ride twice almost killed him), he met with Clarence Hathaway, then editor of the Communist *Daily Worker* and a major party leader and Marxist theoretician. Hathaway quickly recruited West to take over the Angelo Herndon Defense Committee in Atlanta. Herndon was a young black Communist activist in Atlanta who had been arrested—under a pre-Civil War insurrection act—for organizing an inter-racial demonstration in the city for increased municipal relief for the unemployed. (Herndon received a 20-year prison sentence for his crime—but was freed as a result of effective legal action by the party.) But before

West was sent to Atlanta, Hathaway insisted he attend the Communist Party (CP) organizer's school at Camp Nitgedaiget (Yiddish for "no worries") in the Catskill Mountains, near Beacon, New York—one of a handful of proletarian camps operated by the party in New York (along with Camp Unity, Camp Wocolona, and Camp Kinderland). He spent 10 weeks there and met Hosea Hudson, a black organizer in-training while at the camp. The two began a life-long friendship.

West's experience with northern CP condescension toward southerners, and especially Appalachian southerners, at Nitgedaiget foreshadowed his future tensions with the party. West came to feel that though the party had some successes here and there—in Gastonia through its work with the International Labor Defense (ILD) and in several other areas, the main obstacle to party progress in that region lay not in the resistance of the culture or people to communism—not in the South as a conservative region—but with the party itself. Arguing that the southern mountain regions of Appalachia had a long tradition of abolitionism, West argued that the party simply failed to tap that culture of resistance effectively. In his organizing work in the southern Appalachians, in Atlanta, and in Kentucky (he served as general organizer for Kentucky Workers' Alliance—which represented public works employees and the unemployed), West brought with him an acute understanding of the dual legacy of the South: A racist slavocracy that nonetheless produced the earliest abolitionist movement.

For West the South's poor white trash were his people, and it was his mission to bridge their struggles with those of blacks. History, language, and religion were three of his weapons. His poetry and prose, characterized by his use of proletarian regional vernacular and a strong identification with the region's working class, were filled with historical allusions to a progressive past, one filled with struggle against injustice. In pamphlets and articles, he cultivated a regional chauvinism that allowed him to celebrate the heroes of his region at the same time as he confronted the injustices of the South. He considered Appalachia "a freedom loving oasis in a society dominated by the southern slavocracy," and saw himself continuing in the tradition of his grandfather, Old Kim Mulkey, who taught him that "everyone had a right to freedom no matter what color."

As a radical Congregationalist minister, West also clearly understood the transformative medium of religion. He was long-driven toward bridging a Christian and Marxist worldview. In the late 1920s, working his way through Lincoln Memorial University in

Harrogate, Tennessee, West already felt the pull of his future calling as a minister. Inspired in his youth by a local preacher, Larkin Chastain, he turned to a class-conscious religion, one that drew on the image and symbol of Christ as a lowly carpenter. That emphasis would persist throughout his life. He would often explain and condemn war, racism, poverty, and capitalism in biblical terms. In "The Awakening Church," a column he published in the Birmingham *Southern News Almanac* from 1940–1941, he encouraged churches to be more aggressive in applying Christ's teachings to contemporary social and economic problems. He published a newsletter, the *Country Parson*, while in Meansville, Georgia. From 1942–1945, he served as superintendent of the Lula, Georgia, public schools.

West's career in the 1940s through the early 1990s, when he died, tracked a persistent regionalist course, but one influenced by broader historical and international developments. He continued to identify strongly with the Soviet Union and generally followed the Soviet line on political issues. In 1945, West received a Julius Rosenwald Foundation fellowship grant to attend Columbia University in New York (he also used the grant to attend the University of Georgia, and the University of Chicago). He decided not to pursue a formal Ph.D. program but to undertake independent study. Increasingly in those years, West, along with Rev. Fred E. Maxey from Leeds, Alabama, became more and more involved with fellow southern radical Claude Williams's Institute of Applied Religion. In 1946, he took a job as an assistant professor of literature and creative writing in the Department of Human Relations at Oglethorpe University (Atlanta) and published his poetry anthology, *Clods of Southern Earth* (1946). By this time he had achieved a national recognition as a people's poet. However West's growing involvement with left-wing politics led to his firing from Oglethorpe by reluctant University President Phillip Weldner, who was under pressure by the school's trustees. Preceding the 1948 national election, West had become more and more engaged in the Henry Wallace campaign and had also given his active support to the local defense of Rosa Lee Ingram. The Ingram case involved a white man who, while attempting to rape a black woman in her home, was shot and killed by her sons, aged 7 and 11. The all-white jury deliberated for only 30 minutes before finding the black family guilty and sentencing them all to death. The sentence was later reduced to life in prison after public protest. They were pardoned and released by President Jimmy Carter three decades later.

After the Wallace campaign, West kept a relatively low profile in Georgia but surfaced again in Dalton in support of local Chenille mill workers in 1955. There his work with a local church, the Church of God of the Union Assembly, and his publication of the *Southerner: A Voice of the People*, continued his earlier emphasis on religion as a class-conscious instrument of economic and social justice. He spent a great deal of time by himself in the 1950s, traveling occasionally to New York and continuing to write. His poetry reflected the repression and restricted quality of life imposed on Communists during the McCarthy era, with themes of love, separation, anxiety, and loneliness in evidence throughout (see *the Road Is Rocky*, 1951, for example). His daughters, Ann and Hedy West attended Berea College and Western Carolina College. West's wife, Connie, accepted a position in Baltimore teaching art in an elementary school and enrolled in an MA program at the Maryland Institute of Art, and in 1960, she was appointed art supervisor of Baltimore County. Though subpoenaed before various House and Senate investigative committees, West escaped the worst of the McCarthy and post-McCarthy era. In 1960, he obtained a job at the University of Maryland in College Park supervising student teachers and in 1962, served as the faculty adviser to the newly established Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) chapter on campus. That was a year before he retired to return to his beloved mountains, this time to Pipestem, West Virginia, where he had purchased 400 acres.

West came back to his dream of founding a folk-life school inspired by the Grundtvigian philosophy he had studied in Denmark at the International People's College. In 1964, he and Connie founded the Appalachian South Folklife Center in Pipestem, West Virginia, dedicated to preserving and disseminating Appalachian mountain culture and folkways. They offered various practical courses to local residents, established the Mountain Freedom Press, set up a camp for Appalachian children (which also sponsored visits by northern urban kids), initiated several regional, modest economic-development projects, and put on annual music festivals that—in their heyday—drew more than 20,000 people from around the nation. The center, which exists today, created a food co-op and a clothing exchange, and sponsored group trips abroad by local Appalachian children. Don and Connie West finally made their dream in the region they both held sacred.

West died in Charleston, West Virginia, on September 29, 1992, 2 years after his wife passed away.

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See also **Highlander Folk School/Highlander Research and Education Center**

WESTERN FEDERATION OF MINERS/ INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MINE, MILL, AND SMELTER WORKERS

The Western Federation of Miners

Few U.S. unions can match the militant and discordant history of the Western Federation of Miners (WFM). Formed by hard-rock metal miners in the 1890s, the WFM represented an authentic working-class response to the rise of industrial capitalism in the American West. Split by ideological dissension and ethnic divisions, the WFM shifted between radical socialism and business unionism during its volatile two-decade existence. Despite its internecine battles, the WFM's romantic legacy of militant unionism lingered long in the memories of western miners, smelter workers, and labor activists.

The WFM's roots lay in the development of lead and open-pit nonferrous metal mining and smelting in the Rocky Mountain West during the second-half of the nineteenth century. Miners' mutual aid associations and early unions first emerged in the 1860s, when highly capitalized enterprises and company towns, often controlled by absentee investors, replaced the mining camps and smaller placer operations that first extracted the region's gold and silver deposits. Local miners' unions enjoyed some success in dictating wages and working conditions around the region's mines and mills until the 1880s, when they faced stiff opposition from mine owners and their political allies. Clashes between miners and mine owners from the 1890s to the 1910s frequently ended up in armed warfare.

The WFM was first conceived in 1892 in the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, mining district during a violent strike that united lead and silver miners and mill workers against their employers, organized as the Coeur



Man standing on back of coal car in tunnel. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-77538].

d'Alene Mine Owners' Association. Armed strikers shut down local milling operations to protest a wage reduction and the wretched living conditions in company-owned housing. In response the Mine Owners' Association imported strikebreakers, company spies, and eventually state and federal troops, who arrested the strikers and confined them to make-shift bullpens, which quickly became the symbol of class warfare in the West. The defeat convinced the Coeur d'Alene strikers that they needed to extend unionization throughout the West to combat the mine owners' substantial economic power and political influence.

The WFM was officially founded in 1893 when over 40 delegates from various Rocky Mountain states met in Butte, Montana, home of one of the West's strongest and most solvent miners' unions. Determined to establish a regional federation of local unions, the delegates' initial goal was the period's pure-and-simple business unionism, including union recognition, a closed shop, a fair wage, arbitration of industrial disputes, and improved mine safety laws. With only a quarter of the West's 30,000 miners belonging to unions, the WFM delegates also provided for the appointment of full-time organizers. With the exception of the Cripple Creek, Colorado, mining district, which became a WFM stronghold, the WFM floundered until 1896, when Edward Boyce, an Irish-born union officer from Coeur d'Alene, was named the union's president.

The WFM had affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1896, but under Boyce's leadership, bolted from the federation a year later, frustrated with the AFL's political conservatism and craft unionism. The hard-rock mining industry contained a heterogeneous mixture of skilled miners, craftsmen, semiskilled operatives, and unskilled laborers. This collection of workers constituted a transient and diverse labor pool, consisting of an Anglo-Irish elite, new immigrants from southern and Eastern Europe, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, and Asian immigrants. Not surprisingly mine owners manipulated ethnic and skill divisions to prevent successful unionization. In response WFM leaders embraced industrial unionism—one union for all workers in the industry—to promote class solidarity among western miners and metal processors.

After leaving the AFL, WFM leaders backed several efforts to form a rival labor federation. In 1898, the WFM established the Western Labor Union, and when this organization faltered in 1902, they founded the more expansive American Labor Union. By this time the WFM had aligned with the Socialist party of America, moved its headquarters to Denver, Colorado, and appointed the Socialist William "Big Bill" Haywood as its secretary-treasurer. A year later Charles H. Moyer, a South Dakota miner, replaced Boyce as the union's president, marking the start of the WFM's most turbulent period. Beginning in 1902,

WFM unions in Colorado engaged in several violent and disastrous strikes that left the union in disarray by 1904. The Colorado mine wars, which demonstrated the mine owners' control of state political and police power, convinced the WFM's leadership of the pressing need for socialism and industrial unionism on a national scale.

The WFM's efforts at an anticapitalist federation of industrial unions culminated in 1905, when it spearheaded the formation of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Although the decision to align with the IWW split the WFM between anticapitalist radicals and trade union moderates, the WFM initially prospered from its association with the IWW and reached its organizational peak in 1907 with 40,000 members in nearly 200 union locals. That summer Moyer and Haywood were involved in a sensational trial after being forcibly deported from Colorado and made to stand trial for the assassination of former Idaho governor, Frank Steunenberg, a foe of miners' unions who had ordered troops into the Coeur d'Alene district during the mine wars of the 1890s. Represented by famed criminal attorney Clarence Darrow, Moyer and Haywood were eventually acquitted of the murder, but the two soon parted ways, with radical Haywood remaining with the IWW and the more cautious Moyer returning to the WFM, determined to steer it back toward the labor movement's mainstream.

In 1908, the WFM officially separated from the IWW as a first step toward reconciliation with the AFL, which it rejoined in 1911. The AFL in turn increased the WFM's jurisdiction to include all North American workers who labored in the nonferrous metals industry. At its annual convention in 1916, the WFM was renamed the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (IUMMSW, or more commonly Mine-Mill), ostensibly to recognize the union's expanded geographical scope but also to distance the union from its radical WFM past.

International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers

The WFM's name change did little to reverse the decline of unionism in the western metal-mining industry that began in the mid-1910s and persisted through the early 1930s. Split by competition with the IWW and chronic ethnic divisions, Mine-Mill easily fell victim to mine owners' open-shop movement, with the disintegration of the Butte Miners'

Union representing its most important casualty. When long-time president Charles Moyer was forced to resign in 1926, Mine-Mill was in organizational disarray; conventions were sparsely attended, and few union officers held full-time positions. The union limped through the first few years of the Great Depression when the nonferrous metals industry experienced a severe economic collapse and high unemployment levels prevailed. In 1933, Mine-Mill counted just 1,500 dues-paying members and a mere six active union locals.

Mine-Mill began its revival in the mid-1930s aided at the national level by New Deal labor legislation. In June 1933, inspired by the National Industrial Recovery Act's Section 7(a), delegates from Mine-Mill's remaining active unions promised an aggressive drive to take advantage of spontaneous organization among miners and smelter workers in the Butte-Anaconda district and throughout the West. By 1935, when Mine-Mill joined the insurgent Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO, later renamed the Congress of Industrial Organizations), the union's membership had increased to 26,000 members in 132 union locals.

Like other CIO unions, Mine-Mill welcomed the passage of the 1935 National Labor Relations (or Wagner) Act that established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to monitor union elections and restrict employers' unfair labor practices. Despite the passage of the Wagner Act, Mine-Mill encountered repeated jurisdictional disputes with AFL craft unions and never fully organized skilled workers in the nonferrous metals industry. In 1938, for the second time in its history, Mine-Mill left the AFL when the federation expelled the eight original CIO unions. Although hardly a dominant union in the CIO, claiming just 3% of its total membership, Mine-Mill would champion the CIO's brand of industrial unionism and liberal politics in the mountain West.

In 1936, 28-year-old Reid Robinson was elected Mine-Mill's president, signaling a new era for the union, one that would witness the resurfacing of the radical-moderate split similar to the one that had divided the WFM. The son of a Butte Mine-Mill union officer, Robinson had worked briefly in the copper mines before entering local union office in the early 1930s. Initially part of a conservative coalition, Robinson gradually advanced a left-wing Popular Front agenda that alienated his former supporters. Determined to maintain his independence from anti-Communist moderates on the union's ruling executive board, Robinson duplicated the CIO tactic of using handpicked Communist and other left-wingers on his office and organizational staff.

He also circumvented the board by establishing his own successful organizing projects at Connecticut brass refineries, southeastern iron ore mines, and the copper, gold, and silver mining and smelting districts in the western United States and Canada.

As Robinson increased the scope of his power, Mine-Mill officers and rank-and-file members red-baited Robinson and charged that the Communist party had taken control of the union, threatening the union's long tradition of rank-and-file democracy and local autonomy. Robinson's supporters responded that the metal industry's oligopolistic structure and New Deal labor relations regime necessitated a more centralized union bureaucracy. In retrospect Robinson (whose membership in the Communist party remains uncertain) posted several major achievements during his tenure. Mine-Mill not only retained its democratic procedures, including rank-and-file election of officers and ratification of contracts, but union membership increased from 20,000 to over 90,000. Not only did Mine-Mill organize much of the western metal mining industry during Robinson's presidency, but the union mended its chronic ethnic divisions, while also extending its reach into previously unorganized regions and industries.

During the first-half of the 1940s, the return of stability to the notoriously volatile metals industry along with the military draft shifted market forces in Mine-Mill's direction. By the end of World War II, Mine Mill had organized many of the 100,000 workers at the nation's top metal producers—Anaconda, American Smelting and Refining, American Metals, Phelps Dodge, and Kennecott. During its wartime organizing drive, Mine-Mill benefited from the United States Supreme Court's 1941 *Phelps Dodge* decision, which barred mine owners from firing union members. The *Phelps Dodge* decision not only helped Mine-Mill gain union recognition from the major metal producers in the American southwest, but aided the union's successful drive to organize the region's Mexican-American workers.

After World War II, Mine-Mill confronted the combined force of government repression, internal dissension, employer opposition, and repeated raids by other CIO and AFL unions. Robinson resigned from the union in 1947 amid charges that he solicited a loan from a brass company executive and was replaced by Mine-Mill's secretary-treasurer Maurice Travis, a Communist party member whom Robinson had first hired in 1944. Under pressure from anti-Communist moderates, Travis resigned the presidency after 1 year and returned to his post as secretary-treasurer. He was replaced by John Clark, a union officer from Great Falls, Montana.

Clark's critics claimed he was a front man for Travis and by association, the Communist party, but Clark held the union together during the Cold War era, when the federal government made Mine-Mill a special target. The union first came under government scrutiny when Mine-Mill's leadership refused to sign Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavits until 1949, when Travis publicly resigned his Communist party membership and only because Mine-Mill risked losing NLRB certification. In 1956, the U.S. Justice Department indicted 14 Mine-Mill leaders on charges they had falsified their Taft-Hartley affidavits, a case that went through several trials and numerous appeals before it was dismissed by federal courts in the mid-1960s. The federal government's Subversive Activities Control Board branded Mine-Mill a Communist-infiltrated organization in 1962 and started proceedings to strip the union of its right to represent employees in the metals industry.

By this time Mine-Mill, which officially opposed the Truman administration's Cold War containment policy, faced bitter opposition from the labor movement's anti-Communist majority. In 1950, the CIO expelled Mine-Mill, as part of the federation's purge of 11 left-led red unions. In the wake of the expulsion, several CIO and AFL unions began raiding individual Mine-Mill local unions by urging dissidents to secede from the union and calling for repeated NLRB representation elections. The raiding increased after 1955, when the newly merged AFL-CIO gave the powerful United Steel Workers of America (USWA) exclusive jurisdiction over the nonferrous metals industry. The frequent raids and red-baiting caused Mine-Mill to lose many eastern unions, including those in the Connecticut brass refineries and Alabama iron mines, along with several important unions in its Rocky Mountain stronghold, most notably at Bunker Hill, Idaho, in 1960 and Anaconda, Montana, in 1962.

Although isolated from the labor movement's mainstream, and almost bankrupt from fighting the government in court and fending off rank-and-file secession movements, Mine-Mill remarkably managed to survive throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. Despite numerous controversies most rank-and-file members in the West remained loyal to the union. Many members recalled fondly the WFM's militant past and dismissed Cold War red-baiting as a routine anti-union tactic. Other members stood by Mine-Mill because of its ability to win contract improvements, contrary to the USWA's charges that mine owners preferred to deal with a weakened Mine-Mill rather than a more stable AFL-CIO union. Mexican-American members embraced Mine-Mill as a civil rights organization that helped them challenge the discrimination they routinely

faced on the job and in the company towns located in southwestern United States.

The plight of Mine-Mill's Mexican-American members gained national attention through the 1954 film, *Salt of the Earth*, produced by members of the Hollywood blacklist who dramatized a 15-month strike by Mine-Mill zinc miners in Grant County, New Mexico. Although the film garnered favorable reviews, it suffered from opposition from the film industry unions, the Catholic clergy, and conservative citizens' groups. Nevertheless it was a unique Cold War-era film that compared the ethnic and class oppression suffered by Mexican-American workers to the gender oppression suffered by their wives, who served picket duty during the strike to circumvent a court injunction. Although few women worked in the metal-mining industry, with the exception of a brief period during World War II, members' wives exerted influence on Mine-Mill policy during the secessionist battles of the 1950s and 1960s, through their membership in the union's women's auxiliary.

The combined cost of contesting AFL-CIO raiding, government repression, and internal dissension spelled Mine-Mill's eventual demise. In the mid-1960s, a weakened Mine-Mill claimed just 26,415 members in 63 union locals, down from its peak of 114,000 members in 1948. Throughout the postwar era, Mine-Mill's leadership had looked for a possible merger with several other unions, but none of these efforts panned out until Albert Skinner replaced Clark as the union's president in 1963. Skinner, who acknowledged that western miners and smelters needed a united front against the major copper companies to achieve industrywide pattern bargaining, guided Mine-Mill to its 1967 merger with the USWA, dissolving the last remaining link to the WFM and its legacy of militant unionism in the mining West.

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See also **Bisbee Deportation/Copper Strike (1917); Communist Party; Company Towns; Congress of Industrial Organizations; Film; Haywood, William D.; Industrial Workers of the World, 1950s–1960s; Phelps Dodge Copper Strike (1983–1984); Taft-Hartley Act**

WHEATLAND STRIKE/RIOT (1913)

The Wheatland strike grew out of several factors relating to the problem of farm labor in California and other regions of the American West. Farmers needed agricultural labor for harvesting, which could not be secured solely by using local seasonal wageworkers and family members. Therefore farmers needed to attract workers to their farms to work on a temporary basis. California farmers had been making use of seasonal and migrant agricultural labor for years before 1913. However the supply and demand of migrant workers grew steadily after the turn of the

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century. Farmers, who had to deal both with fixed operating costs and fluctuating market prices for their crop, treated labor as a variable cost.

Ralph Durst was co-owner and manager of a large farm and ranch that produced a series of crops, including hops, in Wheatland, California. In 1913, the price of hops fell. For Durst to continue making a profit, he chose to cut harvest labor costs. For the August harvest, he advertised in broadsides throughout the region and in a number of newspapers in California, Oregon, and Nevada for workers to journey to his farm to pick hops. Twenty-eight hundred men, women, and children answered his call. These workers represented the essential diversity of the California farm labor workforce. Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Hawaiians, Syrians, Japanese, Indians, Poles, Greeks, Italians, and Lithuanians made up the largest contingents of foreign-born workers; in all the workers spoke 27 different languages. The native-born workers included migrant, white, male workers, resident seasonal day laborers, and a number of local families who regularly participated in the harvest season in the valley.

When the workers arrived, they quickly discovered poor living and working conditions at the labor camp. They had to rent a campsite and buy food at the on-site grocery store. The toilet facilities and drinking water supply were inadequate. In his advertisements, Durst promised that the pickers would receive the going rate of \$1 for 100 pounds of picked hops. But this was deceptive. He required excessively cleaned hops before weighing and had no hop pickers present on the inspection crew for harvested hops. He also withheld 10 cents per 100 pounds of picked hops. Pickers would receive this withheld pay at the end of the harvest. Workers ended up making less than \$1.50 a day. Despite temperatures reaching over 110 degrees, workers did not have access to water in the fields. Durst did provide a powdered lemonade drink at a cost of 5 cents a glass.

The harvest commenced on July 29, and by August 1, labor discontent over the poor living and working conditions permeated the entire camp. Working among the hop pickers were current and former members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), also known as Wobblies. With the participation of the vast majority of the workers, the Wobblies established a committee out of several mass meetings. The elected members included former Wobbly Richard "Blackie" Ford as chief spokesman for the hop pickers and current Wobbly Herman Suhr as the secretary of the committee. The committee approached Durst with a list of worker demands. These demands included a flat rate of \$1.25 per 100 pounds of picked hops, drinking water in the

fields, inspection of picked hops by the pickers themselves, and improvement of camp toilets generally among other demands.

Durst would only agree to meet some of the demands. The workers' committee warned Durst that the hop pickers would strike if all of their demands were not fully met. Durst broke off the negotiations and ordered the strike committee to get their pay and leave the ranch. When Ford and the committee refused, Durst asked deputy sheriff Henry Daken to arrest Ford. Workers intervened on behalf of Ford when Daken could not produce a warrant. Later that day the workers organized a mass meeting in which Ford and Suhr urged the workers to strike in order to force Durst to address their grievances. In order to persuade as many as possible to join in the strike, speakers in German, Greek, Italian, Arabic, and Spanish addressed the crowd. With a show of hands the vast majority of hop pickers favored a strike.

Durst summoned Edward Manwell, the district attorney, and Marysville's sheriff, George Voss, who brought along a number of deputies, to arrest Ford and to break up the workers' gathering. When the party approached Ford, the workers again intervened on his behalf. A member of the posse fired a shot into the air to disperse the crowd. This had the opposite effect. Manwell, a deputy, and two hop pickers died in the ensuing violence and gunfire. Many in the crowd suffered bullet wounds from the 20 or so rounds fired during the melee. The crowd was unarmed, though by most accounts, the deaths of Manwell and the deputy resulted from members of the posse having their guns taken away and used against them.

After this initial outbreak of violence, the hop workers immediately left the ranch in all directions. Fearing more worker disturbances, Governor Hiram Johnson sent national guard units to the area. Eventually law enforcement officials arrested Ford and Suhr for murder. Two organizations emerged to help with the workers' defense, the IWW's Wheatland Hop Picker's Defense League and a coalition group, the International Workers' Defense League. Their primary purpose focused on generating public support for the men on trial and raising funds for their defense. However contributing to an anti-IWW atmosphere surrounding the trial, California's newspapers demonized the defendants and associated in the public's mind Wobblies with violence. Never in the course of the trial could the prosecutors demonstrate that Ford and Suhr either fired a weapon or encouraged others to use violence. Yet the conspiracy case against the defendants led to a second-degree murder conviction. Ford and Suhr received life sentences but were eventually released in the late 1920s.

Following the Wheatland strike and the convictions of Ford and Suhr, the IWW inaugurated a systematic effort to organize the state's farmworkers. Also in response to Wheatland, progressives in state government began to address the issues that led to the strike with the California Commission of Immigration and Housing (CCIH). Simon J. Lubin, Carleton Parker, and other officials of the CCIH instituted sanitation inspections of farm-labor camps throughout the state. These early efforts by both organized labor and state intervention on behalf of farmworkers began a long and continuing struggle to address the needs of California's agricultural laborers.

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WOMEN'S AUXILIARIES

While little is known about the activities of labor union auxiliaries in the United States, many assume that the violent clashes between the working-class wives of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) Women's Emergency Brigade and Ford's hired thugs during the 1936 Flint sit-down strike was the birth of the women's auxiliary movement. In fact the genesis of the movement actually dates back to the 1890s. As the influence and power of the Knights of Labor waned, working-class women found themselves isolated from the labor movement. Unlike the

inclusive mission of the knights, the craft-driven American Federation of Labor (AFL) focused little energy on organizing female workers. Nor did the AFL's leadership struggle with issues of gender equity. And while many working-class women during the late nineteenth century engaged in wage labor outside the home, it was their activities as wives, mothers, and daughters, not their contributions as wage earners, that defined their identity.

Yet interestingly it was working-class women's role within the home as consumers, or managers of their husbands' income, that motivated them to organize labor union auxiliaries. By organizing auxiliaries, women saw an opportunity to engage in the economic marketplace through the labor movement. While the unions representing their fathers and husbands were fighting for the 8-hour day and a family-wage, working-class women used auxiliaries to emphasize further the necessity of increased wages in order to achieve an American standard of living. While inherent in their argument was an embracing of the ideal of a male breadwinner, working-class women at times embraced militant rhetoric and action to achieve these goals. Furthermore while there is a dearth of published material on women's auxiliaries in the United States, there exists a tension within the historiography about the nature of their militancy as labor activists and women.

Some of the earliest auxiliaries were formed by the wives of workers in such unions as the International Association of Machinists (IAM), the Brotherhood of Railroad Brakemen (the union later changed the name to Trainmen), and the International Typographical Union. As early as 1888, Sophia J. Granger, the wife of the union's treasurer, led 25 wives, sisters, and mothers of the Brotherhood of Railroad Brakemen in Fort Gratiot, Michigan, to petition the brotherhood's convention to form a Ladies' Auxiliary. They succeeded and on January 23, 1889, the Grand Lodge of Ladies' Auxiliary to the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen was formed. Similarly in 1902, the Women's International Auxiliary to the International Typographical Union was organized in Cincinnati, Ohio, at the Golden Jubilee Convention of the International Typographical Union.

One early account of agitation among working-class wives took place in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Woodworkers affiliated with the AFL were striking for wage increases and union recognition when the company attempted to bring in replacement workers. On June 23, 1898, a clash broke out between the strikers and their wives and the nonunion workers who showed up at the factory to work. According to the *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, the wives were among the most disorderly. With pouches filled with eggs, sand, and

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pepper in one hand and clubs in the other, the women chased the nonunion workers away from the mill. The plant remained closed until strikebreakers were brought in under policy protection. Several days after the plant re-opened using nonunion labor, nine women were arrested and jailed for attempting to keep the strikebreakers from entering the mill. The next morning, 40 women, all wives of striking workers, filled the mayor's office and demanded the release of the women and intervention in the labor dispute. According to the wives their husbands' wages were too low to live on without going into debt to feed their families. It was this issue—the standard of living—that drove the organization of the first auxiliaries and would continue to fuel their organization into the 1970s.

In other cases auxiliaries were born out of ancillary organizations. For example the Ladies Auxiliary to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) grew out of Women's Economic Councils (WECs). Organized by A. Philip Randolph in the mid-1920s, the WECs functioned to help wives encourage their husbands to join the BSCP. In 1938, however, the councils were transformed into full-fledged auxiliaries. No longer simply a cheering squad on the sidelines of the labor movement, the Ladies' Auxiliaries acted as "soldiers in aprons" bringing together consumer issues and labor issues. As with so many auxiliaries, the auxiliary membership believed that the union wife controlled her own sphere of domestic influence over the labor movement. Similarly in 1936, the AFL's Union Label Trades' Department formed the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries League (AFWAL). Rather than focusing only on promoting the consumption of union made goods, AFWAL advocated the organization and centralization of women's auxiliaries throughout the AFL. Like the Ladies' Auxiliary to the BSCP, AFWAL encouraged union wives to use their influence politically as well as economically.

It is not a coincidence that one of the most well-known moments in auxiliary history—the attack of hired thugs on the UAW Women's Brigade during the Flint sit-down strike in 1937—overlaps with the formation of AFWAL or the founding of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the BSCP. The 1930s witnessed an explosion of auxiliary activity to accompany the fast and furious growth of the labor movement. While the AFL auxiliaries had been active for close to four decades in some cases, a new era of auxiliaries flourished as a result of industrial organizing through the CIO. The wives of UAW workers were encouraged by Walter Reuther to organize auxiliaries to assist in building union density in the auto industry by quelling anxiety among the wives of newly organized

workers. The confrontation between Ford's hired thugs and the auxiliary women on May 26, 1937, was just the beginning for the UAW Women's Auxiliaries. And like the AFL auxiliaries, the CIO auxiliaries organized a national coalition called the Congress of Women's Auxiliaries (CWA).

Across the country working-class housewives formed auxiliaries. For the most part auxiliary membership comprised women who did not identify as wage earners. It is difficult to discern what percentage of auxiliary members did not work outside of the home. However it is clear that many auxiliaries prohibited membership of women who were also members of the union to which the auxiliary was affiliated. For example the UAW prohibited participation of female UAW members in the auxiliaries. Meanwhile the BSCP did not discourage the participation of female union members from joining the Ladies' Auxiliary. In fact female participation in the Ladies' Auxiliary seemed to be encouraged by the male leadership of the BSCP. There was one significant exception to this division between wage-earning women and auxiliary women, the entry of the United States into World War II. During the early 1940s, auxiliary members heeded the call by the federal government and industry to join the ranks of wage earners. Among UAW auxiliary members, many women saw this as an opportunity to spread the gospel of unionization among the working class. For instance in 1943, Julia Katz, the CWA National Director, took a job as a burner in a Baltimore shipyard. According to a letter she sent to the CWA-affiliated auxiliaries, it appears that Katz joined the workforce as a patriotic gesture as well as an opportunity to build the labor movement. In her letter Katz wrote that she was working with women from across the country who have migrated temporarily to Baltimore for work. Katz expressed total joy in learning her trade, but the opportunity to build the labor movement was the dominant theme in the letter. The female workers' husbands "are members of the union and they will be 'union-men' too! At least I will try and make them so...I am persuaded that these very 35 women cannot achieve their needs without the organization of their mothers and mother-in-law and the wives and mother of all of their co-workers into auxiliaries . . . There is one thing about which I am certain; that is the fact that the auxiliary is a training-school for unionism."

By the 1940s, both the AFL and CIO affiliated auxiliaries reached their heyday. In fact almost as many women belonged to labor auxiliaries as to labor unions during this time. Throughout the 1940s and into the 1950s, union auxiliaries participated in a range of activities, including legislative campaigns.

Working-class housewives mobilized their membership in legislative battles to fight the high cost of living, often organizing in concert with other working and middle-class organizations to keep the Office of Price Administration active. While many auxiliaries sought equal pay and seniority rights for female workers within their unions, within the legislative context, the auxiliary leadership within the AFL and CIO clearly objected to the passage of the National Women's party Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

The ERA was one of the most controversial issues between working- and middle-class women's groups. Joining forces with such groups as the American Association of University Women, the National Council of Jewish Women, and the National Trade Union League, the auxiliary leadership viewed the ERA as a threat to the protective labor legislation that had been gained during the Progressive Era. By erasing the inherent differences between men and women, many auxiliaries believed the ERA weakened women's role in the workplace. In the February 2, 1944, issue of the *CIO News*, Eleanor Fowler, the secretary-treasurer of the CIO Women's Auxiliaries, attacked the National Women's party writing, "The women's rights line [is] slick and dangerous . . . They [the NWP] don't bother to say that equality means to them elimination of minimum wage and maximum hours laws for women where men don't have the same protection. And that the equal rights amendment would immediately toss into the waste basket all the protective legislation for women which labor has struggled to achieve." In addition to the battles to save the Office of Price Administration (OPA) and defeat the ERA, auxiliaries also sought support among their membership for other key labor legislation.

Aside from their legislative activity, the CIO and AFL auxiliaries had little in common programmatically. For example in addition to legislative activity, AFL auxiliary members emphasized the importance of buying union-made products. A significant portion of their publications were dedicated to urging women to purchase union-made goods for the home as well as encouraging affiliated auxiliaries to compile lists of union-made goods. For example in a 1945 pamphlet entitled "A Heart-to-Heart Talk with Consumers," Mrs. Herman H. Lowe, president of the AFWAL, wrote, "Because about 90 cents out of every union-earned dollar is spent by the women members of the family, we are carrying on a continual campaign, through the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor, urging women members of labor unionists' families to buy Union Label goods and to use Union services." This emphasis was never far from the programmatic work of AFL auxiliaries, since the national organization was tied

through organizational structure and leadership to the AFL's Union Label Trades' Department. In fact such historians as Dorothy Sue Cobble have argued that the AFL auxiliaries resisted expanding their mission beyond union label campaigns and community service, which has placed them in a historically more conservative framework than their counterparts in the CIO auxiliaries.

In contrast the CIO auxiliaries took up issues of gender and racial equality throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Unlike the AFL publications, the women's auxiliaries' column in the *CIO News* as well as individual auxiliary publications concentrated on a variety of social and economic issues affecting both union and nonunion families. Some of the reoccurring CIO auxiliary campaigns included the creation of childcare centers for working mothers, establishment of school lunch programs in public schools, and the ongoing struggles for racial equality through the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC). In fact the issue of purchasing union goods was an anomaly in the pages of CIO auxiliary publications.

In 1956, the sharp differences between the AFL and CIO auxiliaries dulled once the AFL and CIO merged to form a unified labor federation. Soon after the merger in 1957, the AFWAL and the CWA followed suit and formed the AFL-CIO National Auxiliaries. The *AFL-CIO Auxiliaries Reporter*, the new auxiliary publication, portrayed the merger as a new phase in the auxiliary movement: "This historic convention marks the beginning of a new, unified Auxiliaries Organization, the AFL-CIO Auxiliaries. It is an organization that is dedicated to and bound by the all-inclusive program of its parent body, the AFL-CIO. It embraces a program of Education; of Community Services; of Promoting the Union Label and Union-Made products; of Political Education and Activity; of Legislative Activity; and of Promoting the Good and Welfare of the Trade Union Movement." And for a while this new auxiliary federation did rejuvenate the work of the auxiliaries. The integration of the two auxiliary agendas brought much needed attention to political mobilization during the late 1950s and early 1960s. As the auxiliaries reorganized, many added political-action committees to their structure and urged their membership to increase their volunteer time to certain legislative campaigns and getting-out-the-vote efforts.

At the time of the merger, the CWA counted 12,000 members and the AFWAL claimed to have 15,000. It is important to note however that not all union auxiliaries, such as the Women's International Auxiliary to the International Typographical Union (WIA-ITU) and the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), were members

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of the national federations. In fact the AFWAL estimated that close to a million women belonged to AFL auxiliaries that had not yet affiliated with the federation. After the merger the AFL-CIO National Auxiliaries organized a membership campaign urging unaffiliated union auxiliaries to join. Many unions, including the WIA-ITU and the Ladies' Auxiliaries to the BSCP, agreed to join the national federation.

As the civil rights and women's movements continued to gain prominence, the mission and appeal of women's auxiliaries grew increasingly outdated. Not surprisingly by the mid-1960s, auxiliary membership and activity waned. The programmatic work of auxiliaries reverted back to a more community service-based focus. In some cases the auxiliaries discontinued, while other unions rewrote the membership rules to include the families of union members, thereby opening up membership to men and children for the first time. For example in the United Transportation Union (formerly the Brotherhood of Railroad Brakemen), the word ladies was eliminated from the name to reflect the changing membership. Currently the auxiliary has approximately 6,000 members in the United States and Canada that focus on such community-service efforts as fundraising for cancer research and seeing-eye guide dogs. While the mission of the remaining union auxiliaries is no longer directly tied to directly building the labor movement, the record remains clear that auxiliaries played a central role in helping to establish the American labor movement.

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See also **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters**

WOMEN'S BUREAU

Officially established within the Department of Labor by the U.S. Congress in 1920, the framework for the Women's Bureau emerged during World War I with the creation of the Women in Industry Service by Woodrow Wilson in 1918. During the war the Women in Industry Service devised wartime labor standards for workingwomen. In 1920, the newly created bureau's mandate proposed to investigate and improve the conditions of female workers. Although the bureau does not initiate legislation or possess any enforcement capabilities, it is the only federal agency that represents the needs of wage-earning women in the public-policy process.

Founded on the heels of the progressive movement, female reformers seeking to create a government agency to protect workingwomen through protective legislation influenced the bureau's inception. Mary Anderson, a Swedish immigrant boot maker who became president of the Stitchers' Local 94 and an organizer for the Women's Trade Union League led the bureau until 1944. Under Anderson's direction the coalition of women's groups that had advocated for the agency remained closely allied with it for decades. These groups included the League of Women Voters, the National Consumers' League, and the Women's Trade Union League. In its early years Anderson and her colleagues were forced to defend themselves from Red Scare accusations of socialist sympathies. A more enduring point of dissention revolved around the question of strategy that should be used to obtain women's rights. A minority of female activists led by the National Women's party believed that passage of an Equal Rights Amendment at the federal level would be in the best interests of all American women. Anderson and her associates however felt that this type of blanket amendment would in effect negate the existing state-based protective legislation and strike a harsh blow for workingwomen. Equality for women, they believed, could be achieved only by furthering protective legislation.

Some of the agency's most important work centers around the investigative reports that it publishes. The bureau has investigated multiple topics of concern to women, including conditions facing black women in industry, older women as office workers, and availability of childcare. Much of the bureau's work has focused on the wages, hours, and employment conditions for female workers. With the possible exception of the New Deal years, the Women's Bureau has suffered from a perpetual lack of funding.

The Women's Bureau and its leaders faced criticism as well. In 1924, the *Dearborn Independent* accused Anderson of being a Communist tool. That

same year, Lucia Maxwell, a librarian in the Chemical Warfare Section of the War Department, created the so-called Spider Web chart, which listed the Women's Bureau and other women's organizations, including the Women's Trade Union League, as members of a vast conspiracy out to destroy the United States.

In 1936, Anderson's attempt to promote a charter of women's rights failed due to the division of various women's groups over protective legislation for women and the Equal Rights Amendment. The bureau spent much of the 1930s chronicling the low wages and unemployment of women during the Great Depression. Under Anderson's tenure, the agency successfully lobbied for women's inclusion in the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, which for the first time in U.S. history, set national standards for minimum wages and maximum hours for all workers. During World War II, working closely with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the bureau identified the need for advanced skill training and more job opportunities for female wartime workers—80% of whom stated in 1944 that they wanted to retain their jobs once the war ended. It also conducted studies that revealed that the 100,000 children enrolled in federal day-care centers constituted only 10% of the children who needed such care.

Frieda Miller took charge of the Women's Bureau after Anderson retired in 1944. Although Miller empathized with trade union women, she shifted the bureau's emphasis from women in industry to women in agricultural and domestic work who remained excluded from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. In the wake of the New Deal, the bureau's support from a coalition of women's organizations began to slip away. One of its staunchest advocates, the Women's Trade Union League disbanded in 1950, and the influence of the National Consumers' League declined considerably. Eisenhower's appointee, Alice Leopold, took over in 1953 and redirected the bureau's efforts toward calculating and deciding the nation's most effective use of women's power. No longer a resource of advocacy for trade union women, Leopold cast the bureau as a bureaucratic data-collection agency that encouraged a partnership with business.

Esther Peterson who took the helm under Kennedy and her 1964 successor, economist Mary Dublin Keyserling, both shared an allegiance to labor and revived the bureau's reform interests and government regulatory participation on behalf of workingwomen. Peterson took the lead in convincing the government to address women's economic difficulties by initiating the creation of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. The Women's Bureau and its supporters, many of them members of the presidential commission, were instrumental in the Passage of

the Equal Pay Act of 1963 mandating equal pay for equal work. The bureau also began to direct its efforts toward addressing the special needs of low-income and minority women. Keyserling's refusal to endorse the ERA contributed to its declining position. Although Nixon's Women's Bureau Director Elizabeth Duncan Koonz endorsed the ERA, the bureau's status declined further. It failed to ally successfully with the women's movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The bureau backed a 1982 employer-sponsored day-care drive and the 1993 passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act. Today the Women's Bureau operates in an informational capacity acting mainly as what Peterson called a staff arm of the United States Department of Labor.

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WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE

The Women's Trade Union League (WTUL, 1903–1950) was an organization founded by trade unionists and social reformers to organize wage-earning women into trade unions, as well as provide education and agitate for protective labor legislation.

Beginnings

Founded in 1903 during the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the WTUL was a coalition of middle- and upper-class female allies and working-class women with deep roots in the Progressive Era's efforts for social reform, especially as situated within the settlement house movement. As growing numbers of white women entered the industrial workforce at the start of the twentieth century, the often-horrific conditions under which

they labored became increasingly apparent. Although certainly aware of the situation, the AFL continued to advocate for a family-wage, earned by a male wage earner at the same time it focused its energies on the organization of skilled male craft workers as it had done since its inception in 1886. Arguing that women tended to work only briefly before marriage for pin money, the AFL claimed it was not in their organization's best interest to allocate resources toward the organization of female workers. But wage-earning women like Pauline Newman, Leonora O'Reilly, Mary Kenney O'Sullivan, and Rose Schneiderman knew that growing numbers of women worked for much of their adult lives, both before and after marriage in low-paying jobs for long hours and often in dangerous conditions. These women needed union protection, too; however the AFL remained ambivalent at best regarding the organization of female workers. Thus women like O'Sullivan turned to middle-class social reformers, especially within the settlement house movement, to seek support and much needed assistance. At the same time nonetheless women like O'Sullivan, a former bookbinder and the first female organizer appointed by the AFL in 1892, knew full well the efficacy of union representation and sought an alliance that would bridge the gap between female workers and the trade union movement. In this spirit the WTUL was born.

During the 1903 AFL annual convention, held that year in Boston, O'Sullivan met with the wealthy settlement house worker William English Walling. Walling, later a cofounder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), had just returned from England where he was introduced to the British Women's Trade Union League. Founded in 1874 and first known as the Women's Protective and Provident League, the British WTUL had aggressively campaigned to bring significant numbers of British female workers into pre-existing trade unions by the early twentieth century. As a former factory inspector and resident of the University Settlement House in New York City, Walling was well-aware of the poor labor conditions faced by wage-earning women. Inspired by the British WTUL, he hoped to create a similar organization for working-women in the United States, and in O'Sullivan he found a willing partner. With the permission of her old friend and then president of the AFL, Samuel Gompers, O'Sullivan announced an organizational meeting from the convention floor. At that meeting, held in a Boston settlement house, several trade unionists and settlement house workers, both male and female, discussed the initial plans for an American WTUL and were soon writing a constitution and by-laws. Before the AFL annual convention ended,

the WTUL had officers in place and a plan of action that included the establishment of branch leagues in New York, Chicago, and Boston.

The WTUL goal of being a cross-class alliance was reflected in its first selection of officers. The first national president of the WTUL was Mary Morton Kehew, a wealthy and progressive woman who was then also president of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Boston. Jane Addams, middle-class settlement house pioneer and cofounder of Chicago's Hull-House, was elected national vice-president. Representing wage-earning women were O'Sullivan as national secretary and Mary Donovan, a Lynn, Massachusetts, shoe worker as treasurer. Initial executive board members included the middle-class Lillian Wald, founder of the Henry Street Settlement House, and Leonora O'Reilly, a former garment worker and labor organizer, both from New York. Executive board members from Chicago in addition to Addams included her fellow settlement house worker Mary McDowell and labor organizer Ellen Lindstrom. However well-intended its efforts were to bridge the formidable class divisions between the wage-earning female members of the WTUL and their so-called allies, that is, the middle- and upper-class women who would eventually include such women as Eleanor Roosevelt, the organization would always be hampered by class tensions. So, too, would its tenuous relationship to the male-dominated trade union movement be a constant factor in its nearly 50 years of existence. The pattern was set at its founding. Perhaps in recognition of the ambivalence of the AFL membership at large to the organization of women, the WTUL chose not to ask the AFL for an official endorsement at the 1903 convention. Instead they asked the convention for a resolution regarding the appointment of a female organizer. The AFL sanctioned that decision but waited another 5 years to act. In any case official recognition of the WTUL did not come from the AFL until 1912. Nonetheless branches were organized in the targeted cities within a few months, and the WTUL on the national and local level was quickly involved in several major strikes across the country. Despite the ever-present class tensions within the organization and the ambivalent attitude of the AFL, the WTUL achieved much in its early years as it sought to improve the conditions of wage-earning women in the United States.

Early Years

From its founding up through the outbreak of World War I, the WTUL participated in a number of strikes, some small, some large, all involving significant

numbers of female wage earners, many of whom were not trade union members. Throughout, despite its continued official distance from the AFL, the WTUL aimed to organize female workers into pre-existing AFL affiliates. The organization of female workers was the primary mission of the WTUL but so too was education—in part, this was the education of female workers regarding the benefits of trade unionism as well as the education of male trade unionists to the need for organization of female workers. Increasingly the WTUL turned also to lobbying for protective labor legislation aimed specifically at female workers at the same time its efforts in the struggle for women's suffrage accelerated. In 1906, the wealthy and well-connected Margaret Dreier Robins became president of the WTUL, which a year later in recognition of the growth of its local leagues that now included a fourth in St. Louis, renamed itself the National Women's Trade Union League (NWTUL). During Robins's presidency, which lasted until 1922, the NWTUL focused on its three-part approach—organization, education, and legislation. In varying degrees these three strands guided the WTUL as it went from strike to strike in its early years.

One of the largest strikes that the WTUL took part in occurred only a few months after its formation. During the summer of 1904, upward of 25,000 textile workers, more than half of whom were women, went on strike in Fall River, Massachusetts, protesting a series of wage reductions and speedups. Only approximately 20% of the entire workforce was organized into AFL-affiliated textile unions representing weavers and spinners, for the most part those who were considered skilled workers, the majority of whom were male, either native-born or English and Irish immigrants. However most Fall River textile operatives were classified as unskilled workers and were increasingly female and newer immigrants, primarily French Canadian and Portuguese, none of whom were yet seen as organizable by the AFL. Yet the misery associated with low wages and worsening work conditions crossed craft, gender, and ethnic lines, and it was into this void that the WTUL stepped, hoping to address the concerns of the 12,000 or so female textile workers on strike for several months during 1904. As it would in other times and places, the WTUL provided assistance on the picket lines, raised strike relief funds, and generated much publicity about the conditions of life and labor in the Fall River textile mills. In this its first labor action, the WTUL also engaged in what it referred to as a strike time experiment, sending 130 female textile workers on strike to work as domestic servants in Boston. In her capacity as NWTUL secretary and a leader in the New York League, Gertrude Barnum, the well-to-do daughter of a Chicago judge,

conceived of this experiment that was soon judged a failure—by most of the 130 women who took part and by working-class leaders in the league, such as O'Sullivan, now vice-president of the NWTUL. That this well-meaning ally would think that sending female textile workers to work as domestics for even lower pay and under potentially more exploitative working conditions, was indicative of the limitations of the WTUL in its early years. It was a somewhat more mature organization that took part in the massive strike of New York City garment workers in 1909–1910 known as the Uprising of the 20,000. Within the New York WTUL by this time, working-class members, such as Pauline Newman and Schneiderman, had joined their fellow garment worker and veteran trade union activist Leonora O'Reilly. And while Schneiderman would eventually be president of the New York branch, during the Uprising of the 20,000 it was still the middle- and upper-class allies, such as Helen Marot and Mary Dreier, sister of NWTUL President Margaret Dreier Robins, who led the organization. But their resources were sorely needed during this long and bitter strike. The WTUL, in New York and on the national level, worked hard to raise funds and generate publicity. In the city as the strike dragged on into the winter of 1909–1910, wealthy WTUL allies wearing furs joined the picket lines and were soon dubbed the mink-coat brigade. Some were even arrested and that, too, generated much press for the strikers, since many of the so-called mink-coat brigade were related by blood and/or marriage to the city's most prominent men. Just a year after the strike was finally settled, fire broke out in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City; within a few minutes on that Saturday afternoon in March 1911, 146 workers, most of them young female immigrants from Italy and Eastern Europe, died in one of the worst workplace disasters in American history. The tragedy, which in part stemmed from the fact that the factory owners had locked the doors to prevent employee theft and keep union organizers out, made clear the need for improved work conditions in the city and on a national level. Working with other concerned social reform groups, such as the National Consumers' League, the WTUL pressed for and then took part in the state investigation that eventually did lead to improved worker-safety laws and the beginnings of better enforcement of those laws. In addition to these large strikes, the WTUL took part in countless other smaller labor actions across the country, primarily in or near those cities—New York, Chicago, Boston—where they had established branch leagues. Yet another strike of huge proportions, ultimately quite divisive for the WTUL, was the Bread and Roses strike in 1912, which involved more than 20,000 textile workers

WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE

in Lawrence, Massachusetts. There it was the Industrial Workers of the World, not the AFL, that took charge of the strike, and when the AFL decided not to sanction this increasingly violent strike of primarily immigrant workers, the majority of whom were women, the WTUL split over what its stance should be. The WTUL cofounder O'Sullivan and some others felt strongly that the league should assist the strikers in whatever way they could even if it meant going against AFL policy. Robins, then president of the NWTUL, and her sister, Dreier, president of the New York League, felt otherwise and ordered the WTUL out of Lawrence in keeping with the AFL policy. In response O'Sullivan resigned in protest from the organization she helped form. Later that same year, 1912, the AFL finally recognized the WTUL as an affiliate.

Later Years

Throughout these strikes the WTUL also sought to meet its goals of organizing female workers, providing labor education, and lobbying for protective labor legislation, and it did so in a number of ways. In 1913, the WTUL organized more than 2,000 women into the newly created Boston Telephone Operators' Union at the same time it continued to organize female industrial workers. Providing education, especially that which focused on union activities, was also important to the league. Part of the educational effort was done through league publications, including their monthly newsletter, *Life and Labor*, which first appeared in 1911. Beginning in the 1910s, but especially during the 1920s, the WTUL sponsored yearly labor schools for female workers, including the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers. While always claiming that union representation was the best way to improve work conditions, the WTUL had, especially in the wake of the Triangle Factory fire, pressed for protective labor legislation. Branch leagues frequently sponsored investigations of workplace conditions, often doing so in cooperation with local unions and social reform groups, such as the National Consumers' League. These detailed investigations would then be presented to state legislative bodies, leading to the passage of several labor laws during the 1910s, such as the 1913 Massachusetts Minimum Wage Law for Women, the first of its kind in the nation. The NWTUL fought for minimum-wage laws for female workers across the country and succeeded in several other states in addition to Massachusetts, until all such laws were found unconstitutional by the 1923 Supreme Court decision *Adkins v. Children's Hospital of District*

of Columbia. In lobbying for protective-labor legislation, the WTUL increasingly came to realize the importance of women's suffrage and joined that mostly white, middle-class movement in earnest in 1911 when it formed the Wage-Earners' League for Woman Suffrage. Schneiderman and Newman, both veteran organizers for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and active in the New York WTUL, were especially active in the WTUL women's suffrage campaign that finally achieved its goals in 1920 with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. However this unity around gaining women's suffrage was short-lived. The industrial feminism, as it was then called, of white, working-class women, such as in the WTUL, differed from that of many middle-class women on some key points. This became especially evident in the postsuffrage years when the WTUL opposed the Equal Rights Amendment as put forward by the National Women's party beginning in 1923, citing the danger the ERA would pose to the protective labor legislation the WTUL had fought so hard to achieve. Increasingly the WTUL turned to the federal government in its efforts to improve working conditions for women. After World War I several organizations, including the NWTUL, pushed for the creation of a Women's Bureau within the U.S. Department of Labor. When created in 1920, the first director was former shoe worker and long time Chicago WTUL leader, Mary Anderson. This collaboration with the federal government increased only during the 1930s when New York WTUL ally Eleanor Roosevelt's husband was elected president. Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, the monumental legislative response to the onset of the Great Depression, brought many WTUL leaders to Washington, including Schneiderman. President of the NWTUL from 1926 until 1950, Schneiderman would be the only woman appointed to the National Recovery Administration's Labor Advisory Board when it was established in 1933, a position she held for the next 10 years.

In part it was this success in terms of labor legislation on the federal level that led to the eventual demise of the WTUL in 1950. In 1935, Congress passed the Wagner Act, which guaranteed all workers the right to organize; a year later, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) formed. From its inception the CIO actively recruited industrial workers, skilled and unskilled, including women, and union representation for female workers increased dramatically during the second-half of the 1930s and into World War II. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 established a minimum wage and maximum hours for workers of either sex, though agricultural, food service, and domestic workers—all job categories in which women predominated—were initially excluded. Nonetheless

the labor laws that the WTUL had worked so hard to achieve on a state-by-state basis over the years were now federal law. Financially, too, the WTUL had suffered along with the rest of the nation during the Great Depression as even those middle- and upper-class allies who gave so much support curtailed their contributions. This coupled with the changes on a national level led the organization formally to disband in 1950. In its almost 50 years of existence, the WTUL achieved much for wage-earning women while it sought to organize them into trade unions, provide education, and lobby for protective-labor legislation. Even after its demise the WTUL remained an example for later groups, such as the Coalition of Labor and Union Women, as the issues of female workers continue to be addressed.

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See also *Adkins v. Children's Hospital (1918)*; **American Federation of Labor**; **Coalition of Labor Union Women**; **Congress of Industrial Organizations**; **Lawrence Strike (1912)**; **Minimum-Wage Laws**; **National Industrial Recovery Act**; **Newman, Pauline M.**; **Robins, Margaret Dreier**; **Schneiderman, Rose**; **Textiles**; **Triangle Shirtwaist Fire**; **Women's Bureau**

WOODHULL, VICTORIA (1838–1927)

Victoria Woodhull is known for her firsts—the first woman to run for president of the United States, the first to present an argument before the Judiciary Committee of Congress, the first to open a brokerage house in New York City—but her significance lies in brilliantly occupying the crossroads of American reform movements at the midpoint of the nineteenth century.

Victoria California Claflin was the seventh of 10 children born into the poorest family in Homer, Ohio. While her mother earned money selling the patent medicine she brewed at the hearth, her father exploited Victoria's precocious oratorical talents and took her at the age of eight on the revival circuit as a child preacher, then in imitation of the Fox sisters of Rochester, toured Victoria and her sister Tennessee as child spiritualist mediums, alternately starving and beating them to add effect to their trances. When at the age of 14 Victoria's health finally broke from her father's abuse, she was treated by a Dr. Canning Woodhull, a man exactly twice her age who cured her, then eloped with her.

Victoria was 16 when she gave birth to her first disabled child, Byron, and largely on her own, due to her husband's addiction to gin, morphine, and mistresses. She followed Dr. Woodhull to California, where she worked first as a seamstress, then as a bawdy theater actress and casual prostitute, but a few years later, when they headed back to the Midwest, the tables had turned, and Dr. Woodhull, unable to care for himself, followed her.

Her second child, Zulu, arrived in 1861 after Victoria had returned to working the spiritualist circuit and like her first was nearly killed by the botched delivery of a drunken Dr. Woodhull. Her life had become itinerant, with stays in Chicago (opening a short-lived clinic of magnetic healing), and then travels throughout the Midwest with her sister and the rest of the n Claflin clan as a traveling medicine show. In late 1865, Victoria left her family and struck out on her own, making a new start in St. Louis, where she fell in love with Colonel James Harvey Blood, a local war hero and spiritualist, who left his wife and two daughters to marry her. Blood was well-versed in reform politics, which proved to be the missing element of Victoria's latent radicalism. Together they set about to defy the conventions of an oppressive society, such as filing divorce papers just to protest the inequities of the institution of marriage.

Victoria rescued her sister Tennessee from her father, and they all moved to New York City where opportunity abounded, most importantly in the form of Cornelius Vanderbilt, whose deep interest in spiritualism encouraged him to underwrite some of

Victoria's new enterprises. Certainly a reputation as a sage could not have hurt her newly opened brokerage house, Woodhull, Claflin & Co., especially when they showed a tendency to end up on the winning side of highly leveraged bets (though this may have been more attributable to Vanderbilt's insider tips than to the aid of the spirit world). With her profits and expanding credit, Victoria moved into a large brownstone and showed a generosity that was later repaid in scandal. She accepted into her household her ne'er-do-well husband, Dr. Woodhull, who was practically an invalid and lived only a few years more. She welcomed as a permanent guest, Stephen Pearl Andrews, an obscure genius who invented shorthand, a universal language, an impenetrable theory of everything he called Pantarchy, and claimed to have started the Civil War by causing the secession of Texas. Over time she eventually housed most of the members of her large family, including her mother, who repaid her kindness by unsuccessfully suing to have Col. Blood evicted from the household and to assume ownership of Victoria's properties.

In April 1870, Victoria Woodhull announced that she was running for president of the United States (on her own Cosmo-Political party, which later changed its name to the Equal Rights party) in order to illustrate "the rights I already possess," observing the fact that while she was barred from voting by state law, she had a perfect right to hold the highest office in the land according to the qualifications stipulated in the U.S. Constitution. Though it began as a means of ballyhooing her campaign, the newspaper she started, *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, soon expanded to champion the full myriad of reform movements then percolating through the nation.

Woodhull was viewed suspiciously by the other women's rights reformers who gathered in Washington, DC, for the 1871 National Women Suffrage Association, though she quickly became, for a short time, their hero when she secured an audience before the Judiciary Committee of the House and delivered a memorial arguing that the Fourteenth Amendment had established women's suffrage and that the continuing denial of the right of women to vote was therefore unconstitutional. Over the next year Woodhull became a notorious celebrity who packed halls with lectures on women's rights and free love, currency reform, cooperative economics, and "stirpiculture" (an early form of Eugenics). She also embraced the cause of radical labor reform and placed her newspaper at the disposal of the English-speaking faction of the International Workingmen's Association, and became the first American publication to reprint the *Communist Manifesto* (translated into English by Andrews). But her presence also proved to be one of

the poles of controversy within the first U.S. Marxist labor organization and contributed to its ultimately splitting along ethnic and ideological lines.

In November of 1872, Woodhull published details of the scandalous affair between the nation's most famous Protestant minister, Henry Ward Beecher, and the wife of the well-known reformer and her intimate friend, Theodore Tilton. Arrested for publishing obscene material, a violation of the recently passed federal Comstock Act, she and her sister Tennessee were jailed twice though ultimately acquitted. However the legal ordeal drained them of their wealth and broke Victoria's health. In 1877, she and Tennessee sailed to England (a trip possibly paid for by the heirs of Vanderbilt to remove her from a pitched battle over his estate), where they both married wealthy aristocrats.

In 1892, Victoria resumed her interests in reform and with her daughter Zulu as coeditor, published the *Humanitarian*, which while more conservative than her old weekly, maintained her breadth of interests. Retiring from publishing in 1901, Victoria established her home as a bohemian salon that welcomed a long train of eccentric visitors to the dismay of the local villagers. She died near the beach in Brighton in 1927 at the age of 89.

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WORK ETHIC

The work ethic defies easy explanation. As a matter for academic investigation, the work ethic transcends strict disciplinary boundaries and has been the subject of scholarly debate in a variety of academic disciplines: Sociology, anthropology, economics, and political science, to name only a few. As a concept though, the scope of work ethic's influence reaches far beyond the boundaries of academic discourse and penetrates deep into American cultural life providing an important source of both popular mythology and individual identity.

Historically when scholars have discussed the work ethic, they have treated it as a uniquely Western phenomenon; however the idea of a work ethic is not

endemic to one culture (for instance it is not uncommon to speak of the Confucian work ethic). When offering definitions of the work ethic, scholars and laypersons alike usually refer to a particular attitude toward work. To have a strong work ethic is to find intrinsic value in work, and usually this value is thought to transcend mere material considerations. The idea of the work ethic is irreducible to work itself; merely working is not sufficient evidence of a work ethic. Instead it is the way in which an individual approaches work that is important. Persons with a strong work ethic are lauded for their commitment to hard work and sacrifice and usually display a degree of self-discipline. Furthermore the work ethic is often considered a testament to a person's moral value, and those who fail to demonstrate such an ethic are often judged harshly.

The Work Ethic in Religion

Most commonly when scholars discuss an American work ethic, they are talking about a conception of the work ethic thought to be rooted in the Protestant tradition, and this Protestant work ethic was most famously explored in Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, originally published in 1905. Protestantism, Weber explained, laid a unique foundation for the rise of industrial capitalism because it gave moral value to earthly activity, augmenting previous conceptions of religious devotion with a commitment to one's working life. Weber traces the Protestant work ethic to Luther's initial rejection of monasticism and his belief that even the layperson could lead the devoted life through the dedicated pursuit of an earthly calling. What begins with Luther however is made explicit by Calvin, and it is in Calvinism that Weber finds the most potent source of the modern work ethic. In Calvinism the role of the work ethic was threefold: First the work ethic was thought to provide the best evidence that a particular individual was among the elect and predestined for salvation. Second the absence of a work ethic could reveal to the community of believers the identity of those who were not so fortunate. Finally Calvinism more than any other Protestant sect justified working in pursuit of a profit and encouraged individuals to invest their profits back into their earthly pursuits.

Given Protestantism's role in the religious and cultural life of the early American colonies, it is not surprising to find the Protestant version of the work ethic so entrenched in the American identity. Whether expressed by colonial preachers, such as John Winthrop (1588–1649), John Cotton (1584–1652), or

Cotton Mather (1663–1728), the idea of serving God through a commitment to one's own calling was quite consistent with the project of civilizing the new world in the face of overwhelming circumstances, and as the colonies blossomed, the work ethic provided an important standard by which to judge the commitment and character of the colonial citizen. The work of Mather is exemplary in this respect: Mather is among the first American Protestant ministers to accept the accumulation of wealth as consistent with the religious duty of a calling. In his *Bonifacius* (1710), he explains to good Christians that a life of riches can be a moral life as long as one remembers that those riches are a gift from God to the deserving and as good Christians, they are obligated to return a portion of these gifts to the community. At the same time Mather warned that damnation was sure to follow idleness. In an early expression of what has now become a popular response to poverty and unemployment, Mather advised fellow Christians against giving simple charity to one's less-fortunate neighbors; their salvation could be assured, he argued, only by finding them work and insisting that they keep it.

Although many scholars of the work ethic—Max Weber among them—saw the Protestant ethic as the source of mostly middle-class values and bourgeois business acumen, it must be noted that religious notions of the work ethic have been important elements in cultivating working-class consciousness as well. With the rise of American industrialism, both labor organizers and rank-and-file workers drew from religious traditions in an attempt to counter the capitalist attempts to increase their own wealth through the exploitation of labor. Gilded Age workers for instance turned to the work ethic to reclaim the intrinsic value of their own labor, and the gospel of wealth preached by industrialists was often met by the gospel of labor preached in both churches and union halls. Drawing as much from Christianity as they did from radical socialism, many American workers held firm in their belief that labor was a gift from God; to make one's livelihood through the sweat of his or her own brow was among the most significant earthly manifestations of God's magnificence. An economic system that allowed one person to benefit from another's labor, without appropriate recompense, was considered among the most aberrant forms of exploitation.

The Work Ethic in Politics

Whether religious or secular in origin, the concept of a work ethic had an important role to play in the

politics of the revolutionary-era United States. For those who dreamed of a new social order free from monarchical reign, a positive attitude toward work served as an important distinction between citizens of the new nation and the British aristocracy who still viewed labor as a curse meant solely for the lower classes.

The importance of this ethic to the political history of the early republic cannot be overstated. Some of the earliest partisan divisions revolved around the role of work and the work ethic in American life. Whether it was Jeffersonian Republicans or Jacksonian Democrats, the strategy was often the same: Appeal to a common work ethic to paint the opposition as adherents to the old aristocratic order, a leisurely class whose wealth rested on the back of another's labor. The work ethic provided a valuable character trait thought to be common to the early nation's emerging middle-class of artisans, farmers, and small entrepreneurs. The work ethic was an outward sign of fitness for self-determination and distinguished the middle class of American citizens from both the aristocratic elite (who do not work) and the growing population of African slaves (who are not free).

At no time was this fact of American political life more relevant than in the years preceding the Civil War. The Republican party for instance built the work ethic and the accompanying concept of free labor into their ideological opposition to slavery. For Republicans one of the great sins of the southern aristocracy was the fact that they devalued the labor of blacks and poor whites alike. The South was damned not only morally but economically; in fact the two could not be disconnected. By disallowing free labor, the South betrayed the American promise of social mobility and stifled the rise of a vibrant middle class thought necessary for economic and moral progress. For many of the Republican faithful, this was the South's greatest sin.

Using the work ethic as part of a political strategy that paints another in a negative light is not limited to partisan politics; it has played a role in a multitude of political struggles, not the least of which has been the ongoing struggle between capital and labor. Some conception of the work ethic was often an important element of capital's various schemes of accumulating wealth. For instance Fredrick Taylor's system of scientific management was among other things a system aimed at increasing the productivity of individual workers by instilling in them a materialistic work ethic and rewarding productive work accordingly. Labor often responded to these attempts by employing its own interpretation of the moral value of work, one that was meant to raise the consciousness of alienated workers. Industrialism, labor often argued,

betrayed the promise of the work ethic by failing to reward an individual for his or her own dedication to work: First industrial factory work stripped the worker of the ability to fulfill the promise of self-determination thought to follow from a strong work ethic. Second it betrayed the promise that a strong work ethic would be rewarded, and many within the labor movement claimed that industrial capitalism in fact robbed workers of their labor's ultimate value regardless of how hard they labored and how much they were paid for their labor; no compensation could equate to labor's intrinsic value.

The work ethic has also been used as an important element in the politics of discrimination and bigotry. Gender discrimination for instance has often revolved around the work ethic's interpretation as a masculine attribute. Contrary to women's lived experiences, women were often portrayed in the popular imagination as the intrinsically idle sex, capable of only the most mindless of employments. If the work ethic had everything to do with the sense of liberty and self-determination that characterized American masculinity, then it seemed to have little to do with the perceived dependency of womanhood.

In fact many of the most potent ethnic stereotypes have traditionally included the assumption that the group in question lacks a strong work ethic and as a corollary the ability to contribute to American society. Laziness was primary among the negative qualities that informed discrimination against African-Americans long after the abolition of slavery. Furthermore the discrimination against immigrants in the United States has always revolved around the perceived absence of a commitment to hard work. It is still common to see stereotypical depictions of immigrants and racial minorities that emphasize their supposed lack of a proper American work ethic.

The Work Ethic in Culture

As a core value of American life, the work ethic has been reinforced through a variety of cultural forms, all of which follow religion and politics in advancing the work ethic as a moral virtue, one usually thought to be necessary for social mobility. This was especially evident during the industrial revolution. In nineteenth-century children's literature, authors, such as Horatio Alger, Jacob Abbott, and Mari Edgeworth, all contributed popular stories that advocated the work ethic as central to moral character, and although it is easy to exaggerate the ways in which the themes of these works are similar, generally they all share a common concern: Their narratives teach the

values of hard work and self-discipline by weaving stories around the multiple successes of the industriousness and the multiple failures of the slothful.

The literary and cultural fascination with the American West told a similar story. Westward expansion was interpreted as a testament to the hard work and commitment of the American character, and these attributes were further propagated by a genre of popular literature that told the stories, albeit fictionalized, of those who conquered this vast frontier. In his famous frontier thesis delivered to the American Historical Association in 1893, Fredrick Jackson Turner explained how the values of hard work and self-determination necessary to civilize the savage terrain of the American West were fundamental characteristics of the American self. Drawing on both the religious and political origins of the work ethic, this particularly American mythology paved the way for Herbert Hoover's eventual appeal to the rugged individualism of Americans in his 1928 presidential campaign.

The work ethic still remains an important part of the American cultural imagination, primarily through its relationship to the promise of the American dream. Pulling from many aspects of American culture, unbridled faith in the possibility of achieving this dream demands equal faith in the power of the work ethic, and although the American dream is often thought to be available to all, there is an accompanying belief that only the committed few can actually realize it. (In fact when Americans are asked, they regularly think hard work is more important than starting position when predicting one's ability to climb the socio-economic ladder.) Harkening back to its Protestant roots, this contemporary work ethic is often employed to justify socio-economic inequality and disparity in wealth. The spoils of the American dream, it is argued, rightfully go to the deserving, and those whose dreams go unrealized have only themselves to blame. Like its predecessors this version of the work ethic is very individual in nature and is consistent with the priority of individualism in American culture.

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WORKER MOBILIZATION, MANAGEMENT RESISTANCE: 1920s

American workers in the 1920s experienced a number of dramatic transformations. Labor militancy following World War I and hopes for an expansion of industrial democracy gave way to retreat and conservatism within the labor movement. In expanding mass-production industries, management steadily asserted its control. In the early years of the decade, workers launched a range of political efforts to advance more democratic interventions of government into the economy. By decade's end it was clear to many workers that the state reinforced conservative business goals and nativist policies. Sharing unevenly in the celebrated prosperity of the decade, workers initially participated in consumerism in ways that supported ethnic and racial identities. Mass culture increasingly threatened community control over consumption as the 1930s began. On the whole the twenties witnessed a growing shift away from worker efforts to democratize production and toward concerns about more equal participation in consumer culture.

Postwar Confrontations

World War I profoundly shaped the character of the decade that followed. It created new expectations for federal government interventions to advance industrial democracy even as the war led some officials to repress radicalism. Debates about patriotism and the meaning of immigration intensified during the conflict, generating new pressure in the years ahead for restrictions and support for a narrow definition of



Row of completed “Tin Lizzies” or Model T’s come off the Ford assembly line. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-63968].

Americanism. Though the war accelerated demographic changes and opened up new possibilities for industrial unionism, the democratic promise of labor mobilizations faded in the immediate postwar years. Most unions retreated after 1922, and the federal government shifted its support toward employers who defused the radical potential of industrial democracy with company unionism and welfare capitalism.

The postwar strike wave from 1919–1922 ended in bitter disappointment for workers. The defeats of the Seattle General Strike and the steel strike by the end of 1919 coincided with government roundups of immigrant radicals across the United States. Defiant displays of working-class unity faced strong opposition from employers, city authorities, and state governments during this turbulent period. Rejecting working-class proposals to nationalize major industries, officials in the Wilson and Harding administrations committed themselves instead to bringing down prices and defending the existing social order. Employers and government officials frequently joined forces to mobilize the public against collective industrial action. Union membership had peaked in 1920 at over five

million workers, only to decline to 3.6 million just 3 years later.

Important examples of these trends in the immediate postwar period can be seen in the meatpacking industry. During World War I leaders of the Chicago labor movement had begun to organize racially and ethnically diverse packinghouse workers into an industrial union. Federal mediation briefly enhanced worker strength but limited strike possibilities. When meat prices began to fall in the early twenties, the big five packers revived an anti-union campaign and pledged to cut wages and increase working hours. The Harding administration did not renew federal wartime agreements. Packinghouse workers struck late in 1921, sparking an unequal confrontation. The packers were united by economic crisis and supported by local and state governments. Unionists were plagued with financial and organizational problems, fragmented by race, ethnicity, and skill, and without federal oversight. Police attacks against picketing workers generated high levels of violence and rioting in Chicago. Though Denver suffered no violent confrontations during the walkout, a district court judge

ordered the imprisonment of local union leaders for calling a strike that threatened the public interest.

Shifting Management and Labor Relations

The defeat of major postwar strikes and the dismantling of wartime agreements paved the way for changes in management and labor relations during the 1920s. Bent on challenging wartime gains, employers in oligopolistic industries increasingly combined welfare capitalism with open-shop drives in order to combat unionization. Bethlehem Steel, Goodyear, General Electric, and International Harvest, among others, promised workers pensions, modest insurance plans, subsidized mortgages, and social programs. Southern textile mill owners built churches and hired sympathetic ministers. Welfare capitalism touched the lives of roughly four million workers at its height. Administering these limited programs were employee-representation plans or company unions. Although publicized examples predated the war, company unions were widely celebrated in the mainstream press. Touted by employers as a form of industrial democracy, company unions circumscribed the issues that workers could address. Mimicking bona fide trade unions, company unions stabilized labor relations by weeding out radicals and constraining worker protest.

Many of the organizational and management techniques that shaped mass-production industries during the decade began at the Ford Motor Company. Though others had experimented with assembly-line construction, Ford refined such techniques on a scale previously unmatched after 1913. By 1928, his River Rouge complex in Dearborn, Michigan, featured a continuously moving chain of production that could turn out 6,400 cars in one day. To lower turnover rates and discourage union organizing, Ford initially reduced working hours and increased wages to 5 dollars a day, double the prevailing wage for semiskilled workers in Detroit. Yet skilled workers increasingly gave way to semiskilled and unskilled machine tenders. The automaker imposed strict rules for shop floor behavior, created a sociological department to investigate workers' private lives, and maintained a private spy network to suppress union efforts and physically intimidate organizers. Throughout the decade the automobile industry stimulated a host of related businesses like steel, glass, rubber, and petroleum. These expanding sectors of the economy demonstrated particular hostility toward unions during the 1920s. Though industrial workers produced the goods that fueled the prosperity of the decade,

they increasingly lost control and authority on the shop floor.

The technical and organizational changes that marked mass production during the 1920s were not uniformly experienced by workers. Agriculture was only partly changed by the introduction of mechanized harvesters and tractors. The African-Americans and Chicanos who harvested cotton, fruits, sugar beets, and vegetables endured difficult hand labor and oppressive management tactics. The construction industry, which enjoyed a decade of dramatic growth fueled by a surge in demand for new homes, also continued to rely on hand labor. Women's service and sales work at times centered on interactions with clients that managers could less directly supervise.

The 1920s saw a steady decline in strike activity. Americans had witnessed roughly 3,500 strikes per year from 1916–1921. By the end of the decade, that number had fallen to only 790 per year. The militant confrontations of the immediate postwar years gave way to more indirect and submerged worker challenges. A few dramatic strikes did punctuate the otherwise calm years of the late 1920s, but these reflected the militancy of diverse workers typically outside mass-production industries. Unionized Chicano farm workers in California tested the growing power of agribusiness. Unorganized textile workers in the South, the majority of them women, walked out to protest the stretch out, night work, and the oppressive hand of the employer in company towns. One group of African-American workers mobilized within the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters to confront the oppressive management of the Pullman Company. But these protests achieved little in the short run even as they lay the groundwork for some successes in the 1930s.

The most influential labor federation in the 1920s, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), largely accommodated itself to management changes. Dominated by affiliated unions in coal, clothing, printing, public service, transportation, and construction, the AFL focused chiefly on the concerns of conservative craft unionists in local market sectors of the economy. The death of long-time AFL President Samuel Gompers in December 1924, created an opportunity for more conciliatory leadership under William Green. Promoting union-management cooperation, Green even oversaw the reversal of the AFL's long-standing opposition to scientific management. Though the federation "shifted from militancy to respectability," as historian Irving Bernstein has aptly noted (*The Lean Years*, 1960), talk of union-management partnerships achieved little for workers. The AFL struggled to respond to falling membership over the decade. Construction and transportation unions did maintain

or even increase their membership rolls over the decade. But unions in mining and clothing manufacture lost significant numbers. Workers in these industries suffered from overcapacity, overproduction, and downward pressure on wages.

The AFL mostly ignored the growing service sector, which increasingly provided opportunities for female workers. At the start of the decade, more women worked in clerical or sales work than in manufacturing or domestic service. White women particularly gained new opportunities even as black wage-earning women remained largely confined to domestic service. Though wage earning promised a measure of economic independence, female workers struggled against discrimination by employers and within some unions. Labor force segmentation and expectations that marriage should end wage work for women constrained female ambition during the decade. Some working-women looked to the state to address economic inequalities.

Labor Politics

Despite long-standing suspicions of the state among AFL leaders, electoral politics captured the attention of a significant group of workers in the early 1920s. Mine and railroad union leaders were at the forefront of a progressive bloc advancing broad visions of government activism. The plan for government ownership of the railroads sketched by Glenn Plumb became a rallying point for a range of reformers urging ambitious social welfare programs. In 1922, members of the railroad brotherhoods, the stationary engineers, and the machinist unions organized a national Conference for Progressive Political Action (CPPA). Though rejecting calls for a third party, CPPA activists created local and state branches that worked to elect a number of progressive candidates in 1922 while helping to defeat several champions of the open shop in Congress.

Additionally the first years of the new decade witnessed a brief revival of independent labor politics. Unionists in Chicago and New York organized an independent labor party. Worker alliances with farmers also appeared promising. Building on the success of the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota, a number of farmer-labor groups in the Midwest and Far West called for public ownership of key industries and banks, public-works programs, legal protections for collective bargaining, and public housing.

The 1924 presidential campaign marked a high point of progressive labor and farmer activism during the decade. Farmer-labor coalitions, the CPPA, and even the AFL leadership joined forces to support

Wisconsin Senator Robert M. La Follette's campaign for the presidency. La Follette attempted to redefine the public interest in terms less hostile to labor while supporting collective bargaining and limits to court injunctions against striking unionists. Organizational and financial problems however plagued his campaign. In some communities divisive battles over the rise of the Klan and prohibition overshadowed this progressive challenge. Though Coolidge carried the election with 15 million votes, La Follette collected nearly five million. Ethnic voters in the late 1920s did not yet participate in electoral politics in ways that reinforced class critiques.

Governmental Interventions

Despite labor defeats at the polls, the role of government in economic life remained a contested issue. Often state action worked to the detriment of organized labor. Colorado and Kansas experimented with compulsory arbitration boards that narrowly defined the rights of the public in terms of uninterrupted production of basic consumer necessities. Court injunctions were widely used against striking workers during the decade, most notably during the nationwide railroad strike of 1922. U.S. Supreme Court decisions also constrained strike and picketing activity in such cases as *Duplex Printing Press Co. v. Deering* (1921) and *Truax v. Corriegan* (1921) illustrate. By the early 1930s, however, abusive injunctions against struggling coal miners ignited a successful movement to secure congressional support for anti-injunction legislation.

For female workers government action sparked intense debate during the 1920s. Growing judicial approval of sex-specific protective labor legislation raised important moral and political issues. Earlier Supreme Court rulings like *Muller v. Oregon* had affirmed state authority to set maximum hours for women on the grounds of their biological difference from men and potential maternity. Though such legislation could serve as an entering wedge to advance protections for all workers, it also threatened to isolate women from the laboring mainstream. By 1920, male unionists, many employers, the National Consumers' League, and officials in the U.S. Women's Bureau embraced protection.

Yet sex-specific protective labor law faced a key test during the decade. Following the success of the woman's suffrage movement in 1920, leaders of the National Women's party rallied support for an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution. Successfully persuading Congress to introduce the measure in 1923, ERA advocates insisted that

protective laws penalized female workers and legitimated a view of femininity that rested on maternity and biological weakness. Protection activists countered that the ERA would jeopardize hard-won gains to protect workingwomen. Working-class women remained divided by the debate. Some, like Fannia Cohn of the garment workers' union, argued that unionization rather than legislation offered the best protection for workingwomen as it did for men. But because of the obstacles to women's organization, Cohn felt that "it would be folly to agitate against protective legislation." In its 1923 *Adkins v. Children's Hospital* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a minimum-wage law for women in a blow to protection advocates. During the New Deal, however, the minimum wage campaign ultimately bore fruit with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The federal government during the 1920s was not only a site of struggle over protective legislation for female workers. It also transformed the meaning of ethnicity and race with changes in immigration policy. The AFL leadership and many western affiliates had long called for restrictions on immigration to limit competition for working-class jobs. Fears of immigrant diversity, dissent in ethnic communities, and antiradical crusades during and after the Great War generated a growing consensus among native-born Americans for restriction. In 1921, and more conclusively in 1924, Congress approved dramatic restrictions on immigration from southern and Eastern Europe, while excluding outright any remaining immigration from Asia. The new quota system had a tremendous impact on the working class. Communities of southern and Eastern European immigrants became more settled and confronted steady Americanization pressure. The new national-origins system also transformed a formerly multi-ethnic nation into a white republic, separating white ethnicity from non-white race. Congress allowed Mexican immigration to continue however in order to provide cheap labor for western agribusiness. Escaping quota restrictions, Mexican immigrants soon confronted a new border patrol. With its changing immigration policy, the federal government created new links between citizenship and whiteness that would last for decades.

Working-class immigrants moreover could not assume that the state would protect their civil liberties. The trial of two Italian-born anarchists, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, particularly highlighted the excesses of nativism and brought home to many immigrants the coercive power of the state. Accused of robbery and murder in Braintree, Massachusetts, Sacco and Vanzetti stood trial in 1921 as much for their political beliefs. Though their trial was marred by questionable evidence, the two men were convicted

of murder. Six years of appeals and a murder confession from another anarchist could not avert the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti on August 22, 1927. Crowds across the United States and around the world gathered in protest, and immigrant workers in a number of locations walked off their jobs.

Diverse Workers and Mass Consumption

Immigration policy and Americanization campaigns were not the only pressures on ethnic and racial identity among workers. The pervasive impact of mass culture threatened to lessen the salience of both. Cars, radios, movies, home appliances, commercial recreation, and sports all helped to integrate previously isolated groups into the mass cultural mainstream. But they did so in uneven ways, as workers sought to give their consumption an ethnic or racial cast.

Family income clearly shaped possibilities for participating in the consumer culture of the decade. Prosperity was not uniformly experienced, as unemployment and seasonal layoffs continued to plague many workers. Contemporary studies of income levels and consumer spending suggest that workers did not widely share in the consumption of consumer goods, with skilled workers participating more fully in the much-advertised prosperity. Middle-income Americans, rather than members of the working class, were most likely to buy goods on credit.

In her study of Chicago communities, Lizbeth Cohen argued that the impact of mass culture in immigrant neighborhoods depended on the social and economic contexts in which it developed. Chain stores did not widely penetrate working-class, immigrant communities at first. Movie theaters initially reflected the ethnic values of the local community, but the pressure of consolidation in the movie business worked to crowd out local theaters by the late 1920s. Hollywood increasingly appealed to middle-class audiences in the 1920s, shifting the target audience for many films away from the working class. Ethnic, religious, and labor organizations used local radio to reinforce community identities, until the pressure of commercialization became too great. Contacts with mass culture had the most profound effect on the children of new immigrants, worrying parents and religious leaders. But even mainstream mass culture did not always reflect the values of the Protestant middle class.

African-American immigrants in northern cities like Chicago participated more widely in mainstream commercial life but did so in ways that forged a new urban black culture. Black migrants continued to

leave the rural and urban South in record numbers during the 1920s, a trend initiated during the Great War. From 1920–1930, over 800,000 headed north in search of economic opportunity and a measure of freedom. The discrimination they faced in residential, political, and industrial life worked to reinforce racial ties. Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association sparked a broad movement that stressed the importance of black-owned businesses and encouraged a new race pride. Black musicians and recording companies helped to define white mass culture in terms of jazz. While large enterprises like Victrola dominated the recording industry, local companies could reproduce music that reinforced racial and ethnic identities whether in black Chicago or Mexican-American neighborhoods in Los Angeles.

The focus on consumption during the twenties offered workingmen and women some political possibilities. Working-class cooperatives, boycott, and union-label campaigns could become tools for enhancing trade union influence or even restructuring the consumer economy in more democratic directions. But these campaigns often faltered without broad support from working-class housewives. They also suffered from racial exclusions that divided potential class allies.

Generally working-class Americans turned in the 1920s to consumption and leisure for a measure of compensation for the loss of influence on the job and harshness of work life. Even though the culture of consumption could still affirm community ties, industrial productivity increasingly outpaced the ability of many to consume. After the stock market crash of 1929, this problem became much harder for Americans to ignore.

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WORKERS' ALLIANCE OF AMERICA

The Workers' Alliance of America was a nationwide, mass movement of relief workers, recipients of direct relief, and unemployed workers formed in the United States in 1935 and dissolved in 1941. The organization was initially created through the merger of Socialist-led groups of unemployed workers with the Musteite Unemployed Leagues. In 1936, the Communist-led Unemployed Councils were also folded into the Workers' Alliance, although non-Communist leaders retained a majority on the alliance's national executive board.

Workers' Alliance locals elected delegates to countywide or statewide organizations, which in turn elected delegates to nationwide annual conventions. For most of its existence, David Lasser (its non-Communist president) and Herbert Benjamin (its Communist secretary-treasurer) led the Workers' Alliance at the national level. The movement grew rapidly, prompting the *New York Times* to warn in 1938 that it was becoming "an enormous pressure group compared with which the American Legion and the farm lobbies may pale into insignificance." By 1939, the Workers' Alliance claimed several hundred thousand members, reportedly exercised an influence over about 1.5 million Americans and included a total of 1,521 locals in 45 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Nearly all of the organization's monthly income (about \$4,000 on average in 1939) came from membership dues, initiation fees, charter fees, and the sale of organizational supplies and literature to members.

The Workers' Alliance fought for a permanent, practical, and adequate works program for the unemployed. In practice this meant additional funding for the Works Progress Administration (WPA), more WPA jobs, higher wages for WPA workers, and application of new federal labor laws to the WPA. The Workers' Alliance also sought to secure adequate relief for those not given WPA jobs. At its 1938 National Conference on Work and Security, the movement insisted that "the Federal government makes its contribution only in part when it provides a work program." Accordingly the Workers' Alliance called for the restoration of federal responsibility for general assistance, which was to be accomplished by adding another entitlement to the Social Security Act. However direct relief was seen as a necessary evil. As Lasser put it in 1939, the alliance's primary aim was to "secure work [for the unemployed]—and failing that, enough income to provide security for themselves and their families."

By 1939, three-quarters of Workers' Alliance members were WPA workers, for whom the organization served as a kind of labor union. However since the status of WPA workers as employees was contested, the Workers' Alliance had to struggle to bring into existence the very constituency that labor unions presuppose and represent. In other words the movement demanded not only higher wages and better working conditions for WPA workers, but also recognition of a new identity. As Lasser put it in 1936, "the WPA workers . . . want to be taken out of the twilight zone in which they are not on relief and yet have an essentially relief status. We WPA workers want to work and be treated as workers." Consistent with these claims, the Workers' Alliance sought to forge organizational ties to the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). By the late 1930s, the Workers' Alliance and CIO locals (sometimes joined by AFL locals) had set up unemployment committees in cities throughout the nation to plan and carry out joint actions on issues of common concern. In addition the Workers' Alliance, the AFL, and the CIO cooperated to protest WPA retrenchment in 1939. However cooperation was limited by organizational rivalry and competition. While the AFL's and CIO's willingness to recognize WPA workers as employees confirmed the claims of the Workers' Alliance, it also triggered a struggle over who would represent them.

Women made up roughly 20% of the alliance's membership in 1939. Although often consigned to women's work or relegated to women's auxiliaries, women participated in a broad range of movement activities, including picket lines, demonstrations, and fund raising. Women also assumed leadership

positions as organizers, newspaper editors, elected officers, convention delegates, and executive board members at local and national levels. Like women, African-Americans were also active in the Workers' Alliance, forming an estimated 10% of its membership in 1939. Due largely to Communist influence, the Workers' Alliance aggressively advocated racial equality. The movement sought to organize black workers, fought to expand the political rights of southern blacks (particularly through the abolition of the poll tax), and forged growing ties to black civil rights organizations in the late 1930s. These efforts provoked brutal and often violent resistance in the South; Workers' Alliance members and organizers were harassed, tarred and feathered, prohibited from meeting, forced out of town, tear-gassed, jailed, beaten, and shot.

The demise of the Workers' Alliance is typically attributed to economic recovery or co-optation by the Roosevelt administration. Neither explanation is fully convincing. The Workers' Alliance was already in decline by 1939, when unemployment was still high (more than 17% of the civilian labor force). Moreover co-optation was symptomatic of a deeper underlying cause: The rise of an increasingly powerful coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats in Congress in the late 1930s. Concerned about the growing power of the Workers' Alliance and the threat its multiracial organizing might pose to the southern agrarian economy, congressional conservatives led an anti-Communist campaign to delegitimize and repress the movement. At the same time red-baiting and the 1939 nonaggression pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union exacerbated tensions between Communist and non-Communist members of the Workers' Alliance, leading to a costly series of splits, purges, and defections from 1938–1940. External repression and internal conflict over Communist influence within the Workers' Alliance severely hindered the organization's capacity to mobilize resources. By the time the national executive board of the Workers' Alliance dissolved the organization in November 1941, it had dwindled to 200 branches in 25 states.

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WORKERS' DEFENSE LEAGUE

The Workers' Defense League (WDL) was founded in 1936 to protect the legal rights of workers. Ad hoc committees established in response to the violent repression of labor protests during the Great Depression

served as precursors to the WDL. One such committee formed in Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1935, when Socialists protested the imposition of martial law during a labor strike and pressured city officials to release two jailed socialist leaders. Another temporary committee arose in 1936 following violence against organizing sharecroppers in Arkansas. A third precursor to the WDL formed in early 1936, when Socialists rallied public opposition against the kidnapping, torture, and murder of labor organizer Joseph Shoemaker in Tampa, Florida.

Several months after the Tampa rally, on May 28, 1936, the American Socialist party's executive committee voted to establish a permanent institution to coordinate similar activities addressing labor problems. Party leader Norman Thomas chaired an organizing committee whose members included lawyers Francis Heisler and Max Delson, the Reverend Aron S. Gilmartin, and David Clendenin. Clendenin, a Yale graduate spurred to social activism by the Great Depression, was particularly instrumental in the WDL's creation. As the organization's first secretary-treasurer, Clendenin was mainly responsible for establishing the WDL as an alternative to the largely Communist International Defense League (ILD).

Despite its socialist ties, the WDL pledged independence from all political parties. It established two nonpartisan goals: Providing legal aid to workers unfairly accused of violating the law and taking affirmative legal action against abusive employers and public officials. To achieve these goals, the WDL used litigation, education, independent investigations, picketing, protests, and mass mobilization.

The WDL, like the ILD, did not limit itself to particular categories of workers. Not only did it defend industrial laborers, but it also championed the rights of agricultural workers often ignored or marginalized by the organized labor movement. The WDL provided legal support to the interracial Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, founded with the help of Socialists in 1934 to assist farm workers in the Southeast. In the 1930s and 1940s, investigators revealed numerous instances of peonage and involuntary servitude in the South, including the infamous case of slave master Paul Peacher, who was eventually convicted under federal law. The WDL was particularly active in Florida, where it challenged both the unbridled power of sheriffs to arrest African-American workers and the various laws that forced allegedly idle men and women into employment. In Georgia WDL leader Frank McAllister investigated involuntary-servitude complaints and passed on information to the NAACP and to the U.S. Department of Justice for additional legal action.

As the origins of the WDL suggest, the WDL set out to intervene in far more than workplace disputes

between employers and employees. In particular the WDL recognized the importance to workers' rights of First Amendment rights to free speech, press, and assembly. As a result, the WDL launched a successful legal campaign in the late 1930s to strike down local ordinances barring leaflet distributions in several states. The WDL also cooperated with other civil liberties organizations to address broader issues of civil rights. Along with the ACLU and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the WDL was influential in successfully challenging the antilabor repression of free speech by Mayor Frank "I-am-the-law" Hague in Jersey City, New Jersey. Together with the NAACP, the WDL defended Odell Waller, an African-American sharecropper convicted of killing his landlord over a crop dispute who was eventually executed.

The WDL extended its work beyond the borders of the United States in the late 1940s. It created an International Commission of Inquiry into Forced Labor to investigate involuntary servitude in the American South as well as Communist countries and southern Africa. The WDL, backed by the American Federation of Labor (AFL), succeeded in persuading the United Nations to create a Commission on Forced Labor. In the 1950s, the WDL helped reform the Industrial Personnel Security Program, which had enabled employers to label union organizers security risks to evade federal restrictions on retaliating against union members and leaders. During this period the WDL continued to defend the legal rights of American workers not protected by other organizations. These workers included soldiers in the U.S. military, migrant farm workers, merchant seamen, and the unemployed.

As it matured the WDL continued to address the concerns of minorities and especially of minority workers. The WDL was the first organization to protest the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and in the 1960s, its Apprenticeship Program trained more than 30,000 minority youth in the building trades, helping them gain union membership and skilled jobs. In the 1990s, the WDL reaffirmed its commitment to ending forced labor by publicizing new cases of peonage among agricultural workers.

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See also **International Labor Defense; Sharecropping and Tenancy; Socialist Party of America; Southern Tenant Farmers Union; Thomas, Norman**

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' compensation statutes govern the obligation of employers to compensate their employees for injuries arising out of and in the course of employment. Workers' compensation—known as workmen's compensation until the 1970s and 1980s—thus functions as an alternative to the common law of torts under which an injured employee could sue an employer in the event of an injury. Compared to tort liability, workers' compensation both simplifies and expands the basis for awarding compensation to employees—relying on work connection rather than fault as its test of liability—while at the same time benefiting employers by limiting damages to legislatively determined benefit rates instead of the significantly more generous jury-determined awards traditionally available in tort law.

The Origins of American Workers' Compensation Statutes

American workers' compensation statutes were enacted beginning in the second decade of the twentieth century. In the years after the Civil War, employees in American industry were injured and killed at rates that dwarfed those in comparable industrializing nations. Overall at the turn of the twentieth century, one worker in 50 was killed or disabled for at least 4 weeks each year because of a work-related accident. This crisis presented a paradox for free-labor thinking, the leading paradigm of American economic, political, and social life after the Civil War. Indeed such free-labor principles as competition among firms, which tended to drive down working conditions, and worker independence, which led employees to disregard safety procedures, appeared to be exacerbating factors in the industrial-accident epidemic. These and other failures of free-labor ideology and the mounting toll on the industrial army gave rise to a series of large-scale experiments in adapting the nineteenth-century law and politics to a new problem of industrial social policy.

Four leading approaches to the accident problem emerged in the United States. Judges, jurists, and legislatures developed the law of employers' liability

as an attempt to set principles to govern the rights and duties of employers and employees in the event of work injuries. Workers themselves organized widespread systems of cooperative insurance that may have provided more compensation to injured employees than any other mechanism. Some of the most sophisticated employers developed early private programs of injury compensation. And social insurance advocates began to propose compulsory workers' compensation schemes along the lines of those that had been enacted in Western Europe beginning in the 1880s.

It was hardly inevitable that workers' compensation statutes would become the central American mechanism for compensating work-injury victims. Yet each of the alternatives to workers' compensation faltered in the years leading up to 1910. Notwithstanding a frantic series of legislative amendments, the common law of employers' liability seemed increasingly unable to deal with the mounting number of injured workers. Workers' cooperatives were ever more powerless to police against the proliferation of new, lower cost insurance associations that siphoned off the cooperatives' lowest risk members. Employers' contractual work-injury compensation systems in turn proved far more expensive than the common law of employers' liability, and so in many industries competition from cost-cutting competitors threatened to do in the welfare capitalist experiment in work injury compensation.

Drawing workers' compensation programs from transatlantic progressive policy dialogues, American reformers became convinced that workers' compensation was the best solution to the industrial-accident crisis. In place of tort law's tortured inquiries into the relative rights and duties of employers and employees, they reasoned, workers' compensation would substitute rational compensation based on the needs of injured employees and their families. Where the cooperative insurance societies generally failed to create financial incentives for employers to take safety precautions in the production process, workers' compensation would ensure that employers paid for the costs of the injuries arising out of their operations. And where the costs of employer-specific welfare capitalist plans often created prohibitive competitive disadvantages, compulsory workers' compensation statutes would force all employers in an industry to take on the added injury-compensation costs involved in moving from the common law of tort to workers' compensation.

Yet for all the virtues offered by workers' compensation, the question why workers' compensation statutes were enacted so quickly and with such unanimity in American states in the decades after 1910 has long posed a troubling problem for legal and political

historians. Five leading interpretations have emerged. One school of thought contends that workers' compensation statutes were enacted on the basis of a Progressive Era idea of social justice. The corporate liberal school holds, to the contrary, that workers' compensation statutes were enacted to allow employers to avoid the increasing costs of tort lawsuits by shunting injured employees into a system in which payments were perhaps more common but were sharply capped at low-dollar values. A third approach, the prior-regulation approach, is agnostic as to the question of increased or decreased employer costs but associates the enactment of workmen's compensation statutes with the fact that work injuries—unlike sickness or old age—were governed by the law of employers' liability such that enacting workers' compensation statutes did not require the creation of a completely new regulatory regime where none had existed before. The fourth leading explanation—and perhaps the most influential in the literature—is the bargain theory. Under the bargain theory, workers' compensation statutes attracted constituencies sufficient to ensure enactment because they offered something for almost everyone. Employees gained by receiving simple and effective insurance against work accidents. Employers gained by receiving protection from the creeping possibility of high-verdict awards by juries.

Each of these four theories leaves much to be explained. The social justice theory cannot explain why so many sophisticated employers who often declined to support other social insurance reforms were supporters of workmen's compensation. The corporate liberal theory fails to account for the fact that employers' liability insurance rates increased (as they had been predicted to do), often sharply, in the early jurisdictions to enact workers' compensation statutes. The prior regulation theory does not explain why railroad employee injuries—the most heavily regulated injuries under the common law at the turn of the twentieth century—are still governed not by workers' compensation but by the law of employers' liability. And lastly the bargain theory fails to account for the fact that the first general workers' compensation statute in the United States—enacted in New York in 1910—included none of the benefits that the bargain is supposed to have provided. Indeed the New York statute—like several of the other earliest statutes—left employers exposed to potentially high-verdict tort suits by allowing the injured employee to choose ex-post between a lawsuit or a workers' compensation claim.

The fifth leading theory contends that progressive reformers set the agenda for legislation by drawing the workers' compensation model from European

policy dialogues. Once on the table, workers' compensation provided benefits to employees whose post-injury recoveries seemed likely to increase, as well as to the sophisticated welfare-capitalist employers who had adopted their own internal work-accident compensation schemes. Only by enacting compulsory statutory compensation schemes could sophisticated firms raise the labor costs of their cut-rate competitors to match the costs they had voluntarily assumed through their private, contractual compensation systems.

In 1910, New York enacted the nation's first important compensation statute. Over the next decade, 42 of the 48 states followed suit. But enactment of the statutes was only the beginning of the story. In early judicial tests in Montana and (most importantly) New York in 1911 (*Ives v. South Buffalo Railway*) courts struck down workers' compensation statutes as unconstitutional takings of the employers' property. A combination of state constitutional amendment, popular outrage, and judicial retreat (for example, *Jensen v. Southern Pacific Co.*, *New York Central RR Co. v. White*) followed, making clear that workers' compensation was not necessarily unconstitutional. Yet the threat of judicial review had a powerful effect on the trajectory and character of workers' compensation in the United States.

The first American compensation statutes, like the workers' compensation program in the United Kingdom to this day, had allowed employees to elect between compensation claims and a lawsuit after being injured. Statutes enacted in the wake of the 1911 New York decision however were redrafted with a *quid pro quo* or exclusive structure in which the employer's obligation to compensate in the absence of fault was matched by the employee's inability to sue in tort for unlimited damages even where the employer had been at fault. Moreover as extra protection from unconstitutionality, statutes enacted after the 1911 New York decision typically adopted an elective or voluntary structure in which employers were subject to the statute only if they opted in or (depending on the state) declined to opt out. Both of these alterations had powerful effects on post-injury compensation. Absent the choice to sue at law, injured employees were left with capped compensation claims. Elective statutes in turn sharply constrained the ability of states to raise compensation benefit rates.

The Administration of Workmen's Compensation

The enactment of workers' compensation statutes coincided with a decline in industrial-accident rates

and the end of the U.S. world-historic industrial accident crisis, although it is unclear how much of the progress was due to changed employer accident costs, to widespread public attention that workers' compensation brought to the industrial accident crisis, or to other factors. The success of workers' compensation programs signaled a shift from the free-labor ideology of the post-Civil War moment toward the actuarial categories and managerial models of the twentieth-century state. Where tort law had entailed individual inquiries into the boundaries of individuals' freedom of action, workers' compensation statutes aggregated accident cases and averaged the outcomes. Workmen's compensation thus seemed at times like a kind of entering wedge for a whole panoply of social insurance schemes, schemes that by the middle of the twentieth century would become the modern welfare state.

Compensation statutes also helped to rework many of the nation's legal and political institutions. Many of the reformers who would become leaders in the New Deal cut their teeth on workers' compensation reforms in the 1910s. Compensation statutes introduced the first mass system of administrative adjudication, replacing judges and juries with specialist administrators; they established the constitutional legitimacy of regulating the labor contract; and they supplied a model for the New Deal's programs of economic security and insurance. Workers' compensation statutes anticipated exceptions in New Deal programs for agricultural and domestic laborers. Workers' compensation prefigured the ways in which mid-century American social policy would rely heavily on such private entities as insurance companies, labor unions, and employer human resources departments as the administrative apparatus for implementing social policy. In addition workers' compensation (originally *workmen's* compensation) also set in place the gendered structure of mid-century American welfare state programs, providing benefits through predominantly male wages and often limiting death benefits to widows rather than widowers.

If compensation statutes were models for the twentieth-century administrative state, they foreshadowed its limits as well. Where the turn of the twentieth century had been characterized by eclectic experimentation and openness in the American law of work accidents, by the middle of the twentieth century, an interest-group politics of employers, insurers, plaintiff's lawyers, and labor unions seemed to lock down and ossify reform. Unions and employers for example quickly turned claims hearings from arbitrations of the needs of an injured worker into adversarial contests. Interest group politics also helped to prevent workers' compensation from serving as a model for

social insurance programs, like health insurance, as had been hoped by some of its proponents. In addition interest-group politics helped to ensure that work accident law in the United States would remain a patchwork scheme of overlapping state and federal systems, all existing alongside employers' liability tort schemes for railroad workers and seamen.

In the middle of the twentieth century, interest-group domination of workers' compensation policy also produced expansion in the scope of workers' compensation statutes. Agricultural workers and industrial diseases were brought within the scope of workers' compensation statutes for example as employers saw financial advantages in replacing tort law's open-ended damages awards with compensation programs' legislatively determined damages schedules.

And yet injured workers and their representatives at mid-century also found new ways to expand their post-injury remedies. In such areas of tort law as manufacturers' liability for defective products, the workmen's compensation principle that enterprises should pay for the damages arising out of their operations was yoked to a legal regime that allowed juries to award uncapped damages to injury victims. In addition the legislative dynamics of workers' compensation programs caused claimants' lawyers for the first time to assemble their own lobbying organizations. Those early claimants' lawyer organizations in turn gave rise to the modern American plaintiffs' bar, an institution that by the late twentieth century would be one of the most powerful political forces in the nation. Among other things the plaintiffs' bar has developed a successful practice of bringing tort suits against product manufacturers and other third parties for injuries on the job. Workers' compensation statutes insulate employers from suit because they are an injured employee's exclusive remedy against an employer. But third parties, such as product manufacturers, are not so insulated. And so in so-called third-party suits, which make up about one-half of all products' liability actions in the United States, many injured employees file workers' compensation claims against their employers while simultaneously pursuing high-damage-award product liability actions.

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WORKFARE

Workfare is a federal program that requires those receiving welfare to work in exchange for their benefits. Workfare workers receive no wages, but they continue to receive the welfare benefits (such as subsidized housing, food stamps, or cash payments) for which they are qualified. Work assignments are commonly in the public sector, such as parks' maintenance, janitorial or hospital work, though corporate and non-profit employers also participate, often drawn by salary savings or tax incentives.

Workfare as a concept has a long history beginning with the workhouses and poor farms of the 1600s. However it took on renewed life in the last-half of the twentieth century. The U.S. Congress considered requiring work in exchange for benefits in the mid-fifties, but its advocates were outnumbered by those who sought to keep women (who comprised the majority of welfare recipients) at home. Workfare officially began in 1962 with the Community Work and Training Programs (CWTP) included in Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) legislation. The CWTP remained small, with only 12 states participating by 1967. Meanwhile the numbers of welfare recipients climbed dramatically. From 1960–1968, their numbers nearly doubled from 745,000 families to 1.5 million, and by 1972, they doubled again, as 3 million families received relief. Spurred by this growing population, welfare rights groups affiliated with the National Welfare Rights Organization demanded higher benefit levels, day care for working parents,

and medical benefits. Expanding rolls provided conservative politicians with an opening to attack welfare. The Nixon administration's Family Assistance Plan (1969) included a punitive workfare provision. Though it was defeated, in part by mobilization of welfare rights activists, its forced-work requirements were incorporated into AFDC.

Workfare differs from government jobs programs, such as the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression or the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) in the 1970s. Those voluntary programs created jobs for unemployed workers seen as deserving them—usually white men. In contrast workfare programs disproportionately affect women and people of color and assume that welfare recipients are unemployed due to lack of motivation, skills, or a work ethic. Most recipients' work lives however are marked with cycles of employment in low-wage jobs or the informal economy, alternating with periods on public assistance. Others are single parents working to raise their children at home.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (1996) ended six decades of support under AFDC, which the act renamed Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The new law, administered by states, ended the concept of welfare as an entitlement program and placed a 5-year lifetime limit on benefits, requiring adults to work after 2 years.

During the 1990s, TANF's workfare requirements enabled politicians to replace union workers with unwaged workfare workers. Tens of thousands of workfare workers performed the same jobs that cities, counties, and private employers had previously paid wages to union workers to perform. In this process of job restructuring, welfare recipients replaced waged workers, who often ended up on the welfare rolls themselves.

One of the largest workfare programs began in New York City in 1995. As attrition thinned the ranks of unionized city workers by some 20,000, their positions were filled with twice that number of part-time workers from the city's Work Experience Program. A similar dynamic occurred across the nation. In San Francisco 3,000 workfare workers labored in public transit and parks; in Los Angeles 25,000 worked in schools and hospitals; in Wisconsin tens of thousands were put to work under that state's plan to cut welfare rolls.

Organizing Workfare Unions

Workfare workers have a history of organizing unions. In 1973, welfare recipients in New York

City's Work Relief Employment Project (WREP) began organizing among the program's 10,000 workers—the vast majority of them African-American and Latinos—who labored at over 400 worksites. With financial support from community groups workers inaugurated United WREP Workers in February 1974. Its objectives included voluntary, adequately paying jobs, and collective-bargaining rights. Its organizing drew from traditional labor movement tactics, such as demonstrations, pickets, and collecting signatures in support of a union election. Support from trade unions was mixed, with some skeptical about the organizing, while others supported it both ideologically and materially. By late 1974, more than 30% of the workers had authorized United WREP Workers to represent them, and the union announced it would petition for an election. Shortly thereafter AFSCME District Council 37 convinced the state's labor board to add the workfare workers to its existing bargaining units.

Large-scale efforts to organize workfare workers re-emerged in the late 1990s with the explosive growth of workfare under TANF. The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) set up organizing projects in New York City, Milwaukee, and Los Angeles, among other cities. In New York City ACORN organized demonstrations and filed collective grievances, winning improvements in conditions as well as a grievance procedure but no actual wages. When the city refused to recognize the union's 13,000 authorization cards, Jobs with Justice facilitated a symbolic election, resulting in a vote for ACORN representation of 16,989 to 207. While workfare participants were not covered under collective-bargaining laws, the process showed their desire for representation and put pressure on the city to curb workfare abuses.

In San Francisco People Organized to Win Employment Rights (POWER) was founded as an independent union in July 1998. Because its members did not have bargaining rights under state law, POWER used direct-action tactics, winning a grievance procedure, free public transportation, health and safety protections, and a 40% reduction in work hours. The city agreed to consult POWER before making any changes, recognizing it as workfare workers' *de facto* collective-bargaining agent.

In some cases workfare organizing deepened connections between traditional unions and community-based poor workers' unions. For instance the Communications Workers of America and ACORN launched a joint campaign in New Jersey in 1998, called People Organizing Workfare Workers, and gathered thousands of authorization cards that were used to pressure employers.

By century's end the number of people on workfare had declined. From 1996–1999, TANF rolls fell by over 50%, and some six million recipients lost benefits. Forcing the poor into workfare jobs without childcare, transportation, or education forced many off the welfare rolls; others were cut off after exhausting their limited period of assistance. Those workfare workers who remain continue to organize for their rights as both workers and as welfare recipients.

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See also **Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); Living Wage; Minimum-Wage Laws; Poor People's Campaign; Unemployment; Welfare Rights**

WORKING GIRLS' CLUBS

In the 1880s, an increasing number of females in their late teens and early twenties left their parents' home to work in urban factories. The young, single, and increasingly immigrant, workingwomen struggled to find affordable housing and social outlets. Three general forms of clubs developed to address those needs. The first were associations and homes established by middle-class, white, female philanthropists who were concerned about the morality of girls living alone in

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the city. The second were cooperatives established by workingwomen, sometimes with the assistance of wealthy reformers, but managed by the workingwomen themselves. The third were clubs founded by black women to provide services for themselves, often requiring the assistance of middle-class women's associations. These clubs varied in their aims, organization, and services.

White women's Christian associations began to offer affordable housing to white, working girls in urban centers beginning in 1856. In 1884, New York philanthropist Grace Hoadley Dodge founded the Working Girls' Society to provide workingwomen with moral, health, and religious instruction. Several additional clubs followed in New York and other industrial cities in the East and Midwest. In 1885, the leaders of the clubs formed the national Association of Working Girls' Societies (AWGS) and published a magazine *Far and Near*. The clubs were typically tied to homes for working girls also established by middle-class philanthropists to provide female laborers with affordable housing, camaraderie, and a social outlet.

The number of working girls' clubs and the religious diversity of their sponsors grew through the late nineteenth century, but the membership increasingly comprised women working in vocations. The U.S. Department of Labor speculated in 1898 that the primary reasons factory workers did not reside in the clubs were the cost of the boarding clubs and their location far from the manufacturing districts. Some workers also objected to the moral regulation the patrons of the club imposed on the residents. Many of the factory workers therefore resided in tenements.

In 1892, settlement worker Jane Addams founded an alternative form of a working girls' club in Chicago. Though Addams had learned of the AWGS a year earlier when Dodge visited the Hull-House settlement, she founded Jane Club in response to requests by workingwomen who needed secure and affordable housing to enable them to organize and strike for better working conditions and higher wages. With the assistance of labor activist Mary Kenney (O'Sullivan), Addams acquired a house and paid the initial expenses but allowed the club to be managed as a cooperative by the members without moral education or behavior requirements.

Into the twentieth century laboring women developed a handful of similar cooperatives in other cities. These associations typically offered members insurance or mutual aid, recreation, educational opportunities, and sometimes housing. They comprised native-born and immigrant women, self-segregated by ethnicity.

African-American women who migrated from rural areas to work in cities during this period faced racial as well as economic restrictions in their search for housing. The existing working girls' clubs accepted only white women and most respectable boardinghouses were too expensive. Many single black women without means, whether they worked in a factory, office, or in the professions, thus resided in the cities' vice districts.

During the 1890s through the 1920s, a number of African-American women established clubs for themselves. In 1913, Jane Edna Hunter and a group of black female workers in Cleveland established the Working Girls' Home Association, later the Phillis Wheatley Association, which offered boarding, social activities, and assisted its members in securing employment. Other black working girls' clubs were established in Boston, New York, Buffalo, Providence, and Chicago. Some of these clubs sought assistance from local chapters of the National Association of Colored Women or from black churches. Sometimes the middle-class clubwomen and church members' efforts to impose their moral values on the residents caused tension between the groups; however many of the homes needed the financial support to remain viable.

During the height of the industrial revolution, white, black, religious, and ethnic working girls' clubs provided workingwomen in urban centers with essential services. For a few the clubs became places where women were also able collectively to organize and agitate for better working conditions and higher wages. Most required their members to adhere on some level to the moral values of their middle-class sponsors. Many of the clubs remained vibrant associations through the 1920s but were unable to survive the Great Depression. The few clubs that did survive adapted their services and continued to support working girls through the twentieth century.

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WORKING-CLASS FEMINISM

Working-class feminism has had a dramatic effect on the lives of men and women. Where once women were assigned to sex-segregated jobs under seniority and wage schemes separate from and unequal to those of men, they now expect to be able to vie with men for positions on an equal basis. The most important issues relating to women in the paid work force today, such as sexual harassment, pay equity, and pregnancy and family leave, were central concerns to working-class feminists who first openly challenged the old system beginning in the 1950s.

The origins of working-class feminism lie in the struggle of women to define their place in society over the course of the last 150 years. It first took significant organizational form when the coalition of working-class and reform women who championed Progressive Era protective legislation regulating women's working hours and conditions created a campaign to challenge workingwomen's status. To those women toiling in cotton mills and food-processing plants, in garment shops and laundries, and at other work sites, these measures provided welcomed relief. Unionists of all political stripes, including Communists who were influential in the labor movement in the 1930s and 1940s, steadfastly defended protective laws. They rejected the call of mostly upper class, professional women in the National Woman's party for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). These workers and their allies accepted the limits on women's working hours and regulation of working conditions; by the 1960's wage-earning women chafed at the constraints protective laws placed on their ability to obtain overtime pay and work in higher-paying jobs as well as the second-class status in unions.

Most historians identify the 20 years following the end of World War II as crucial to the grounding of working-class feminism. The war, especially the introduction of women of all races into production jobs previously considered suitable only for men, had a limited effect on the rise of feminism: There was little popular support for gender equality in the 1940s. The demographic, economic, and technological transformations in the 1950s and early 1960s proved to be more significant. More women, especially married women with young children, entered the workforce in search of permanent employment. As part of the postwar consumer culture, they sought higher wages and greater opportunity; automation lessened the heavy-work requirements of designated male jobs, giving rise to a halting and uneven call that equality replace protection on the job.

As working-class women began to think differently about their status at work, the union hall, and at

home, a cadre of union women activists—staff members and elected officers—joined together under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, with business, religious, and civic leaders to form the Women's Bureau Coalition. Black and white women unionists dominated the coalition. It was during the early 1960s, with a sympathetic Democratic administration in office and Esther Peterson, long-time union staff member and head of the Women's Bureau, that women achieved their most impressive results. They played a crucial role in bringing about the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the formation of the president's Commission on the Status of Women, the expansion of the Fair Employment Standards Act to include low-paid and marginalized workers, and the enactment of a law providing for federal government support for day care. Even as female leaders maintained their support for protective laws, the results of these efforts pointed to a growing support for equality.

Female union leaders opposed passage of a provision banning sex discrimination in employment contained in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They believed, as did many others, that the new law should ban only racial discrimination, viewing the sex discrimination ban, originally introduced by a recalcitrant white southern Congressman, as a distraction. They were as surprised as union men when rank-and-file women filed a large number of complaints and lawsuits against their employers and unions based on the new law. No labor organization was immune to such charges, although the level and type of unfair treatment women experienced varied across and within unions according to membership composition, union politics, and industrial workplace organization. The women's action emboldened the largely middle-class liberal feminists in such organizations as the National Organization for Women (NOW), who in turn, lobbied reluctant government officials to enforce Title VII fully. Judicial rulings largely invalidated protective laws by the early 1970s.

Working-class unionists came together in scores on new groups to support gender equality. By the time the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), the largest and most influential of these groups, held its founding convention in 1974, most unions, as well as the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), had formally endorsed the ERA. Even so some union feminists remained skeptical of the amendment's equality standard. National leaders, like the Hotel Workers' Myra Wolfgang, budged little from the view that sweeping demands for equality were not in the best interest of

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workingwomen; others, notably activists and staff members with the United Automobile Workers, chafed at protective measures constraints and welcomed the ERA. Most working-class feminists fell somewhere between these two tendencies. They grappled with the tensions between the goals and strategies of equality and difference, understanding that the ERA would not solve many problems affecting workingwomen.

The CLUW members succeeded in establishing an effective, cross-racial organization that helped transform gender relations in unions and contributed to advancing liberal issues in the Democratic party. Their membership increased from 6,000 members in the late 1970s to 18,000 by the mid-1980s. They faced opposition from those who accused them of a too cozy relationship with union leaders. Other feminists and some civil rights leaders attacked them in the face of a severe economic downturn in the mid-1970s that threatened to undo affirmative action progress due to their defense of the seniority principle of “last hired, first fired.”

As a result of the continuing prevalence of female-dominated employment sectors, working-class women in the late 1970s shifted their attention to advocating from a perspective of gender difference. They focused on pay equity or comparable worth, and on reproductive rights issues, such as working to help pass the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978. In the 1980s and 1990s, as seasoned activists from industrial unions worked with younger unionists in unions representing service and government employees, they continued to address the central concern of power and gender relations with a practical feminism that recognized the unique experiences of wage-earning women.

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Equal Pay Act
Fair Employment Standards Act
Pregnancy Discrimination Act

See also **Coalition of Labor Union Women**

WORKPLACE HAZARDS, DISABILITY, AND INJURY

Workers in every occupation have long faced the threat of work-induced disabilities and illnesses. The particular kinds of hazards encountered by workers, however—as well as the kinds of injuries and illnesses produced—vary in relation to such technological developments as mechanization, beliefs about gender and race, and the legal climate. The impact of workplace hazards reaches well beyond the workplace, shaping working-class life, inspiring unionization, and affecting the lives of disabled workers themselves.

Changing Industries, Evolving Hazards

Workers in major industries have historically faced a heavy toll in injuries and accidents. During the early years of the railroad industry in the 1860s, accidents were so common that missing or crushed fingers signified an experienced brakeman or engineer. Coal miners encountered similar dangers in the 1860s: 6% of Pennsylvania miners sustained serious temporary disabilities, another 6% were permanently disabled, and another 6% died. Due to rapid mechanization and the increasing scale of industry, injury rates peaked in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1900, American workers were from three to five times more likely to die in accidents than their European counterparts, depending on their industry. This industrial accident crisis inspired the passage of workers' compensation laws and the safety movement in the 1910s, which helped halve industrial accident rates by the mid-twentieth century. Certain industries, such as meatpacking, remain dangerous today, however; roughly one-third of meatpacking workers develop an occupational injury or illness each year.

Seemingly lighter jobs—often those filled by women—have also long been physically taxing and injurious. Early twentieth-century servants complained of the painful feet, lower back problems, and varicose veins caused by 15-hour days and 7-day workweeks, while seamstresses and laundresses developed pelvic injuries from foot-powered treadles and irons. Ironically many of the early light industrial jobs that employers advertised as being especially suitable for women—and which offered women a means of avoiding the drudgery of household labor—involved high levels of exposure to toxic chemicals. Women thus made up a majority of the victims of many of the first occupational diseases to be identified: Phossy-jaw (necrosis of the jaw induced by white phosphorus) among matchmakers around 1900, radium poisoning among watch dial painters in the 1920s, and benzene poisoning in the 1930s and 1940s. The rise in repetitive-stress injuries and environmental illnesses in the late twentieth century testifies to the potential dangers lurking in the seemingly safe environs of offices.

The Paradoxical Impact of Mechanization

Technological developments and in particular, mechanization, have had dramatic and often paradoxical impacts on workers' safety. They have frequently produced startling increases in certain types of injuries and have even created new diseases. Both the mangles of early twentieth-century steam laundries and the die presses introduced at Ford Motor Company in the 1910s caused vast numbers of finger amputations, while textile workers risked being scalped if their hair became caught in power-operated shafts. The rise of mechanized drills in mining, granite cutting, and foundries in the 1920s, in turn, created silicosis, an incurable and often fatal lung disease caused by the inhalation of silica particles from rock. Similar epidemics of dust diseases—brown, black, and white lung—developed in mechanized textile mills, coal mines, and among asbestos workers, while the nuclear, chemical, and plastics revolutions caused radiation sickness and cancer.

Mechanization—and the accompanying growth in the scale of industry—has long been an integral part of employers' quest for productivity, a quest that has often had negative consequences for workers' safety. The sheer size of early twentieth-century steel plants, as well as the vastly increased productivity of blast furnaces, for instance, required railroad tracks across much of the plant floor as well as dozens of unguarded walkways high above the ground. Mechanized coal

mines, by contrast, held many of the same hazards as before—explosions, cave-ins, and haulage car accidents—but their reliance on electricity, greater concentrations of explosive coal dust, and increased size made mass tragedies far more likely. A single open light brought into a gassy area in a Pennsylvania mine in 1902, for instance, caused an explosion that killed 112 men. Even unionized workers had little control over the vast array of new hazards presented by mechanization, although skilled workers sometimes had the option of making the difficult choice between safer working practices and higher productivity and wages.

Moreover mechanization has often tempted employers to try to push the pace of work beyond what human bodies can withstand. Starting in the late nineteenth century, steelworkers lost much of their traditional control over the speed and amount of work. As in many other industries, newly introduced “pushers” drove workers so hard that by 1907, one in four workers at U.S. Steel was injured each year. Speed-ups continue to cause injuries today: After the Hormel Meat Company fired many of its expert workers and increased line speed in the mid-1990s, over 70% of workers at a Nebraska plant developed carpal tunnel syndrome.

At the same time some technological advances—and certain types of mechanization—have significantly reduced workplace hazards. Overall electricity provided better light and removed the labyrinths of dangerous boilers, flywheels, pulleys, and belts on factory floors. Improved ventilation systems and drilling with water significantly reduced the scale of the silicosis epidemic by the 1950s. Moreover the rise of the safety movement in the 1910s—which began with the efforts of U.S. Steel, DuPont, and Ford to educate workers and redesign machines—inspired design engineers to incorporate guards, automatic shut-off and reversal mechanisms, and other safety devices into new machines. Better medical care has also gradually eliminated many of the permanent disabilities once caused by the everyday wear-and-tear of work: A broken leg for instance now rarely costs a worker the ability to walk.

Race, Gender, and the Legal Climate

Assumptions about race and gender have often placed certain groups in unsafe workplaces. In the infamous Hawk's Nest tunnel case in the 1930s, Union Carbide and Carbon specifically recruited migrant African-American laborers to drill through rock that consisted

of nearly 99% pure silica (which the company planned to use in manufacturing). The company failed to inform workers about the dangers and refused to permit wet-drilling, provide masks, or ventilate the tunnel; instead managers relied on racism and the isolation of their workforce to hide the deaths of at least 500 workers and the disablement of many more from the public. Ironically the horrendous safety provisions revealed the company's avarice by greatly speeding up the course of silicosis among workers, who died after only a few months rather than a few decades. Likewise racism shaped how California farmer treated their workers during the Depression, reserving the relatively easy ladder crops for whites while confining Mexicans and Asians to the often literally backbreaking ground crops.

Women's supposed docility, dexterity, and hostility to unions, as well as the assumption that they needed clean, nonstrenuous work, made them an attractive workforce for many light industrial jobs. As previously mentioned many of these jobs involved exposure to dangerous toxins yet because early workers' compensation laws covered neither occupational diseases nor domestic nor farm workers, women made ill by their work rarely received compensation. Ironically concerns about how workplace hazards would affect women have at times limited their employment options. Early twentieth-century protective legislation, for instance, excluded women from many well-paid skilled jobs in the lead industry, but left men entirely unprotected from lead poisoning.

Changing legal and regulatory regimes have fundamentally shaped both the hazards faced by workers and the treatment of disabled workers. During much of the nineteenth century, injured and disabled workers struggled with, as John Fabian Witt argues in the *Accidental Republic* (2004), "a legal climate that made accidents cheap." In upward of 85% of cases, employers' liability law protected employers from paying compensation. The limited scope and weak enforcement of factory safety legislation—Iowa had only two inspectors for nearly 15,000 workplaces in 1903—likewise failed to push employers to invest in safety equipment. The advent of mandatory no-fault workers' compensation laws in the 1910s encouraged companies to invest in machine guards, ventilation systems, and other safety devices as cost-saving measures. Combined with the safety and efficiency movements, and more stringent safety and factory inspection laws, workers' compensation dramatically reduced accident rates by the late 1930s. Cost continues to help determine workplace safety however; in the late twentieth century, globalization began redistributing jobs to countries that lack basic safety provisions or effective workers' compensation programs, in effect redistributing the social burdens of dangerous workplaces.

Victims of occupational diseases have often had great difficulty winning compensation. Most states were slow to offer compensation for occupational illnesses. Moreover the difficulty of tracking victims and identifying the causes of diseases that can often take years if not decades to develop has made it easy for unscrupulous employers to resist paying ill workers. For instance although English doctors definitively linked brown lung with the high levels of cotton dust found in mechanized textile mills in 1705, stricken workers gained no compensation until the late 1970s. Instead company doctors diagnosed workers as having tuberculosis, lung cancer, bronchitis, or other noncompensable diseases. Since the establishment of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) in 1970, OSHA standards for cotton dust and carcinogenic chemicals, among others, have raised awareness about occupational diseases, while OSHA inspections have significantly reduced accident rates in certain industries.

Beyond the Workplace

The impact of workplace hazards has extended far beyond the workplace itself, shaping working-class communities, inspiring unionization, and of course affecting the lives of disabled workers themselves. Until the mid-twentieth century, work-induced injuries and illnesses were so frequent as to be considered a commonplace misfortune. When Crystal Eastman interviewed Pittsburgh workers for her famous treatise, *Work-Accidents and the Law*, she found that workers had trouble remembering even such major injuries as the loss of a finger or a crushed skull. In fact a fully functional body may well have been abnormal in many communities. The physical perfection of people in the Sears catalog shocked memoirist Harry Crews: "Nearly everybody I knew [in rural Georgia] had something missing, a finger cut off, a toe split, an ear half-chewed away, an eye clouded with blindness from a glancing fence staple." Injuries have also shaped the membership of communities, especially in company towns. A North Carolina textile worker's refusal to return to work the day after losing two fingers in a carding room accident cost him not only his job but also his home. Moreover workplace hazards have often spilled over into surrounding communities: In the tristate region of Oklahoma, Missouri, and Kansas, notorious in the 1930s as the center of the silicosis epidemic, residents continue to struggle with respiratory diseases caused by tailings piles.

The fear of disability or death at work has long stimulated unionization and aided unionization

campaigns. Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee drew heavily on reports of farmworkers sickened by leukemia and other occupational diseases caused by heavy pesticide to attract union supporters and create negative press for growers, while the renowned union organizer Mother Jones found one of her most powerful rhetorical weapons in the deformed hands and breaker boys in coal mines. Supporting ill comrades could also become a central part of the union's identity, as in the Western Federation of Miners. To avoid dealing with company doctors, the union founded and ran a number of hospitals in the 1890s.

Ironically while the threats posed by workplace hazards and disabilities have often inspired unionization, unions have not always been very progressive on health and safety issues. Starting in the 1880s, the railroad brotherhoods joined railroad companies in excluding disabled workers from returning to regular employment and blaming them for causing their own injuries. Union locals also discouraged disabled members from remaining active; however the brotherhoods eventually established a union home for destitute members. More recently the United Mine Workers of America attempted to balance its budget on the backs of disabled miners and miners' widows, groups that union leaders viewed as politically expendable. After losing financial stipends and medical coverage in the 1960s, disabled miners and widows formed the Black Lung Association and helped successfully lead a 20,000-person wildcat strike in 1970 for union democracy, proper benefits, and federal black lung compensation. Starting in the 1970s, however, OSHA's work on health and safety standards inspired many unions to become more engaged in health and safety issues.

Workplace hazards have of course also affected the lives of those injured and their families. Disabilities were relatively common in most working-class communities until the mid-twentieth century, and disabled people seem to have found relative acceptance. Starting in the late nineteenth century, the growing interest of employers in efficiency, mechanization, and high productivity, and their related assumption that people with disabilities were inefficient workers, however, made it ever more difficult for disabled workers to find employment. Notably the Ford Motor Company actively hired people with disabilities, placed them in positions where they could be productive, and paid them equal wages, but many disabled workers were forced to turn to either low-wage, low-skill jobs in sheltered workshops or the informal labor market. While workers' compensation undoubtedly benefited disabled workers and their families, it provided further disincentives for employers to hire people with disabilities. The vocational rehabilitation movement, which

began in the 1910s, gradually educated employers about disabled workers' capabilities; as a result many employers temporarily hired people with disabilities during World War II. Many disabled people still struggle to find employment today, although the disability rights movement and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 have significantly reduced barriers.

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Disabilities Act

See also **Bureau of Labor Standards; Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA); Workers' Compensation**

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

The Roosevelt administration launched the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935 to employ some of the millions of Americans left unemployed by the Great Depression. The WPA, as it came to be

known, was one of the key programs of the second New Deal. Like the rest of the second New Deal, the WPA emphasized direct, interventionist solutions to the social problems of the Great Depression. The agency was headed by Harry Hopkins, who represented the more liberal, free-spending wing of the Roosevelt administration. Hopkins aimed to bring as many unemployed workers as possible into the WPA. The WPA was the largest of the New Deal relief efforts. In all approximately 13 million people worked for the WPA at some point, and the WPA employed three million workers annually. Every state and just about every county in the country hosted at least one WPA project.

Like the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Public Works Administration, the WPA attempted to replace standard poverty relief (the dole) with a relief stipend earned through work. Yet the WPA was also a significant departure from earlier New Deal programs. Whereas the CCC was expressly limited to conservation work, and the PWA was limited to the construction and expansion of public works, the WPA undertook all kinds of work to occupy the unemployed. The bulk of WPA relief recipients went to work on construction projects—building schools, hospitals, libraries, and other public buildings. The Roosevelt administration also took the WPA in a new direction, hiring painters, dancers, actors, writers, and other artists in several divisions of the WPA. For the first time in U.S. history, the federal government became a major benefactor of the arts.

The Federal Theater Project, headed by Hallie Flanagan, hired actors, directors, and stage hands to put on live theater. During its 4-year existence, an estimated 30 million Americans saw a Federal Theater Project play. The Federal Art Project hired painters, sculptors, and other fine artists to produce new works and teach Americans about art. While the painting of the Federal Art Project has generally been perceived as subpar, several skilled painters, among them Jackson Pollock, participated. Art historians credit the New York branch of the Federal Art Project for helping to lay the groundwork for the abstract expressionist movement that took hold later in the century.

The Federal Writers' Project composed travel guides, recorded regional folklore, and wrote histories of the individual states. Several prominent American writers, among them Saul Bellow, Ralph Ellison, John Steinbeck, and Richard Wright, worked for the WPA. Perhaps the greatest historical legacy of the Federal Writers' Project was the compilation of the WPA slave narratives. Alan Lomax led teams of WPA writers as they interviewed thousands of former slaves about life in the antebellum American South.

The slave narratives continue to be a rich if sometimes controversial source about life for African-Americans before emancipation.

The National Youth Administration (NYA) focused on unemployed young people. In an age where many families depended on the wages of teenage and young adult workers for survival, the high unemployment rate amongst the young was especially troubling. Hundreds of thousands of young Americans found first jobs with the WPA, and many went to college with the proceeds.

While historians frequently criticize the New Deal for its record of accomplishment regarding African-Americans, the WPA was generally a model agency in hiring black workers. Because of its high degree of federal control, local governments had less power to deny jobs to African-Americans. Even in the South many black workers found steady, albeit low-paid employment in the WPA. Hopkins appointed Mary McLeod Bethune to head the National Youth Administration (NYA) Division of Negro Affairs, making Bethune the highest ranking African-American official of the New Deal.

The WPA did not succeed so well in bringing relief to the millions of unemployed American women. Many women did serve in the WPA, especially on sewing projects, producing clothing, blankets, and other items for poverty relief. Yet the gender rules of the American workplace remained in place for the WPA. For instance few women found employment on the WPA construction projects.

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WORLD WAR I

The United States was an active belligerent during the First World War for just 20 months. During that time no foreign troops set foot on U.S. soil, no trenches scarred its countryside, and no long-range artillery targeted its cities. Ultimately American casualties were but a fraction of those endured by other belligerent powers. And yet the war profoundly affected American workers and unions. The war produced a

sudden and acute labor crisis in the United States. More than 3,000 strikes erupted during the first 6 months of U.S. participation in the war. Immediately following the war, the country was wracked by even more labor upheaval. No previous period of U.S. history has seen such intense and widespread labor conflict. Ultimately the World War I years altered the course of U.S. labor history, producing new patterns of workplace management, union organization, labor politics, and workforce composition that would affect American labor history long after the war.

In many ways modern American labor history began in the period of the Great War. To understand this and to appreciate how deeply the war changed things for American workers and unions, we must consider three factors: The context within which American workers encountered World War I, the surprising developments that unfolded during the war, and the impact of the war's end on workers and unions. Together these factors defined the legacy of the war for American labor.

Wartime Context

Because U.S. participation in the war was so brief, understanding its impact requires an acute appreciation for the fluid state of the nation, its workers, unions, and labor relations practices at the moment the U.S. entered the war. This in turn requires taking stock of both immediate and long-range trends that unfolded at the time of the war, setting the context for the way in which workers experienced the war.

The U.S. entry into the war changed the landscape of American labor relations in dramatic fashion. One of the changes first evident was the worker-friendly labor market that the war produced. Hostilities in Europe cut off the flow of immigrant labor to American industries. Military enlistments and the draft further drained the ranks of factory labor. Furthermore highly paid war production jobs pulled workers from less highly remunerated manufacturing jobs into war production plants, producing labor shortages in many industries. This turbulence broke down the boundaries of prewar labor markets. Drawn by the promise of factory wages, African-Americans left the agricultural South by the hundreds of thousands for jobs in steel mills, shipyards, and auto plants. As the East St. Louis riot of 1917 illustrated, black workers were often greeted by white hostility when they arrived in the North looking for industrial jobs. Other sources also fed the growing demand for labor. Women left their homes or their jobs in retail and service

industries for manufacturing employment. Mexicans also streamed northward across the boarder to fill job vacancies created by wartime conditions. Still labor shortages persisted.

Labor shortages gave workers an unprecedented opportunity to organize unions. For the first time in their working lives, many workers were thus able to address long-standing grievances. For more than a decade prior to the outbreak of the war, employers had waged a largely successful battle to make manufacturing industries open shop. Toward that end employers had used the stick of professional strikebreakers, blacklists, and yellow-dog contracts as well as the carrot of limited company benefits. Wartime conditions weakened employers' traditional anti-union weapons. Not only did labor markets favor workers, the role of employers' most reliable ally—the courts—receded and the executive branch of the federal government became more involved in shaping labor relations.

These short-range developments were in turn magnified by the three longer range developments that intersected on the eve of the war: Progressive Era reform politics and state building reached a high-water mark; the nation's labor movement entered a period of ferment and experimentation; and employers, policy makers, and progressive reformers began a search for a common solution to labor unrest and inefficiency.

The state's growth was perhaps the most evident of these changes. World War I dramatically expanded the role that the state played in the lives of Americans. But the war merely continued prewar trends in state building. From 1912–1916, progressive reformers had widened the capacity of the federal government to regulate the nation's economic life through new agencies, such as the Federal Trade Commission (1913), the Federal Reserve System (1914), and laws regulating working conditions on railroads and merchant ships. These initiatives were passed by Democratic majorities in both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate and signed by Democratic President Woodrow Wilson. Democrats' embrace of reform-oriented state building marked a significant moment in U.S. political history. The Wilsonian Democratic party attempted to position itself as the nation's reform party, broadening its base beyond the solid South. The Democrats' reform agenda in turn opened the party to an alliance with the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

The AFL was itself in a state of flux on the eve of World War I. Founded on the clear principles of craft union organization, nonpartisanship in politics, and voluntarism (as opposed to statism), the AFL had seen its central premises put to the test in the years

before the war. The labor federation was beset from two sides. On the one hand it was excluded from the nation's burgeoning mass-production industries and harassed elsewhere by employer opposition and hostile judicial interventions. On the other hand it felt pressured by the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), which mounted a significant challenge to the AFL after 1915 by seeking to organize unskilled workers who had been neglected by craft unions. These problems pushed AFL president Samuel Gompers and other union leaders into an alliance with Wilson's Democratic party. This was bad news for the Socialist party of America, which had long hoped to build an alliance with the AFL.

As the AFL underwent such changes, new problems and possibilities were also emerging in prewar workplace relations. The advent of mass production—perhaps best symbolized by the opening of Henry Ford's first assembly line in 1913—exacerbated tensions in the workplace. During the early twentieth century, manufacturers relentlessly drove to increase efficiency and their control over the work process by introducing new technologies, variable piece rates, bonus plans, and the scientific management theories famously expounded by Frederick Winslow Taylor. They succeeded in deskilling many elements of craft work, creating multitudes of semiskilled machine operatives to do the work once done by highly experienced all-around machinists, for example. But employers often found it difficult to retain semiskilled workers in whom they had invested considerable training costs. This very problem had led Ford to introduce his famous 5-dollar day, offering a premium wage to workers in return for loyalty to the company. With the same goals in mind, some other large-scale employers adopted welfare plans that included profit sharing and rudimentary health care and pension benefits.

The obvious need to find a solution to the nation's labor question prompted a wide range of reform-minded actors to embrace the idea of industrial democracy prior to the war. The term industrial democracy was not new. Some early twentieth-century reformer, such as the progressive lawyer Louis D. Brandeis, had used it. But it was President Wilson's creation of the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations (USCIR) in 1913 that placed the ideal of industrial democracy on the agendas of a broad range of reformers. Progressive labor lawyer and USCIR chairman, Frank P. Walsh, played a key role in that process. After 2 years of headline-grabbing USCIR hearings, Walsh issued a report that blamed the nation's labor troubles on autocratic management and argued that the "only hope for the solution" of labor conflict lay in "the rapid extension of the principles of democracy to industry." "Political freedom

can exist only where there is industrial freedom," the Walsh report said, "political democracy only where there is industrial democracy." The USCIR thus primed Americans to later see industrial democracy as the solution to wartime labor upheaval. Once at war President Wilson's framing of U.S. intervention in Europe as a struggle to spread democracy made the achievement of industrial democracy a priority on the nation's wartime domestic agenda.

But what would industrial democracy look like? While Americans increasingly embraced the term during World War I, they meant a wide range of different things by it. To most progressives industrial democracy meant bargaining between management and workers represented either by unions or nonunion employee councils. To AFL leaders however industrial democracy was only possible where unions won formal recognition, closed shops, and collective-bargaining contracts from employers. To the enlightened management officials who began to embrace the term, it usually meant labor-management cooperation that gave unions no recognition or privileges. To wartime radicals the term became a synonym for socialism, syndicalism, or workers' control. Much of the wartime upheaval was bound up in sorting out which brand of industrial democracy would prevail.

War, Workers, and Unions

The U.S. entry into the Great War in April 1917 unleashed a wave of labor conflicts within the United States. As strikes spread so, too, did efforts to suppress them. Many states and localities enacted work-or-fight laws that threatened idle workers (including strikers) with being drafted into the army. Superpatriot groups, such as the American Protective League, launched "slacker raids" in working-class communities. But the most infamous episode of repression occurred in Bisbee, Arizona. When copper miners tried to organize in July 1917, more than 1,000 of them were rounded up at gunpoint by vigilantes and shipped into the New Mexico desert on cattle cars. In Bisbee and throughout the country, employers blamed the IWW for stirring up strikes. The Socialist party (SP), too, was singled out for attack due to its decision to formally oppose U.S. participation in the war. Gompers and the AFL on the other hand supported both U.S. participation in the war and Wilson administration attacks on the antiwar SP and IWW. In September 1918, the Justice Department rounded up more than 100 IWW leaders and later put them on trial for obstructing the war effort. The AFL leaders and a small group of prowar

Socialists meanwhile organized the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy (AALD) and used their new organization to attack the SP. By the end of the war, both the once vibrant IWW and SP were all but destroyed.

Yet the Wilson administration realized early in the war mobilization that repression alone would not establish the labor peace necessary to win the war. As wartime strikes spread, Wilson named Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson (a former official of the United Mine Workers union) to lead a mediation commission that would investigate the causes of strikes and recommend solutions. Secretary Wilson and his mediators in turn became convinced of the need for a broad federal policy that would protect workers' rights to organize during the war's duration. Other administration officials came to a similar conclusion. Labor mediators with the U.S. Shipping Board, Fuel Administration, and Railroad Administration experimented with plans that gave workers the right to elect representatives who would bargain with their employers. As the strike rate rose through the fall of 1917, the administration finally moved decisively to centralize such experimentation and adopt a national policy in favor of collective bargaining. In January 1918, the president named a committee of labor and business leaders to hammer out such a policy. The outcome of the committee's work was the creation of the National War Labor Board (NWLB), composed of five employers, five trade unionists, and cochaired by former Republican President William H. Taft and USCIR veteran Frank Walsh. From April 1918 through the end of the war, the NWLB implemented a war-labor policy that was destined to alter the course of the nation's labor history.

A set of principles guided the NWLB's intervention in wartime industrial disputes. The board proclaimed the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. It called for equal pay for women working in jobs also done by men, and it set 8 hours as a nationally recognized workday in war industries. The NWLB did not force private employers to abandon the open shop and recognize unions, but it did obligate them to bargain with their workers. To promote collective bargaining in cases where employers refused to grant union recognition, the NWLB called for workers to elect shop-committee representatives who could bargain on their behalf. Employers were never enthusiastic about the NWLB or Wilsonian labor policies, but the AFL embraced them warmly. This was scarcely surprising, for such policies helped unions establish a strong foothold in steel mills, railroad shops, meatpacking plants, and electrical-manufacturing factories that organized labor had never been able to penetrate.

Yet few in labor or the government could have anticipated three unintended consequences that flowed from the administration's war labor program. First the very existence of agencies like the NWLB did not foster labor peace as much as they encouraged workers' to strike in an effort to win government intervention. Indeed the government program even helped equip strikers with a rationale for their militancy. Ultimately the NWLB admitted over 1,000 labor disputes to its docket before the war ended. Almost 90% of those cases originated in complaints by workers, most of which were brought to the board's attention when workers struck their employers. Militancy triggered government intervention, which in turn spread militancy. As one contemporary explained, the NWLB's decisions "looked so good to workers that they were stirred to instigate" disputes so as to "secure the good offices of the Board." At the same time the Wilsonian labor program allowed workers to justify their militancy in patriotic language as an attack on autocratic management. This was especially important for immigrant workers whose militancy might otherwise be suspect as evidence of their disloyalty. War workers shrewdly began referring to their employers as the "American Junkers," the "Kaiser[s] of industrial America," and the "American Hohenzollerns." They portrayed their challenges to their "Prussian" or autocratic bosses as efforts to secure the "de-kaisering of industry." And they argued that authentic de-kaisering could take place only when workers had joined unions that could bargain on an equal basis with their bosses. Joining the union was thus not merely a worker's right, but a *responsibility* in this "war to make the world safe for democracy." The rallying of the Machinists union in one war production center was simply "Wake up! Be real citizens!" As this slogan implied, union membership was thus portrayed as a prerequisite of full citizenship. With such rationales everywhere in 1918, it is not surprising that when one employee of the General Electric company was asked about the origins of his union sympathies, he could reply: "In a way, I didn't have any [union sympathies], only—I might say I had an American feeling, that is all...I didn't have much thought in the matter... of union stuff."

A second unintended consequence that flowed from the administration's war labor program was its unintentional empowerment of those workers who had been most subordinated prior to the war: Recent immigrants, African-Americans, and women. During the war each of these groups made considerable gains. Not only was their access to better paying jobs improved by labor shortages, but the war labor program also promised them a voice over the conditions

under which they labored at a time when they lacked full citizenship rights outside of the workplace. Typically immigrants voted in shop elections without regard to their American citizenship. So did women at a time when they had yet to win the suffrage nationally. In a nation where the memory of the bloody 1917 East St. Louis race riot (in which white workers brutally attacked blacks who came to their city in search of war work), federal labor agencies offered African-Americans important avenues of appeal through which to challenge some injustices. Though federal labor policies generally left racial discrimination intact, blacks did benefit from minimum wages set in some war-related industries and from policies that opened their access to wage-earning jobs. "I am getting more to day then I ever made in all my past life," one black worker wrote to Washington, "I thanks you so mightily for seein to it." Ultimately the Wilsonian war-labor program raised the expectations of immigrants, women, and black workers who deserved—and could win—fairer treatment from employers and white male coworkers.

A third unintended consequence flowed from the impact of shop committees on the American labor movement. Although they were intended to allow collective bargaining without compelling employers formally to recognize unions, the election of shop committees ended up triggering union organization and contributing to the spread of industrial unionism within a labor movement dominated by craft unions. Developments in such previously anti-union industries as electrical manufacturing and steel demonstrated this. The largest U.S. electrical manufacturer, General Electric owned five large U.S. factories in 1917, none of which were unionized. No sooner had the NLRB been formed than GE workers organized a company-wide movement to create an inclusive union of all GE workers: The Electrical Manufacturing Industry Labor Federation. The election of NLRB shop committees in the GE plants fostered this organizing. Meanwhile in the nation's largest nonunion sector, the steel industry, a similar dynamic unfolded. Shop-committee elections at steel plants encouraged workers to organize unions. These initiatives in turn helped persuade the AFL to launch the National Committee to Organize Iron and Steel Workers in 1918. By September 1919, the steel-organizing committee comprised of numerous craft unions working in concert was strong enough to lead the largest strike to that point in the history of the U.S. steel industry. In a development that the designers of the war-labor program certainly did not intend, both the electrical- and the steel-organizing drives were led by militants far to the left of President Gompers of the AFL.

By the time the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, much had changed for American workers and unions in less than 2 years time. More than a million workers joined the labor movement during the war, boosting AFL membership to roughly 3.2 million by the war's end. Many believed that postwar reconstruction would see labor consolidate and extend its gains. As one journalist saw it, the central issue for the postwar era was "how far can industrial democracy go?" Union leaders had good reason to hope that they could finish organizing the nation's manufacturing core. They were soon to be disappointed when this did not happen. When the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, unionization of the nation's basic industries was far from complete and panicked employers were already mobilizing to roll back both union gains and the government interference in their workplaces.

Legacy of Wartime Change and Postwar Backlash

Ironically for U.S. workers their wartime labor insurgency tended to dissipate each of the long-range trends that had presented the prewar era with such lively cause for labor reform. Whereas prewar progressives had entertained dreams of state building, the postwar era saw a violent reaction against all vestiges of statism. This backlash threw progressives on the defensive. Farmers who abhorred the administration's efforts to control wartime wheat prices and consumers who blamed the government for wartime inflation fed this trend. But it was the government's attempts at labor regulation that most energized the backlash among employers. By late 1918, industrialists railed against "that damn NLRB," and demanded what one employer called an end to interference by "petty government officials and shop committees." Conservative southern Democrats were just as irritated by Wilson administration labor reforms, seeing in them a potential threat to racial segregation. As a result Democrats were increasingly divided on the desirability of labor reform. Sensing an opening the Republicans coalesced after nearly a decade of internal turmoil and took back both houses of Congress in 1918. The reactionary Sixty-Sixth Congress sped the shutdown of such agencies as NLRB in 1919.

As support for labor reform dissolved, the AFL was divided over the proper way forward. Many in labor called for a peacetime version of the NLRB. As one left-winger shrewdly observed, the NLRB's shop committees had provided an "enormous stimulus to

industrial unionism” by offering “the nucleus of a shop soviet through which workers may exert the full weight of their collective power.” Not surprisingly conservative craft union leaders did not relish such thoughts. They sought to disengage from government policies that they blamed for fomenting a challenge to craft union predominance and weakening the AFL’s traditional voluntarism. Whereas the wartime AFL had experimented with industrial organization and government regulation, the postwar AFL had second thoughts. Craft unionism and voluntarism were both resurgent within the AFL by the early 1920s as industrial union efforts in steel, meatpacking, and electrical manufacturing were destroyed, the NWLB was dismantled, and an effort to nationalize the nation’s railroad under the Plumb Plan collapsed.

Contributing to labor’s postwar conservatism was the hostile climate that developed in the United States in the aftermath of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. During the strike wave of 1919, employers successfully linked labor militancy to the threat of communism. This linkage helped undermine support for the Seattle general strike, the Boston police strike, and the great steel strike of 1919. Complicating matters for labor was the fact that the Bolshevik revolution also provoked a split in the American socialist movement. Those loyal to the Russian revolution broke away from the SP and helped found the Communist party in 1919. Thereafter the American Left was itself deeply divided over the issue of communism.

These developments in turn gave employers the greatest amount of power to define the legacy of the Great War for American workers. Employers did this by breaking unions where they were able to do so. But this was not all. If they were to have postwar peace, many large-scale employers knew that they needed more than the absence of a union. As a pragmatic businessman put it, with “labor crying for democracy, capital must go part way or face revolution.” Such employers understood that the war had significantly altered workers’ expectations, encouraging them to demand a voice over their conditions of labor. Employers wanted to satisfy the demand for a voice, without giving up power in the bargain. Toward this end they sought to fashion the ideal of industrial democracy in their own image. They replaced NWLB shop committees and unions with company unions and representation plans. By 1921, AFL unions had been driven from electrical manufacturing and steel, and 700,000 workers were enrolled in company unions.

Although employers tamed industrial democracy after the war, reducing this ideal to a shadow of its prewar promise, labor relations were quite different than they had been a decade earlier. Employers had successfully beaten back government regulation and

mass unionization, but they could not destroy the memory of the wartime promise of industrial democracy. After the war even many anti-union employers admitted the legitimacy of workers’ demands for a voice in determining the conditions of their employment even as they fought to make sure that unions would not be the vehicle for expressing that voice.

The war also changed the composition and the consciousness of the American working-class. It had contributed to the great migration of black workers to the North and triggered an ongoing influx of Mexican workers from the South. By cutting off immigration, giving rise to intense wartime loyalty campaigns, and drawing millions into military service, the war had also contributed to the Americanization of immigrant workers. All of these trends together with the rising expectations unleashed by the war left a lasting imprint.

Finally the war provided an indispensable experience for reformers and progressive trade unionists—one that they would later draw on. Although progressives and trade unionists were marginalized in the decade following the war, the Great Depression later provided them with an opportunity to resurrect experiments of the World War I years. As President Franklin Roosevelt’s government invoked the precedents of World War I to justify his New Deal programs, reformers and trade unionists renewed their campaign for industrial democracy through the industrial union effort of the 1930s. Thus the Great War continued to influence the fortunes of American workers and unions long after its guns were silenced.

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See also American Federation of Labor; Bisbee Deportation/Copper Strike (1917); National War Labor Board (WWI); United States Industrial Commission

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World War II brought enormous changes to working-class life in the United States and to the fortunes of organized labor. Wartime labor mobilization incorporated more workers than ever before into a modern industrial working class, including many who had previously been relegated to the margins of the American economy. The trade union movement grew in size during the war, and labor union density reached a century high peak by 1945. And the wartime state intervened in labor-management relations to an unprecedented degree. All of these developments represented accelerations of trends inaugurated by the Depression and the New Deal and also proved to be harbingers of some important transformations to come in the postwar period.

Changing Composition of the Working Class

First and foremost the war helped put Americans back to work after a decade of depression and

unemployment. When the war began in Europe in 1939, 10 million Americans remained out of work; by the time the United States entered the conflict in December 1941, that number had been reduced to four million. During the Great Depression mass unemployment seemed impervious to New Deal programs, never dipping below 14%; by the height of war production in 1944, this figure had been reduced to 1.2%, virtually a full-employment economy. From 1940–1943, the peak of wartime production, the employed private-sector civilian labor force increased by five million, a 12% expansion. Workers spent more hours at work as well: Average weekly hours in manufacturing jobs increased from 38.1 to 45 during the same period.

Officially rationing governed wartime consumption habits of basic goods, like gasoline, rubber, sugar, and meat. Nevertheless for many working-class Americans on the home front, the wartime economy meant the return of prosperity and expanded consumption. By mid-1942, 6 months after Pearl Harbor, one-third of the nation's economy was devoted to war production; and from 1939–1945, federal spending multiplied 10-fold. Full employment, overtime, incentive pay, deferred pension plans, and increasing numbers of industrial jobs put spending money in the working-class consumer's pocket for the first time since the 1920s. The combination of rising incomes, the entry of new workers into the labor force, wartime shortages, and admonitions to invest in war bonds, dammed up an enormous reservoir of spending power that would deluge the American economy in the postwar period, threatening inflation at first but eventually ushering in a rising tide of broad postwar prosperity.

The attraction of wartime jobs also encouraged American workers to move, drawing millions of laborers from rural, isolated, and the small-town United States to the burgeoning war-production facilities in the industrial heartland and on the Gulf and West coasts. Fifteen million Americans moved in search of work during the war. Many of these men and women left the most economically depressed sections of the country, the rural South and Southwest in particular. Four-and-a-half million people moved from rural to urban communities, and 1.6 million alone left the South. The nation's farm population dropped by 5.7 million during the war years. These changes permanently altered the nature of working-class life in the United States.

American workers also found themselves concentrated in production plants that drew together huge numbers of laborers. During the war the number of corporations employing 10,000 or more workers went from 13% to 30% of American companies. In the Douglas Aviation facilities in the Los Angeles basin,

100,000 workers built planes; in San Francisco Bay's Kaiser shipyards, 90,000 employees mass-produced liberty ships; the Willow Run bomber plant outside of Detroit employed 40,000 people. Such huge conglomerations of workers, many of them new to urban industrial life, led to housing shortages, transportation bottlenecks, and crowded and tense living conditions. Exacerbating these tensions was the entry into the industrial workforce of new recruits previously denied access to most production jobs: African-Americans and women.

African-Americans at Work

With the initial stirrings of wartime mobilization, African-Americans found themselves shut out of defense jobs by the combined resistance of employers and white workers just as they had been denied entry to decent industrial employment in peacetime. But in mid-1941, rallied behind the banner of black labor leader A. Philip Randolph and his Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the March on Washington Movement (MOWM) threatened a mass march on Washington unless the federal government pledged to open wartime defense jobs to black workers. The MOWM relied on the mobilization of working-class blacks, and President Franklin Roosevelt complied with Randolph's demand by establishing the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) by executive order. Though limited in scope—it could combat discrimination only in plants engaged in war work—and lacking enforcement powers, the FEPC was the first government entity devoted to combating employment discrimination and as such established an important precedent for the postwar civil rights movement. The FEPC helped blacks gain access to defense employment but proved largely unable to dislodge obstacles to black entry into skilled positions or to rectify unequal pay arrangements.

Still with the government's imprimatur on their wartime employment, over one million new black workers entered the workforce, two-thirds of them women. Wartime employment gains for blacks in manufacturing proved especially significant. Only 17% of black men worked in manufacturing in 1940, but by 1944 this figure had increased to 30%. The changes for black women, who previously had been employed primarily in domestic service, proved dramatic as well; by the end of the war, nearly 20% of employed black women worked in manufacturing.

Trade unions responded in a number of ways to the influx of black workers. By 1943, there were 500,000 blacks enrolled in the Congress of Industrial

Organizations (CIO) unions and another 650,000 in the American Federation of labor (AFL), a dramatic increase over prewar levels in both federations. Some CIO affiliates, like the United Automobile Workers (UAW) or the United Electrical Workers, made efforts to quell the racial hostility of their white membership and to discipline workers who engaged in hate strikes against the promotion and upgrade of black workers or desegregation of previously all-white shop floors. It was here that a lasting alliance was forged between the nascent civil rights movement and the racially progressive forces inside the CIO, which helped set the stage for some postwar working-class based civil rights activism. In response to the mobilization of its African-American members, for example the CIO instituted a Committee on Racial Discrimination (CARD). On the other hand powerful AFL unions, like the Machinists and the Boilermakers, continued to discriminate against African-Americans. The latter union, which maintained a grip on many jobs in the rapidly expanding shipbuilding industry, relegated black workers to impotent auxiliary unions. Blacks for their part filed complaints against the Boilermakers with the FEPC and developed independent organizations to challenge union and workplace discrimination. In general, the war years marked a moment of opportunity and mobilization for black workers, but the basic barriers of employment discrimination were not breached, the efforts of the FEPC, the CIO's CARD, and black workers themselves notwithstanding.

Women at Work

The war conscripted male workers into military service—almost 30% of the male labor force in the Detroit area entered the military, for example—and thus opened up opportunities—and pressures—for women to enter the work force. When the United States entered the war in late 1941, one-quarter of the nation's women already worked for wages outside their own homes (although the figure for black women was far higher—38%—than for white). But only 15.5% of married women did so. The number of women employed expanded from 12 million in 1940 to 19 million by 1945, peaking at a female labor-force participation figure of 36%. This was not simply a market response to the huge labor demand stimulated by wartime output and labor shortage. Federal government agencies did much to encourage female labor-force participation, from recruitment and training (the War Manpower Commission) to propaganda (the Office of War Information) and even in a few rare

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instances, the provision of child care for female defense workers with young children (Federal Works Agency). Women also joined unions in new record numbers: Their ranks jumped from 800,000 to 3 million, representing nearly one-quarter of all organized workers by 1943.

Despite the ubiquitous image of Rosie the Riveter, the attractive, unmarried, can-do female-manufacturing worker who appeared in wartime propaganda, the female industrial-defense worker represented but a small percentage of the overall number of women who poured into the wartime labor force. At the peak of female employment, two million women worked in defense plants, but this never represented more than 10% of all female workers at the time. As the figure of Rosie suggested, shipyard employment was one of the largest categories of female industrial employment during the war (second only to aviation, in which one-third of all workers were female), but the total in this sector never exceeded 225,000, or less than 20% of workers in that crucial wartime industry. And only a small number of women broke into the skilled trades in any industry; less than 5% of war jobs classified by the government as skilled went to women and even fewer to African-American women, who were only hired into these positions late in the war if at all. Still at the peak of war production in 1943 and 1944, nearly half of all women entered the workforce for some period, and for the first time the number of married women in the workforce exceeded the number of single women.

The new role for women as industrial workers was simultaneously embraced and denied, understood as an act of patriotic duty and yet accommodated to the feminine ideals to which most of the society, including women themselves, continued to adhere. An article in the *Woman's Home Companion* could report with pride that "American women are learning how to put planes and tanks together, how to read blueprints, how to weld and rivet and make the great machinery of war production hum under skillful hands and eyes," yet insist at the same time that "they're also learning how to look smart in overalls and how to be glamorous after work. They are learning to fulfill both the useful and the beautiful ideal."

In general long-standing gender barriers and attitudes seemed impervious to the upheavals of the war. "The unprecedented relationships between men and women which wartime work entailed . . . were to be in large part reabsorbed into the dominant pattern of tradition," one woman who worked in a shipyard remarked with evident disappointment. The sudden change in the place of women in the labor market proved profoundly threatening to male coworkers, husbands (and prospective husbands), and postwar

reconversion planners alike. Not only did women's war work erode divisions between male and female work, but it had material consequence as well: These jobs paid better than any work women had done before and provided them with the potential means of economic independence. Three-quarters of the women surveyed by the U.S. Women's Bureau in the last year of the war claimed they intended to remain in the labor force, most often out of economic necessity, to provide for their own support or that of other family members.

A combination of factors—returning servicemen eager for work and wives; government reconversion planning that favored men; a shrinking number of jobs as shipyards and aviation plants demobilized; the opposition of trade unions; and on the part of many if hardly all women, the desire to marry, bear children, and return to the home—drove women from the workforce at the close of the war. If one-quarter of the workforce in the auto industry was female in 1945, a year later the figure had shrunk to 1 in 12. In the last 6 months of 1945 alone, 1.32 million women were laid off from their defense jobs. At bottom male anxiety about maintaining the role as breadwinner and fear of female economic independence proved unshakeable.

Unions and the State

With the rapid growth of wartime employment in the sectors of the economy that had seen union gains during the organizing drives of the 1930s—steel, rubber, meatpacking, auto, electrical—organized labor gained five million new members during the war, an increase of 50%. Those sectors of the economy oriented to the production of war materiel grew exponentially. In the shipbuilding industry on the Pacific Coast, for example, the San Francisco Bay Area alone saw the number of shipyard workers increase from a mere 6,000 to 240,000 during the war, and many of these newcomers joined unions. By 1945, the UAW had surpassed one million members, from a 1939 starting point of 165,000. Over 700,000 steelworkers, 400,000 electrical workers, 225,000 meatpackers, and 200,000 shipbuilders helped fill the ranks of organized labor by war's end. By 1945, 35% of nonagricultural workers belonged to unions, and a remarkable 80% of the workforce in basic industry had been organized. Although these gains swelled union treasuries and enhanced labor's political clout, they also served to dilute the number of committed and experienced members and weakened union discipline. The new recruits paid dues, but few had experience with trade unions, and

many proved reluctant to participate in union affairs. Others chafed at the union restrictions they encountered and found the no-strike pledge, enforced by the unions themselves, a hindrance to the expression of shop-floor grievances. Finally the new industrial unions of the CIO and the old-line craft unions of the AFL, especially in the metal trades, fought bitter jurisdictional battles over access to labor's potential new members.

The CIO in particular sought to bolster its position by working closely with government agencies. As the imperative of conversion to military production approached, leaders of the industrial union federation moved to establish joint labor-management councils to guarantee labor a seat at the table with big business and government in the event of wartime industrial mobilization. In 1940–1941, both Philip Murray, president of the CIO, and UAW Vice-President Walter Reuther proposed industrial-council plans that would make organized labor an equal partner in tripartite planning of production, investment, procurement, and labor supply. Reuther for example put forth an ambitious vision of an Aviation Production Board that would convert Detroit's industrial plant into a production unit capable of manufacturing 500 planes a day. But large corporations, the military, and even government wartime civilian agencies, like the National Defense Advisory Commission (NDAC), fended off these bold initiatives and ensured that organized labor would remain a junior partner in the organization of war production. Management resisted outside interference—whether from civilian boards, labor, or the state—with its prerogatives: As General Motors President and member of the NDAC William Knudsen put it: “We don't want any part of the Russian system over here.”

If organized labor had limited success in influencing mobilization plans, in the arena of labor relations they did achieve a genuine involvement in tripartite dispute-resolution mechanisms during the war. In 1941, spurred by rapidly increasing labor demand and a desire to consolidate the organizational gains of the 1930s, workers took to the picket lines in unprecedented numbers. That year unions called 4,200 strikes, taking out a total of 2.3 million workers, many of them in coal, steel, auto, and electrical industries, the heart of the American industrial economy. This upheaval in the face of the growing threat of American involvement in the war led Roosevelt and his allies in the labor movement to establish a tripartite mediation board that would adjudicate labor-management disputes in defense industries. Once the United States entered the war however strike action took a backseat to patriotic production, and both the CIO and AFL agreed to a no-strike pledge for the duration.

In exchange the National War Labor Board (NWLB)—prior to Pearl Harbor, the National Defense Mediation Board—which consisted of 12 members, four each from labor (divided evenly between the CIO and AFL), business, and government provided unprecedented protection of union security. Of the many wartime administrative agencies designed to oversee war production—the War Manpower Commission, the War Production Board, the U.S. Employment Service—this was the only one in which organized labor proved able to gain some representation and wield some influence. Despite grumbling by rank-and-file workers about limited wage increases, restrictions on labor mobility and strikes, and limitations on overtime pay, the NWLB placated labor leaders by granting maintenance-of-membership clauses in many of the union contracts it approved. Under these agreements all newly hired workers in a union shop would be automatically enrolled in the union after a 15-day waiting period. For organized labor this proved an essential component of the wartime industrial-relations regime because of the enormous influx of new workers with no prior experience with unions into the defense industries. The union security thus gained proved instrumental in encouraging the growth of organized labor during the war.

Union security came at a price, however. In exchange for state-mandated expansion of their organizations, union leaders were expected to uphold the no-strike pledge embraced by both the CIO and AFL and to suppress unauthorized, or wildcat strikes. Furthermore the necessity of war production entailed increased overtime, production speed-ups, and shortcuts on workplace safety. The volatile combination of inexperienced workers, new machinery, long stretches of overtime, and ceaseless demand for increased output led to an epidemic of workplace accidents, with an especially terrible toll in the nation's coal mines. From 1942–1943, 3,000 miners were killed on the job, and over 500 were injured every week. Across the nation 80,000 workers had been killed by accidents by 1943, far less than American battlefield casualties up to that time. Finally while state-mediated collective bargaining helped unions secure recognition and contracts, the NWLB sought to check inflation and thus served as a brake on rising wages during a period of intense labor demand.

In particular despite the organizational gains instigated for unions by the NWLB, both workers and the labor movement expressed deep dissatisfaction with the board's little steel formula on wage increases. In an effort to restrain rapidly advancing wartime inflation, the NWLB laid down a policy in July 1942 that capped wage increases at about 3%, a figure the board claimed matched the gap between the increase in cost

of living and wage gains over the past 18 months. This wage-stabilization formula essentially placed the burden of inflationary restraint on wage earners and proved immensely unpopular with rank-and-file workers. In order to mollify workers however, the NLRB granted frequent nonwage benefits in lieu of wage increases. In fact despite wage restraints, real pay for manufacturing workers did increase significantly during the war, setting the stage for a postwar consumption boom. But this can be attributed more to regular employment, grueling overtime, and more widespread access to skilled positions than growth in basic wage rates.

The combination of strict union discipline, dampened wage demands, and intensification of production eventually led to an outbreak of wildcat strikes. Despite the no-strike pledge, millions of workers continued to walk off the job during the war when dissatisfied; indeed the figure in 1944, when over two million workers engaged in 5,000 strikes, neared that of the strike-prone year of 1940. In the auto industry such strikes were especially widespread, with over half of all workers taking part in some form of work stoppage during that tumultuous year on the factory floor. The work stoppages of 1944 however had an average duration of less than 6 days, historically a very low number, and involved only half as many striking workers as did 1946, a year with a comparable number of strikes. Thus wildcats consisted of strikes of short duration and of relatively small groups of workers (43% brought out 100 workers or less), designed to resolve particularistic shop-floor grievances.

Union leadership was often enlisted in cajoling recalcitrant rank-and-filers back to work. Those leaders who refused to relinquish the strike weapon, most notably John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers (which broke from the CIO during the war), found themselves hedged in by punitive legislation. Lewis had never shared the interventionist aims of Roosevelt's foreign policy, had opposed the militarization of the American economy and the corporatist labor policy of the war, and refused to endorse the president for a third term in the 1940 election. By 1941, Lewis took the miners out on strike and after a bitter battle secured a closed shop in the captive mines owned by the steel industry. Two years later in 1943, when he did so again in an effort to thwart the little-steel-formula cap on wages, a Republican-dominated Congress enacted in response the War Labor Disputes, or Smith-Connally Act, giving the president wide powers to seize defense plants (and the coal mines) threatened by strikes and mandating a 30-day cooling off period in essential workplaces threatened by a strike call. The act went well beyond the war

crisis and attempted to clip labor's wings politically as well, forbidding union contributions to political campaigns. In order to evade these restrictions, the CIO created a political action campaign, the CIO-PAC, to register and educate working-class voters, back labor-friendly candidates, and serve as a counterweight to the emergent congressional alliance of antilabor Republicans and southern Democrats. Though the effects of Smith-Connally were not so drastic as labor feared, it proved a harbinger of postwar limitations of labor's rights embodied in the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947.

Conclusion

The impact of World War II left a mixed legacy for the nation's working class. Wartime mobilization created full employment, but victory over Japan in August 1945 instantly ushered in layoffs, as \$24 billion in war contracts evaporated; 300,000 defense workers lost their jobs in Michigan alone after V-J day. Over the next 3 months as pent-up consumer savings stimulated inflation, real income dropped by an average of 15%, and the specter of unemployment returned as nearly 13 million men in uniform demobilized into the American labor market. Although many of the nation's most powerful corporations accepted the basic elements of collective bargaining over wages and benefits extended by the wartime state, they also sought to ensure that the growing influence of organized labor would not intrude on such managerial and corporate prerogatives as investment decisions, pricing policy, and basic control of production processes on the shop floor of the nation's factories. Declining incomes, fear of layoffs, the end of the no-strike pledge, and the re-assertion of corporate power generated a postwar strike wave that expressed accumulated grievances: In the 12 months following the end of the war, there were 4,630 strikes, involving five million workers.

Wartime work had incorporated millions of new workers into the industrial working class. But with the conflict over, the no-strike pledge, stepped up production, racial and sexual tension on the shop floor, and bitter interunion rivalries between the CIO and AFL, the wartime workplace was shot through with tensions that sporadically erupted into violent altercations and unauthorized work stoppages. These conflicts set the stage for postwar disputes about the place of women in the workplace, the civil rights of black workers, and the political influence of organized labor.

Finally historians continue to debate the nature of the corporatist settlement organized labor struck with

business and the state during the war. The workplace contractualism bequeathed to the postwar social order by the NWLB was at one time regarded as a straitjacket for the rank-and-file, enlisting bureaucratic trade unions in quelling militant shop-floor tendencies.

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Smith-Connally Act
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See also **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Fair Employment Practice Committee; March on Washington Movement; National War Labor Board; No-Strike Pledge; Randolph, Philip A.; Reuther, Walter; Rosie the Riveter; Smith-Connally Act; Taft-Hartley Act; United Electrical Workers of America; United Mine Workers of America; Women's Bureau**

WRIGHT, FRANCES (1795–1852) Radical Reformer

Born in 1795, in Dundee, Scotland, Frances, or Fanny, Wright was a writer, orator, feminist, free-thinker, and utopian Socialist who was one of the boldest radical reformers of her time. Though her prosperous father held radical and democratic views, she was orphaned at age two and was raised in London and Devonshire by Tory relatives, against whom she rebelled. At the age of 18, she left England to live with her uncle, James Mylne, a noted professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow, who also espoused radical democratic ideas at a time

when to do so was to dissent from British orthodoxy. Though barred from attending the university because of her sex, Wright read widely and began writing. She soon became enamored of the republican United States, whose egalitarian founding principles were reflected in her own views. By 1818, when she set sail for New York, Wright's social and political philosophy was already fully formed. Influenced by Enlightenment rationalism, Mary Wollstonecraft's feminism, Paineite radicalism, Bentham's utilitarianism, and such utopian Socialists as Robert Owen and Saint-Simon, Wright devoted her career to democracy, feminism, the rights of workers and the poor, free thought, and racial equality. Although her career included more failures than successes, Fanny Wright brought immense publicity to the causes she espoused and influenced others to support labor and other progressive views.

In 1821, shortly after her return to Britain, she published the first serious study of the United States by a British woman, *Views of Society and Manners in America*. Openly sympathetic toward the democratic ideals of the new republic, the book won plaudits from several British intellectuals, including Jeremy Bentham, and sparked a friendship with the Marquis de Lafayette. Indeed when Wright returned to the United States in 1823, it was with Lafayette, who introduced her to James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, with whom she discussed her evolving communitarian scheme to achieve the gradual emancipation of slaves. Instead of returning with Lafayette, she became a naturalized U.S. citizen and set out to put her ideas into action.

Encouraged by Jefferson and Madison to pursue her experiment, in 1825 Wright used some of her inheritance to purchase a tract of land, which she named Nashoba, near Memphis, Tennessee, and 10 slaves. Believing that slaves needed training and education before they could succeed as free people, Wright's original intent was for her slaves to earn their freedom by working the land for 5 years, and then moving to another country. Though Wright advocated abolition of slavery, like many who believed in colonization, she could not envision a racially egalitarian United States. Instead her goal was the uplifting and emigration of the black population. Marriage laws and religion had no place at Nashoba, and when one of her white followers publicized this interracial free love philosophy, Nashoba lost financial backers and made many enemies. Wright's defense of racial and sexual equality outraged conventional opinion. Owing to the poor quality of the land and the prevalence of malaria and other diseases, Nashoba failed by early 1828. Although she eventually managed to resettle 30 ex-slaves in Haiti, the collapse of the Nashoba experiment surely

caused Wright to question her belief in the value of communitarian solutions to social problems.

Undaunted Wright repaired to New Harmony with Robert Dale Owen, to assist him in editing the *New Harmony Gazette*. Her principal activity for the rest of her life however was as a public speaker. Defying the limits on women by appearing widely as a public lecturer, Wright became one of the first women publicly to address gender-mixed audiences on secular topics in the United States. To make matters even more controversial, Wright advocated radical viewpoints on sensitive themes, attacking slavery, the oppression of women, revealed religion, the rising influence of evangelical clerics, the exploitation of workers and the poor, and existing forms of schooling. Most shocking were her frontal assaults against traditional marriage and the subjugation of women. An electrifying speaker and a hero to fellow free-thinkers, Wright became the object of vitriolic abuse, both physical and verbal. Several of her lectures were met with riots.

In 1829, Wright and Owen relocated to New York City, where they renamed their newspaper the *Free Enquirer*. Here Wright found an enthusiastic audience among the radical artisans of the city, many of whom shared her radical democratic views and anticlerical beliefs. Her lectures were attended by hundreds, and she played an important role in reviving the energy of the anticlerical and artisanal Left. Wright increasingly focused on the plight of urban workers, and promoted Owen's proposal for a system of state-sponsored free boarding schools as the key to abolishing class inequality. Though her ideas were influential among many artisans and her undoubted skill as a public speaker helped to energize radical politics in New York, Wright was never directly or formally involved in the Working Men's party of New York, though Owen did lead a faction for a time. After the failure of the Working Men's party, Wright left the United States for Europe, where she lived from 1831 to 1835.

On her return to the United States in 1835, Wright resumed her writing and lecturing, but some of her ideas were no longer quite so radical. Her advocacy of gradual emancipation and colonization seemed almost moderate in comparison to the rise of the immediate abolitionism of William Lloyd Garrison and others. In 1836, Wright positioned herself unusually close to the political mainstream by campaigning for Martin Van Buren and the Jacksonians' banking policies. Her feminism however remained radical and controversial, and she published several powerful statements regarding the universality of woman's oppression. In January 1852, having endured a bitter divorce, she slipped on ice and broke her leg. After suffering for 10 months with severe pain, she died.

Wright represented an important Atlantic crossing between the salon radicalism of Britain and France and the radical politics of the nineteenth-century United States, in particular the feminist, abolitionist, communitarian, and labor movements. Though her radical projects failed and her ideas lacked originality, Wright played an important role as a popularizer and publicizer of radical thought. Her most important legacy was to feminism, and her work on behalf of the Working Men's party helped to popularize that movement and some of its ideas for a time. More broadly her life stands as a testament to the radical potential of American egalitarianism—and to the contradictions confronting those who try to realize that potential in words and deeds.

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WURF, JERRY (MAY 8, 1919–DECEMBER 10, 1981) President of District Council 37 (New York City) of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

The most important public-sector union leader of the last-half of the twentieth century, Jerry Wurf helped turn public workers from a weak and neglected section

of organized labor into one of the most dynamic groups within the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), eventually challenging and shaping the broader goals of trade unionism in the United States. Born and raised in New York City, Wurf was the son of Sigmund and Lena Tannenbaum Wurf, first- and second-generation immigrants from Central and Eastern European Jewish backgrounds. Wurf attended local public schools, where he excelled in the humanities, and in the early 1940s, enrolled at New York University where he received a degree in economics. During his high school years, he became a follower of American socialist leader Norman Thomas, joining the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), an experience that introduced him to the art of political organizing and developing in him a broader interest in social concerns and civil liberties that would shape his political commitments for the remainder of his life.

Following graduation Wurf took a job as a cashier in a cafeteria and organized his workplace for the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union, Local 488, eventually working on the union's staff. Frustrated with the level of bureaucracy in the local, but wanting to remain involved with the labor movement, Wurf accepted a position as an organizer with District Council 37, New York City's section of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in 1947. Wurf soon emerged as a reformer within AFSCME, taking over as DC 37 president in 1952 and transforming a weak organization into one of the most powerful unions in the city. Wurf was a demanding leader whose hot temper and tendency to micromanage union affairs sometimes alienated staff members, but his single-mindedness also resulted in unprecedented success. As DC 37 head Wurf directed major organizing drives into unrepresented city departments and succeeded in challenging New York's labor-management policies. Wurf's ability to secure new rights for municipal employees helped gain AFSCME new members in New York, going from a scant 400 members in 1952, to 20,000 by 1960.

In 1960, Wurf married Mildred Kiefer, who joined the District Council 37 staff in the early 1950s. A committed activist involved in the workers' education movement, she was the source of many of the innovative ideas that marked AFSCME's growth in New York during these years, and she was Wurf's greatest inspiration in his work as a labor leader.

Wurf's success in New York City gained him recognition as one of AFSCME's most innovative leaders. Eventually a series of disagreements with AFSCME international founder and president, Arnold Zander, would launch him into a national

campaign to restructure the union. Since AFSCME's founding in 1932, Zander had reigned as the union's undisputed chieftain, but by 1958 a series of internal disputes, centered on controversial increases in membership dues and undemocratic convention regulations divided many within AFSCME. Although not originally a leader of the reform section, Wurf reluctantly emerged as its most forceful spokesperson. Following the union's 1960 convention, a national reform organization emerged within AFSCME, the Committee on Union Responsibility (COUR). With Mildred Kiefer and a cadre of regional leaders, Wurf established COUR chapters across the United States and narrowly defeated Zander as international president in 1964.

Taking over as AFSCME international president, Wurf immediately set out to restructure and reform the union. Financial restructuring ranked high on Wurf's agenda, with measures taken to improve the union's financial status, which had long been supported by the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department. By 1966, Wurf had realized most of his campaign promises, including the redrafting of the international union constitution, implementing more transparent election codes, placing limits on the international's ability to place locals in trusteeship, establishing a judicial panel to oversee the union's disputes, and expanding AFSCME's executive board from 13 to 18 members.

The initial period of Wurf's presidency was marked by a series of high-profile national organizing campaigns. The AFSCME along with other public-sector unions expanded membership by the thousands during the 1960s. By 1969, AFSCME led the way, gaining as many as 1,000 new members a week. The most famous AFSCME drive of this period occurred in 1968, when almost 2,000 African-American sanitation workers in Memphis went on strike for higher wages, better working conditions, and recognition of AFSCME Local 1733 as their official bargaining agent. Memphis city officials refused to recognize the union, resorting to violent anti-union measures. The AFSCME forged new alliances with numerous community- and church-based organizations in the city's African-American community, linking the workplace struggle of the sanitation workers to broader community issues and African-American civil rights. Seeing the struggle of the sanitation workers as central to the broader movement to secure better conditions for the nation's poor, civil rights leader Martin Luther King came to Memphis to aid the cause, where he was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Following King's death, with international attention drawn to the cause of the striking workers, Wurf went to Memphis where he helped to negotiate Local 1733's first contract.

Through the late 1960s, Wurf was the most visible national spokesperson for the new form of social unionism championed by AFSCME, often making public appearances on national television and radio programs. Through these years Wurf spoke out often against the Vietnam War and the domestic policies of President Richard Nixon. In 1969, Wurf was named to the AFL-CIO executive council, signifying the new status of public-employee unionism and AFSCME within the U.S. labor movement. Wurf's independence often placed him at odds with federation President George Meany over national politics, foreign policy, and the position of public workers within the labor movement. Wurf broke publicly with Meany over his failure to support the formation of AFL-CIO Public Employees' Department as a national lobbying organ of the federation committed to the concerns of public workers. In response Wurf went outside the federation by linking with the independent National Education Association (NEA) in forming the Coalition of Public Employee Organizations (COPE) in 1971. Two years later Wurf organized a similar organization with other AFL-CIO public employee unions, linking with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and the National Treasury Employees' Union to form the Coalition of American Public Employees (CAPE), a move that further distanced him from Meany. Rival public-sector union leaders, especially Albert Shanker, head of New York City's American Federation of Teachers (AFT) publicly fought with Wurf in the 1970s over agenda and policy issues, causing rifts between their organizations that hampered solidarity in a period of mounting government opposition to public-sector unionization.

Perhaps Wurf's most important contribution as a labor leader in the last-quarter of the twentieth century was his insistence that the labor movement be an instrument for broad social change. Political engagement was primary to this objective. Wurf envisioned AFSCME as an important force in shaping a progressive agenda within the national Democratic party, an aspect of his vision that continues to shape AFSCME's sense of purpose into the twenty-first

century. In 1971, Wurf established the union's political arm, Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality (PEOPLE), which actively supported Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern in 1972 as well as Jimmy Carter's successful bid in 1976. The AFSCME's PEOPLE organization was one of the largest political-action committees in the United States in the early twentieth century. Disappointed with President Carter's economic, labor, and social policies, Wurf sided with Senator Edward Kennedy in his challenge to Carter in Democratic primaries in 1980. Despite increasing health problems, Wurf was the key organizer of the Solidarity Day demonstration in Washington, DC, in September 1981, where 260,000 labor and civil rights groups, led by a 60,000-member AFSCME delegation, protested against the social programs of the Reagan administration. Wurf died on December 10, 1981, and was replaced by Gerald McEntee, leader of Pennsylvania AFSCME District Council 13 as AFSCME international president. Wurf's legacy in the U.S. labor movement remains his call to link social causes with workplace issues and in the challenge continuously to organize new members in the lowest paid job categories.

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See also American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); McEntee, Gerald W.; Shanker, Albert

Y

YABLONSKI, JOSEPH A. “JOCK” (1910–1969) United Mine Workers

In 1969, Joseph A. “Jock” Yablonski challenged the president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), William Anthony “Tony” Boyle, in a union election. Boyle defeated Yablonski and then ordered his death. Yablonski’s supporters, known as the Miners for Democracy, mounted a campaign that led to the election being nullified in 1972. Boyle was defeated in an election in that same year and later was convicted of Yablonski’s murder.

Yablonski was born in Pittsburgh on March 3, 1910, the son of Polish immigrants. He quit school at age 15 to work in the mines. He left the mines in 1927 and worked as a baggage handler for the Pennsylvania Railroad and as an appliance salesman for the West Penn Power Company. In 1930, he was sentenced to eight months in a workhouse for stealing money from a slot machine.

In 1933, his father died of injuries suffered in a mine. Yablonski took his father’s job and began a career as a union leader. He became active in the UMWA and rose quickly in the union hierarchy. In 1934, he was elected to his local mine committee, became president of UMWA Local 1787, and was chosen as a member of the District 5 executive board, even though he was only 24 years old. In those roles, he was an outspoken advocate of mine safety and led several successful organizing drives.

In 1940, he supported the union’s revered leader, John L. Lewis, in his campaign for Wendell Willkie

for president. With Lewis’s backing, Yablonski was elected to the UMWA’s International Executive Board (IEB). In 1958, he became president of District 5 in Pittsburgh. That district was one of the few that elected its officers rather than having them appointed by the president. Yablonski’s positions as a labor executive allowed him to live comfortably on one hundred acres of land in Clarksville, Pennsylvania.

Yablonski hoped to become president of the union but was not selected for the office when Lewis retired in 1960. Yablonski continued to be a member of the UMWA’s hierarchy, but he upset Boyle by running for the union’s vice presidency in 1964 without Boyle’s approval. He was fired as District 5 president in 1966 as a result of his actions but remained on the International Executive Board. In April 1969, he became acting director of the union’s lobbying wing, Labor’s Non-Partisan League. He was fired from that position when he announced his candidacy for president.

Yablonski had been loyal to the union’s leadership, but he finally became sufficiently frustrated to mount a challenge. Yablonski was the highest-ranking officer ever to challenge a UMWA president. He was an effective negotiator who had maintained contact with the rank-and-file miners. He had worked with Lewis and believed he had similar skills as a leader. If he could get his message to the miners, Yablonski believed that he could defeat Boyle. Unfortunately, he was not able to mount an effective campaign because of threats of violence and Boyle’s manipulation of the union’s election machinery. Yablonski lost the election by 74,000 to 41,000 votes. Boyle, however,

was not simply content to win the election. He wanted to punish Yablonski for running against him. On December 31, Yablonski, his wife, Margaret, and his daughter, Charlotte, were murdered in their home. Their murders outraged miners and led to the creation of the Miners for Democracy.

After his death, Yablonski was the subject of a movie, *Act of Vengeance* (1986), and songs were written about him across the coalfields. Although he failed to win the election, Yablonski provided a vivid example of the power of labor martyrs to overthrow corrupt and inefficient union leaders and make reform possible in the UMWA.

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See also **Boyle, W. A. (Tony); Miners for Democracy; United Mine Workers of America**

"YELLOW-DOG" CONTRACT

As early as the 1840s, employers had required workers to pledge to abstain from union membership as a condition for employment, but "ironclad" contracts, as such arrangements were called, only emerged as a common anti-union tool beginning in the 1870s. By the 1890s, unionists used the term "yellow dog" as a means of expressing contempt for workers who agreed, orally or in writing, to this employer demand. Despite labor's widespread resistance to the "yellow dog," the courts consistently upheld the contract's legality between the 1880s and 1932.

Employers defended the contract on ideological grounds—it represented the freedom to run one's business unhindered by outsiders and to work for an employer of one's choosing. The contract was the antithesis of slavery, according to this formulation, because it recognized workers' right to their own labor; it did not compel the worker to sign. Unionists, however, pointed out that the term

"contract" obscured the unequal bargaining position of workers and employers. The yellow dog violated workers' freedom of association, a liberty that, as one Illinois labor leader put it, defined "the essential difference between the free man and the slave." (Ernst, p. 264). Unionists recognized that the danger of the yellow dog went beyond its violations of workers' individual rights. The main purpose of the yellow dog was to deter union organizers, who, faced with a possible lawsuit for interfering with a contract, might well abandon their efforts in the early stages of a union's campaign. Indeed, in some industries in the early twentieth century, union activity became nearly impossible as employers increasingly turned to court injunctions to enforce the yellow dog.

The federal courts largely accepted employers' arguments and consistently overturned state laws that banned the yellow-dog contract. Not until 1898 did the practice meet with its first federal legal challenge. The Erdman Act prohibited the yellow-dog contract in the railroad industry, where it was widely used, as part of a general effort by large majorities in Congress to offer some minimal recognition to the legitimacy of trade unions, specifically, the railway brotherhoods, as a means of avoiding major strikes.

The federal judiciary continued to rule against labor, notwithstanding the impressive congressional support demonstrated for some accommodation with trade unionism. In the 1908 case *Adair v. United States*, the Supreme Court declared the Erdman Act's provision against the yellow dog unconstitutional on the grounds that it violated the principle of freedom of contract. Using the same rationale, the court overturned a Kansas law against the yellow dog in 1915. *Adair* served as a precedent for other antilabor rulings. In cases involving the United Mine Workers' attempts to bring into its ranks West Virginia workers who had signed yellow-dog contracts, federal judges issued strong rulings against the UMW. The first, citing the *Adair* case, concluded that the UMW had conspired to "destroy others' vested contract rights" (Dubofsky, p. 47). The second case's judge suggested that all unions were illegal under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and the Constitution. A circuit court overturned the latter decision, but the Supreme Court upheld it.

Judicial support for the legality of the yellow-dog contract reached its highest point with the 1917 Supreme Court case *Hitchman Coal & Coke Co. v. Mitchell*. The majority opinion held that the agreement gave operators a "property interest" in their workers. The UMW's efforts to organize infringed on this interest, it continued, and thus represented "unfair competition." The mine operators' victory

in *Hitchman* opened the door to a slew of injunctions against the UMW for even endeavoring to persuade nonunion workers to join in the nonunion southern fields. These injunctions increasingly brought federal and state troops into labor conflicts on the side of mine operators.

The yellow-dog contract served as the basis for at least 10% to 15% of the injunctions issued between 1917 and 1932. During WWI, the federal government suspended yellow-dog injunctions because the National War Labor Board's guiding purpose was to secure workers' wartime cooperation by promising mediation of labor disputes. But in the 1920s, the practice peaked, especially in smaller, highly competitive industries in which unions had made inroads but did not dominate, particularly bituminous coal mining and the garment industry.

In the late 1920s, political momentum built for anti-injunction legislation, partly as a result of labor's long and vociferous objections to "government by injunction." The restiveness in labor's ranks grew and found support among Progressive reformers within both of the major parties and in the courts. These reformers and a significant sector of the public increasingly accepted the idea that unions had a role to play in serving the common good as preservers of order in industrial relations. The economic realities of workers, which often involved employment with a large corporation, belied the claim that employers and employees met on an equal plane to freely contract or not with one another. Ironically, large firms had sought to reform their workplaces by introducing scientific management, pension plans, and annual vacations. These firms often viewed the yellow dog as a relic from a more autocratic, unstable industrial era.

With public sympathy for unions expanding further in the early years of the Great Depression, the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932 easily passed in both houses of Congress. The Act deemed the yellow-dog contract unenforceable with the larger purposes of legitimizing collective bargaining in the eyes of the law and limiting the grounds upon which the courts could issue antilabor injunctions. Under this legislation, American workers generally received the rights and protections previously applied only to railway workers. The means to enforce this labor law and others came in 1935 with passage of the Wagner Act, a pivotal piece of New Deal legislation that survived the Supreme Court's and employers' hostility. While the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act amended Wagner, and labor's fortunes have changed radically since the 1930s, the ban on the yellow-dog contract remains in place.

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YONEDA, KARL (1906–1999) California Labor Activist

Karl Yoneda was a labor organizer and civil rights activist. He was born Goso Yoneda to Japanese immigrants in California in 1906 but changed his name to Karl in honor of Karl Marx. In 1913, his father took the family back to Japan. In 1926, after receiving a notice that he would soon be drafted into the Japanese Imperial Army, Yoneda returned to America. In 1935, he married Elaine Black, who was well known in California for being a labor organizer. Yoneda worked closely with his wife for the next 60 years on behalf of organized labor in California and in an effort to improve civil rights for Japanese immigrants.

Yoneda engaged in and organized frequent labor strikes. As a teenager he participated in a strike against the newspaper for which he worked as a delivery boy, after they lengthened routes but did not increase the pay. As a young man he joined the labor movement in Japan, participating in printers' and rubber workers' strikes. After returning to America, Yoneda became a labor organizer for the Trade Union Educational League, which was affiliated with the U.S. Communist Party, of which he was a member. In 1927, he joined the Japanese Workers Association. In 1931, he participated in a labor protest in Los Angeles, in which he was severely beaten by police officers. Two years later, Yoneda was arrested for staging a protest at a Los Angeles City Council meeting, where he was beaten again by police officers.

He wrote for and edited several labor and Communist publications. While in Japan in the 1920s, he published an underground newspaper for poor farmers. He became the publications director of the Japanese Workers Association in 1928. In the 1930s, he served as the editor of *Rodo Shimbun*, a Japanese-language Communist newspaper in San Francisco. He used this newspaper to attract more Japanese immigrants to organized labor as well as to the Communist Party.

After Japan invaded China in 1931, Yoneda was instrumental in leading strikes against Japanese ships among Japanese-American longshoremen throughout California. He was successful in organizing longshoremen in a massive dock strike in San Francisco in 1934. The police were ultimately called in to break the strike, which resulted in two strikers being killed and dozens more being wounded. Because Yoneda had organized the strike, police officers broke into his office at the *Rodo Shimbun* newspaper and destroyed the printing press and arrested a number of the newspaper's employees.

Yoneda worked as a longshoreman intermittently for many years, from the 1930s to the 1970s. He also served as a labor organizer for the San Francisco chapter of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). He was an official representative of the San Francisco ILWU at many state and national meetings. And he represented the ILWU at several international meetings. He also founded the Alaska Cannery Workers Union in San Francisco, where the company's employment office was located. He eventually served as the vice president of the union.

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in World War II, President Roosevelt issued an executive order mandating the internment of almost 112,000 Japanese-Americans on the West Coast. Although Yoneda resented having his loyalty to America tested, he was deeply committed to defeating Japan. As a result, he organized a group of Japanese-Americans to build an internment camp at Manzanar, where they would live for the duration of the war. Yoneda's wife and son also lived at the camp. He formed the

Manzanar Citizens Federation to lobby for improved living conditions and to support the war effort. Because Yoneda supported the U.S. government's war goals, he was frequently criticized and accused of being a spy for the government in the camp. In an effort to avoid further tensions at the camp and due to his desire to defeat Japan, he joined the military in 1942. He served in the Military Intelligence Service, translating Japanese documents and writing propaganda materials. During the course of the war, he received several medals for his service.

After World War II, Yoneda continued to work as a longshoreman and remained active in the ILWU into the early 1970s. Following his retirement in 1972, he wrote several important books and a number of articles on Japanese-American labor history. Yoneda also taught labor history at several California universities. He organized annual pilgrimages to the Manzanar internment camp and was also an active member of the Japanese American Citizens League. He continued to participate in various peace and social justice organizations until his death in 1999.

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Z

ZOOT SUIT RIOTS

Since the late twentieth century, there has been much talk about the greatest U.S. generation, those who grew up during the hard times of the Great Depression of the 1930s, fought in World War II, and witnessed the nation become a global superpower. This breed of Americans, it is believed, was more self-reliant, more resilient, and more patriotic. Yet their behavior during the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943 was less than honorable. During that summer white sailors and soldiers in uniform rushed into downtown Los Angeles seeking out Mexican youth and attacked them on the streets. This was an era when race riots were started by whites, and their violent actions often went without reproach. In fact the Los Angeles newspapers praised the troops for their bravery and thanked them for “cleaning up the town.”

As World War II raged on overseas, numerous battles erupted on the home front. In addition to Los Angeles, 1943 saw riots in Harlem, Detroit, and even Beaumont, Texas. Tensions leading up to the Zoot Suit Riots had been brewing since the previous summer. The 1942 Sleepy Lagoon case fueled a backlash against Mexican youth. When Los Angeles resident Jose Diaz was found murdered, 17 Mexican young men, ages 17 to 21, allegedly rivals of the Thirty-eighth Street gang, were put on trial for murder. The International Labor Defense (ILD) came to their aid, and during the 1940s, the Sleepy Lagoon case became the West Coast’s version of the Scottsboro case, in which the ILD had defended seven black youth on trial in the South for raping two white women.

The ILD assembled a defense team that included Carey McWilliams, Alice Greenfield McGrath, and Harry Braverman. They also formed the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee, a group of supporters that read like a roll call of prominent figures in the Hollywood Left: Actors Charlie Chaplin, Rita Hayworth, Katherine Hepburn, Lena Horne, John Howard Lawson, Canada Lee, Clifford Odets, Dalton Trumbo, and Orson Welles. Novelist Guy Endore wrote a pamphlet entitled *Sleepy Lagoon Mystery* to help promote the campaign.

During the trial a captain in the sheriff’s office told a grand jury that Mexicans were biologically predisposed toward violence because of their bloodthirsty Aztec heritage. The judge refused to allow the youth to fix their hair or change their clothes, thus further strengthening the impression that they were dirty criminals. Twelve of the defendants were convicted of murder, and five were convicted of assault. In October 1944, the U.S. District Court of Appeals overturned the convictions citing a miscarriage of justice. In the meantime many of the young women who were also believed to be part of the Thirty-eighth Street gang spent longer periods of time in reformatory school, which some claimed was worse than jail. During this 2-year span, the newspapers sensationalized the case, helping to create the perception among Los Angelenos that a crime wave was spreading through the city, and the terms zoot suit, *pachuco*, and gang became synonymous with Mexican youth.

Starting on June 3, 1943, and for a week afterward, thousands of sailors and soldiers stationed in Los Angeles stormed downtown, entered movie theaters,

ZOOT SUIT RIOTS



Washington, D.C. Soldier inspecting a couple of “zoot suits” at the Uline Arena. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection [LC-USF34-011543-D].

assaulted brown-skinned youth, both blacks and Mexicans, and left them bloody and naked in the streets. Writing for the *Nation*, Carey McWilliams claimed that these riots were the result of sensational newspaper headlines about the Sleepy Lagoon case and police misconduct. In fact during the first few days of the riots, no police officers were seen in the area of downtown Los Angeles. When they finally did arrive, officers arrested more than 300 people—most all of them black and Hispanic. Even the Communist party denied the racial foundation of the riots and claimed instead that they were provoked by Fascists to disrupt the spirit of wartime unity. Among the few local newspapers that criticized the actions of the white servicemen was the Spanish community newspaper *La Opinión* and the *California Eagle*, the black-owned and prolabor newspaper run by Charlotta Bass. In the *Crisis*, the national publication of the NAACP, black novelist Chester Himes gave his firsthand account of the riots and harshly criticized the white soldiers, whom he called “uniformed Klansmen.”

The precise time and location that ignited a week of riots is unknown, but the conflict was captured in the image of the zoot suit, a popular style of dress among black and Mexican youth. Believed to be

derived from actor Clark Gable’s long-tailed suits in *Gone with the Wind*, the zoot suit costume was made famous by swing jazz musician Cab Calloway. The name zoot suit came from the bebop language of the 1940s, and the outfit was also referred to as drapes or reat pleats. In his autobiography Malcolm X reminisced about donning a zoot suit when he frequented Harlem night clubs as an adolescent. During World War II cloth was being rationed for the American troops overseas. The wide shoulders and baggy pants of the zoot suit were considered an open affront to the war effort. Made of bright and gaudy fabric, these outfits were truly a symbol of defiance and an expression of the unwillingness by these youth to fight what many believed was a white man’s war. In fact during the week of rioting, the Los Angeles City Council passed a resolution declaring the wearing of a zoot suit a misdemeanor.

To the rebellious youth of the subsequent Chicano movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, this generation of Mexican-Americans and their zoot suits were venerated as radical ancestors. The *pachucos* of one era became the Chicanos of the next. This is most clearly expressed by playwright Luis Valdez in his 1978 *Zoot Suit*, a popular play that was adapted to the silver screen in a 1981 movie starring Edward

James Olmos. According to historian Mike Davis, today's Los Angeles gangs emerged from the Zoot Suit Riots, when Mexican-American youth formed gangs to fight back against their white attackers. Today it is not uncommon for young men at predominantly Hispanic Garfield High School in Los Angeles to come decked out in colorful zoot suits, topped with wide-brimmed hats and with a long chain swinging at their side. For these kids the stylish zoot suiters of the 1940s were the darker-skinned members of the greatest U.S. generation.

BRIAN DOLINAR

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