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THE FIELD BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

ON the last day of the year 1911 a group of social workers and university men presented to President Taft a petition for the creation of a federal commission of inquiry. They asked for a body "with as great scientific competence, staff, resources and power to compel testimony as the Interstate Commerce Commission" to investigate the field of relations between employer and employee. Among the topics specifically mentioned for investigation were the organization and methods of trade unions and employers' associations, strikes, laws and judicial decisions relative to labor, and constructive "schemes of economic government," such as the "trade legislature" in the New York cloak and suit industry, the Canadian industrial disputes legislation, the Wisconsin industrial commission and the Australian minimum-wage acts.

Six months' agitation resulted in the passage of an act by Congress, approved August 23, 1912,[1] providing for a commission of nine members, three to represent employers and three to represent organized labor. The duration of the commission was limited to three years, and an appropriation of $100,000 was made for the expenses of the first year. The commission was given broad powers of investigation into general labor conditions, conditions of association of labor and capital, problems of sanitation and safety, agencies of industrial peace, and the subject of Asiatic immigration. It was especially charged to "seek to discover the underlying causes of dissatisfaction in the industrial situation and to report its conclusions thereon." In mid-September, 1913, President Wilson's nominations were confirmed by the senate, and in October the commission met and organized for work.

It is significant that the impulse which resulted in the creation of this commission came from men and women who belong

[1] U. S. Statutes, 62nd Congress, 2nd Session, Public, 351.

to what may be termed the third party to the industrial struggle. They were men and women, to be sure, who know conditions of life and labor at first hand; and many of them had been instrumental in settling industrial disputes. Yet after all, of what deep concern was it to them that employers and employees are recurrently at loggerheads? What concern is it to the average citizen?

Let us look at the situation as they brought it forward, and carried conviction in Congress that the work ready to the hand of such a federal commission reaches to the economic bedrock of American democracy.

I

Throughout the period of westward expansion the homestead laws were the underpinnings by which men adjusted themselves to the land, as the basis for subsistence. On them, and on contractual relations which smacked of the soil, they built up the great commonwealths of the Mississippi Valley and beyond.

With the development of manufacturing, the currents have set in new directions; cities have piled up; the people have massed in great trade groups; employments embedded in corporate industry have become the basis for subsistence for vaster and vaster numbers of Americans. On the contract of hire depends their prosperity.

Now, the laws and customs of adjusting rights and interests among agricultural peoples have been the development of centuries. They have become moulded in forms conformable to democracy. But while organic social changes have come in with modern industry, as radical as the change in tools from wheelbarrows to electric cranes, the terms of the contract of hire have not been reconsidered in relation to the new conditions.

If we apply to the farming life of America the words equity, tenure and security, we obtain a fairly clear idea of the economic base upon which households and granges, counties and states, have been built up. But if we apply the test of the same words to the working life of American industrial districts, we get at once a vivid impression of the insecure footing of our

wage-earners. And if we turn to the message which Abraham Lincoln sent to Congress fifty years ago and read what he then said of the self-sufficient household and the self-employing man as the sure foundations upon which political democracy must depend to withstand the encroachments of new forms of despotism, we appreciate the risks to our institutions which industrial changes have thrust into the national life.

Not merely the sudden massing of industrial workers but the unevenness in the size and strength of the parties to the work contract put strains upon it. Corporate bargainers range from small concerns, which retain much of the old personal contact between master and man, to far-flung enterprises governed by wire, which have injected a system of absentee capitalism into American industrial life as definite in its effects as is absentee landlordism. In strength of position these corporate bargainers range from the isolated contractor, whose work must be prosecuted on an exposed corner and at a rate of speed enforced by real-estate owner and prospective tenant, to the manufacturer whose walled plant enables him to store up finished goods to tide over a strike. They range from associations of such manufacturers, which can put a strike-breaking force into the plant of any member and break the back of a local strike regardless of its merits, to nationalized industries, which can effect the same end by closing down a plant here and operating elsewhere. They range from manufacturers, who view organized labor as nothing more than a disruptor of orderly administration to be fought at every turn, to manufacturers who not only bargain with it, but look to it to aid in the discipline of unsteady workers or to settle disputes between crafts.

There is equal unevenness in the ranks of labor. The workers range from those in sedentary trades, thick with traditions, to those in new and hazardous callings like that of the structural iron workers, which attract foot-loose men of the same devil-may-care stamp as did our frontier settlements. They range from old employees, indispensable core of an industry, to the machine hands of the loft districts of the cities, whose employers take them on and lay them off with no more sense of responsibility than they feel when they throw the switch that

turns on their electric power. They range from mass organizations which embrace every worker in an industry—from common labor up, to craft organizations hedged in by apprenticeships from competition with the common laborers; from elemental, unorganized bodies of men who strike spontaneously under some common spur, as at McKees Rocks and Lawrence, to highly disciplined orders, like the railroad brotherhoods, whose stages of development have been as distinct in character, ideals and methods as are those of thoroughly organized business concerns. The organizations of workers range from isolated local bodies to international unions with staffs of paid organizers; from irresponsible associations with unitemized accounts and a ring control which matches that of machine politics, to organizations on a business basis with large benefit funds and responsible executives.

Leaving out of consideration what have been called the predatory industrial corporation and the predatory trade union, we have, therefore, a great diversity in the relative strength of position enjoyed by the two parties to the labor contract. In the middle ground, for the purposes of illustration, may be cited the brewery trade, in which strong unions, local and international, have carried on long-headed negotiations with an equally strong organization of employers to devise trade agreements covering not only the customary subject-matters of hours, wages and labor conditions, but the creation and joint management of a fund for old-age pensions, accident and sickness insurance. At one extreme of the scale is the Chicago builder who has to deal with thirty different city trades and who may be bankrupted because his operations are held up by disputes which the unions may have among themselves. At the other extreme, the Steel Corporation, with a half-billion capitalization and with men numbered in the hundreds of thousands, refuses to bargain with even two men acting in unison.

The presence of such inequalities between the two parties to the labor contract is sufficient to require that the commission give fresh scrutiny to that contract to see if it is meeting the stress of demands which it was not devised to bear. Clearly, also, the commission should consider how the sovereign power

of the state, greater than that of any of these parties, may be thrown over the transaction so that sheer disparity in strength between the contracting parties shall not of itself occasion social wrong.

In the absence of such governmental control, the parties to the labor contract have themselves sought to exercise control over it either by mutual agreement or by compulsion from one end of the bargain or the other. Thus we have:

The closed shop—closed from below—in which unions succeed in preventing the employment of any but their own members in a given trade.

The preferential shop, in which the employers agree to give a preference to union labor when engaging new workers.

The open shop, in which union and non-union men are on an equal footing and in which employees are treated with singly or in groups, as they prefer.

The pseudo-open shop, in which the labor organization is dislodged or rendered feckless by a process of discharge or refusal to treat with the men collectively.

The closed shop—closed from above—in which the employer discharges men who attempt to act collectively or even to belong to unions, and in which the workers do not so much bargain as simply take or reject what is offered.

Two recent developments should be added. The tactics of the I. W. W. may be regarded as evolved out of the very weaknesses of the workers in the last named position. The appeal of this organization is to the ranks of common labor, the glutted, the replaceable. It meets the flat refusal of the employers to bargain with such men by denouncing all contracts with employers. And where, against the all but impossible odds of police repression and economic necessity faced by such workers, they fail to win, the I. W. W. counsels reprisal, after return to work, by a sabotage more to be feared than the strike itself. But in its larger strategy the I. W. W. preaches an industry wide open at the bottom, an industry organized as a whole, an industry working out its common salvation.

The protocol plan in the garment trades in New York, apparently at the far extreme of the scale from the tactics of the I.

W. W., claims the same strategy for its own. The one is avowedly on a war footing; the other stands for organized peace. Under the protocols, now in vogue in several trades, we have the beginnings of economic self-government within each industrial group: grievance boards, through which in one trade representatives of 1200 employers and 70,000 employees adjust the trouble in a particular shop; sanitary boards, which deal with questions of hygiene, lighting, ventilation and fire escapes more rigorously than does the state department of labor, and call a strike if necessary to enforce their decrees; standard wage boards which are beginning the scientific study of rate-making.

If the commission will make a comparative study of the situation of working men and women in industries which afford examples of each of these various forms of control, it will break new ground. The same is true of a study of the effect of the change from one form of control to another in the same industry. How far are most trade unions open at the bottom to young men and to new-comers? "Suppose the working man has no union to speak for him," asks Professor Ross, "what are the forces that will insure a market value for his labor?" How well does he fare in the matter of fines, dockages, bonuses, held-back wages and the other things which so materially affect any comparison of earnings? We have never had a comprehensive study of the lessons to be learned from our great strikes. We could profit from a much deeper sifting of the experiences in industrial adjustments under the Erdman Act and the conciliation boards in the coal fields. Still more fragmentary is our knowledge of how in actual practice the vast number of individual bargains are struck between those who offer labor and those who offer pay, bargains whose terms and conditions bring to the workers a consciousness of fair play or else add to their growing sense of injustice.

For in addition to this disparity in strength between the parties to the work contract, account must be taken of the continual and disturbing changes in the nature of the work contracted for, the necessity for making newer and ever newer bargains. Sometimes these affect a large class of labor all at

once; more often, some few operations in the midst of intricate processes. The explanation, of course, lies in the fact that, in addition to the sheer transfer of hundreds of thousands of people from agriculture to industry, industry itself has been overturned from top to bottom by the subdivision of labor, by the introduction of power, by the use of chemicals, by the increase of speeds and the changes in machinery and in method. The measure of output which was the subject of yesterday's bargain, like the tools with which the work was performed, is obsolete today. Too often have the workers seen the gains from industrial improvements slip through their fingers or bring them loss, by replacing a skilled mechanic with a semi-skilled machine-tender. Where increased output has led only to rate-cutting, this has in turn given rise to restriction of output and to opposition to machine production. Grievance on the one hand has thus bred grievance on the other.

Is it too much, therefore, to look to this commission to discover and define the public element in rate-making? Would not something be gained if it considered how far the miners' program of public and accurate tally of output can be given general application? Has not the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Commission, in proposing to publish the wages paid by employers who fail to meet its minimums, struck an important principle of wage publicity? Is there no way by which the assurance of a net gain to the workers may be a recognized factor in making wage adjustments following an improvement in method, so that with every mechanical advance the general level of wages will be lifted a bit instead of lowered? Would not industrial progress itself respond to such a social policy toward invention?

Closely related to machine production is another element which affects the foothold of American workmen in the corporate industries, *viz.*, the vast influx of immigrant wage-earners. More important than the fact that upon their arrival a third of these immigrants are illiterate, is the fact that before coming to this country nearly a fifth have never worked for wages. The immigration restrictionists are right in saying that the mass and insecurity of the immigrants act as a powerful

undertow on the lower bargaining levels of all industries. The Federal Immigration Commission indicated that the average pay of day labor the country over is less than the sum required for family subsistence, and that the influx of newcomers tends to keep it there for immigrant and native workman alike.

The engineer and the physician are beginning to limit the lawyer's conception of the freedom of contract which permits the foreigner to be placed at a dangerous machine which he does not understand, or which allows him to handle industrial poisons without knowledge of their evil. We know that scores of rough peasant lads have been crippled by lead poisoning in American industries. The new commission may well consider the question whether the control which society might exercise in such cases over "greeners" who are industrially immature, should not be extended to include immigrant laborers in whatever industries their presence threatens—not only the bodily well-being of particular men but the social and economic well-being of great trade groups.

This change in tools and processes which has displaced old crafts has resulted in the destruction of much of the older social fabric upon which we have depended both for resolute self-dependence in politics and for conservative leadership in the general affairs of life. The English-speaking miners of western Pennsylvania built up churches, lodges, unions and community life. Within the last thirty years, as pointed out by the Federal Immigration Commission, there has been an exodus of these pick miners from certain counties to the Southwest; and immigrants and machine saws have taken their places. With this lapsing of our customary social institutions in such regions, it becomes all the more important that the fabric of just relations in industry be stable, so that whatever befalls the community life, fair dealing and security in the industrial field will give all comers their first fundamental impression of the things for which America stands.

On the other hand, industrial operations, as in the mines, in logging, in construction camps and even in the new industrial towns, carry forces of workers into unpopulated areas where civil society has not yet taken root or is still insecure. In these

twilight zones of democratic life, injustice flourishes. Fragmentary information which reached the public from the coal fields of West Virginia and Colorado, the copper country of Northern Michigan and the timber lands of Louisiana has been such as to give grave concern as to hard-won rights subverted, and lawlessness breeding lawlessness. The New York Immigration Department has found grave evils in construction camps all over the state. This department may have suggestive experience to offer the commission as to how to project the forces of industrial law and order, so as to be available promptly and naturally to isolated men in these hinterlands of life and work.

In the cities themselves, life has become so complex and congested that the fixing of the terms of employment is often wrested from the hands of employers and employees by forces over which they individually have no control. For example, it is common practice for the laundries of the United States to require their ironers to work half through the night on Fridays, a practice which means broken health and broken virtue for hundreds of women yearly. But we realize that here is something which hinges on more than the moral decision of any individual laundry owner; that if he refuses to operate his plant on Friday nights to meet the demands of his patrons for clean linen for Sundays, he will lose their custom and so be forcibly retired from business. Therefore it is that legislation is advocated that will prohibit night work for all women in laundries, and so put all plants on an equal footing and make the man with the bundle of dirty linen pay in punctuality what is too often paid for out of wasted lives. The situation in these laundries shows that the labor contract cannot justly be wrenched from the social growths of which it is a part and settled without relation to its human context.

II

To the recognition of this impotence of the lone employer, and to a growing appreciation of the weakness of the position of wage-earning women and children in bargaining for their labor, are due the beginnings of new statute law in the various

states, limiting the right of contract. It was a law prohibiting the overwork of women, protested by an Oregon laundry owner, that afforded to the Supreme Court of the United States the opportunity for perhaps its most sweeping decision as to the authority of the state, under its police power, to restrict the freedom of the individual to fix the terms of his employment. We have laws in different commonwealths reducing the working day of women and prohibiting the work of children who in size, education or age are under a certain standard. In mining and in caisson work we have the beginnings of similar legislation applying to men. How far such statute law may be used to the advantage of labor we do not yet know. Our new industrial commission could at least examine the extent to which the labor contract is already limited in the different states, and compare our laws with those of other countries which have proved salutary. It could consider the constitutional principles on which these limitations in our statutes have been successfully based and could review their applicability to federal legislation, or urge such uniformity in state laws that the progressive commonwealth shall not, as now, be penalized for the humanitarian legislation which puts it ahead of the laggard states.

To turn from statutes limiting freedom of contract to statutes changing the common law of tort liability, it should be noted that state after state has during the past five years wiped out the old defenses open to employers in damage suits—assumption of risk, contributory negligence and the fellow-servant doctrine. These were so many unwritten undertakings of the contract of hire which for three-quarters of a century the courts assumed the workman assumed when he took a job. The very title "master and servant" harks back to an earlier day, a day of domestic rather than of factory production.

There may well be other ancient obligations in the conception of the work contract which like these need readjustment to fit new times. There may be recent modifications which likewise need scrutiny before they become fixed and hard. Within the last few years a score of great industrial corporations have instituted elaborate systems of profit-sharing and bonus-paying, service pensions, sickness benefits, and accident relief. The

National Electric Light Association has been the pioneer in developing a comprehensive social program covering all these points, and savings funds in addition. A generous progress is here at work. But it should be noted that all these provisions are a part of the bargain between employer and employee. Some of them, like the payment of a bonus, if it is made dependent upon good behavior and even then held back for a period of probation, are clearly devised to bind the employee to his employer and to prevent strikes. It would require no stretching of the field of the new federal commission to make it cover not only a consideration of such modifications of the labor bargain, but an investigation of the systematic schemes of social insurance which have been adopted in Europe and have there attained the chief ends sought by the systems inaugurated by some employers in this country, without subjecting the employees to disadvantage. In the adoption of such more systematic plans, this country lags far behind Europe.

Old principles of the common law and constitutional rights are called into play with respect not only to the labor contract but to the act of bargaining.

In periods of industrial conflict we find on the part of both employers and employees a vigorous assertion of those principles and rights which most nearly serve them. Unions point out the alacrity with which police and military forces are rushed to the defense of property, compared with their slowness of motion where human rights are concerned. Employers view with distrust the failure of unions to incorporate so that they can be brought more readily before the courts. Unions denounce injunctions which would stay their hands when delay would mean for them a lost strike. Employers attack picketing as an interference with their business and in some industrial districts have been able to make it unlawful. Unions stand out for the right to bargain collectively, while they less vehemently assert the rights of a workman who, perhaps because of the personal grudge of a union official, is denied membership in the union and hence the opportunity to earn a livelihood. Employers, when they preach loudest as to the right to work, may mean not the rights of resident workmen, but the right of an

immigrant to sell his work for a pittance, unconscious of the effect upon American standards; or they may mean the right of a strike-breaker to work at a wage temporarily high and thus to destroy the possibility of a fair test as to whether *bona fide* workmen will accept the terms to which the strikers object. And this bristling championship of the rights of workmen on the part of employers too often, as at Little Falls and Paterson, ignores the right of free meeting, without pain of discharge or police interference, or the right to domicile, as at Westmoreland, where a petty magistrate enjoined a priest from visiting men of his own communion in the company houses.

To this right to work, the commission should give fresh scrutiny. They should define it anew on the basis of modern conditions, and then call for its defense with the force of government. But there are other elements in the contractual relations between employer and employee which, as we have seen, need similar scrutiny. It is poor statesmanship to apply the strength of the government merely at such points in a desperately subnormal industrial situation as will tend only to perpetuate it. Petty magistrates and police, state militia and the courts—all these were brought to bear by the great commonwealth of Massachusetts, once the Lawrence strikers threatened the public peace. But what had the great commonwealth of Massachusetts done theretofore to protect the people of Lawrence against the insidious canker of subnormal wages which was blighting family life? Such policies of applying public strength may be so inept and incomplete as to amount to public impotence.

There has ever been a political significance to the finely adjusted laws of property rights which have been developed by Anglo-Saxon civilization. They have served to make the small man—farmer or tanner or weaver as he might be—secure in his property-holding against the encroachment of over-lord or king. Under the changes ushered in by industry, a new race of over-lords has risen up, holding fief in the economic life. The means of production have been transferred from small to powerful hands; the industrial corporation rather than the homesteader becomes the type of property owner. Should not the

commission gauge how far these laws of property have been turned to purposes the reverse of those for which they were intended; and how new balances may be struck?

As Professor Henry R. Seager, former president of the American Association for Labor Legislation, has pointed out, when wage earners see in the injunction process a legal remedy which may be used effectively by one side in an industrial dispute and not by the other; when the courts tell them that they may strike to better conditions, but that if they strike to strengthen the union as a means to secure those better conditions they are guilty of conspiracy; when a court's view of the boycott seems to them to involve a denial of their liberty to patronize whom they choose, and leads to jail sentences for conservative leaders like John Mitchell; when the Standard Oil Company escapes with an order to dissolve to its own profit, while the United Hatters are fined $240,000 under the Anti-trust Act; then wage earners are strengthened in the belief that for whatever purpose a law may be framed, the courts will be certain to turn it against them rather than against their employers. When, in the midst of a strike, pre-revolutionary riot acts and statutes of Edward III are summoned from their obscurity, that belief is not weakened.

The new commission could do few things more clarifying than to reëxamine the whole trend of judicial decision relating to labor disputes, and to come forward with constructive recommendations. Many of the most one-sided decisions, one way or another, are embedded in the records of the minor courts, and only such a resourceful inquiry could get them out into the open. Such an authoritative presentation could not fail of itself to lift the levels of such court proceedings in the future.

III

We have thus reviewed rapidly some of the social bearings of the work contract to which we, singly, in groups, and as a whole, are parties: the inequalities in the organizations which participate, the injection of women and children and immigrants into the situation to complicate the bargains of men, the revolutions in manufacturing methods which make the work bargain

an ever-recurring fact, the technical development which makes it difficult, the social pressure which distorts or moulds it, the laws which apply to it with uncertainty. As Professor Hoxie puts it: "It will not do to attribute the resulting conditions and actions to ignorance, selfishness or perversity on the part of employers or workers. They but act as the inherent forces of the modern industrial system dictate." The situation is one at best filled with organic change, adjustment and readjustment. It would put to the test the most firmly woven and clearly defined fabric of industrial relations. But as a matter of fact our industrial relations are not firmly woven nor clearly defined. The economic motive has been the only element, sure, certain, omnipresent. Under pressure from it, as a natural consequence, men have taken things into their own hands; singly and in groups they have applied remedies which at worst gouged their fellows and at best have been but a partial solution. Encroachment from one quarter has been answered by encroachment from another. The leadership which has been the subject of most serious public criticism has been of the sort which has forged to the front among men on a war footing from the beginning of time. The excesses on both sides have been of the sort which are inevitable when the fabric of fair play is not strong enough nor well enough devised to stand the tension.

Viewed from the angle of the breakdown of government in the field of industrial relations, the actions of manufacturers in extending their spheres of control become not the ruthless deeds of a new breed of pirates, but the understandable efforts of men charged with the difficult task of production. Out of the invertebrate life about them they must muster all sorts and conditions of men into the team play of industry and must set them to work so that the end of each day heads up into accomplishment, must adjust them to great tools and mighty natural forces in the never-ending strategy of producing utility out of energy and raw material.

But progressive employers have failed in this: in imposing voluntary standards upon their fellows which would prevent human exploitation in any and every quarter. If the function of setting rules to the game is therefore taken over much more

fully than in the past by the more powerful hands of the state, we may believe that the resulting stability and good-will would release for industrial executives forces of coöperation and creativeness among their men which are now battened down by private discipline and restraint.

Viewed from this same angle of the breakdown of government in the field of industrial relations, the program of organized labor becomes, in the large, not a ruthless act of aggrandizement, but the struggle of men to bring about order and security for themselves and their kind; and this struggle merges in the slow upward march of democracy. For the homesteader the sale of a peck of potatoes or of a cord of wood is but an act of trade. His acres stand intact, however the bargain goes. But on the work contract in the industrial world hinge the intimate facts of family life and well-being, the income, the leisure, the maintenance of children, the hope of safe old age, the economic strength of a self-governing people—not only all these things as they are, but the chance for what is to come. And he who views the economic well-being of the rank and file of the working people of America and regards it as sufficient and finished, is out of joint with that spirit of initiative and enterprise which asserted itself individually on the border of western settlement and which in our century is asserting itself collectively in industry. We need to overhaul the fabric of our industrial relations so that they will stand the tension and will not snap before this upward movement of the workers.

The public is directly concerned when an express or street railway strike blocks the currents of traffic, or a garbage or ice strike threatens the health of a city, or when, as in the Westmoreland strike of a year's duration, the whole scheme of life of a small community is jeopardized. During such strikes we hear a great deal about the great third party that has interests at stake—that the public must not be made to suffer. But may we not look to the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations to proclaim the public's duty as well as its rights, the duty to put its own house in order, to set about a better coördination and coöperation of all state and federal agencies

dealing with labor conditions, to overhaul the machinery for negotiation and legal adjustment, and to get at the causes which bring employer and employee to the clash and provoke aggression from either hand. For enough has been said to show that the public's problem is not merely that of an outraged umpire in a struggle between two contending forces in our economic life. It goes deeper. For larger and larger groups of Americans it is becoming the problem of their relations as a free, self-governing people to the industrial corporations in and through which they obtain their livelihood. In one of the pamphlets issued by the committee which secured the creation of the commission, it was said :

> We have not as yet squarely faced this mighty shifting in the economic foothold of the democracy. They [industrial corporations] are becoming the permanent basis on which much family life and citizenship depend. This is truer today than it was ten years ago, truer ten years ago than it was twenty, truer in number of people so engaged, and in the size of these industrial units. It will be truer ten years from now than it is today.

Writing as chairman of the committee, Mr. Devine said :

> A "durable" question, is the expressive phrase in which Lincoln summed up the issue of slavery. This being interpreted means that it was a "struggle which was not to be settled in a day but must be stayed by and followed from phase to phase." The industrial warfare similarly presents to us a "durable" question. That is not by any means the same thing as an endless or insoluble problem. The physical conquest of the American continent was a "durable" struggle, but its geographical phase is ended in our own generation. The abolition of poverty requires a "durable" struggle, but it is within sight of sober and responsible statesmanship. The "durable struggle" as to whether this nation was "to ultimately become all slave or all free" reached its "final and rightful result" within less than ten years after Lincoln's defeat by Douglas which called forth the defeated candidate's clear formulation of the issue.

It took the stress of civil war, four score and more years after the nation was brought forth, to remove the flaw which the founders of the Republic had allowed to mar the relations

between land and labor. With that war the United States, hitherto an agricultural country, entered upon its period of industrial development.

Fifty years later a group of forward-looking men and women challenged American statesmanship to give sober consideration to the relations between corporate industry and labor, not necessarily in the belief that any such deep-seated flaw as human slavery exists, or that war is necessary to remove it, but with the profound conviction that the revolutionary economic changes of the half-century have put new and unusual strains upon the personal rights and governmental forms which have been handed down from earlier times, and that it is the especial task of our generation to develop an industrial procedure that will readily and naturally lead to justice and fair dealing in the same way that earlier centuries saw the slow evolution of a civil society conceived in liberty.

The Commission on Industrial Relations is a response to that challenge. Upon it Congress has laid the responsibility for such a public and resourceful scrutiny of all the facts, that before we enter upon any partial or fragmentary solutions, the situation may be seen as a whole and understood of all men.

PAUL U. KELLOGG.

NEW YORK CITY.