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TRADE UNIONISM IN THE UNITED STATES  
GENERAL CHARACTER AND TYPES

From the popular viewpoint, trade unionism is a simple, definite phenomenon upon which it is easy and safe to pass positive and sweeping judgments. Almost everyone, in fact, who is at all interested in economic or social affairs is inclined to assume that he knows just about what unionism is and just what ought to be done about it. The man in the street, the lawyer, the economist, the social worker, the teacher, the preacher, each has his positive concept and his positive scheme for union control or regeneration.

Thus the student honestly seeking the truth about unionism is faced at the outset with a mass of absolute but contradictory interpretations. He is told that unionism is a narrow group organization designed to benefit certain favored workmen at the expense of all others; that it is an artificial monopoly of labor, an impossible attempt to raise wages by unnatural and therefore socially inimical means; that it is the creation of selfish and unscrupulous leaders primarily for their personal gain and aggrandizement, a thing foisted upon unwilling workers and designed to disrupt the natural harmony of interests between employers and employees; that it is a mere business device for regulating wages and conditions of employment by means of collective bargaining; that it is a great revolutionary movement aiming ultimately to overthrow capitalism and our whole legal and moral code; that it is a universal expression

of working-class idealism whose purpose is to bring to all the toilers hope, dignity, enlightenment, and a reasonable standard of living; that it is, in short, selfish and altruistic, monopolistic and inclusive, artificial and natural, autocratic and democratic, violent and law-abiding, revolutionary and conservative, narrowly economic and broadly social.

And with each of these positive interpretations the student is commanded to subscribe to an equally positive and final solution of the union problem. He is informed that unionism will cease to be dangerous when it is boldly proceeded against as a trust; that the problem will be solved when once we have guaranties of industrial peace in the shape of universal arbitration schemes, voluntary or compulsory; that unionism in any form is a menace to social welfare and must, therefore, be destroyed by legal enactment and counter organization; that the trouble with unionism is moral and the obvious remedy lies, therefore, in moral suasion and the preaching of social obligation; that unionism is an expression of crass ignorance, and hence is to be quietly disregarded while schemes are formulated and put into operation for the welfare of society as a whole; that the real problem is one of encouragement and support since unionism stands for all that is best in human conditions and relationships.

The mutual contradictoriness of these popular interpretations and remedies is sufficient evidence to warrant the rejection of any and all of them pending the most unbiased and thorough, scientific investigation of the facts. It must stamp them, either as pure fabrications of the imagination or at best as partial truths, the outcome of narrow observation distorted by conscious or unconscious preconceptions derived from tradition, interest, or special environment. To accept them as final truths, therefore, is to block the way to a real comprehension of unionism and the union problem. For such acceptance must mean the coloring of the facts and the warping of the judgment, however sincere and painstaking the student may be. The first step, therefore, toward a scientific understanding of trade unionism and the problems which it presents to us is to rid ourselves of the popular attitude toward

it and to root out of our minds so far as possible these popular conceptions of it. We must start by wiping the slate clean.

The very existence of these numerous contradictory interpretations, nevertheless, carries with it a pregnant suggestion for the student, namely, that trade unionism may be after all, not a simple, consistent entity, but a complex of the utmost diversity, both structurally and functionally. And, indeed, the most obvious facts of union status and history seem to warrant this conclusion, at least as a working hypothesis.

There are in the United States today hundreds of union organizations, each practically independent or sovereign and each with its own and often peculiar aims, policies, demands, methods, attitudes, and internal regulations. Nor is there any visible or tangible bond that unites these organizations into a single whole, however tenuous. Groups there are indeed with overstructures and declared common aims and methods. But group combats group with the bitterness that can arise only out of the widest diversity of ideals and methods.

A slight acquaintance with the history of organized labor shows that this situation is not unique and at the same time furnishes the apparent clues to its explanation. It reveals the fact that unionism has not a single genesis, but that it has made its appearance, time after time, independently, wherever in the modern industrial era a group of workers, large or small, has developed a strong internal consciousness of common interests. It shows, moreover, that each union and each union group has undergone a constant process of change or development, functionally and structurally, responding apparently to the group psychology and therefore to the changing conditions, needs, and problems, of its membership. In short, it reveals trade unionism as above all else essentially an opportunistic, a pragmatic phenomenon.

For if the history of unionism seems to admit of any positive generalizations they are that unionists have been prone to act first and to formulate theories afterward, and that they have acted habitually to meet the problems thrust upon them by immediate circumstances. Everywhere they have done the thing which under the particular circumstances has seemed most likely to produce

results immediately desired. Modes of action which have failed when measured by this standard have been rejected and other means sought. Methods that have worked have been preserved and extended, the standards of judgment being always most largely the needs and experiences of the group concerned. So that prevailingly, whatever theory unionists have possessed has been in the nature of group generalization slowly developed on the basis of concrete experience.<sup>4</sup>

In making these statements it is not intended to imply that general economic, political, and social theories have not played a part in the genesis of unions or in the molding of their function and structure. Nor is it intended to deny that some unions have been formed and dominated by individuals and small groups of leaders. Idealism has frequently been a genetic and formative force in union history, and the autocrat has played an important rôle in union affairs. But apparently history warrants the general statements that unions, and especially unions that have lived and worked, have arisen mainly in direct response to the immediate needs and problems of specific working groups, and that they have developed characteristically by the trial-and-error method.

Thus the scope and character of union ideals and methods have been as broad and diverse as the conscious common needs and conditions of the groups of workers entering into organization. Some unions have confined themselves to attempts to deal directly with their immediate employers and their immediate conditions of work and pay; others have emphasized mutual aid and education; still others have enlarged their field of thought and action to include all employers and all conditions—economic, legal, and social. In other words, the union program, taking it with all its mutations and contradictions, comprehends nothing less than all the various economic, political, ethical, and social viewpoints and modes of action of a vast and heterogeneous complex of working class groups molded by diverse environments and actuated by diverse motives; it expresses nothing less than the ideals, aspirations, hopes, and fears, modes of thinking and action of all these working groups. In

<sup>4</sup> In all this, unionism is not unique, but has obeyed the general law of psychological development.

short, if we can think of unionism as such it must be as one of the most complex, heterogeneous, and protean of modern social phenomena.

But can we thus think of it? If all that has been said be true, are we not forced to this pregnant conclusion as to the basic hypothesis of our study—namely: That there is no such thing as trade unionism in the sense either of an abstract unity, or of a concrete, organic, and consistent whole which can be crowded within the confines of a narrow definition or judged sweepingly as good or bad, right or wrong, socially helpful or harmful? If, then, we dispense with narrow preconceptions and face things as they actually are and are becoming, it is impossible to say that unionism as such is artificial or natural, revolutionary or conservative, violent or law-abiding, monopolistic or inclusive, boss-ridden or democratic, opposed to industrial progress or favorable to efficiency, a spontaneous outgrowth of legitimate needs or the product and tool of selfish and designing individuals. In short, there is unionism and unionism, but looking at matters concretely and realistically there is no single thing that can be taken as unionism *per se*.

It follows as a corollary that the union problem is neither simple nor unitary. It is not a mere question of wages and hours, of shop conditions and the narrow economic rights of employer and employee, and it cannot be solved by a mere resort to economic theory. On the contrary it is a complex of economic, legal, ethical, and social problems which can be understood and met only by knowing the facts and the genesis of the viewpoint of organized labor in all its reach, diversity, contradictoriness, and shifting character, and by considering this viewpoint in relation to developing social conditions and social standards.

The study of unionism, therefore, if it is to be fruitful, that is if it is to assist in the solution of our economic and social problems, must be realistic and scientific. Unionism is what it is and not what any advocate or opponent would have it to be. It is a matter of fact in the same sense that institutions, animal and plant species, or any other organic manifestations are matters of fact. There is no normal or abnormal unionism; no unionism that is artificial as distinguished from that which is natural. In short, there is no

fixed union norm by which any concrete case is to be tested; for all unionism is, and is becoming, by virtue of sufficient causation. The problems which it raises, therefore, like all other problems of a scientific nature, are to be solved, if at all, not through passion and prejudice and formulations of what ought to be, but through an intimate knowledge of the facts as they exist and a study of causes. It is for the student then to put aside his preconceptions and feelings, to get close to the realities, and to be willing to follow the truth to whatever conclusions it may lead. Calmly and dispassionately we must seek to know unionism as it actually appears in all its phases and to search for its underlying causes. Only after we have studied it and its problems thus, in the spirit of the biologist or of the student of social psychology and social institutions, shall we be in a position to say positively what unionism really is and what, if anything, should and can be done about it. It is in this spirit that the following tentative analysis is presented.<sup>1</sup>

The master key to the real character of unionism and union problems is to be found apparently in the existence of distinct union types. Though unionism itself is so pragmatic and therefore so protean as to warrant the rejection of all attempts to characterize and judge it as a whole, it has seemingly developed along certain fairly distinct general lines giving rise thus to types sufficiently definite to allow of legitimate generalization in regard to them. It appears possible to distinguish such types both as to function and structure. Structural types have, indeed, been recognized quite generally by students. Examination of the history and present status of unionism in the United States appears to reveal four such types, each objectified in a variety of concrete units; while somewhat akin to these distinct types may be distinguished other forms which may perhaps be regarded as modes of transition from one to another.

Naming the structural types in what hypothetically may perhaps be considered their natural sequence of development, we find

<sup>1</sup> This and succeeding papers on Unionism in the United States are intended to be a practical application of the viewpoint and method of study outlined in two papers previously published by the writer in the *Journal of Political Economy*, viz., "Historical Method v. Historical Narrative," XIV, 9, November, 1906; "The Trade-Union Point of View," XV, 6, June, 1907.

first what is ordinarily called the *craft union*.<sup>1</sup> This is an organization of wage-workers engaged in a single occupation, as, for example, in glass-bottle blowing, horseshoeing, locomotive engineering. The occupation may be limited strictly to one simple task or may include a number of closely allied tasks or crafts. The strict test of a craft union seems to be that each member of the organization performs or may perform all the tasks included in the occupation. Usually a craft union covers but a fraction of the work of a given industry. The craft organization has developed two principal units, or appears in two main forms: the *local craft union*, which usually unites the members of the craft or occupation working in a particular locality—a town, a city, or a section of a city; the *national* or *international craft union*, which unites into one organization the local units of a single craft or occupation throughout the country or neighboring countries.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, there appears what may be termed the *crafts* or *trades union*. This organization is a *federation* of unions in different crafts or industries. It has developed three principal forms or units: the *local trades union*, or *city federation*; the *state federation*; and the *national* or *international federation*,<sup>3</sup> which unite, through

<sup>1</sup> The terms "craft union" and "trade union" are often used interchangeably. The writer prefers to make "trade union" the general inclusive term covering all types of unionism, structural and functional. This is the popular usage.

<sup>2</sup> Examination of union constitutions reveals a surprising amount of diversity and much individual variation in the matter of structural units. Some organizations, for example, have sublocals, as in the case of the shop club of the printers and the pit committee of the miners. There may be also units intermediate between the local and the international, such as district councils, state divisions, etc. There are, moreover, such things as auxiliary organizations. It is not intended here to deal with this matter in detail but simply to name the most usual and perhaps the most generally important units connected with the different structural types.

<sup>3</sup> These trades unions appear under many different titles. For example, the city federations are known in different localities as Trades Councils, Trades Assemblies, Trades and Labor Councils, Trades and Labor Assemblies, Trades and Labor Unions, Central Trades Councils, Central Labor Unions, Central Labor Councils, Central Federated Unions, Central Trades and Labor Assemblies, Central Trades and Labor Councils, Central Associated Trades Councils, Labor Councils, Joint Labor Councils, United Trades and Labor Assemblies, United Trades and Labor Councils, Federations of Labor, Central Federations of Labor, etc. The state federations also go locally under different titles, and in the United States and Canada there is more than one national trades union, for example, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Canadian Trades and Labor Assembly.

delegate organizations, respectively the unions of a locality, a state, or a larger territorial area.<sup>1</sup> Examples are the Chicago Federation of Labor, the Illinois Federation of Labor, and the American Federation of Labor. The essential characteristic of the trades union is that the constituent organizations retain their individual independence or sovereignty.

Thirdly, we may distinguish the *industrial union*. This type, as the name implies, is organized on the basis of the industry rather than the craft. That is to say, it attempts to unite into one homogeneous organic group all the workers, skilled and unskilled, engaged in turning out and putting on the market a given finished product or series of closely related products. For example, this type of union would unite all the craftsmen in the direct employ of brewing concerns, including not only actual brewers, maltsters, bottlers, and packers, but the engineers, firemen, teamsters, watchmen, etc.; or, again, it would organize into one union all the workmen in and about a coal mine including actual miners, miners' helpers, shot firers, drivers, spraggers, trappers, trackmen, timbermen, hoisting engineers, check-weighmen, dumpers, etc. The actual connotation of this type of unionism varies in different productive lines and with the integration of productive enterprise, but the essential test of industrial unionism seems to be that the industrial scope or area of the workers' organization shall be coterminous with that of the capitalistic enterprise or series of closely related enterprises. The main forms or units of this type of unionism thus far developed are: the *local industrial union*, a combination of all the employees of a single local industrial plant or of all the industrial enterprises of a like character in a given locality; the *national or international industrial union*, a combination of all the workers in a given industry throughout the nation or the international economic unit; the *district industrial union*, an organization covering an area within which productive and market conditions are essentially similar. Thus, for example, the coal-

<sup>1</sup> Trades unions of the same order are not always strictly or exclusively federations of organic units, and unions of the same order may vary considerably in structural character. For example, some trades unions admit individual members, and there is great variety in the degree of centralization of authority. Nowhere is the pragmatic character of unionism better illustrated than in such structural variations.

mine workers are organized into local unions at the mines, into an international union including workers in the mines of the United States and Canada, and into district organizations covering adjacent bituminous or anthracite mines or fields.<sup>1</sup>

Fourthly, there exists what is technically known as the *labor union*. This type of unionism proposes the organization of all workers regardless of craft or industrial divisions into homogeneous groups by localities, by districts, and throughout the nation or largest possible international area. At present the *local labor union* is the only existing unit of importance in the United States which realizes this ideal of organization, though attempts have been made, notably in the case of the Knights of Labor, to establish and maintain labor unionism in all its ideal forms, *local*, *district*, and *national*.

Besides these four structural types of unionism there exist in this country at least two varieties which can hardly be designated as distinct types but which, strictly speaking, are apparently neither craft, trades, industrial, nor labor unions.

The first of these varieties may be called the *compound craft* or *crafts* union. It is a centralized, homogeneous organization of the workers in a number of related crafts. It differs from the craft union in that it includes workers who do not engage in the same tasks or occupations. But it is not an industrial union since it may be one of several labor organizations whose workers are engaged in turning out a given finished product or are in the employ of a single capitalistic enterprise. On the other hand, it may overlap industrial divisions. It may be the outcome of a formal consolidation of two or more craft or compound craft unions, in which case it is usually known as an *amalgamated* craft or crafts union. Examples of this variety of unionism are to be found in the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin, and Steel Workers of North America, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, the International Association

<sup>1</sup> The coal-mine workers have also subdistrict organizations. The subdistrict seems to be based on a uniformity of industrial conditions, e.g., thickness of veins, character of roof and floor, etc., while the district represents an area within which market conditions are similar. That is to say unions may have both territorial and industrial divisions or units.

of Machinists, the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electrical Railway Employees of America.<sup>1</sup> In fact, a large proportion of the unions, *local* and *national*, in the United States are today compound or amalgamated craft unions, whether or not so designated by title. As this variety of union has special representatives in all the intermediate structural stages between strict craft unionism and industrial unionism it would perhaps not be unreasonable to regard it, provisionally at least, as a mode of transition between these two distinct types. Later considerations, however, must determine the truth of this assumption and, if true, the general direction of the developmental tendency.

The second structural variety of unionism which is difficult to classify may in the absence of any generally accepted designation be termed the *quasi-industrial federation*. It is generally a federation of industrially related craft and compound craft unions, appearing in *local*, *district* or *state*, and *national* units. Examples of it are to be seen in local printing trades and local building trades councils, in state building trades councils and system federations of railway employees, and in the Building Trades, Metal Trades, and Railroad Employees departments of the American Federation

<sup>1</sup> The multi-craft character of this variety of unionism may be illustrated by the following constitutional quotations:

"The Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' International Alliance claims jurisdiction over the following work: All metal roofing, the manufacturing, erection, and finishing of metal cornices, metal skylights, metal furniture, metal lockers, hollow metal doors and trim, metal sash and frames, metal ceilings and sidings (both exterior and interior), all sheet metal work in connection with heating and ventilating, furnace and range work, metal jobbing, assortment work, coppersmithing, and all sheet metal work made of No. 10 gauge and lighter; providing, however, this gauge restriction shall not apply to coppersmiths in the working of copper, who shall have jurisdiction over copper of any and all gauges" (Constitution, 1911, article VI, sec. 2).

"The Amalgamated Association [Amalgamated Glass Workers' International Association of America] shall consist of an unlimited number of local unions composed of trustworthy and industrious glass workers, consisting of the following branches: glass cutters, lead glaziers, metal sash glaziers, prism glaziers, bevelers, silverers, scratch polishers, embossers, engravers, designers, glass painters, draftsmen, sand blast workers, glass chippers, glass mosaic workers, setters, putty glaziers, cementers, benders, flat glass or wheel cutters, glass sign makers, glass packers, plate glass workers, and all wage workers engaged in the production and handling of glass not already affiliated with a national or international union of glass workers" (Constitution, 1905, sec. 3).

of Labor.<sup>2</sup> This variety of unionism is one in which the constituent craft or amalgamated craft unions retain their individual sovereignty, yet appear and act as a single organization with respect to designated affairs of common interest. It resembles both the trades union and the industrial union types, but differs from each essentially. It is a narrower and closer association than the trades union and is vitally unlike it in the scope and character of its activities. On the other hand, it lacks the organic homogeneity and centralization of the industrial union. As it is in every case, roughly speaking, an organization within a particular industry and as its aims and activities approximate—so far as they go—those of the industrial union type, it may perhaps be regarded also as an intermediate phase—a mode of transition between the craft and industrial union. Whether it represents thus a continuous evolutionary process and, if so, what the nature of the process is, will appear from later considerations.

As we have said, the existence of distinct structural types and varieties of unionism has been quite generally recognized, and it has been noted further that union function tends to vary somewhat with the variation in structure. It seems possible, however, to go much further than this in the general functional analysis of unionism. A penetrating study of the union situation past and present seems, in fact, to warrant the recognition of functional types quite as distinct in their essential characteristics as the diverse structural manifestations. It is true that these functional types do not in practice represent exactly and exclusively the ideals and activities of any particular union organization or group. That is to say, no union organization functions strictly and consistently according to type. Yet as representing fairly distinct alternative programs of union action and as guides to the essential character and significance of the diverse organizations and groups included in the heterogeneous union complex, these functional types apparently do exist and are of the most vital concern to the

<sup>2</sup> This variety shades into the real industrial federation, an example of which is found in the Mining Department for the American Federation of Labor.

student of unionism. There are seemingly four of these distinct types, two of which present dual variations.

The first and perhaps most clearly recognizable functional type may be termed *business unionism*. Business unionism appears most characteristically in the programs of local and national craft and compound craft organizations. It is essentially trade-conscious rather than class-conscious. That is to say, it expresses the viewpoint and interests of the workers in a craft or industry rather than those of the working class as a whole. It aims chiefly at more here and now for the organized workers of the craft or industry, in terms mainly of higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions, regardless for the most part of the welfare of the workers outside the particular organic group, and regardless in general of political and social considerations except in so far as these bear directly upon its own economic ends. It is conservative in the sense that it professes belief in natural rights and accepts as inevitable, if not as just, the existing capitalistic organization and the wage system as well as existing property rights and the binding force of contract. It regards unionism mainly as a bargaining institution and seeks its ends chiefly through collective bargaining supported by such methods as experience from time to time indicates to be effective in sustaining and increasing its bargaining power. Thus it is likely to be exclusive, that is, to limit its membership by means of the apprenticeship system and high initiation fees and dues, to the more skilled workers in the craft or industry or even to a portion of these; though it may, where immediate circumstances dictate, favor a broadly inclusive policy—when, for example, the unregulated competition of the unorganized and unskilled seriously threatens to sweep aside the trade barriers and break down the standards of wages, hours, and shop conditions which it has erected. Under these circumstances it tends to develop a broad altruism and to seek the organization of all the workers in the craft or industry. In harmony with its business character it tends to emphasize discipline within the organization and is prone to develop strong leadership and to become somewhat autocratic in government, though government and leaders alike are ordinarily held pretty strictly accountable to the pragmatic test. When they fail to

"deliver the goods" both are likely to be swept aside by a democratic uprising of the rank and file. In method, business unionism is prevailingly temperate and economic. It favors voluntary arbitration, deprecates strikes, and avoids political action, but it will refuse arbitration and resort to strikes and politics when such action seems best calculated to support its bargaining efforts and increase its bargaining power. This type of unionism is perhaps best represented in the programs of the railway brotherhoods, though these organizations, as we shall see later, present some characteristics of a vitally different nature.

The second union functional type seems best designated by the terms *friendly* or *uplift unionism*. Uplift unionism, as its name indicates, is characteristically idealistic in its viewpoint. It may be trade-conscious, or broadly class-conscious, and at times even claims to think and act in the interest of society as a whole. Essentially it is conservative and law-abiding. It aspires chiefly to elevate the moral, intellectual, and social life of the worker, to improve the conditions under which he works, to raise his material standards of living, give him a sense of personal worth and dignity, secure for him the leisure for culture, and insure him and his family against the loss of a decent livelihood by reason of unemployment, accident, disease, or old age. Uplift unionism varies greatly in degree of inclusiveness and in form of government, but the tendency seems to be toward the greatest practicable degree of mutuality and democracy. In method, this type of unionism employs collective bargaining but stresses mutual insurance, and drifts easily into political action and the advocacy of co-operative enterprises, profit-sharing, and other idealistic plans for social regeneration. The nearest approach in practice to uplift unionism is perhaps to be found in the program of the Knights of Labor, though that organization has varied in many respects from the strict type.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It has been strongly urged by a friendly critic, who is most intimately acquainted with the organized labor movement in the United States, that business and uplift unionism are not in reality distinct and independent types, but rather two varieties of one type more comprehensive than either. The argument put forward is that no business union can be found which has not also the uplift in mind and an idealistic viewpoint. It is suggested that this inclusive type might be called *bargaining unionism* or *constructive business unionism*.

As a third distinct functional type, we have what most appropriately may be called *revolutionary unionism*. Revolutionary unionism, as the term implies, is extremely radical both in viewpoint and in action. It is distinctly class-conscious rather than trade-conscious. That is to say, it asserts the complete harmony of interests of all wage workers as against the representatives of the employing class and seeks to unite the former, skilled and unskilled together, into one homogeneous fighting organization. It repudiates, or tends to repudiate, the existing institutional order and especially individual ownership of productive means, and the wage system. It looks upon the prevailing codes of right and rights, moral and legal, as in general fabrications of the employing class designed to secure the subjection and to further the exploitation of the workers. In government it aspires to be democratic, striving to make literal application of the phrase *vox populi, vox Dei*. In method, it looks askance at collective bargaining and mutual insurance as making for conservatism and hampering the free and united action of the workers.

Of this revolutionary type of unionism there are apparently two distinct varieties. The first finds its ultimate ideal in the socialistic state and its ultimate means in invoking class political action. For the present it does not entirely repudiate collective bargaining or the binding force of contract, but it regards these as temporary expedients. It would not now amalgamate unionist and socialist organizations but would have them practically identical in membership and entirely harmonious in action. In short, it looks upon unionism and socialism as the two wings of the working-class movement. The second variety of revolutionary unionism repudiates altogether socialism, political action, collective bargaining, and contract. Socialism is to it but another form of oppression, political action a practical delusion, collective bargaining and contract schemes of the oppressor for preventing the united and immediate action of the workers. It looks forward to a society based upon free industrial association, and finds its legitimate means in agitation rather than in methods which look to immediate betterment. Direct action and sabotage are its accredited weapons, and violence its habitual resort. These varieties of the revolutionary type may

be termed respectively *socialistic* and *quasi-anarchistic unionism*.<sup>1</sup> The former is perhaps most nearly represented in the United States by the Western Federation of Miners, the latter by the Industrial Workers of the World.<sup>2</sup>

Finally in the union complex it seems possible to distinguish a mode of action sufficiently definite in its character and genesis to warrant the designation *predatory unionism*. This type, if it be truly such, cannot be set apart on the basis of any ultimate social ideals or theory. It may be essentially conservative or radical, trade-conscious or class-conscious. It appears to aim solely at immediate ends, and its methods are wholly pragmatic. In short, its distinguishing characteristic is the ruthless pursuit of the thing in hand by whatever means seem most appropriate at the time, regardless of ethical and legal codes or the effect upon those outside its own membership. It may employ business, friendly, or revolutionary methods. Generally its operations are secret and apparently it sticks at nothing.

Of this assumed union type also there appear to be two varieties. The first may be termed *hold-up unionism*. This variety is usually to be found in large industrial centers masquerading as business unionism. In outward appearance it is conservative; it professes a belief in harmony of interests between employer and employee; it claims to respect the force of contract; it operates openly through collective bargaining, and professes regard for law and order. In reality it has no abiding principles and no real concern for the rights or welfare of outsiders. Prevailingly it is exclusive and monopolistic. Generally it is boss-ridden and corrupt, the

<sup>1</sup> By many it would seem more appropriate to designate the second variety as *syndicalist unionism*. The name *quasi-anarchistic* has been chosen, however, because there appears to be as yet little real syndicalism in the United States, and further because *quasi-anarchistic* is the more inclusive term. It leaves open the opportunity for further subclassification should the conditions warrant.

<sup>2</sup> In strict justice it must be stated that there are two general organizations in this country claiming to be known as the Industrial Workers of the World. The first, the parent body, has its headquarters in Chicago; the second, an offshoot, is officially located in Detroit. The latter is a representative of the first revolutionary variant. That is, it advocates political action and supports one of the Socialist parties. In ordinary usage the term I.W.W. applies to the Chicago organization, and when unmodified is to be so understood in these pages.

membership for the most part being content to follow blindly the instructions of the leaders so long as they "deliver the goods." Frequently it enters with the employers of the group into a double-sided monopoly intended to eliminate both capitalistic and labor competition and to squeeze the consuming public. With the favored employers it bargains not only for the sale of its labor but for the destruction of the business of rival employers and the exclusion of rival workmen from the craft or industry. On the whole its methods are a mixture of open bargaining coupled with secret bribery and violence. This variety of unionism has been exemplified most frequently among the building trades organizations under the leadership of men like the late notorious "Skinney" Madden.

The second variety of predatory labor organization may be called, for want of a better name, *guerilla unionism*. This variety resembles the first in the absence of fixed principles and in the ruthless pursuit of immediate ends by means of secret and violent methods. It is to be distinguished from hold-up unionism, however, by the fact that it operates always directly against its employers, never in combination with them, and that it cannot be bought off. It is secret, violent, and ruthless, seemingly because it despairs of attaining what it considers to be legitimate ends by business, uplift, or revolutionary methods. This union variant has been illustrated recently in the campaign of destruction carried on by the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers.<sup>2</sup>

The writer is aware that apparently, strong objections may be urged against the assumption that these diverse expressions

<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested that there is still another functional union type which might be called *dependent unionism*. It is well known that there are unions whose existence is dependent wholly or in large part upon other unions or upon the employers. Some unions, for example, could not exist except for their labels, which secure a special market among other unionists or union sympathizers for the goods which they turn out. Such unions are sometimes demanded or initiated by the employers, who see in the label a good commercial asset. Again, there are unions instigated and practically dominated by employers, organized and conducted on especially conservative lines with the purpose of combating or displacing independent unionism. We may then, perhaps, be justified in recognizing here a fifth functional type with two subordinate varieties.

of union viewpoint and action represent true functional types.<sup>1</sup> It has been admitted that probably the ideals and modes of action of no particular union organization correspond exactly to any one of these so-called types. It is a fact, moreover, that the programs of most unions are undergoing a pretty constant process of change and sometimes shift rapidly. It is true further that the membership of any union may include representatives of all kinds of unionism—business, uplift, revolutionary, and predatory. It might then be argued that what have been here called types are mere individual attitudes, or, at most, aspects or tendencies of one and the same union species. It will be the purpose of succeeding papers, therefore, to test the reality of these assumed types and varieties and to interpret them causally by means of a brief study of the genesis and development of organized labor in the United States. Incidentally this study should reveal also the general laws of union development.

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<sup>1</sup>The writer is also fully alive to the fact that no first attempt at functional analysis of unionism can be regarded as final and will welcome any and all criticism and co-operation that may lead to greater accuracy in this respect.