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HOW TO ORGANIZE: A PROBLEM

Resume of Findings

ONE DAY INSTITUTE ON TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION



Ten cents net

National Women's
Trade Union League
of America

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PAMPHLET

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NATIONAL WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE
OF AMERICA



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To Mary van Kleeck, director of Industrial Studies for the Russell Sage Foundation, is due full credit for the organization of the maze of material from which this handbook has emerged. Close contact with women's work conditions during her many years with the Foundation, as director of the Women in Industry Service in the United States Department of Labor, and subsequently as the first Director of the permanently established Federal Women's Bureau—this long-time absorption in industrial relations is accompanied by a keen sense of human values and gives marvelous equipment for the service she has rendered.

The National Women's Trade Union League of America finds it difficult to measure the value of this contribution. Any attempt to reduce to writing our "thank you" seems wholly inadequate.

INTRODUCTION

THIS book is a discussion of the "technique" of trade union organization, written for those who are responsible for organizing women in their trades. It has many authors, for it is a summary of discussion in committee meetings and conferences. And it is not finished. It is offered as a basis for more discussions in the hope that gradually more and more wisdom growing out of experience may be expressed and written down as a means of making more effective the great human movement which trade unions constitute.

The National Women's Trade Union League of America held a One Day Institute on methods of organization in connection with its Tenth Biennial Convention in 1926 at Kansas City, the plan having been developed by the National Executive Board at its meeting during January of that year.

In preparation for the Institute the subject was explored by a committee with members in New York and Chicago, drawn from the ranks of trade union organizers, psychologists, economists and experts in publicity. In New York there were Maud Swartz, chairman, Mabel Leslie, Sadie Reisch, Rose Schneiderman, Mary van Kleeck, Mary Goff, Matilda Lindsay, Anna Wolf, Robert Bruère, A. J. Muste, David Saposs, E. C. Lindeman, Ordway Tead, and Evart G. Routzahn. The students in the National League's

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training school were charged with some of the research work and co-operated with the Chicago Committee—Agnes Nestor, Mary Haney and Elisabeth Christman. In their conferences together the main problems were formulated and questioned and suggestions outlined.

On the day of the Institute, this outline was in the hands of each delegate, while the Discussion Leader—Lillian Herstein, of the Federation of Women High School Teachers of Chicago—had before her the same outline but with ample supplementary data. There were no prepared speeches but a quite remarkable discussion from the floor, which lasted throughout the morning and the afternoon.

At the close of the session the proceedings of the day were committed to the Convention Organization Committee, the chairman of which was Julia O'Connor Parker, President of the Telephone Operators' Department of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. This Committee reviewed the day's discussion and recommended that it be worked over by a national committee and that a handbook be issued for use by trade union organizers and officers.

Subsequently conferences were arranged by local Leagues on the same subject: the Waukegan (Illinois) Interstate Conference called jointly by the

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Women's Trade Union Leagues of Chicago and Milwaukee, the National Committees of Madison and LaCrosse, and the Illinois State Committee; and the Katonah Conference, conducted by the New York Women's Trade Union League.

These conferences and discussions have clearly shown how many are the ramifications of the problem. The handbook has been delayed chiefly for that reason—that the League and its committees have made only a beginning. But they have served to introduce the subject and what they have said is gathered together in the following pages as a stimulus to further thinking.

Victor A. Olander, Secretary-Treasurer of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, and of the International Seamen's Union, in his critical reading of the manuscript raised many questions. His comprehending thought on leadership has been incorporated in the text.

The hope is that this first edition will speedily be superseded when more ideas and more statements of experience are called forth by conferences and written down for others to read.

In this symposium no attempt is made to give credit to those who spoke. Like the achievements of the unions themselves, this handbook is a group prod-

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uct. It reflects the unsolved problems and the encouraging ideas for solution of those who are active today in organizing women into unions. Nor are the different conferences separately described. The same subjects were discussed in each of them, and on each subject the combined wisdom of the meetings in Kansas City, Waukegan and Katonah is gathered together.

What is "technique" and what has it to do with organization? The meaning of "technique" in writing books suggests the answer. Many believe that great literature is produced by unconscious literary artists, that, as the chairman of the Kansas City Institute expressed it, "The author sits down, sees Mother clear the table, puts his hand over his forehead and then writes." But, as she pointed out, the more we study literature the more we realize that the unconscious literary artist is rare, if he ever exists. Many men were writing in the times of Chaucer and Shakespeare, but these two excelled. They knew how to write. Even great imaginative poets like Keats and Shelley scratched out lines and wrote in others.

The dressmaker learns how to do her work before she can be called a dressmaker. Moreover, in all that she does she begins where others left off. Somebody who has successfully made dresses knows how she has

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done it and can teach another person how to do it. Why, then, should not those whose job it is to organize trade unions learn from others how to do it? The great trouble is that sometimes those who do it best are not conscious of how they do it. Moreover, they have not stopped to think why sometimes they have failed. In learning technique, failures and difficulties are as important as successes; sometimes more so, for they make one think.

To stimulate trade union organizers, the wise and the inexperienced, the expert and the discouraged, to think about how to do their work better, and to bring to bear the intelligence of allies of the labor movement upon its great task, is the purpose of this pamphlet.



FOREWORD

EIGHT million and a half or so American women are gainfully employed and of this number nearly four million are in industry and are prospects for organization—only 250,000 or so of them being enrolled in the unions. In the face of these figures we must tread softly and talk humbly. In this spirit, most definitely, do we send out our little compilation of observations, opinions, experiences, theories. Can we organize women, and how? We would like to make it not only a query but a challenge to ourselves and those with whom we share the responsibility for bringing women into trade union ranks. To this end we have set down, as we know them, the facts in the case. The most important of these facts we can demonstrate with mathematical exactitude—that pitifully few women are organized and that the number is not increasing. Venturing little beyond this major premise in the way of authoritative pronouncement, we have sought to analyze the difficulties, suggest some expedients, feel our way to a more solid ground of knowledge and policy. The value of this document lies to my mind greatly in its honest and critical approach to the problem. We have ourselves resolved upon a new technique. We have not spared our own mistakes and ineptitudes. We are frankly taking counsel and seeking counsel, confessing to the magnitude of the task, pleading for the attention of the best

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minds to this job of organizing women. Have we outgrown the theory that women are not organized because the men don't want them in, won't let them in, that in fact the only villain in the piece is the dominant male who wanted to hold his supremacy against a feminine invasion of superior brains and executive ability? I think so. Some hostility, some caution, a great deal of indifference on the part of men toward the organization of women—these have been and are factors and persuasions in the situation, but no longer do we bitterly make man's inhumanity to woman the grand answer to the lost legion outside the fold. For, as this little booklet bears testimony, we are using as well as preaching the factual technique, we are reviewing the whole gamut of feminine psychology, probing our obvious weaknesses as women and as organization prospects, being the frailer vessel generally and, shades of feminism! we are even asking ourselves whether men rather than women organizers would have better success in recruiting women.

Beneath all our objectiveness and impersonality in this study lies a deep and abiding zeal. This is a cause to us, a splendid and inspiring one. We want to serve the labor movement of our day and generation as best

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it is given us to serve. We want to translate to our women fellow workers something of the values which we know lie in organized labor. As an expert in industrial relations, it can offer to women as to men the best return in the world on their investment in union dues. It has a hundred years' experience in providing higher wages and better working standards of every kind. But it offers more than that to the idealism which we hope lies in the hearts of the women we want in our ranks. It gives an opportunity to work for a better race, a brighter world for children, to lift from the backs of toiling men and women the ugly burdens of poverty. There is a place in our ranks for every woman whose spiritual motherhood quickens to that program.

We have spoken with candor of the shortcomings of women as trade union prospects, their inexperience, their susceptibility to employer blandishments, their subjection to an unfavorable public opinion. May we not speak, too, of a woman's loyalty, her crusading fervor, her warm-heartedness toward the finer values of the labor movement. We hold that her contribution to labor's progress is potentially great and we plead for a common acceptance of labor's responsibility to bring her into its fellowship.

JULIA O'CONNOR PARKER.

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Why do some unions succeed while others fail?

Why do some unions grow rapidly in membership while others find it very difficult to win new members?

Why do some unions hold their members while others lose them?

Why do some unions have lively meetings while others have only dull business so that their members have no interest in coming?

Why do some organizers find it easy to persuade an employer to change conditions while others meet always with antagonism and resistance?

This little book is a discussion of questions like these. In the forty years of the life of the labor movement in the United States most of the unions have been too absorbed in the work of organizing to have time for a study of methods. This is the history of many other movements. Their pioneers win success and make mistakes without any record of how they did it or any conclusion as to how others ought or ought not to do it. But when a movement grows beyond the pioneer stage of personal leadership, it must become self-conscious if it is to succeed. The trial and error method must give place to an objective

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analysis of procedure. The conditions which have made for success in the past must be set down in writing as a means of planning for like success or greater effectiveness under similar conditions in the present.

The labor movement today has another reason for a new study of how to organize. Both industrial conditions and public opinion have changed. Industry is more and more mechanical. New dangers weaken the trade unions. New problems are presented to them. Only objective study and conference together can enable leaders and members to meet these new conditions wisely.

Added to these reasons for a new approach is a very special reason for interest in this subject on the part of the National Women's Trade Union League. The League is concerned with the organization of women. Women's economic status is changing, and with it is changing the whole psychology of women and girls. Is the present trade unionism adapted to their needs and interests? How can it be made to appeal to them? How can they be trained to take their part in making their union a success?

Different Methods in Different Industries

Each trade has its own problems, which differ according to whether the shops are large or small,

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whether the workers are skilled or unskilled and whether men are employed in the trade. Workers of different nationalities have different ways of looking at things. An organizer in the upholstery trade and one in the white goods trade exchanged experiences at a committee meeting in New York, and the following outline shows the differences:

In the upholstery trade are many small shops belonging to interior decorators. The majority send their work out to factories. Many of the decorators are opposed to unions and give their work to non-union factories. The union has succeeded, however, in getting the best workers into the organization, and the best work is done in union shops. The trade is part of the building trades, and the strong organization of the building crafts strengthens the upholsterers' union. The work is skilled, and the women who do it are mature. Irish and German predominate, with some Swedish, Hungarian and Italian. There is no left movement and very little interest in radical propaganda. The union makes a straight effort to raise wages and decrease hours. The women have a separate local, but the men have assisted them in organization, and when a new agreement is made the men's local takes the lead. A shop is organized by

persuading the workers that they need a higher wage scale, getting them one by one to join, and then approaching the employer. The organizer goes to work in the shop and becomes acquainted with the workers in that way, or she talks with them on the street after they leave the work room.

In the white goods trade, in contrast to the upholsterers, the girls are younger and of different nationalities. The Jewish girl is likely to marry early, and the young girls in the white goods trade do not feel themselves a permanent part of the industry. Many of the foreign-speaking workers, Russians, Italians, Spaniards and others, do not understand or speak English. The strength of the organization came through a big strike in 1913. Many of the workers who have come into the industry since the strike do not know how much the union has accomplished. The girls change frequently from shop to shop. You may convert ten girls in a shop one week, and only five of them will be employed there the next week. In a recent campaign three months were spent, and the workers had changed their positions before the results could be seen. New workers had taken their places, and these were not members of

the union. The organizer concluded that next time she would get the workers ready and call a strike in a given section of the city before the manufacturers had time to raise wages and thus prevent a strike. A recent campaign of membership was carried on by calling shop meetings, distributing circulars and talking with girls on the street.

Different Methods in Different Communities

In large cities where there are many trades and many shops and where the trade unions are strong, it will be easier to form an organization. But it is also more difficult to get to know the workers. In the larger cities one can reach the unorganized workers by distribution of circulars and by interviewing the workers a few doors from the shops. In a smaller community, circulars explaining the American labor movement are impossible because they immediately put the employer on the defensive. Pressure may be brought to bear on the worker, probably through the loss of a job, if he is seen talking to an organizer, and this makes it impossible to speak to a worker on the street. The following outline has been suggested for methods of organization in small communities:

Personal visitation. The workers will talk more freely in their homes away from the work-

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shop, and will give a concise picture of conditions in shop or factory.

Social connections. After the home meeting, when the worker's confidence is won, she is less fearful of your meeting her near the shop or factory. Workers in small communities are always afraid that they may lose their jobs if they have anything to do with unions or organizers. When you have won the confidence of the worker you can walk home with her, and it is best to begin with her "flapper" interests. You may have to dance the Charleston with her. She will then think you are a "good sport" and she will help you to reach her fellow workers.

Influence of worker upon worker. This is much more effective than the effort of a stranger to make a direct approach.

Conversations about working conditions. After suspicions have been removed by social intercourse, begin conversations about the place of women in industry and wages and cost of living. It is important to picture conditions of hours and wages in the organized section of the industry, and to go deeply into the question of the lowest wages that an employer can pay when other shops are organized, so as to show

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the responsibility of each worker to take her part in keeping up the standards of the industry, since readiness to accept the lowest minimum wage directly retards advancement for the organized men and women.

Local committees of organized labor. The effort should be made to develop local responsibility, and it is better to work more slowly and to accomplish this than to interest people quickly and leave no permanent organization. Reach the men's unions and try to stimulate them to carry forward the organization of women.

No one method applies in every industry and in every community alike. One approach accomplishes one purpose, and another brings different results. Labor unions must provide some means of analyzing in advance both the trade which is to be organized and the community in which it is located. (The way to do this will be discussed later, in connection with the need for investigation and research. See page 62.) If the American Federation of Labor had an organization department, whose business would be not to organize but to study methods of organization and their results under different conditions, the work of the unions could be planned more effectively.

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The labor movement frequently suffers from inadequately planned efforts toward organization. A powerful center of enthusiasm is needed to persuade people to join. Once they have joined, they must be led to think through their problems, but the initial interest must be aroused by well planned "evangelistic" campaigns. One union alone has difficulty in accomplishing this. It requires united effort.

The need for an overwhelming opinion in favor of trade unions is especially great as a background for organizing women in a community. The imagination of women is not easily captured by a trade union. But success is infectious, and the feeling in the community as a whole has a great deal to do with the success of a single union.

The Strike as a Means of Organization

Three typical methods of organizing a union have been practiced: (1) quiet methods to build up a union by securing one member after another before it becomes known to employers and the community that a campaign is under way; (2) propaganda and education planned to enlist the interest of the whole community; (3) the strike.

What are the comparative values of these three methods?

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What is the place of the strike in the present organization of trade unions in the United States?

Opinions differ. Some believe that the most effective way of organizing and building up an organization is through strikes, and that the American labor movement makes a mistake when it counsels the workers not to go on strike. After organization, the number of strikes should be minimized, but unorganized workers want action. They do not understand the finer points of unionization. They only know that they have grievances and that they must right them by fighting. They do not think about unions unless a crisis arises. Even a lost strike may win members.

For an unskilled industry some organizers believe that only a general strike in the industry enables the union to secure a foothold and to get results. In an unskilled occupation an individual can easily be replaced, and it is not easy to win members one by one. Only mass action seems safe. On the other hand, unskilled workers are likely to be so poor that they cannot afford to take chances and are much more afraid of losing their jobs than are the better paid workers.

Many believe that a better method than a strike is an organized drive in which the whole labor movement of the community takes part. That creates an

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atmosphere, an enthusiasm, a spiritual drive, that cannot be outdone and that brings the best results. The difficulty of organization through a strike is that the effects often do not last. Members fall away because there is no solid basis for intelligent interest. On this ground some believe that open education of the workers and of the public by means of meetings and printed material is best.

Activities in a Local Union

Every activity and policy of a local union should be analyzed to see exactly what appeal it makes to members and whether it wins and holds them. These activities include:

- (1) Wages and the success of the union in increasing them.
- (2) Hours of work and the success of the union in decreasing them.
- (3) Apprentices and what the union has done for them in getting pay for them while at the same time protecting the experienced workers by preventing the employment of too many apprentices.
- (4) Discharge and reinstatement and the extent to which the union protects the worker's hold on the job. The importance of this differs

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in different industries. For instance, feeling is strong in the white goods trade that the union must prevent the discharge of a worker and secure reinstatement, whereas in the upholstery trade the union finds that while the worker wants protection against injustice she often prefers to leave a job and does not want reinstatement. In other branches of the clothing trade, as well as in the white goods industry, this security in the job has become a central issue in the minds of the workers, and the union must recognize it.

- (5) Production standards, efficiency, et cetera. The worker wants protection against overspeed; the employer wants quid pro quo in making an agreement with the union; and the union must develop a wise policy.
- (6) Employment bureaus. Some unions have found the maintenance of an employment service for their members a means of making membership attractive and also increasing the hold of the union upon the various shops.
- (7) Sickness and death benefits.
- (8) Social and educational activities. These depend upon the attitude of the workers, their ages and their interests.

(9) Union meetings, collection of dues, size of dues, and policy regarding shop delegates. Too frequent meetings may decrease attendance. Collection of dues in the shops may keep the membership together better. But the requirement to attend union meetings helps to develop solidarity. On the other hand, if members do not wish to come, it may prove a weakness in the union to have poorly attended meetings. Frequent change in shop delegates may increase interest. The more members put on committees and set to work, the more interest there will be in the union.

There are great possibilities in making trade union meetings more attractive. As a delegate said at Kansas City: "Who wants to sit in a meeting, listen to a humdrum reading of minutes, to a squabble or two, and then adjourn?" Attractive surroundings count. In St. Louis one of the unions found that an assembly room could be secured in a first-class hotel if refreshments were taken at the price of 35 cents for ice cream and cake.

More important is some plan which gives the members something to do. In a stenographers' union in New York the meetings were very un-

successful until the officers realized that they were taking everything on their own shoulders, and thereafter they began to divide responsibility. They have an editorial board, an organization committee, a social committee and others. Everybody has a job and a sense of responsibility. Attendance increased.

Three locals in Chicago, the glove workers, the bindery women and the boot and shoe workers, arranged for a series of health lectures in a large hall in an accessible location. The meetings were packed.

(10) Policy toward married women. In trades in which the number of married women is increasing, this is important. The upholsterers' union gives a girl who marries a withdrawal card and if she wishes to return to the trade at any time she may be reinstated by the payment of not more than one year's dues if she has renewed the card for the necessary number of years. About 80 per cent of the girls who marry return to the shops.

Interesting the Individual

A union is made up of individuals, and the whole task of winning and holding members depends on understanding how to interest the individual. It is

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a problem in education. It cannot be considered apart from all the other questions, since the test of all the policies of the union will be the strength of its hold upon its members. But there is a separate question as to the ways of interesting individuals.

How can new members be interested?

How can old members be trained to take their share in the work of the union so that they will always retain their interest?

The first step is to study the individuals in the trade to be organized, their ages, nationalities and racial psychology, the type of work which they do, their attitude toward their work and their interests in the community.

The next step is to experiment with the best methods of reaching them and to be ready to analyze the results and to abandon a method when it does not get results. What the union has to offer, how it is organized to accomplish its purpose and what results it gets must all meet the acid test of whether or not the workers join and stay in the union.

All the methods of general education of the community in the principles of the labor movement will have their influence upon the success of the union in interesting the individual. Talking trade unionism in

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the family, studying economics and social science in the schools, having some background of enthusiasm for the labor movement in the community, getting sympathetic treatment in the newspapers, winning the support of individuals in the community outside the labor movement—all these will affect the attitude of individuals toward union membership.

Success in interesting women depends upon the attitude of women toward vocations. If they have enthusiasm for economic independence and are ambitious to succeed in their work, they will more readily see the importance of a union.

For many of them it will no longer be possible to choose between marriage and a job. They must have both, and it must be part of the work of a union with women members to encourage the women to stand on their feet and to find out how they can combine marriage and a job to the best advantage of their families and themselves. The union might well study the ways of relieving women of unnecessary burdens in the home, developing co-operative methods of getting housework done and especially letting the women see that they must secure a high enough wage to enable them to pay for service in the households (be

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it doing the weekly cleaning or preparing the evening meal).

Of course, it is not possible to make the appeal in the same way to all kinds of women. For instance, there is the "flapper." As one delegate said at Kansas City: "I have had the experience in recent weeks of dealing with the 'flapper' type. I have reached the conclusion that if you want to reach her you will have to do as she does. For four weeks I went to two or three dances a night, going from one to another. As a result, we gained the confidence of those girls and today there is a federal union being formed in that city. If the girls have an interest in moving pictures, go with them. Sociability is the thing that counts with the 'flapper,' because she does not know much about anything else."

The bindery women of St. Louis reported that they find the young girl eager to come into the labor organization, and the Chicago bookbinders seemed to have the same experience. The young girl there, they say, will come into the union if she thinks it will help to increase her wages. The majority of the new members are under twenty. In St. Louis it has been found desirable to make the approach through workers' education. A class has been organized which

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meets in the public library once a week with both union and non-union girls present. Several industries are represented. The aim is to reach the unorganized girl and also to educate the young union members.

The telephone operators reported an experience which seems to be common in other industries: "Telephone operators do team work every day; the success of one depends upon the success of another. We have the ability to work together which comes from large groups working under parallel economic conditions. And so the girls are organizable from that point of view, though they are not so easily interested as ten years ago, when they had lower wages and longer hours. We cannot make the same appeal. We now have to tell the girls who are sixteen and seventeen years old that fifteen years ago such and such conditions obtained, and it leaves them somewhat cold. They come into the telephone exchanges where conditions are fairly human, where the influence of unionism has brought about changed conditions. We cannot forever talk about the past and how conditions used to be; we have got to bring back to them the spiritual value of the labor movement, the benefit of working for and with each other, the service they can render the community if they are satisfied and happy on their job."

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The extent of organization of the employers and the power of large companies are great obstacles. As one delegate at Kansas City said: "I wish our own people appreciated as well as the employers do the power of organization. We can go into any part of the country and get girls to come into the organization; our difficulty begins when the companies start their deadly work of transfers and dismissals. However, the enthusiasm of the young girls keeps them with us as long as we deliver the goods. We have workers' education and kindred movements to help us to capitalize the enthusiasm of the young girls."

Contrary to the experience of the bindery women in finding that the most effective appeal to the young girl was the possibility of raising her wages through the union, a man who took part in the Waukegan conference voiced a grievance against the "flapper," that she should be quite content with a job that she cannot live on because she assumes that her father or her brother has the right to help to support her. This had been the experience of this delegate in the coal-mining communities. "If a woman is going to demand a square deal," he said, "she ought to assume the right of financing herself. Then she would have to go to the boss and ask for a square deal. I know how downright sore we felt on the question in the

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coal mines. We said: 'Sure, you're wearing silk stockings and silk dresses and having a good time and your dad is working his days out in the coal mines. You're not self-respecting. You don't deserve a square deal unless you are willing to earn your own living.' You cannot organize anybody unless they need to be organized to raise their wages. Even if they do live at home, they ought to be taught to believe there is something in financing their part of the home. Very few women earn enough to support themselves, and the woman who does have to support herself and sometimes her children has an additionally hard job because of the girl who gets along on \$10 and \$12 a week and lives on the rest of the family. I think that is something the 'flapper' can be made to realize."

To the discussion at this point at Waukegan a glove-maker contributed from her own experience: "I know that the first two years I worked if anybody had come to organize me they probably would have had a difficult time doing it. I was so fascinated with my work. There was nothing but a thrill. It was new. I was young. I was enthusiastic. I can remember operating a particular machine. The boss asked me how I liked it. I said: 'I would never get tired sewing on this machine.' That is how I felt

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that day. Well, after I had worked a few years and began to feel backaches and the strain of the long day and work in industry, my point of view began changing. There took place within me a certain unrest. I was dissatisfied with things in general before I got into the union. I did not know what was the matter. I was always scolding about the trusts. My father used to say: 'You ought to be in the union.' There was no union in our trade that we knew about.

"I think there is that sort of helplessness about any group floundering around, and we have got to consider in a group of young girls, if new in industry, that they have not had the discouragements so that they are ready for organization, which the girls who are older have had. But we have got to consider that group when trying to organize, and we have got to consider the older group who feel that things are wrong. When you are at the shops, giving out leaflets, as you talk to each one to whom you give a leaflet and say, 'There is a meeting next week; be sure to come,' then you get reactions from them. Perhaps they will be indifferent. Again, you will meet another group where conditions are all wrong, where they are getting cuts in pay, and they will say: 'I should think we do need the union. It is about time.' I know factories where we got that reply from many

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girls last winter. Yet they did not come to the meetings. There is the fear, 'I might lose my job.' There is the feeling, too, that it cannot be done, that the union will not succeed. Somehow we must meet the psychology of the worker. We must overcome the fear in her heart. We must make them believe that it is possible to build an organization. Some time perhaps we shall have to have a psychologist in trade union work."

An organizer of the milliners protested that "the 'flapper' is much more serious than she looks. Millinery is considered a highly skilled trade, but it is not. It has been reduced by all the modern inventions for pressing and cutting until now it does not require much skill. The young worker is attracted to millinery because she has been made to believe that it is above factory work. The problem with the young worker is how to get her into the union. Once she is in, you can talk more sense to her than to older people. After all, youth has more spirit than the old. She is much more likely to go out on the picket line. She does not feel the hardships of life. They have not made the deep impression upon her that they have made on the older woman, and therefore the revolutionary spirit is much more marked. One of the best methods of getting in touch with the work-

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ers is from inside the shops. The girls have no time to talk with you when the day is done. They want to go home and dress up. If you work inside the shops, you have a chance to talk with them and talk sense and they understand.

"But we made it our business to get the girls in a shop out to a social party. We had doughnuts and coffee and speakers, not any great orators who would stampede them, but those who know industry and conditions and talk as worker to worker. One girl came who had thought it was not necessary to join the union because she had a steady job. After three months she had caught the spirit and the courage and now there is not a meeting to which she does not bring a new member. She says: 'Look what workers in the union are getting. We don't have to work so many hours.'"

The diversity of nationalities and of languages is important in its effect upon the appeal to individuals. One delegate at Kansas City reported that the young girls particularly would not join a union in which they had to be with girls of other nationalities. A New York organizer confirmed this, but thought that one trouble was that long speeches in foreign tongues tire people out. In a New York meeting, with "Americans, Jews, Italians, Spaniards and others, a

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speech in Yiddish may last an hour, and those who do not understand walk out. The same things happens when the Italians and the Spaniards speak." She advocated one language for meetings, and that English.

The direct appeal of the union to the individual needs reinforcement by more discussion of trade unionism in the home, particularly in the families of trade unionists. Women's auxiliaries and the closely allied device of the union label can be of great assistance in developing the homes of trade unionists as centers of education of children in the principles of the labor movement. As one delegate at Waukegan said: "My father, a miner, carried a card for years, and he never said to me when I went into industry that I ought to belong to a trade union. I think the responsibility lies largely on the trade union man, that our women are not in the organization today."

Separate Locals for Women

Is it easier to interest women if they are organized separately?

Is it more effective to have men and women workers in the same local unions?

An organizer in the millinery trade put the answer in this way: "In our particular line we have to or-

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ganize the women separately because, although there is no reason in it, matters have come to the stage that you cannot get women to come to the men's organization. A great many men have entered the industry. They are saying that women are not organizable. The women, on the other hand, say: 'We can't have anything to do with the men, because in a strike they will scab on us. It is our industry. They took it from us.' That is the fault of education. In time we will overcome it, but right now we are faced with the problem of organizing the women separately. It is a double job, and we will have to amalgamate them in order to be able more effectively to fight the employers. The workers, by the very fact that they are exploited, must consolidate, must amalgamate. The problem is not as bad as it seems. The only thing is, we have to get the women into the trade unions and to understand the big necessity of organization. Once they understand and get interested, all the details can be straightened out, because the women in the union are intelligent enough to realize the problems when they are faced with the facts."

Another delegate gave other reasons for separate organization: "Whenever men and women are in

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one organization, the women don't get any representation. Our international union has been organized since 1898 and we had quite a fight to elect a woman on the international executive board. But finally we did it. There is no law against it, but the men are absolutely against it. I think it is better for men to organize by themselves and the women by themselves, but to belong to the same international union."

Another delegate, representing the postoffice clerks, contributed the idea that "in the trades where men and women are somewhat of the same age, they seem to work together best. When you find the men older, the women don't have a chance. In the postoffice union they are about the same age, and the men and women have a great deal in common. The experience there is that the young man is interested in the union and the young woman is satisfied to leave it to him. It is generally when the woman is older that you can get her interested to come to the meetings. The men always seem to be glad when a woman shows interest. We have many women officers in the locals, and the men were delighted when they were able to get a woman who would fill a position on the executive board, and when after years of serving most bril-

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liantly she had to leave the service because of poor health we have not been able to find another woman to take her place. From my own observation I cannot agree that a woman does not have a chance to express her personality in a union where men and women are organized together."

An officer of the League, speaking of experience in several industries, said: "In the garment trades they formed a woman's local because when they were organized with the men in an election of delegates to the national convention not one woman was chosen. The men believe they can handle these things better. One reason is that it is hard to get men and women to the meetings at the same time. The women would rather have a meeting at five o'clock than to come in the evening when they have work to do at home. Sometimes the meeting is held in a place where women do not like to go. Sometimes the women are timid about taking an active part when men are attending the meeting. I don't know whether it is because we are so honest in admitting inexperience, but you often hear a woman say: 'I don't feel equal to taking the office.' A man will never say that. He will say: 'I haven't got the time.' If we wish to develop leadership, our women must be in an organization by them-

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selves, because then they are thrown on their own resources and they must function to manage their own organization. We have found that it is not that the men are trying to keep the women down, but that the women don't push themselves. Take the elevated railway employes. They think it is great because they put one woman on the board. The International Ladies' Garment Workers, with 80 per cent women, have only one woman on their national executive board. It was by a resolution of the Women's Trade Union League that a delegate went to the National Convention of Hotel and Restaurant Workers, authorized to present a resolution for women to serve on the joint boards, and she got it. We must remember that this great labor organization, the American Federation of Labor, has not one woman on its executive council."

A delegate with experience in the garment trades in New York and Chicago was opposed to separate organization. "Let us try to prove to the men," she said, "that we not only would better the conditions of women, but we will not hinder the progress of men. I am sure we can do much more working together than working separately. The only problem is how to organize the women. The only difference in

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approaching a woman is that she must be convinced that she is a part of industry and not feel that, as she is to leave it in a few years, she need not be interested in conditions. We know that employers try to divide us according to race and color. They know that the more we are divided the more advantage they can take. The thing for us to learn is that the more we are united the bigger our strength will be. As unionists we say: 'In unity there is strength.' When you go into a union, you discuss the problems of the shop and of the industry and you learn that the interest of the women is just as great as the interest of the men—in other words, that we must struggle and fight and win together. What happens when we are separate? Our psychology begins to work differently. Prejudices begin. If we have discussed the industry in the union, we stand closely together in the factory. When we are not together the boss takes advantage and just as with race or nationality he says that the Negro is spoiling the price for the white man so he says to the women: 'The men always talk against you and say you are not entitled to an equal division of work.'

"Another reason is that the attitude toward women in industry has to be progressive. Woman is a new

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product in industry. The man says: 'I have given so many years of my life, and she has just entered the industry and immediately she wants to be secretary.' But experience in struggling together changes that idea. We must always remember that there are members of the union who are not progressive on any question. So they oppose women holding office. We here are progressive, and we should be the last ones to preach that women should be separately organized."

The discussion might be summed up by saying that, as in every other question involved in organization, one must adapt one's method to the particular condition which one finds. One must study the trade, the community and the shop, and decide the best procedure to fit the particular condition. This applies to the whole question of the relation of men's locals to women's locals and the relation of men to women in the same local.

Approaching the Employer

Why do employers refuse to recognize trade unions?

What have been the policies of trade unions which have been most successful in securing recognition?

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What can a union offer to an employer which will convince him that it is advantageous to deal with it?

Is there danger that an employer who is forced to give recognition when a union wins a strike may never be truly converted to trade unionism?

Obviously the trade union has done only half its work when it has persuaded members to join and succeeded in keeping their interest. The other half of its work is to succeed in securing better conditions for the workers. A very important part of success in securing better conditions is the establishment of such a status for the workers in the industry that they have a voice in the policies which affect labor. In other words, it is important not only to establish a given wage, but to make sure that, as conditions change and rates of pay must change, the interests of the workers are cared for in the day-to-day decisions of management. This point will be more fully discussed in connection with the subject of the purposes of the union, but it is to be kept in mind in considering the approach to the employer.

The problems divides into two parts: (1) how to secure recognition in the first place; (2) how to

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establish co-operative relations which will make possible agreement on details and adjustment of day-to-day problems.

In the majority of trades recognition seems to be first achieved when the union has become powerful enough in membership to compel recognition. The next step, how to make recognition work after it is accomplished, is a different kind of problem, to which the unions should perhaps give increased attention.

The Committee on Organization after the Kansas City Institute summed it up in this way: "Under present conditions it is practically inevitable that a newly organized union must battle for recognition, not necessarily nor advisedly through the strike, but through a process of effective organization which very frequently must be carried on in the face of discrimination and persecution by the employer.

"Assuming such organization and recognition achieved, what are the means of holding it and of making it operate as an economic machine for improving conditions?"

"Your committee would like to make a special plea for what is variously called the factual or scientific approach. A union committee which seeks to

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negotiate with an employer and which presents itself as the agent and spokesman of the workers in the industry is inexcusably stupid if it attempts such a task without the fullest information it can secure as to the economic status of the industry. We appreciate that in some kinds of business it is impossible to get this information. But even where in the beginning a balance sheet is not available, the workers' representatives ought to know the practical side of the business, ought to know its labor problems, ought to know from intelligent observation something of its production and efficiency needs, ought in fact to be competent witnesses when the workers' evidence is presented. In the case of public utilities or other regulated groups, information is available to the public as to profits, surplus, depreciation, interest rates, et cetera; and while corporation bookkeeping is a formidable thing, it is nevertheless possible for representatives of trade unions to be able to combat the inevitable plea of poverty on the part of employers with sufficient facts to warrant their getting a respectful hearing. There is happily in the labor movement a growing appreciation of the necessity of the scientific approach in special classes, special publications, special institutes, which are being provided to meet this need. We would urge upon our fellow workers in

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the women's labor movement to utilize methods of negotiation involving this philosophy where women workers are concerned, to at least the same degree as is being done in the case of men, rather than relying on special appeals and sentimentality because they are dealing with women."

The committee wisely coupled this recommendation with another, regarding the approach of the union to its own members. Evidently if the union as a whole is to have the scientific and constructive approach in dealing with employers with whom it has an agreement, its members must have faith in this method of approach and must themselves be as well informed as possible. The committee said: "Another phase of the scientific approach is the reasoning method of dealing with the workers themselves during the organization process. We advocate the sane, intelligent and quiet method of explaining the advantages of organization to the workers, in pointing out the disadvantages under which they labor as an unorganized group, rather than the bombastic, noisy and abusive methods which characterized an older day in organization tactics. We appreciate that it is sometimes necessary to meet vicious and untruthful propaganda on the part of employers by some sterner meth-

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ods, but certainly it is highly advisable that the former method be given a reasonable trial, thus avoiding unnecessary antagonisms and hatreds between the employer and individual leaders in the union and preventing the raising of false issues which may militate against the smooth process of organization and negotiation."

Summing up the discussion of the psychological approach to the employer, the Kansas City Committee on Organization said: "Employers are, after all, human beings, and their behaviorism, even where the unionization of their employes is concerned, would probably react to the same influences which affect the rest of us, and we urge the employment of tact, friendliness and even the more subtle appeals to his pride."

If this sounds somewhat like a counsel of perfection, it may be worth while to record here the statement at the Kansas City convention of a New York organizer who, while she agreed that we must not forget psychology in making the approach, nevertheless declared that "it is not the people who are calm who can approach the bosses best and get the best results." As another delegate expressed it: "The psychological approach does not always mean the

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smooth approach. Frequently the employer will object to a certain person negotiating with him because that person is effective. Mr. Gary said, in an article in the Chicago Tribune, that he believed in organization. He said: 'If we could always confer with our own people, there would be no trouble.' What he meant was that he did not want as effective a man as John Fitzpatrick, who had had years of experience in the labor movement."

The New York organizer just quoted thus analyzed the approach to the man whose shop is already organized: "Suppose the shop has to be reorganized. We would go to the man who had given us the conditions we asked for and who knew that he had a 100 per cent union shop. Therefore we would apply ourselves to making him understand that the union will help him to succeed in his business and that he cannot lose out by having an organization shop. Probably he would say to us: 'Yes, but the union has nothing to offer. I am paying \$15 a week for this girl. An open shop right next door to me produces exactly the same garment for less wages.' The next thing for me to do would be to tell him that we were trying to organize the non-union shop. It is not always the fact that the boss who pays \$10

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a week to a girl makes the same line of goods as the man next door who pays \$8. But we must organize all the shops. When we have the power, the approach to the bosses will be easy."

"The next question is, How are we going to hold the agreements after we get them?"

"Can we forget human psychology? The economic question comes in there. The worker himself is weak. We have found out in the building trades and among the dressmakers that after an agreement is signed the boss will go around the shop and say: 'Never mind the agreement. Never mind the organization. You are the one sitting at the machine. If I have no work, you will have no work. You will have to do it a little cheaper, or I cannot run the shop.' Education of the workers is the fundamental thing. We must teach our people that when an agreement is secured they must stand up and see that it is carried out. It is up to the individual in the shop. Some workers are conscientious. Others are not. That cannot be helped. When it comes to the question of approach, in my opinion it does not take any particular kind of person to do it. My experience is that it all depends upon the time and the industry. When the industry is flourishing and you

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have a 100 per cent organization, you can send the devil himself and he will get an agreement."

The Job of Organizer and How to Make It Effective

Not everyone agreed with this idea that the personality and technique of the organizer were not important. On the contrary, a good many questions present themselves in connection with the work of organizers.

Are organizers selected carefully enough to insure the appointment of those who are best qualified to meet the particular problems of the particular trade in the community where the work is being done?

Should there be specialization among organizers? Are some better adapted to the work of interesting members and some better fitted to approach employers? Should women organize women? Should the organizer be of the same nationality as the persons whom he approaches?

Are young organizers needed in trades employing large numbers of young workers?

Should there be conferences of organizers in

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different trades to discuss methods and exchange experiences?

How can the experience of organizers be put into written form so that one may profit by the mistakes and successes of another?

What subjects ought an organizer to study to make her work most effective? History of the labor movement? Economics? Psychology? Methods of publicity? Public speaking? What others?

The whole question of leadership is raised in the discussion of the work of organizers. As the Committee on Organization at the Kansas City convention said: "Argue as we may for rank-and-file control of organization, the labor movement, like every other human endeavor, wins its way to success very frequently on personal, magnetic and vital leadership. The women's labor movement needs leadership of this type. They can contribute more than any other single factor to the organization of women and to the successful conduct of unionism. They make the difference between dull and sparkling meetings, between dead mediocrity in union procedure or so interesting and alert a method of carrying out even the most routine of union affairs as will enliven and enthuse

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the membership. Within the experience of every one of us is the picture of unions which have been held together and carried on to prosperity by the sheer magnetism and courage of one individual. The committee appreciates that humans of such qualifications are rare, and our recommendation is the rather trite one that where such women are available they be given every opportunity which the movement can afford to equip themselves for service in the union. We would like to note also that such high-type individuals are apt, beyond the average, to sense the spiritual qualities of the labor movement and to be won to its service on that score."

[Victor A. Olander says there are three sorts of leadership:

1—The fraudulent sort that places all responsibility upon the "rank and file" while himself shirking all responsibility by ranting about alleged "rank and file control." In order to escape criticism, he refrains from telling the members what he—as the chosen lookoutsman, to use a nautical term—sees and hears. He is a coward and cheat and does not perform the service due from even the least conspicuous member of the rank and file, i. e. he does not say what he thinks. Remember the French story, as the frenzied mob went tearing by: "I must FOLLOW them, monsieur, I must FOLLOW them—for I am their LEADER!"

2—The autocrat who does as he pleases, leaving the rank and file to follow, if they will. He is rarely a real

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leader, in the true sense, for he does not marshal his people, is not concerned about morale and is separated from the mass. He proceeds without concern as to what may follow—and therefore does not LEAD, but only commands.

3—One who strives earnestly to inform himself on all problems affecting his people, who tells them honestly and frankly what he sees, who joins in the discussion, and vigorously, who plans and shows how to carry out those plans, who patiently GUIDES as well as commands, and who, when the mob frenzy momentarily overcomes the “rank and file,” has the courage and the self control to stand firmly and calmly against the mob spirit, without regard to personal consequences. The main essentials to leadership are self-control—self-respect—sufficiently assertive to become known to the “rank and file.” They may not know what Shakespeare wrote, but they feel that one who is true to himself can not be false to them.]

While realizing that leaders are probably born and not made, nevertheless suggestions emerge from an analysis of experience which would help to make the work of organizers more effective, whether they be rare leaders or ordinary mortals. At the Katonah conference under the auspices of the New York Women's Trade Union League, a delegate asked: “How about organizing the organizers?” and was greeted by laughter, whereupon another delegate declared: “What has just been said is not so funny at all. Salesmen get together once in a while, and the

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stores have special classes in salesmanship. Our work is a bit of salesmanship. It is to get over a great ideal. The League tried two years ago to get women active in the trade union movement to come together once a week. It was hard to get the group together. They did not have the time. I still maintain that it would be an excellent thing if we could get together once a month. If psychology is necessary, there are splendid psychologists who would be delighted to talk to us on human behaviorism and methods of approach.”

The importance of training for the work of organizers was discussed by another delegate, representing a labor college: “Not everybody is eligible for a position in an organization unless he has been trained for it. We might as well begin to prepare our minds for the coming of that time. Moreover, if our organizers and officers are to be efficient, there must be a change in the psychology of the membership toward the officers. To be critical of officers is one thing, but to be suspicious and to distrust them all the time is a very different thing. To watch a man when there is good reason to suspect that something is wrong is one thing. But to watch him always in the expectation that something is going to be wrong is quite

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different. No organization ever succeeded where there was that attitude of the rank and file toward the officers. We must change that psychology."

At Kansas City a delegate from New York thought that all the questions about organizers came back to the one question of choosing the right person for a given locality. But she thought that it was also very vital to give more support to organizers, remembering the loneliness of the organizer's job. Often they go into isolated communities and are left to themselves. "We who stay at home should see that every single resource of our organization should be given. We should plan conferences because only through conferences can we be stimulated in our work."

Another delegate seconded this suggestion, pointing out that organizers should meet for the same reason that "bankers and others who are looking ahead in the world hold meetings. It is very necessary that we invite speakers who have something to give the organized labor movement. Men who specialize in various subjects, who are studying and conducting researches, have a great deal to give. I believe that we could profit tremendously if we could have a fortnightly meeting where we could sit down to dinner together. We have so little time to read

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and study in the labor movement. And yet we need the knowledge and the inspiration that come from new ventures and new ideas more than any other group of people. I plead for conference not only because it will bring us closer together but because we need to discuss things together and perhaps get an outside point of view. That is what we did in gathering this institute material. It was marvelous to sit down and pump men's minds. When we are close to a job, we do not see it as outsiders see it. Moreover, we ought also to get together with men organizers."

The Aims and Purposes of Trade Unions

How to interest members, how to approach employers, how to choose and train organizers and how to enable them to improve in their work, are all questions which depend for answers upon a clear idea of what the trade unions are aiming to accomplish.

Is it enough to ask for higher wage rates and shorter hours and make these the principal objects of the unions? Will the result be that when fairly satisfactory wages and hours have been established the workers will become indifferent to the union?

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Have the shop committees and the employes' representation offered by employers within recent years made any change in the programs of the unions in the same industries? Have they made any difference in the appeal which organizers make to workers? Should they?

In the history of the labor movement in the United States, the union has developed primarily to protect the interests of the workers in those matters in which their interests have been regarded as different from those of their employers, notably wages and hours. The first step of the unions has been to raise wages and to decrease hours. Meanwhile, a new philosophy of wages is being preached even by employers, who are saying that high wages to workers mean larger markets for the sale of the products of industry, and hence high wages increase the prosperity of business. Moreover, engineers are pointing out that shorter hours result in greater efficiency and a better and larger output.

In what way do these changes in attitudes affect the programs of the unions?

In what other matters beside wages and hours do the interests diverge so that the workers require the protection of collective action?

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(For example, how the job shall be done; speed of work; method of doing it. Another example is that of unemployment and the need for definite programs to increase the security of the worker in his job.)

Should the union seek a share in management or some method of representation in the control of the workshop and in the determination of economic policy for an industry as a whole?

This is against the past traditions of many unions. It has become a sharp issue in some trade unions in which members oppose any co-operation with employers on the ground that it is a compromise and takes the fight out of the union. Moreover, as some opponents say, it forces the unions to assume a responsibility for management and thus weakens their position in a clear-cut stand for the workers, leaving it to management to find out the ways to meet these demands.

What are the dangers, other than those just listed, in experiments in workshop control?

Should it be a goal for the unions, or should the unions continue to say that the management of the business is the employer's job and the job of the union is to get the best possible terms for the workers?

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If the policies of government have an influence upon industrial conditions, should trade unions seek more effective expression of their interests politically?

The chairman at the Katonah conference pleaded for a larger view of the labor movement. "The building up of the labor movement has always been to me the most glorious movement in history, and it has always been a mystery to me why the labor movement has never dramatized that epoch. If in writing the great epoch that has resulted in attempting to apply this technique this discussion can make a real contribution to organization methods, then the Women's Trade Union League will have done something that is very worth while. Something is lacking in the labor movement today. I can picture the old labor movement and its old spirit. It was a religion. It was characterized by militancy of the type that makes men and women heroes and martyrs of a great cause. Thousands have bled and died in order to make the union movement a reality. Today we accept it as it is. Many union members know it merely as something which takes their dues. There is a most glorious opportunity to dramatize the history of the labor movement. The significance of our organization must be emphasized. This will show

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what there is for members to give, what history they have inherited and what achievement is open to them. These discussions of methods of organization are a help in turning our minds back to the history of the labor movement in order to find out how obstacles were surmounted and how successes were won. What the leadership of the labor movement lacks today is the fire of youth, the type of youth to whom obstacles are something which can be overcome easily. It is the spirit of those who will move mountains and who are not dismayed that finally leads to success. That is the spirit of youth and it is the youthful spirit which must guide the new organization."

In an address before the New York Federation of Labor in August, 1928, Senator Wagner declared: "I cannot agree with those who see dark clouds ahead on the horizon of the American labor movement. On the contrary, I prophesy the increasing importance of organized labor in this country. I am convinced that trade unionism is bound to acquire a far greater share in determining the economic policies of industry. The time has arrived for labor to contribute to the framing of economic policy and to assume responsibility with the employer for its successful application. I have an abiding faith in you.

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I know that you have not only wisdom to accept such responsibility, but the vision to strive for and capture it. Necessarily the whole present relationship of organized labor to industry must change. Instead of a tug of war, we shall have a joint venture. Instead of conflict we shall have co-operation.

“There are great tasks ahead for an enlightened labor movement. It must first achieve for itself an impregnable status legally* and economically. Necessarily it will have to secure a voice in the formulation of business policy. It is called upon to assume the leadership in withstanding the encroachment of poverty upon progress.”

In another part of his address Senator Wagner said: “I believe that organized labor must become responsible for efficiency in production and progress in industry. It cannot be otherwise. Once organized labor is accepted as an integral and necessary part of our social structure and the ill-devised efforts to destroy it are abandoned and the struggle for mere existence terminated, labor will naturally turn to these newer tasks and to this greater vision.”

* This refers to Senator Wagner's earlier discussion of what needs to be done on the injunction.

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Here and there in many unions are emerging these new aims. They are not always being formulated, even in the unions which are developing them. Hence this section of this little book must only state the questions, hoping that out of the experience of the unions and through discussion of these questions more concrete material will emerge.

Present Conditions

Affecting the Progress of the Labor Movement

In the preceding section the need for a new statement of aims and purposes was expressed. This is closely linked with the development of new industrial conditions, and these need recognition and study by the unions. They are outlined as follows:

(1) Development of power (i. e. electricity)

How are the unions to be kept sufficiently informed of the issues involved in the present development of power?

(2) Mass production and distribution

What attitude is the union to take regarding mass production?

The formulation of resolutions on wages in relation to production by the executive committee of the American Federation of Labor gives a lead for

careful study by the unions, in order that these resolutions may be applied to particular conditions in particular industries.

(3) Elimination of waste

Should the unions co-operate in this task? What are the wastes in particular workshops, and how do they affect the conditions of work? Are wastes in production and in wholesale and retail trade reducing the income of the workers and at the same time increasing costs and thus decreasing the purchasing power of a dollar? If so, can the unions be content with high wages without attention to wastefulness and trying to increase efficiency?

As the campaign for eliminating waste succeeds, how can the unions protect the interests of the workers so that they may get their full share of the resultant benefit?

(4) Increase in wage rates

Does greater prosperity make the unions less necessary? If the answer is in the negative, does it show that the unions must restate their purposes in more adequate terms than the mere increase of wage rates?

(5) Shortening hours of work

In 1914, 12 per cent of all workers in manufacturing industries in the United States were employed forty-eight hours or less. In 1923, this percentage had increased to 46 per cent. This change has taken place in unorganized industries as well as in unionized trades and it has won the support of engineers, who say that shorter hours improve production.

Is the shortening of hours of work now becoming a habit in industry, so that it will no longer offer much opportunity for achievement by the unions? Is the next step the five-day week?

(6) Mechanization and speed

As mechanization increases and speed is greater, should the unions take a definite stand, establishing a speed limit in the factories just as in the cities a speed limit has had to be established on the streets?

Is it wise now to give special attention to this problem of speed, rather than pushing too rapidly for a five-day week, which would presuppose increased production in the shorter hours?

(7) Unemployment

How can the unions develop a constructive program for the prevention of unemployment?

The unions have given very little direct attention to unemployment and irregularity of employment. They have striven for higher wage rates, but have generally made no stipulation about regularity of earnings.

What should the unions do to protect the workers against the losses of irregular employment? What can they do to make employment more regular?

Obviously unemployment has many causes. One which is being emphasized today is that mechanization and increased output are reducing the number of workers needed for a given amount of production. Evidently, then, study of unemployment must involve study of mechanization.

What policy should the unions urge as a means of protecting workers against the losses due to rapid changes in mechanization?

(8) Overproduction

The bituminous coal industry in the United States is an example. Apparently in the textile industry possible output is greater than the market under the present conditions prevailing as to prices. Economists say that so long as there are persons in the world who lack goods or services there can be no

overproduction—there can be only maladjustment in getting these goods and services into the possession of those who need them. Whether this be true or not, it is clear that it is difficult today to sell the output of industry. Here is a problem again demanding the most thorough-going study in the labor movement itself.

(9) The welfare movement

What is the effect upon trade unions of the development of the welfare movement, including group life insurance, selling of stock on easy terms to the workers, pensions, nursing service for workers and their families, vacations, housing schemes and schemes for saving?

At the Katonah conference it was pointed out that, in view of the development of the welfare movement on the initiative of employers, which often gives less to the workers than appears on the surface, it is worth while for the trade unions to consider their own relation to these supposed advantages. It is sound policy for the trade unions to engage in a great deal of welfare work of their own. The union welfare movement is sound because through it the worker is bound to his union instead of to the employer, and because it is better for the

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worker to learn to do these things for himself through his own organization—better socially, and it makes for better human beings.

Research and Workers' Education

Out of the discussion so far on the subject of organization, little has emerged by way of definite answers to any of these questions, though all of them have been recognized as vital to the unions today. Two methods of enabling the unions to answer questions like these are proposed: (1) That the American Federation of Labor, the international unions and, where possible, co-operating unions in different communities develop further the research work which a few organizations have already undertaken. This will enable labor itself to make its own investigations and also to collate the investigations of other organizations of proved scientific capacity and to make all these studies available for the unions. (2) That the whole workers' education movement be vigorously supported by the unions and welded into the labor movement so that it may be a new source of power for the unions in meeting their problems.

A close alliance is needed between research under the auspices of the trade unions and education whereby the results of research and the results of experience

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may be given life in the thinking of trade union members.

At one of the conferences on this subject of organization the chairman closed the meeting by saying: "It seems quite evident that some of the major difficulties with which we are concerned have not yet been analyzed by us. One fundamental thing that the labor movement needs today is a research bureau to get at the facts and then, on the basis of the scientific facts, to draw their conclusions. That is exactly what big business has done. Big business has developed experts. The sooner the organized labor movement gets over prejudices against the intellectuals, the sooner we will win this great group to our side. My plea is not that you should not fight for the thing you hold dear, but fight intelligently and as people animated by a true social ideal. My plea is for openmindedness without giving up one iota of loyalty to the ideals which you have."

The Structure of Trade Unions

Should the structure of trade unions be changed in order to enable them to accomplish their present purposes better?

The first step is to agree on the present purposes in any one union and then to study whether the union

is organized so as to accomplish these purposes. Change in purposes and in industrial conditions and problems puts the whole question of industrial versus craft organizations in a different light. For instance, if some share in the management of a particular shop is necessary in order to protect the workers, it might be suggested that if there be a dozen or more crafts organized in that shop it will be necessary for them either to form an industrial union or to develop a joint council.

For example, it was stated by an economist, whose advice was asked in preparing material for the Kansas City Institute, in one large unorganized plant in the electrical industry there were 36 unions, each working only on behalf of its own local union. This was one of the strongest arguments in favor of a plan for employes' representation initiated by the management, which brings all the workers together in one organization. Had the unions taken the initiative in forming a joint council, they might not have been defeated in their desire for recognition. The fact that they left this necessary change in their structure untouched enabled the management to establish a form of organization independent of the unions.

Are there functions for which the unions should

work out joint action, such as a central planning department to study methods of organization for several trades; a central fact-finding bureau to get the facts which a union needs to plan an organizing campaign; a central publicity bureau to win the support of public opinion; a research department to study the larger problems faced by the labor movement?

The questions need only to be put in order to bring a favorable answer from anyone who has seriously studied the problems involved in organizing the unions. The trade union movement now needs leaders who are especially interested in management and administration in order to develop the machinery necessary to equip the unions for these larger and more complicated tasks which have been set by the increasingly complicated conditions of industry.

Winning Public Interest and Confidence

Publicity is an instrument which can be used by the unions both for the education of the community and for the education of the workers within and without their membership. At the Katonah conference a number of suggestions were brought out on this point. Reference was made to the amazing amount of misinformation which unorganized workers have, some of which comes through the daily

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papers, prejudicing them against unions. It is important for the unions to see to it that the newspapers have authentic and reliable material. The teachers' union in one of the large cities, for example, definitely and conscientiously makes it its business to send information to the press. Certain large New York papers have special columns and special reporters for problems of labor.

An instructor in journalism at one of the labor colleges gave the following suggestions: "If there be an individual connected with a paper to whom you can send stuff, even if he is only a reporter, it is much better than not sending it at all. If you are organizing in a small town, local publicity counts. What is read in the paper takes on a cloak of respectability. In this way you get information over even to your own labor people. You also get much more sympathy on the part of the public if they are informed. If you have a meeting of your local union and if the international president is going to speak, tell the newspapers so that they will have a chance to write it up. Do not simply say: 'The Amalgamated Association of Crape-Hangers will hold their meeting at such and such a time.' Say something. You should be able to write your own publicity. Use your local slant on it. Write about it as if you

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believed in it and were not ashamed of it. Write a news story and not an editorial. If you are going to give the gist of what is going on at a meeting, put it into somebody's mouth—put into his speech what amounts to a digest of the meeting. If you have an individual in the story, the paper is more likely to take it. The Passaic strike is a big example of what can be done in the way of human interest stories. If the people in the group you are dealing with are working too many hours a week, if they are getting low pay, get it over to the people in the community through the newspapers. People in general are sympathetic when they know the facts, and the facts in themselves, sympathetically presented, are often sufficient without a large headline tacked on with capital letters."

A plea for more emphasis upon publicity for the public was made at the Waukegan conference. "I think we talk to ourselves too much," said one delegate. "We don't have to be converted. We are converted. I think we ought to write down what we feel are the issues in the industrial situation, and I think we ought to give that great group, the public, that kind of information, and I believe that the League is the logical group to do it. When we have a strike, we should give that intangible group, the public, an in-

terpretation of the industrial difficulties. I don't mean a flowery story, but the facts. I have in mind, for example, the garment workers' difficulties here. Many people outside the labor movement have raised the question: 'Why did they go to jail, when the last legislature enacted an anti-injunction law?' That was a point which required explaining."

At the same conference a practical demonstration was given of one method of education. As one delegate said: "Our play tonight is a form of publicity. We have had just two weeks to work on it. We are not bragging about it, but it will show you that in two weeks we can do something with actors who have had no training. We can put a message across. Our play is meant to bring a message to you, and we hope that you will bring that same message to others. This is the thought: We do not need a whole lot of money. It is within ourselves to do something. And if we want to get it across, we must work together, not thinking that this one or that one is going to get ahead of us. Think, rather: 'This is for the good of the cause.' And then go ahead and do it. It is the same way with publicity."

The committee which prepared material for the Kansas City convention had extended conference with

experts in publicity, whose recommendations are summed up as follows:

(1) Effective publicity is a task for experts, requiring money and persons to do the work. Leadership in it must be given by some central organization. The American Federation of Labor could give greater assistance to the trade union movement by giving this leadership.

(2) The problem is to educate the average local community by leading people to recognize that there are activities in the labor movement which are of value and interesting to know about.

(3) First the community must be studied. Just as librarians have discovered that if they are to make the public library useful they must study the community, so the labor movement needs to study the people in its own locality.

(4) The newspapers offer a valuable medium for publicity. Quotable statements from outstanding persons in different professions in the community are helpful. Short biographies of labor leaders make good newspaper material and might be syndicated, particularly if prepared by a journalist outside the labor movement.

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(5) Leaflets and pamphlets, if properly prepared, will help.

(6) Meetings of various organizations outside the labor movement, including churches, women's clubs and other organizations, offer opportunity for speeches.

(7) Whatever the method, the preparation of the material is highly important. Publicity depends on two things: first, that the organization concerned help to provide the material; second, that it help to provide the method of using it. The next step is how to distribute the material, and this requires a careful study of the best method of distributing it—where it can be used and how it can be used.

The churches have given evidence of an increasing interest in the problem of human relations in industry, but the unions might give more attention to the opportunity to provide information for the churches. There is room for much closer connection between labor and the churches in local communities and also through national organizations. The review of important events in industry and industrial relations sent out by the Federal Council of Churches in advance of Labor Day is giving material to the clergy for sermons on this subject. An opportunity is af-

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forded there for the trade unions in a local community to offer information to clergymen who are preaching on labor. There is also opportunity for the national unions to co-operate with the National Social Service Commission in the churches.

Other methods of giving information to the public and to union members as well as to unorganized workers were discussed at the conferences. They included the use of the radio, exhibits at state fairs and definite plans for affiliation with sympathetic organizations.

Considerable discussion was given to the public schools and the importance of sound courses in the schools on the labor movement. As one delegate at Kansas City said: "While labor is responsible for the creation of the public schools in America, it has let the supervision get into the hands of the merchants and manufacturers. I think as soon as labor demands a seat—or several seats—on the board of education conditions will be changed. We must see to it that little Johnny does not come home to his good trade union father and say: 'Say, Dad, the high cost of living is all due to trade union people, because you are asking too high wages. Teacher told me that.' Even the trade school girls are not always taught the truth. In New York strikes trade union

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girls have scabbed in the garment trades. The girls have been given the idea, 'Oh, what is the use of high wages if we have to pay more for our shoes and clothes?' The education of the child is one of the primary questions we must face if we are not to be swamped with our own children turning against the trade union movement."

Another delegate from the teachers' union said: "I feel the attitude of labor has been too humble with respect to the public schools. We are asking nothing but justice from the schools. What we ask is: 'Do the public schools teach the importance of group action?' Yes, they teach the importance of group action on the part of the manufacturers but not on the part of the workers. During the war the schools were told not to teach Shakespeare and history but to organize groups to win the war. Group action was inculcated in the children's minds, but it was not group action by the workers. The Association of Commerce had the audacity to go into the public schools and organize Junior Associations of Commerce. The Chicago Federation of Labor said that they preferred that the schools be free of propaganda for either side and that if Junior Associations of Commerce were organized labor would insist on having Junior Federations of Labor. The result was

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the Junior Associations of Commerce were not dropped, but the name was changed to Civic Clubs. We don't want the schools to give propaganda for the unions, but in a school where economics is discussed we resent the fact that trade unionism is not discussed at all or is discussed with prejudice. The boards of education have usually been made up of men whose children do not have to go to the public schools. It is very useful to the members of the board who are big employers of labor to have docile teachers who will carry out their point of view. The workers ought to make a demand for real education which would place facts before the children and let them make their decisions for themselves."

In the last analysis, success in winning public support will depend upon whether the unions have a clear statement of aims and purposes which meet effectively present-day needs and problems and which show consideration for the public good, including the best interests of the workers.

In the printing of this handbook only trade union workmanship has been employed. The linotype and press work and the binding are from the shop of Gentry Printing Company, and the paper stock is supplied by McGregor Paper Company.

THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE OF AMERICA is a federation of trade unions with women members, with an individual membership of those accepting its platform. For twenty-five years the women trade unionists have made of it a clearing house for their problems and have found it an effective instrument for collective action. The soundness of its policies and the permanent character of its work have won for it the steady support of a large group of men and women without the trade union movement, as well as within its ranks.

National Women's Trade Union League of America

PLATFORM

1. Organization of all workers into trade unions.
2. Equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex or race.
3. Eight-hour day and 44-hour week.
4. An American standard of living.
5. Full citizenship for women.
6. The outlawry of war.
7. Closer affiliation of women workers of all countries.

PURPOSES

To encourage self-government in the workshop.

To develop leadership among the women workers.

To insure the protection of the younger girls in their efforts for better working conditions and a living wage.

To secure for girls and women equal opportunity with boys and men in trades and technical training, and pay on the basis of occupation and not on the basis of sex.

To secure the representation of women on industrial tribunals and public boards and commissions.

To interpret to the public generally the aims and purposes of the trade union movement, and

To provide a common meeting ground for women of all groups who wish to see the principles of democracy applied in industry.

OFFICIAL ORGAN

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PAMPHLET