

Workers' Movements in the United States Confront Imperialism: The Progressive Era Experience¹

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In 1898, the American Federation of Labor feared that colonial expansion would militarize the republic and undermine the living standards of American workers. Subsequent expansion of industrial production and of trade union membership soon replaced the fear of imperial expansion with an eagerness to enlarge the domain of American unions internationally alongside that of American business. In both Puerto Rico and Canada important groups of workers joined AFL unions on their own initiative. In Mexico, where major U.S. investments shaped the economy, anarcho-syndicalists enjoyed strong support on both sides of the border, and the path to union growth was opened by revolution. Consequently the AFL forged links there with a labor movement very different from itself. Unions in Mexico became tightly linked to their new government, while World War I drove the AFL's leaders into close collaboration with their own. The Pan-American Federation of Labor was more a product of diplomatic maneuvering than of class solidarity.

During the last forty years, historians of the labor movement in the United States have focused their attention on the local places of work and residence. Rightly so. We have learned much about our social and political life from such studies. Nevertheless, at no point during the twentieth century could union or socialist movements ignore the *global* economic networks that shaped workers' lives. By 1900, the handful of countries in North America and Europe that accounted for more than 85 percent of the world's manufacturing output had effectively divided the rest of humanity into their respective spheres of influence and colonies. Moreover, some 55 million Europeans and more than 30 million people from India, China, and Java had migrated overseas between 1820 and 1920. Most of them traveled on shipping lines built by countries competing for world power, and most of them went, temporarily or permanently, to destinations where the Great Powers needed their labor.²

When leaders of trade unions and socialist parties in Europe and North America discussed the economic transformation of the globe taking place around 1900 before their very eyes, they couched issues in terms of the impact on *domestic* affairs: the use of soldiers from the ranks of the poor (especially conscripts) in colonial wars, naval construction, the rising tax burden, and migration (or the perceived threat of migration) from and to the colonies. The wars and rumors of war in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East from 1894 to 1904 greatly intensified these concerns and produced innumerable cartoons of workers staggering under the burden of cannons and warships.³ The 1900 May Day Manifesto of the International Socialist Bureau highlighted these issues: "It is war all over the globe. War budgets rise and rise.... More is spent on rifles, cannons, barracks, ships than is paid in wages to millions of workers; millions of men are put under arms, to massacre, to destroy, to burn, to steal,

to kill."⁴

The purpose of this essay is to consider how the questions of war and empire looked to activists in U.S. labor organizations. Although the press and individual members of the Socialist Party and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) frequently devoted attention to workers' struggles in other lands, it was the American Federation of Labor (AFL) that most actively acquired members outside the boundaries of the United States and involved itself directly in the country's foreign affairs (at least until the antiwar campaigns of the Socialist Party after 1914).⁵ Around 1900, the AFL was highly critical of the expansionist policies of the U.S. government. Fewer than twenty years later it had come not only to support those policies, but also even to participate actively in their execution—though in the case of Mexico often also urging Woodrow Wilson's administration to pursue particular courses of action. In very important ways, actions taken by AFL leaders were responding to those of the socialists and the IWW as well as to the domestic and international upsurge in worker support for direct action, sympathetic strikes, and all-inclusive organization, of which the IWW was but the highly visible tip of the iceberg. Moreover, not all these initiatives and developments originated in the United States by any means. We must also consider the actions of workers in countries that were targets of U.S. investment and colonization. I will devote special attention to the influence on the AFL of workers in Canada, Puerto Rico, and Mexico.

The American Federation of Labor had been more categorically opposed to the annexation of colonies in 1900 than were most European socialist and labor parties and the International Socialist Bureau. To be sure, AFL convention delegates had resolved their "hearty sympathy" with Cubans fighting for "the right of self-government" in 1896.⁶ Going to war against Spain was another matter, however: In 1898, most of the labor and socialist press warned against a resort to arms.⁷

Labor's sympathy for Cubans was tempered by fear of war and militarism, echoing that often expressed by the Socialist International. Both the regular army and state national guards had been called out to break strikes again and again during the 1890s. Troops suppressing the Coeur d'Alene, Homestead, and Pullman strikes had attracted national attention, while the 1897 massacre of Slavic strikers at Lattimer Mines, Pennsylvania, and the 1898 confrontations at Virden and Pana, Illinois, coincided with the Federation's convention debates about war and imperialism. AFL president Samuel Gompers had declared back in 1892 that "membership in a labor organization and the militia at one and the same time is inconsistent and incompatible."⁸

Early in 1899, Gompers went so far as to "look forward to the time" when workers would enforce peace, if diplomats failed to do so, "by the dock laborers refusing to handle goods that are to be used to destroy their fellow men, and by the seamen of the world, united in one organization, while willing to risk their lives in conducting the commerce of nations, absolutely refusing to strike down their fellow men." In 1916 he would explicitly repudiate those words.⁹

The end of the short war of 1898 and the prospect of annexing the Philippines and Puerto Rico reopened the whole discussion. Gompers made a widely publicized speech to the Chicago Peace Jubilee, in which he warned:

There is even now a strife going on among the nations of the earth for the partition and possession of Eastern countries. Let us take the Philippines, and we shall be in the midst of the conflicts. We shall have to follow the monarchical policy of large standing armies, with immense navies ... [and] we will come to that point against which the genius of our institutions revolts—compulsory military duty.¹⁰

Within days of the signing of the Treaty of Paris ending the Spanish-American War in December 1898, delegates to the AFL convention adopted a resolution ardently opposing the "new and far-reaching policy, commonly known as 'imperialism' or 'expansion,'" which "if ratified by the United States Senate will ... seriously threaten the perpetuity of our Republic."¹¹ 8

Three features of the AFL's 1898 debate are worth noting. First, the only negative interventions came from delegates who were social democrats. The socialist leader from Cleveland, Max Hayes, argued that the controversy over imperial expansion had been invented by politicians and plutocrats, and that trade unionists should have "nothing to do with it." They should instead concentrate their efforts on creating a cooperative commowealth. Despite their objections, however, the socialists did not vote against the resolution.¹² 9

Second, both Gompers, in an earlier address a National Conference on Foreign Policy, and most delegates who took the floor during the convention debate emphasized the danger of annexing lands populated by "servile races" and "a semi-barbaric population." The prospects of massive migrations of Filipinos and Chinese into the continental United States as well as the competition from goods produced in colonies haunted the discussion. Delegate John Kirby of a federal labor union in Ouray, Colorado, expressed his opposition to the recent annexation of Hawaii: "We cannot elevate the inhabitants to our standard, but will drag our people down to their level. If the products of those countries are brought in, it will remove our products from competition." Stuart Reid of the International Association of Machinists drew on the experience of his native British Isles: "The people of India did interfere with our movement: machinery was shipped to that country and coolies were put to work, and as a result reduced the wages below a living standard."¹³ 10

More than one historian has argued that racist hostility toward immigrants and peoples of color explains the unions' foreign policy stance.¹⁴ That explanation contains an important element of truth, but it is inadequate to account for the evolving policies of the labor movement. Racism flourished on both sides of the debates about imperialism and trade unionism. Consider Harrison Gray Otis, editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, who had invested heavily in land and development in both Southern California and Mexico. He crusaded relentlessly in his highly influential newspaper against *both* Chinese immigrants and labor unions. Otis had proudly served as a brigadier-general in charge of volunteers who battled the independence fighters of the Philippines, and he subsequently cultivated in print the ominous image of Chinese, Japanese, and Mexicans blended into the "Bronze Menace," against which white Americans had to stand guard. While keeping ever in mind the formidable influence of white racism in the labor movements of the United States, Canada, and Europe, we must look elsewhere for an adequate explanation of AFL policies regarding empire. As Barbara Fields has pointed out, racist arguments have often been marshaled on all conflicting sides of debates over economic and political policies.¹⁵ 11

Third, the National Business League had sponsored the Peace Jubilee where Gompers had made his famous speech.¹⁶ When Gompers joined the newly formed Anti-Imperialist League late in 1898, so did Andrew Carnegie, Edward Atkinson, Henry Villard, George F. Peabody, and former president Benjamin Harrison.¹⁷ Moreover, as will be argued below, the National Civic Federation, which brought business and union leaders together in quest of common interests, became an important theater for discussion of overseas colonies and commerce. 12

Indeed, both the arguments advanced against the annexation of colonies and those in favor of the policy have a familiar ring in the twenty-first century. Opponents contended that capital would flow to the colonies, where it would be possible to fabricate products so cheaply that they would undercut jobs and wages in the United States. As Gompers often put it, living standards could be raised only by manufacturing goods at home for consumption by workers who were motivated by the expectations of "civilized" men and women and paid union wages.¹⁸ Joining the battle for empire would bring no benefits for American workers, but only burden them with taxes, oligarchic rule, resurgent immigrant contract labor, and incessant calls to arms. 13

Champions of imperialism replied that colonies would provide markets to absorb the domestic overproduction. Colonies would also increase the United States' access to raw materials and food products and lower the cost of living. All the while, racially defined immigration policies and enforcement of laws against contract labor could make it possible to restrain residents of the colonies from moving to the United States. And indeed, the Supreme Court ruled in 1901 in the so-called Insular Cases that the constitution does *not* follow the flag.¹⁹ Moreover, William Randolph Hearst, whose newspapers were read avidly by many workers, vigorously opposed Gompers on the question of colonies. Hearst argued that the troops needed to hold colonies would probably be provided mainly by "natives of the islands," while imperial expansion would create career opportunities for American workers who "have brains, energy and a determination to be something more prosperous than a day laborer."²⁰ The famous naval theoretician A. T. Mahan added that no country that wished to survive as a great power in the modern world could stay out of the race for colonies. He warned that continued adherence to the ideals of Jeffersonian democracy would prove fatal to America in an age when the Great Powers were redrawing the political and economic map of the world.²¹ 14

During the opening years of the twentieth century, it seemed that these conflicting arguments were being reconciled. The diplomatic historian William Appleman Williams and his followers have persuasively singled out two defining features of an emerging consensus on foreign policy. First, as a review of the world's commerce, published by the U.S. State Department in 1899, argued: "The enlargement of foreign consumption of the products of our mills and workshops has ... become a serious problem of statesmanship."²² 15

Moreover, the attention of American business and the U.S. government then focused on the Western Hemisphere. Consequently it was easy to understand why Secretary of State Richard Olney had proclaimed in 1895, in regard to the Americas: "To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law 16

upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition."²³ Around 1900, 50 percent of this country's direct investments abroad were placed in Latin America—overwhelmingly in Mexico—and another 33 percent were in Canada.²⁴ Although the investments in Mexico were concentrated in ranch lands, railroads, petroleum, and minerals, the \$175 million of U.S. capital invested in Canada at the time went not only into timber and minerals, but also heavily into manufacturing. General Electric, Westinghouse, National Cash Register, and American Asbestos were among those who had established branch plants north of the border.²⁵ As Gregory S. Kealey has argued, the industrial upsurge at the turn of the century "combined with Canada's high tariff wall and preferential access to British empire markets to create the world's first major branch plant economy."²⁶ Small wonder some of the same business leaders who had joined Gompers in the Anti-Imperialist League simultaneously promoted the cause of closer ties between what they called the Anglo-Saxon nations of North America.²⁷

As if to quiet Gompers' fears for the home economy, the United States enjoyed 17
spectacular industrial growth, as did Western Europe and Russia. The French economist Leon Dupriez has calculated that the average annual increase in physical output per capita for the advanced industrial countries as a group between 1895 and 1913 was double what it had been from 1880 to 1894. The United States, which had already emerged during the 1880s as the world's leading producer of manufactured goods, increased its output even more rapidly than its leading rivals, England, Germany, and France. Not only was immigration increasing America's labor force rapidly, output per worker was growing even faster.²⁸

Even more important for the AFL, between 1897 and 1904 trade union 18
membership in the United States had more than *quadrupled*, growing from 440,000 to 2,067,000—in percentage terms the greatest upward leap in U.S. history. The proportion of workers in private industry who belonged to unions in early 1904 was greater than it is today. And the AFL had for the first time consolidated its position as the country's dominant labor organization—encompassing 81 percent of all union members.²⁹

Trade union resurgence after 1897 also stimulated widespread public discussion 19
of possible ways to make America's industrial relations less bloody. Among many related developments was the formation of the National Civic Federation, through which prominent corporate leaders met with AFL officials in quest of possible terms of peaceful contractual coexistence between labor and capital. In my opinion, these discussions had precious little effect on actual industrial practice.³⁰ But they *did* provide an important forum in which business and union leaders discussed foreign and colonial policy.

There were also thousands of workers who rejected both the Civic Federation's 20
pursuit of harmony between the classes and the AFL's vision of gradually improving workers' lives by means of union contracts. The founding convention of the IWW in 1905 brought together delegates with many different political views, but all of them were determined to rid the world of capitalism, not to polish its rough edges. As the preamble to the IWW's constitution said, its goal was to organize "the workers of the world ... as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and

abolish the wage system."³¹

The Wobblies held militarism and all forms of nationalism in contempt. They argued that craft unions could do no more than improve life for a fortunate few among the workers, and in fact were not very good even at that. Only the mobilization of all workers, regardless of occupation, race, or gender, could be effective in improving the conditions of life. Both short-term objectives and the ultimate overthrow of capitalism, they proclaimed after their 1908 convention, could be achieved only by direct action: "industrial action directly by, for, and of the workers themselves, without the treacherous aid of labor misleaders or scheming politicians."³² 21

The IWW took shape under distinctly North American conditions, but it reflected a widespread belief, inspired in workers' movements especially by the Russian Revolution of 1905, that exploitation and tyranny could be brought down by mass strikes. That faith was incorporated in the basic principles of the anarcho-syndicalist unions of France, Italy, and Spain (all of which had more members than the IWW) and of smaller unions elsewhere in Europe. It also inspired new labor organizations and mass strikes in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile, as well as the strikes of 1906 in the Mexican copper mining, textile, and railroad industries.³³ 22

To be sure, demands for social reform in the United States and elsewhere came from many directions, some of which pointed toward political action, rather than away from it. For example, working people gave widespread support to "municipal socialism"—intervention by city governments to improve housing, provide services, and hold down streetcar fares (a burning issue in the United States). Both locally oriented movements such as Britain's Independent Labour Party and "impossibilist" socialists who scoffed at entitlement programs emanating from national governments, such as the Guesdeists in France, sought control of city governments. In the United States, Progressive Era struggles for municipal services were powerfully supported and often led by recent immigrants and by socialists.³⁴ 23

At the same time, the mobilization of state power for formal and informal empire also encouraged an expansion of government's role in the domestic economy. Let one example suffice. Building the Panama Canal was a vast government undertaking. The Socialist editor of the *Machinists' Monthly Journal* could scarcely contain his enthusiasm. The creation of the canal, the reconstruction of two cities, the erection of ports and quays, and the containment of contagious diseases and mosquitoes provided a model of what state enterprise had "done for the nation at large ... far superior to work done under private contract." Moreover, the wages, hours, housing, recreation facilities, and health services supplied by the federal government's Isthmian Canal Commission provided a model for proper treatment of workers—at least for the five to six thousand white citizens of the United States who were engaged in the operation (workers on the "gold roll"). The 45,000 workers on the "silver roll," primarily black men and women from the Caribbean, but also East Indians, Italians, Venezuelans, and even Spaniards, were not only paid much less but were also left to fend for themselves and were barred from entering facilities reserved for "whites."³⁵ 24

The example of the canal influenced others in addition to white socialist machinists. It aroused enthusiasm for municipal ownership among businessmen. 25

Nowhere was this more evident than in Seattle, a city catapulted to importance because of its location on the great circle routes from Panama City to Asia. The city expanded and modernized its port facilities as a public project, while powerful reform coalitions broke railroad control of local politics and floated bond issues to improve the physical environment and shut down "vice." Its University of Washington became the pinnacle of the Philippine's educational system.³⁶ Such developments around the imperialist world led socialists such as William English Walling and Emile Vandervelde, secretary of the International Socialist Bureau, to warn that public enterprise and state ownership did *not* constitute socialism. On the contrary, they argued, modern capitalism's expansion of the state had to be overcome by socialist revolution.³⁷

As political philosopher Herbert Croly argued in 1909, the Spanish-American War "and its resulting policy of extra-territorial expansion ... availed, from the sheer force of the national aspirations it aroused, to give a tremendous impulse to the work of national reform ... and it indirectly helped to place in the Presidential chair [Theodore Roosevelt] who ... represented both the national idea and the spirit of reform."³⁸ 26

In this new political environment, both Gompers and Carnegie quietly quit the Anti-Imperialist League, and protests against annexing colonies simply disappeared from AFL proceedings.³⁹ Instead, AFL leaders reoriented their efforts toward spreading their style of unionism throughout North America. 27

The AFL and Canada

Major American international unions grew in Canada, cheek-by-jowl with the expansion of branch plants of American corporations. Their growth was assisted by the nature of the border between the United States and Canada, the most permeable in the world. Especially since the 1870s, both English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians had migrated south in such numbers as to repopulate the textile and shoe factories of New England and to constitute more than a quarter of Detroit's foreign-born population. Thousands of British, Italian, and Finnish immigrants who came through Montreal subsequently moved southward, while seasonal Italian railroad workers traveled through the Port of New York to Montreal and then to jobs in the Canada's western provinces. It was commonplace for immigrants to return to Canada when work became slack in the United States, so that personal and economic contacts across the border assumed a continuing importance in family life. Moreover, from the 1890s to 1914, more people entered the rapidly growing far western provinces of Canada from the United States than moved the other way.⁴⁰ 28

Both the Knights of Labor and AFL craft unions had recruited many members in Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada since the 1880s. It was commonplace for labor activists and elected leaders on one side of the border to have been born on the other side. Labor organizations in the two countries also shared a venomous hostility toward Chinese immigrants (supplemented in the Canadian case by opposition to immigrants from India). Immigrants from the British Isles had often brought with 29

them important trade union experience and sometimes even British unions, such as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, a bitter rival to the International Association of Machinists, which had important branches in Ontario, Michigan, and Illinois (and which participated in the founding convention of the IWW in 1905). Many recent immigrants from Britain came with a strong commitment to industrial unionism and to socialist politics. Their influence was to be especially evident in the strike wave of 1919 and in particular in the Montreal shipyards strike and the general sympathetic strikes of Seattle, Toronto, Amherst, and Winnipeg.⁴¹

The Knights of Labor survived the depression of the 1890s somewhat better in Canada than it did in the United States. Three-fourths of its remaining local assemblies were found in Quebec. There were also numerous autonomous Canadian trade unions. But the most spectacular union growth in Canada at the opening of the twentieth century was to be found in the local membership of international unions, such as the carpenters, bricklayers, printers, shoe workers, iron molders, and mine workers, with headquarters in U.S. cities such as Indianapolis, Chicago, and New York and which were affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Although those international unions often had some Canadian officers, their most effective support came from rank-and-file craftsmen in more than 1,000 local unions (in 1902), who felt strengthened by the financial resources, benevolent funds, and traveling cards provided by the internationals. Locals of the internationals, together with assemblies of the Knights and purely Canadian unions were represented in the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, which had been created in 1883 and acquired the name TLCC in 1892. All groups agreed that the parliamentary system and confederation structure of the Canadian state required a Canadian institution distinct from but not necessarily in conflict with the AFL.⁴²

Consensus did not extend beyond that point. AFL leaders were determined to drive the remaining Knights of Labor assemblies out of Canadian city assemblies and to bring the many independent unions under the wing of the Federation. That effort faced ardent hostility not only from the powerful and pro-British Conservative Party and from Quebec's Catholic hierarchy, which denounced AFL leaders as foreigners and Masons, but also from many Canadian unionists who thought they should be allowed to run their own affairs. Ralph Smith, a coal miner born in England who had close ties to the governing Liberal Party in British Columbia and was president of the TLCC from 1898 to 1902, argued that Canadian labor could wield a strong influence only if all components of the nation's movement worked together. He enjoyed especially strong support in the bilingual area around Ottawa and Hull. Smith's outspoken opponent was John Flett, a carpenter from Hamilton, Ontario, whom Gompers had appointed salaried organizer for Canada and who helped bring 140 new local unions into the AFL in 1900 alone.⁴³

Their dispute was brought to a head by the AFL's growing reliance on union labels as an organizing device. The use of union labels was especially contentious in the important shoe industry of Quebec, where workers were involved in a wave of strikes and lockouts during 1900 and 1901 while adhering to a variety of different unions. The New England-based Boot and Shoe Workers International Union, led by the former socialist John F. Tobin (himself born in Guelph, Ontario), sought to bring

all the manufacturers involved in the conflicts under his union's label. His effort failed to impress the province's shoe workers, who knew that their industry was protected from American competitors by a high tariff, and he enraged the militant shoe lasters of Montreal by undermining support for their craft strike.⁴⁴

The stage was thus set for the decisive September 1902 convention of the TLCC in Berlin, Ontario (renamed Kitchener during World War I). It was the largest labor convention Canada had yet produced, and floor battles were furious from the start. The AFL's advocates carried the crucial votes with better than two to one margins. Flett replaced Smith as president. The constitution was changed to bar from affiliation with the TLCC not only the Knights of Labor but also all unions with possible jurisdictional conflicts with the AFL internationals. Gompers wrote in triumph that the interests of the labor movement were "identical" regardless of "arbitrary geographic lines."⁴⁵ 33

Gompers' foes in Canada reacted swiftly, but they proved unable to reverse the fateful work of the Berlin Congress. The upper house of the Canadian parliament passed a bill making it a criminal offense for foreigners to encourage or provoke a strike in Canada, but TLCC leaders mobilized Liberal Party votes in the lower house and defeated the bill. Union leaders who had unsuccessfully advocated allowing all Canadian labor organizations into the TLCC quickly formed a rival National Trades and Labor Congress (soon renamed the Canadian Federation of Labor). Despite the widespread reluctance of many city trades councils to expel unions not chartered by the AFL, however, the international unions encompassed more than 88 percent of all Canadian union locals by 1914. The most effective alternatives then clustered around two poles. One was revolutionary syndicalism, represented first by the Industrial Workers of the World and after 1919 by the One Big Union. The other was found in the largest center of nationalist unions: Quebec. There, unions that rejected the AFL were gradually but systematically gathered, under the guidance of the Catholic Church and in a political context of increasingly intense Catholic nationalism, into a movement guided by Papal encyclicals and a chaplain in each local, the Confédération des Travailleurs Catholiques du Canada.⁴⁶ 34

In short, the Canadian experience suggests that while their resolutions against annexing colonies remained on the books, AFL unions, like important business leaders, were expanding their own economic reach beyond this country's borders. By the 1905 convention of the AFL, Gompers could assert his contempt for the newly founded IWW and proudly declare: 35

Our limits are no longer from Maine to California, from the Lakes to the Gulf, but we include the whole of the United States, Canada, Hawaii, Cuba, Porto Rico, Mexico, the Philippines, and British Columbia. Our international unions deserve support in this growth and in bringing ... an example to the rest of the world.⁴⁷

And what was that example? Autonomous craft unions engaged in a carefully guided quest for contractual relations with employers or groups of employers, symbolized, where possible, by the union label on the employers' wares. Strong trade unions, able to carry out effective, coordinated strikes but restraining spontaneous strikes and sympathetic strikes, were the necessary precondition of cooperation with "the more intelligent among the employers," Gompers continued.⁴⁸ 36

Moreover, it was not only *industrial* peace that was nurtured by the strength of organized labor, but also the peace of the world. Since 1900, AFL convention resolutions had insisted that the "preservation of peace in the world devolves more and more upon organized labor, whose voice is ever becoming more potent in the formation of public opinion, that supreme tribunal before which both monarch and merchant must inevitably bow." But in contrast to the resolutions of the Socialist International, which continued to link the danger of war explicitly to the clash of imperial ambitions, the warnings against annexations and militarism, spoken so loudly by the AFL in 1898, simply faded away. In their place was a celebration that "the labor movement of the United States and Canada is one," as Gompers put it in his 1904 report to the convention, "that the labor movement of the United States and Porto Rico is one," and that collaboration with the unions of Britain and the British Empire was on the rise and providing an example that might spread to continental Europe. "We have heard a great deal about peace, about international peace," Gompers continued, "but I can conceive of no peace that will be lasting unless it is based upon the federation of the working men of the civilized world."⁴⁹

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Lurking behind these bold claims were two unspoken questions. First, in its relations with European unions, international labor secretariats, and the International Federation of Trade Unions, AFL leaders insisted adamantly on the autonomy of every national labor movement. How was that insistence to be reconciled with the decisions of the Berlin Congress and with the new claim that wherever American business went, U.S.-based unions would also go?⁵⁰ The second question was what role labor movements within the economic spheres and colonies of the Great Powers (or what Gompers called the "civilized world") should play in shaping global struggles for social reform and peace. Workers in Puerto Rico and Mexico brought both of those questions sharply to the attention of the AFL. In both those countries, though each in a different way, nationalist struggles against foreign domination powerfully shaped workers' mobilizations for social reform at home.

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The AFL and Puerto Rico

In Puerto Rico, urban artisans had created their own movement during the last years of Spanish rule. Among the immigrant craftsmen who had launched the periodical *Ensayo Obrero* on May 1, 1897, were the men who would lead the union movement until the 1930s: Santiago Iglesias, Eduardo Conde, and Ramón Romero Rosa.⁵¹ Like the anarchists in Europe, they castigated organized religion for numbing workers' minds, and they placed universal secular education high on their agenda of demands. The autonomous island government, which Spain had authorized early in 1897, soon punished the journal with fines and jailed Iglesias for disrespect toward Catholic education.⁵²

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The hacienda owners and creole professionals who led the autonomous government under Spain continued to dominate the island's politics under early U.S. rule. Prominent among them was Luis Muñoz Rivera. He aspired on one front to remove Spanish-born merchants and civil officials from control and to replace them with native Puerto Rican leaders. He also hoped, as he wrote in 1891, to arouse the

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masses, "breaking the ice of their indifference and lighting the sacred fire of patriotism in their hearts." Like other patriotic leaders he despised the workers' movement as inimical to "the great Puerto Rican family."⁵³

The U.S. law that instituted limited self-government in 1901 was the product of expert investigations and lengthy Congressional hearings, in true Progressive Era style.⁵⁴ Scholarly advisors in Washington depicted Puerto Ricans as people retarded by centuries of Catholic monarchism, which had left their gentry arrogant patriarchs, their poor women subject to male tyranny but often without husbands, and their male laborers dissolute and undisciplined. Consequently military authorities had instituted civil marriage in 1899, and three years later one of the first acts of the new legislature permitted women to divorce abusive husbands—a right which women quickly put to widespread use.⁵⁵ 41

The new regime took power amid economic desolation, caused by a worldwide collapse of the price of coffee—then the island's most valuable export. A large, mobile wage-earning class had already been generated by the abolition of slavery, completed in 1873, and by the subsequent spread of coffee and sugar plantations. Now those workers and their families could welcome abolition of the hated "regimen de la libreta" (obligatory pass books which certified workers' places of employment and employers' permission to travel), while they also faced ruinous unemployment and slashed wages. Thousands emigrated to seek work—to Hawaii, Cuba, Panama, and the continental United States.⁵⁶ 42

Between 1898 and 1901, the island had erupted in strikes, and workers created a federation of unions, whose most prominent leader was Santiago Iglesias.⁵⁷ His personal story reveals as much about the workings of imperial government as it does about the difficult relationship between workers' struggles and national independence movements. 43

Born in Spain, Iglesias apprenticed as a cabinetmaker and migrated at the age of fourteen to Havana, where he became involved in workers' study circles and in the Cuban struggle for independence until military authorities forced him to flee to Puerto Rico. There, Muñoz Rivera's autonomous government put him in jail, as we have seen, but he escaped when U.S. troops landed.⁵⁸ Subsequently, Iglesias participated prominently not only in the founding conventions of the union federation and of the new Partido Obrero Socialista—he called himself a socialist all his life—but in a San Juan reform rally, he also came out in favor of annexation: *¿Somos anexionistas? Si.*⁵⁹ 44

Iglesias traveled north and made personal contact with both the new Socialist Party of America and La Resistencia, the militant union of Cuban and Puerto Rican cigar makers in New York.⁶⁰ Those connections helped him bring moral and financial support to strikers in Puerto Rico. The island's government responded by arresting Iglesias and seven other strike leaders, charging them under an old Spanish law with "conspiracy to raise the price of labor." Iglesias jumped bail, came again to the United States, and appealed for help to the 1900 convention of the AFL. Trade unionists at the convention were infuriated by the reappearance of the hated labor conspiracy doctrine, which they thought America had buried.⁶¹ A reporter from the *Louisville Courier Journal* wrote that "the most heated and most interesting debate of the 45

convention" developed around a motion to organize the workers of Puerto Rico "before American capitalists go in there and attempt to control native labor at the prices now paid for it." They appropriated money to help organize the island's workers and persuaded the unions of cigar makers, tobacco workers, longshoremen, and carpenters to take part in the struggle and to translate their constitutions into Spanish. Gompers then commissioned Iglesias as a general organizer for the AFL.⁶²

More intriguing, Gompers appealed on behalf of Iglesias to President Theodore Roosevelt. The president's personal secretary, George Cortelyou, was a leader of the National Civic Federation, which was then seeking to harmonize relations between labor and capital in the United States. Cortelyou wrote to the colonial governor assuring him that Iglesias was "endorsed by Mr. Gompers," who had requested Iglesias be "left free to carry out the objects of his mission." U.S. attorney general Philander C. Knox then persuaded the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico to overturn the workers' sentences and to rule that "any Spanish law in Porto Rico, [which impairs the right of free assembly] has lost its force and become a nullity with the change of sovereignty."⁶³ 46

Workers' rights to organize and strike had been vindicated by intervention from the North in defiance of Muñoz Rivera and his fellow hacendados and in the context of popular misery and upheaval. For the next decade, the labor federation continued to denounce the "statements made in favor of independence of Puerto Rico" by Muñoz Rivera's party as "only the aspiration and thirst for dominion over the producing masses, to secure places and to strangle in the throat of the people the blessed freedom that now exists in Puerto Rico"⁶⁴ 47

The AFL's activity in Puerto Rico reflected its general move away from the opposition to colonial expansion expressed in 1898. In 1902, the year of the Berlin Congress's decisions reigning in the autonomy of Canadian unions, Gompers appointed Ed Rosenberg, a Norwegian-born officer of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, as salaried organizer for Hawaii and the Philippines with authority to organize workers there into unions affiliated with the AFL.⁶⁵ When U.S. forces invaded Haiti in 1915 and rewrote Haiti's constitution and land laws, took control of revenue collection, and established a new police force with American officers, making Haiti a colony in all but name for nineteen years, the AFL uttered not a word of protest.⁶⁶ 48

It is crucial to understanding Puerto Rico, however, to recall that its major employers in 1900 were *not* foreigners. For a time, Spanish-born merchants continued to dominate much of the island's commerce and money lending. But that condition changed rapidly under American rule, and correspondingly dissent from Iglesias's views on U.S. annexation grew in labor's ranks. As early as 1905, the primary participants in strikes were no longer the artisans and port workers of San Juan, but the largely seasonal workers in tobacco and sugar, where many of the largest enterprises had recently been created by investors from the North. Among them were James B. Duke's American Tobacco Company and the Porto Rico Sugar Company, owner of five plantations with 7,000 acres of cane. When nearly 14,000 workers struck that company and other sugar centrals of the Ponce region demanding 75 cents a day, the U.S. district court of Puerto Rico imposed on Iglesias *not* an archaic 49

Spanish conspiracy indictment but a modern American injunction.⁶⁷ As tensions continued to mount in the sugar regions, the island's appointed executive council and the elected House of Delegates agreed in 1910 to create a special police force empowered by the government but paid and directed by companies and hacendados who requested them, along the lines of Pennsylvania's infamous Coal and Iron Police.⁶⁸

Trade union activists in the sugar regions, who were involved in yet another surge of strikes in 1915, persuaded the labor federation to establish a new socialist party. 50 Although Iglesias was elected the party's president, local party sections often denounced their country's domination by U.S. capital. Their denunciations grew louder early the next year, when police dispatched to the Arecibo region by Governor Arthur Yager arrested many strikers and killed several. When Gompers protested to President Woodrow Wilson that the workers' constitutional rights had been violated, Wilson defended Yager as just and patriotic. The convergence between socialist and nationalist aspirations was clearly evident at the new party's 1919 convention, when delegates openly and ardently debated whether to fight for national independence or to appeal to the democratic pretensions of the United States against the domination of Puerto Rican elites. In the end, Iglesias's position prevailed: that independence should come, if at all, only after social democracy had been won at home. What is truly remarkable about the 1919 debate, however, is that speakers on both sides of the question (including Iglesias) referred to the example of revolutionary Russia to support their positions.⁶⁹

It is noteworthy that the trade union body headed by Iglesias, the Federación Libre de los Trabajadores (FLT), while affiliated with the AFL, exercised sufficient autonomy to create its own political party. More important, the desolate condition of the island's agriculture between the world wars undermined trade union power, making the Socialist Party the tail that wagged the trade-union dog. Seeking to secure some legislative benefits for workers, not to mention appointments to government office, the party joined in coalition with the Republican Party, which was committed to the quest for statehood. This alliance made the Socialists partners in governing the colony from 1924 to 1940. A party with a platform devoted to organizing workers' own collective power on the job against "the plutocracy" and "under the banner of the socialist ideal" governed in coalition with representatives of some of the island's most powerful business interests.⁷⁰ 51

As if the Great Depression had not brought enough misery to Puerto Rico, as it did throughout the Caribbean, a furious hurricane swept the island in 1932. The haunting refrains of Rafael Hernández famous song "Lamento Borincano" evoked both the people's distress and a growing animosity toward Yankee companies that had devoured their land. Strikes by women in tobacco and clothing in 1933 met both police violence and student support. The Nationalist Party, under the charismatic leadership of Pedro Albizu Campos, shook the political landscape not only by vigorous electoral activity but also by turbulent street demonstrations as well as the murder of the island's chief of police. 52

Iglesias's labor federation sought to stabilize working conditions through master collective bargaining agreements for each of the island's major industries. The sugar 53

workers' contract evoked furious protests from union members because it provided no wage increase and ignored local struggles over the task system of payment and hours of work. Their strike spread from plantation to plantation, while Iglesias and other FLT leaders tried to cajole or command workers to return to their jobs. In response, strikers called on Albizu Campos for help, and his oratory made strike meetings resound with demands for independence. As the next elections revealed in 1936, however, the discourse of national sovereignty had not won many adherents among those mobilized in the name of wages, hours, and local control ("un peso y ocho horas" were words sung across the sugar fields), but workers were to desert the Socialist Party and the FLT in ever growing numbers. After Iglesias died in 1939, the party fell apart.⁷¹

Nevertheless, nationalist agitation did contribute heavily to a basic realignment of Puerto Rican politics. In 1936, Albizu Campos and six colleagues were sentenced to the Atlanta penitentiary for conspiracy to murder the police commandant. The following March, a nationalist parade in Ponce was met with police gunfire, leaving nineteen people dead (including two police) and at least 100 wounded. While the main opposition party, long committed to island autonomy, disintegrated in the aftermath of the massacre, up in New York City, Congressman Vito Marcantonio, representing the eastside Italian-Puerto Rican community, became a vocal champion of Puerto Rican independence and of the imprisoned Albizu Campos, in addition to social reform.⁷²

A new party headed by Luis Muñoz Marín (son of Luis Muñoz Rivera) rose out of the crisis to dominate the island's political life. After initially calling for independence with social justice, he had by 1940 proclaimed that social justice was the issue, not the island's legal status. As war mobilization reinvigorated the economy, Muñoz Marín worked, often in tandem with the new U.S. governor Rexford Tugwell, to strip sugar companies of their massive holdings, distribute land to smallholders, erect state factories, and ultimately to negotiate self-government in most domestic affairs, while still under U.S. rule, in the form of the Estado Libre Asociado (Commonwealth).

In the new imperial relationship, Puerto Rico remained firmly annexed to the United States while it was rapidly transformed into a branch plant economy in the name of Operation Bootstrap. The labor movement envisaged by Gompers and Iglesias had been marginalized. The Confederación General de los Trabajadores, established in 1940, shaped a new militancy, first among sugar workers then in other domains. Its president was a member of the inner circle of Muñoz Marín's party.⁷³

The AFL and Mexico

By that time, however, the focal point of entanglement with imperialism for the American labor movement had clearly become Mexico. In stark contrast to Canada and Puerto Rico, there was no popular support among workers in Mexico for joining the international unions of the AFL. Moreover, under the regime of Porfirio Díaz any union or strike activity faced brutal repression, though railroad brotherhoods (not

affiliated with the AFL) did wield some power on the railroads of northern Mexico, as preserves of locomotive engineers and dispatchers who had come from the United States along with the railroad companies. After 1905, there was some IWW activity involving both Mexicans and Anglo immigrants in the Tampico oil fields, but the crucial links of Mexico's workers' movement to the IWW were not organizational, but ideological. The most influential organization involved in the strikes that shook the Díaz regime in 1906 was the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM), whose commitment to revolutionary workers' action aimed at bringing down capitalism had much in common with the Wobblies' beliefs.

Nevertheless, the labor movement that took shape during Mexico's revolutionary struggles ultimately did so under the wing of the victorious General Venustiano Carranza. Correspondingly, the resurgent American Federation of Labor allied itself ever more closely with the Wilson administration in Washington and with its foreign policies. Consequently, the links formed between officers of the two national labor movements between 1916 and 1924 were shaped as much by international diplomacy as they were by questions of trade union strategies and affiliations. 58

The United States had annexed half the former area of Mexico by 1848, and at the turn of the century, modern capitalist development—especially railroads—had transformed the border region. In Texas, it had brought a flood of white farmers to the region north of the Rio Grande, where they had displaced the surviving Mexicano ranchero elite from both its economic and its political dominance of the borderland. Anglo political reformers for the first time imposed legal segregation on neighbors of Mexican ancestry. 59

South of the Rio Grande, the major railroads, built rapidly after 1880, were extensions of U.S. lines. Between 1900 and 1911, almost 40 percent of all foreign investment from the United States went into Mexico—into its railroads, mines, and oil. Throughout Mexico, foreigners owned virtually all industry, except the brewery and steel mill in Monterrey, while Spaniards, Turks, and Chinese dominated wholesale and retail commerce. The ruthless military forces of Porfirio Díaz safeguarded all these enterprises. Consequently, as the Revolution made evident, even the Mexican bourgeoisie had few qualms about expropriating capitalists whom they hoped to replace.⁷⁴ 60

Moreover, there was virtually a free-trade zone linking the United States with the northern states of Mexico—Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Durango. Revolutionary leaders Madero, Obregon, Villa, Orozco, and Carranza stemmed from that region. The workers of those northern states tended to be very mobile, many alternating between farm labor and mines and between one side of the border and the other. As Emilio Zamora has argued, before 1915, the largest number of Mexicans entering the United States went to Texas, and somewhere between 50 percent and 75 percent of the new arrivals returned to Mexico each year. This regional society and its revolution were very different from the cohesive villages found in Morelos to the south, which produced Zapata and the agrarian revolt, and also from San Luis Potosí, which had nurtured the earliest intellectual opposition to the Díaz regime.⁷⁵ 61

Working-class activists also crossed the border constantly, salting Mexico with people familiar with the American Federation of Labor, Industrial Workers of the 62

World, and Socialist Party of America. Locomotive engineers, dispatchers, and conductors were overwhelmingly Yankees. Job examinations were given in English! Many of them belonged to U.S. railroad brotherhoods until President Francisco Madero broke their grip in 1912 by requiring workers running Mexican trains to speak Spanish.⁷⁶

Many Mexican political groups had officers or even headquarters in Texas, Missouri, and California. Foremost among those groups was the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM) led by Ricardo Flores Magón. Although this party and its newspaper *Regeneración* ardently advocated land reform and civil liberties, it also discretely encouraged anarcho-syndicalism.⁷⁷ Members of the PLM played prominent roles organizing strikes by copper miners in Cananea, Sonora, and Clifton-Morenci, Arizona, and in the 1905 to 1907 effort to reshape an AFL federal labor union in Laredo, Texas, into a citywide organization of all Mexican workers. PLM members later helped initiate the futile IWW invasion of Baja California and provided at least inspiration for the *Sediciocos* who raided three Texas border towns during the summer of 1915 in support of the Plan de San Diego. That proclamation called for "Social Revolution" and the transfer of arable land to "the proletarians." In response to those attacks, the Texas Rangers and white vigilante groups unleashed a reign of terror against local Mexicans, which in turn inspired many to flee for safety into war-torn Mexico itself.⁷⁸

As historian James Cockcroft has persuasively argued, major strikes of miners, textile workers, and railroad workers in 1906 marked the beginning of open revolt against the Díaz regime. The PLM had been founded in San Luis Potosí in 1901 and as its name suggests originally favored political liberties, competitive capitalism, and removal of the Church from public life. Repression radicalized the party, and by the time Magón and his comrades had been released from prison and had established headquarters in Laredo, they had committed the movement to armed insurrection, libertarian socialism, and return of the land to the despoiled peasants. The famous strike at the complex of copper, gold, and silver mines in Cananea, owned by the well-connected American William C. Greene, was organized out of Douglas, Arizona, by PLM activists and was subsequently crushed by the Arizona Rangers, who crossed the border under the command of a former officer of Roosevelt's Rough Riders. The strikers enjoyed strong support from the Western Federation of Miners and the newly formed IWW, though they actually organized on a community basis, not as an industrial union (similar to Canada's One Big Union rather than the IWW).⁷⁹

Magón and his compatriots were harassed constantly by the William Howard Taft administration as well as by Mexican authorities, and they were forced to move headquarters several times. Ricardo Flores Magón was imprisoned nine times in Mexico and the United States, and he died in Fort Leavenworth in 1923, despite efforts of the new Mexican government to secure his release. But his legal battles enjoyed the support of Missouri's progressive governor, Joseph W. Folk, as well as Samuel Gompers, prominent Socialist Party members such as Mother Jones and Eugene V. Debs, and Magón's attorney, Job Harriman of Los Angeles. By 1910, Socialist magazines and newspapers published a steady diet of articles linking the oppression of Mexican workers and peasants to American business interests. John K.

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Turner's exposé *Barbarous Mexico* (1910), first published in serial form, had become basic reading for the American left.⁸⁰ Earlier, in 1908, when President Theodore Roosevelt sought to clamp down on Mexican revolutionaries by proposing legislation to allow censorship of mail and to expand the secret service, Congress voted his proposals down.⁸¹

Francisco I. Madero's military uprising against Díaz in 1911 drew much support away from the Magónistas. Although much of the business and agricultural elite had benefited from Díaz's solicitation of capital from the United States, a deep and prolonged Mexican economic crisis, triggered in 1907 by a financial crisis in the United States, had undermined the middle class and roused even wealthy men like Madero to battle for political liberties and constitutional government. When Magón denounced Madero's lack of a social program, reminding his readers that "governments are protectors of the rich," and encouraged an armed incursion into Baja California by his followers and hundreds of Wobblies (among them, briefly, Joe Hill), Gompers and other AFL leaders proclaimed their support for Madero—most assertively after the new Mexican president had legalized free speech, strikes, and trade unions (measures the Taft administration greeted with hostility). Eugene Debs, Mother Jones, and the socialist *New York Call* joined in that support, all of them arguing that Mexico had to pass through bourgeois democracy before it could be ready for socialism.⁸² 66

After the armies of Venustiano Carranza won control of much of the country in 1914, with no clear ideology other than nationalism, their commanders turned local buildings over to workers' unions in the towns they occupied. Foreign-owned companies employed most of the unions' members. The Casa del Obrero Mundial (House of the World Worker) soon attracted the active support of many PLM veterans and declared its major weapon to be the "direct action of worker against capitalist." The Casa was founded in 1912, and it briefly became the pilot of widespread strikes, only to be fiercely repressed by the regime of General Victoriano Huerta (1913–14). Nevertheless, the failure of PLM-led military efforts, including those in Baja California, coupled with the brutal suppression inflicted on workers by the Huerta government, left the Casa susceptible to enticements to organize some 7,000 workers in 1915 into six Red Battalions fighting under Carranza's command. The general's adamant opposition to the occupation of Vera Cruz by U.S. military and naval forces had already won many workers to his banner.⁸³ 67

The price the Red Battalions had to pay for Carranza's material assistance was to join Carranza's assault on Emiliano Zapata, in the name of the "struggle against reaction." This was a fateful development: The workers' movement and the agrarian revolution had become enemies. Dissident members of the Casa fled to Morelos, among them their most eminent public intellectual, Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, who became Zapata's chief theoretician and a bitter enemy of the urban working class.⁸⁴ 68

When desperate conditions of life provoked a new wave of strikes in 1916, Carranza dissolved the Red Battalions, turned on the Casa, commandeered many of the new union headquarters, and ordered military courts to imprison arrested strike leaders—something many of his army commanders refused to do. He also unleashed what he intended to be an annihilation campaign against Zapata.⁸⁵ 69

At almost the same time, the constitutional assembly meeting at Aguascalientes finished work on its labor code, article 123. It was the most comprehensive governmental declaration of workers' rights the world had ever seen. In addition to guaranteeing the eight-hour day and rights to organize and strike, it specified equal pay for both sexes and rest periods for working mothers, guarantees of housing, old age and sickness care, government supervision of contracts to work in foreign countries, prohibition of peonage, and more. All this from a convention where there were only two trade unionists.⁸⁶ 70

As the new constitution revealed, this was revolution from above. The new Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (CROM), which arose out of the rubble of the 1916 repression and the hopes inspired by the new constitution, was closely allied to the Carranza government. Many of its officers had worked in the United States and had been members there of trade unions or the IWW or both. In 1918, the anarcho-syndicalists of Mexico City (Federación de Sindicatos Obreros del Distrito Fédéral) also affiliated with the CROM, bringing with them many admirers of the IWW. Although the CROM continued to employ the discourse of syndicalism, modified to advocate "multiple action" rather than direct action, its success, if not its survival, depended on its support from the government.⁸⁷ 71

Luis Morones and other officers of Mexican labor organizations persuaded the AFL Executive Council to petition President Wilson to recognize Carranza's regime and later to join the CROM in joint efforts to prevent war between their two countries after General John J. Pershing had led U.S. troops into northern Mexico in futile pursuit of Francisco Villa. Gompers wrote to AFL officers in California of the need to establish "closer fraternal relations between the labor movements of our two countries that are necessary to protect the wage-earners in our future commercial and industrial developments."⁸⁸ 72

Gompers' letter referred specifically to the 1915 Pan-American Financial Conference, which had been promoted by President Wilson. Gompers had urged the administration in vain to include trade unionists as representatives of "human welfare" in the commissions authorized by that conference to promote economic integration in the Americas. He had argued specifically that union labels constituted one of the instruments of modern commerce. At that year's AFL convention in San Francisco, Santiago Iglesias presented a report calling for solidarity among the trade unions of the Americas in response to the reorganization of business that had been made possible by the opening of the Panama Canal and encouraged by the recent financial conference. The AFL convention, which had been marked by bitter divisions over war preparedness, accepted his report unanimously.⁸⁹ 73

Socialists, who later supported Wilson's war against Germany, heavily influenced Gompers' policies and his links to Mexican unions. Among them were John Murray, former correspondent in Mexico for the *New York Call*, James Lord of the AFL's Mining Department, Santiago Iglesias, and the Romanian-born Roberto Haberman, who managed to hold membership simultaneously in the International Association of Machinists, the Drug Clerks Union of Mexico City, and the cooperative movement of Yucatan.⁹⁰ 74

Moreover, just as the CROM was tied to Carranza's government, so the AFL 75

increasingly linked itself to that of Wilson in both domestic and foreign affairs. Wilson had enjoyed some labor support during his first presidential campaign, but by the election of 1916, he enjoyed a margin of support among working-class votes without precedent in the history of presidential elections. Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson had come from the AFL's largest union, the United Mine Workers of America. Under his guidance, the new U.S. Conciliation Service mediated 1,780 labor disputes between 1915 and 1919 and encouraged employers to negotiate with unions chartered by the AFL and to shun the IWW and other groups which he and the Federation deemed "outlaw." As preparedness for war took center stage in 1916, he sponsored a series of joint meetings between cabinet members and the AFL's executive council, and then successfully proposed Gompers' appointment to the Council of National Defense. Major strikes for the eight-hour day in the spring of 1916 and the threat of a nationwide railroad strike on the eve of a presidential election had yielded a statutory eight-hour day on the railroads (the Adamson Act). After Congress declared war on Germany, the Wilson administration appointed many union officials to agencies created to mobilize the economy and muster public support for a war that initially faced widespread public opposition.⁹¹

Nevertheless, wartime industrial conditions triggered huge strikes during 1917, especially in mining and lumbering, as if to mock the no-strike pledge Gompers had pronounced on his own initiative. Worse yet, the IWW not only provided leadership to many of those strikes, but in the Arizona mining region especially, also organized stable locals of thousands of workers. Among the members in Bisbee, Jerome, Morenci, and elsewhere were many Mexicans. Nevertheless, as IWW activist and future Communist leader Ludwig Lore wrote: "It is not the 'outlaw' worker any longer, the migratory nomad, but the stationary worker with a permanent home and family who constitutes a goodly part of the I.W.W. membership." When Bisbee vigilantes rounded up more than 1,200 strikers and deported them to the desert in July, an army census of the victims found almost half of them to be U.S. citizens, even though most of them were foreign born.⁹²

Brutal treatment of strikers by enraged and armed local residents was by no means restricted to Arizona. It was precisely the resurgent strength of the IWW in 1917, colliding with appeals by local businessmen and editors to patriotic fury, that unleashed violent assaults and murders inflicted on Wobblies across the West. State and federal governments followed suit with indictments and deportations, culminating in the mass trial of 133 actual and alleged IWW leaders. Meanwhile, many well-known AFL unions, as well as unaffiliated newcomers like the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, increased their memberships dramatically. Wartime full employment overcame workers' fear of dismissal, and participation in strikes soared to all-time record highs—war or no war—while new government agencies often resolved major disputes in favor of the workers, who could now couch their demands in the vocabulary of wartime.⁹³ The AFL's collaboration with the federal government may have violated its proclaimed self-reliance and "voluntarism," but its reward was vigorous growth in membership and in influence.

These pressures and opportunities provided the context for the AFL's controversial alignment with President Wilson's foreign policy, including his moves

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towards intervention in World War I. Although Gompers had joined Mexican union leaders and many socialists and progressives at home in urging the President to curb his military ventures of 1914 and 1916 inside revolutionary Mexico, he had shared Wilson's hopes that Madero and later Carranza would bring constitutional government to their country. Moreover, by April 1917, Wilson had stationed marines in Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Nicaragua, and annexed the Virgin Islands—all with no protest from the AFL. It was, however, the approaching war with Germany that drew AFL leaders into active participation in war mobilization. By the time of the turbulent AFL convention of 1915 in San Francisco, Executive Council members in control of the platform gavelled down vociferous opponents of military preparedness and their hooting supporters in the balcony, while Gompers took the floor to declare: I am a pacifist ... and I had hoped that we would get away from the war idea. But when I saw the way the trade unionists of each European nation rallied to their colors in this war, I had to agree the old Biblical sentiment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself ["], had been shot to pieces. We want to see the people of the United States thoroughly trained so that they may control their military and naval forces in the interests of peace, democracy and humanity.⁹⁴

Gompers lent unstinting support to Wilson's war effort and then to the League of Nations.⁹⁵ As the invectives that convention delegates hurled at each other in San Francisco made evident, however, many workers sharply opposed his policies. Just as the war had increased union membership by 1920 to levels not to be reached again until 1940, so it had stimulated the aspirations, discontent, and sense of power among those members. Gompers remarked to his colleague and confidant James Duncan of the Granite Cutters: "Our movement is passing through a critical stage.... The struggles, the sacrifices, the enthusiasm, the highly nervous strain induced by the World War, have brought about a state of almost mental hysteria."⁹⁶

The rebellious mood Lore had praised and Gompers feared manifested itself in political as well as economic life. Versailles and the other treaties ending the war had left the British, French, and Japanese empires not only intact but enlarged, with Italy the only empty-handed ally, and had left Eastern Europe ablaze with nationalist conflicts and social revolution. One immigrant group after another protested what seemed to its members a mockery of the Fourteen Points. Labor's dissidents demanded direct intervention by working people in foreign affairs—"democratic diplomacy." A workers' convention, which drafted demands for a pending strike at five General Electric plants shortly after the armistice, included in its demands the release of all imprisoned antiwar dissidents and radicals in the United States and the inclusion of labor representatives as half their country's delegates to the Versailles peace conference. Critics of President Wilson and of Gompers found their most articulate voice in the Chicago Federation of Labor and its newspaper, the *New Majority*. Just as that journal advocated industrial democracy at home, so it demanded direct participation in foreign policy by working people. A famous *New Majority* cartoon of 1919 depicted working men and women approaching the door of the peace conference and captioned: "You could not make War without us—you cannot make Peace without us."⁹⁷

As was the case with Winnipeg's *Western Labour News* and the *Seattle Union Record*, the *New Majority* depicted "nationalist rebellions" as "part of the class struggle, not a distraction from it." The Chicagoans resolved that they would not "be

satisfied with a League of Imperialist governments dominated by an international League of money bosses."⁹⁸ They applauded the self-determination accorded to Poles, Yugoslavs, and other peoples in Europe, but they insisted that Ireland, India, Egypt, and Mexico be accorded the same right. They found a champion in Frank Walsh of Missouri, who not only quit the National War Labor Board, but also threw his efforts into a League of Oppressed Peoples. As Alan Dawley has argued, "The immediate postwar period deserves to be remembered as the most significant moment of anti-imperialism since the beginning of the century."⁹⁹

In the elections of 1918 and 1920, it was the Republicans who capitalized most effectively on popular discontent with Wilson's government. Business leaders and Republicans rallied voters against immigrants, radicals, and trade unions, while labor's wartime influence in the government faded quickly into memory. AFL delegates walked out of the 1919 President's Industrial Conference after they could not even get adopted a resolution favoring labor's right to organize. The embattled Wilson administration did not invite them back to the second industrial conference.¹⁰⁰ 82

Revolutionary upheavals around the world had also induced the diplomats assembled in Paris to enshrine the eight-hour day and other labor standards in the peace treaties and to create the International Labor Organization to oversee their enforcement. Those same upheavals, however, had by 1923 produced not one international union congress, but four. The social-democratic International Federation of Trade Unions dating from 1900 had survived, but it was now confronted by a Communist-led Red International of Labor Unions, an anarcho-syndicalist International Workingmen's Association, and an International Federation of Working Women.¹⁰¹ 83

Labor Solidarity in the Americas?

It was in this turbulent context that the AFL and the CROM took the initiative to create a Pan-American Federation of Labor. Pursuant to the decision of its 1915 convention, Gompers and other AFL officials met in Washington with Luis Morones and others of the CROM and a separate group from Yucatan. After that meeting, two of the delegates from Yucatan set out to enlist support from other countries in Latin America, but the only favorable response came from one union in Cuba. That was hardly surprising. The labor organizations formed in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile starting in 1905 were more akin to the IWW than to the AFL or the CROM. In fact, the maritime workers and artisans who created the first nationwide labor organization in Chile (1919) actually named themselves a branch of the Industrial Workers of the World. For international solidarity, the Chileans sent their delegates to the 1922 congress of the anarcho-syndicalist International Workingmen's Association in Berlin, Germany, as did unions in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. One union in Yucatan even replied to the AFL's invitation by stating that a mutual assistance organization should be worldwide, not Pan-American.¹⁰² 84

Consequently, only two national movements took part in the founding convention held in the important Texas border railroad junction of Laredo just days after the 85

armistice had taken effect in Europe, both of them operating in close collaboration with their respective governments. In fact, the official call for the meeting had been issued only after the United States had formally recognized Carranza's government, while President Wilson and his Committee on Public Information had secretly provided the funding.¹⁰³ Even so, there was plenty of tension in the air. The Tampico section of the IWW had withdrawn from the CROM in protest against meeting with the AFL, and president Frank Duffy of the powerful Carpenters Union had ardently objected on behalf of the AFL's Catholic members to Gompers' dealings with Mexico's anticlerical revolutionaries.¹⁰⁴

The opening statement from Morones called on the AFL to open all of its unions to membership for workers of Mexican origin and to come to the aid of the many IWW and other political prisoners in the United States. But AFL unions were then collaborating closely with President Wilson's government to exclude the IWW from the copper mines and the maritime world and also with the Canadian government to fight the One Big Union in Nova Scotia and in the western provinces.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, Gompers responded with a ringing denunciation of the IWW as an opponent of the Allied war effort and an enemy of trade unionism. He also defended the authority of every constituent AFL union to make its own membership rules, and he proposed that both federations collaborate to limit immigration into the United States.¹⁰⁶ 86

The sticking point was Texas. The Texas Federation of Labor was dominated by trade unionists who shared the virulent racism that flourished in their state during the war years and the early 1920s. Fort Worth was a storm center of hostility. There, Anglo and black workers had marched together on city hall to demand that civic leaders "rid the city of cheap Mexican labor."¹⁰⁷ The heartland of Mexican participation in the AFL was Laredo itself, where unions of *Mexican* track workers thrived. Clemente Idar, son of a pioneering organizer on the Mexican National Railway, was a prominent advocate of both racial integration and trade unionism along strict craft lines. Idar did succeed over the years in integrating some Mexican workers into the Texas Federation, and he succeeded most notably in working together with the Mexican government to keep Mexican workers on both sides of the border from crossing picket lines during the historic nationwide 1922 strike of the railroad shopcraft unions.¹⁰⁸ 87

Gompers in turn lobbied Washington to resume full diplomatic relations with Mexico and to cede to that country the control that its new constitution asserted over its own natural resources. Gompers and his successor as AFL president, William Green, consistently opposed the efforts of American oil and mining interests to persuade the administrations of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge to intervene militarily in Mexico on their behalf. In return, Gompers persuaded the CROM not to affiliate with the Amsterdam-based International Federation of Trade Unions. At a joint conference of the AFL and CROM in El Paso in the fall of 1923, the Mexican and American federations jointly proclaimed the "Monroe Doctrine of Labor." It declared their shared hostility to any efforts by either "the Red Internationale of autocratic Moscow [or] any other internationale" to violate the "sovereignty" of labor in the Western Hemisphere.¹⁰⁹ 88

In less than a quarter of a century, the AFL had been transformed from a vehement foe of imperial expansion into an active promoter of alliances with those unions in Mexico, Canada, and Puerto Rico that were *not* committed to social revolution. The change began with efforts by the AFL to extend its reach beyond the boundaries of the United States, wherever American business went. A second phase emerged during the First World War. For a few years, the Federation also participated in formulating government policy and enjoyed the shelter that federal agencies provided for trade union growth. At the same time, Mexico had changed from a country where unions had been forbidden into one with a labor congress (the CROM) that supported the government and was in turn nurtured and restrained by that government—though in some places, union activity independent of the CROM actually increased during the 1920s. The AFL in turn lent its support to the rise to power of Plutarco Elías Calles, solicited the aid of the International Federation of Trade Unions as well as the U.S. Navy in blocking shipments of arms to Calles's enemies in 1923, and arranged the following year's convention of the Pan-American Federation to meet in Mexico City at the time of his inauguration. Gompers died in El Paso upon his return from that gathering.¹¹⁰

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To sum up, at the end of the 1890s, the labor movement of the United States expressed profound anxiety that the division of the world into colonial spheres dominated by the Great Powers threatened world peace as well as the ability of trade unions to improve the lot of working people within the domestic economy. During the next twenty years, however, spectacular growth in the domestic economy and in union membership helped persuade leaders of the AFL quietly to abandon their opposition to the annexation of colonies, while major constituent unions incorporated many workers in Canada and Puerto Rico into their ranks and successfully opposed nationalist currents within the movements of both countries. Moreover, the Wilson administration provided at least some assistance to AFL efforts to construct its own countervailing power to that of business. From 1915 to 1919, militant struggles by workers both benefited from the converging efforts of government and union bureaucrats and often overran the boundaries prescribed by that collaboration. When the country went to war, top union leaders openly jettisoned their historic quest for peace through the common efforts of workers in many lands, and they provided wholehearted support not only to the government's mobilization for war, but also to proselytizing around the globe for its war aims.

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Revolutionary Mexico presented a challenge of decisive importance. Starting with the copper, textile, and railroad strikes of 1906, Mexican workers' struggles (including those north of the border) displayed closer kinship to the teachings of the Industrial Workers of the World than to those of Samuel Gompers. Moreover, commanders of revolutionary armies (with the major exception of the intensely provincial Zapatista agrarian movement) appealed to nationalism, rather than social reform. Between 1915 and 1917, however, forces under Carranza's command offered workers' organizations sporadic assistance and the glowing promises incorporated in the new constitution.

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AFL initiatives toward alliance with the new Mexican labor movement were guided by the Federation's adherence to President Wilson's foreign policy goals,

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which also helped secure funding for AFL activities in Latin America. Together, two labor federations, each tied to its respective government, created the Pan-American Federation of Labor, which was to play but an occasional role in strike and organizing activity but which concentrated its efforts on defusing conflicts between the two countries (especially over U.S. companies' claims to oil and mineral rights), securing the ascendancy of a regime in Mexico friendly to its dominant labor organization, and excluding communist, socialist, and syndicalist internationals from the Western Hemisphere. In short, the AFL had changed from a foe of imperial power to a participant in its exercise.

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² Frank Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *XIe Congrès international des sciences historique, Rapports V: Histoire Contemporaine* (Stockholm, 1960), 32–60; Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, 1985), 126–47; Jan Breman, *Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Colonial Asia* (Amsterdam, 1990), 13–14; David Northrup, *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism, 1834–1912* (New York, 1995), 26–31, 107–12; Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915–1940* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 10, 117, 148–49; Stanley Engerman, "Servants to Slaves to Servants: Contract Labor and European Expansion" in *Colonialism and Migration: Indentured Labour before and after Slavery*, ed. P.C. Emmer (Dordrecht, 1986), 263–94.

³ Georges Haupt, comp., *Bureau socialiste international: Comptes rendus des réunions, manifestes, et circulaires* (Paris, 1969), 1: 26–28, see esp. note 4 on 27–28; Partha Sarathi Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914–1964* (London, 1975).

⁴ Haupt, *Bureau socialiste*, 29–31. My translation of the quotation on p. 30. "C'est la guerre sur tout le globe. Les budgets de la guerre montent, montent... On dépense en fusils, canons, casernes, flottes, plus qu'on ne paye en salaires à des millions et encore des millions d'hommes, on massacre, on détruit, on incendie, on viole, on tue."

⁵ See Alexander Trachtenberg, *American Socialists and the War* (New York, 1917); James Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America, 1912–1925* (New York, 1967).

⁶ *American Federation of Labor: History, Encyclopedia, Reference Book* (Washington, 1919), 192. See also Samuel Gompers, *Labor and the Common Welfare*, comp. and ed. Hayes Robbins (New York, 1919), 224–25.

⁷ Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States* (New York, 1955), 2: 405–12; Ray Ginger, *The Bending Cross: A Biography of Eugene Victor Debs* (New York, 1947), 203; Daniel De Leon, "A Word to the Proletariat of Spain," *Daily People*, Mar. 20, 1898, quoted in Stephen Coleman, *Daniel De Leon* (New York, 1990), 59.

- ⁸ David Montgomery, *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market during the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1993), 103; Philip S. Foner, *Militarism and Organized Labor, 1900–1914* (Minneapolis, 1987), 24, 27, 36.
- ⁹ Gompers, *Labor and the Common Welfare*, 228–29.
- ¹⁰ "An Address at the Chicago Peace Jubilee [Oct. 18, 1898]" in *Samuel Gompers Papers*, vol. 5, ed. Stuart B. Kaufman, Peter J. Albert, and Grace Palladino (Urbana, 1996), 20–29, qts. on 22–23.
- ¹¹ AFL, Proceedings, 1898, in *Gompers Papers*, 5: 43, 46.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 5: 44–46.
- ¹³ "An Address at the National Conference on the Foreign Policy of the United States, Saratoga, N.Y." in *Gompers Papers*, 5: 6; AFL Proceedings, 1898, in *Gompers Papers*, 5: 44, 46. Arguments similar to those of Reid were frequently expressed in the British Trades Union Congress, especially by delegates from textile unions. See Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement*, 43–49.
- ¹⁴ See, for example, Gwendolyn Mink, *Old Labor and New Immigrants in American Political Development: Union, Party, and State, 1875–1920* (Ithaca, NY, 1986); Jack Scott, *Yankee Unions Go Home: How the AFL Helped the U.S. Build an Empire in Latin America* (Vancouver, 1978), 141–44.
- ¹⁵ W. Dirk Ratt, *Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903–1923* (College Station, TX, 1981), 15, 258–59; Louis Adamic, *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America*, rev. ed. (Gloucester, MA, 1963), 203–09; Michael Kazin, *Barons of Labor: The San Francisco Building Trades and Union Power in the Progressive Era* (Urbana, 1987), 202–05; Scott, *Yankee Unions*, 147; Barbara J. Fields, "Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America," *New Left Review* 118 (May/June, 1990): 95–118. Eugene V. Debs argued against annexation of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba in 1898, but he favored admitting Hawaii, because those islands were "composed in a degree of Caucasians, and ... already have an established government." Nick Salvatore, *Eugene V. Debs, Citizen and Socialist* (Urbana, 1982), 226–27.
- ¹⁶ "Chicago Peace Jubilee," *Gompers Papers*, 5: 29n1.
- ¹⁷ Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898–1900* (New York, 1968).
- ¹⁸ See Dana Frank, *Buy American: The Untold Story of Economic Nationalism* (Boston, 1999), 47–55.
- ¹⁹ *Downes v. Bidwell*, 182 U.S. 244 (1901) in Henry Steele Commager, *Documents of American History* (New York, 1947) 2: 193–98. See also Scott, *Yankee Unions*, 129–31.
- ²⁰ Hearst's reply to Gompers in the *New York Evening Journal* in *Gompers Papers*, 5: 64–66, quotes on 65 and 64n2. Hearst sponsored the film *Patria* in collaboration with the Navy Department. It warned of the peril of a joint Japanese-Mexican invasion of California. Ratt, *Revoltosos*, 266–68.
- ²¹ A. T. Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power* (1897; Port Washington, NY, 1970), 183.
- ²² William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, rev. ed. (New York, 1962), 41.
- ²³ Commager, *Documents*, 2: 170. For an excellent review of recent studies of U.S. imperialism, see Julie Greene, "The Labor of Empire: Recent Scholarship on U.S. History and Imperialism," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 1 (Summer 2004): 113–29.

²⁴ François Houle, "La crise et la place du Canada dans la nouvelle division internationale du travail" in *Le Canada et la nouvelle division internationale du travail*, ed. Duncan Cameron and François Houle (Ottawa, 1985), 84.

²⁵ Jacques Rouillard, *Les syndicats nationaux au Québec de 1900 à 1930* (Quebec 1979), 39. On investments in Mexico, see James D. Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 1900–1913* (Austin, 1968), 18–23.

²⁶ Gregory S. Kealey, "The Writing of Social History in English Canada, 1970–84" in Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History* (Montreal, 1995), 137.

²⁷ Rouillard, *Syndicats nationaux*, 39–40.

²⁸ David M. Gordon, Richard Edwards, and Michael Reich, *Segmented Work, Divided Workers: The Historical Transformation of Labor in the United States* (New York, 1982), 103; Daniel Nelson, *Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States, 1880–1920* (Madison, 1975), 9; *Iron Age*, Apr. 18, 1912; David Montgomery, *Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865–1925* (New York, 1987), 214–18; Scott, *Yankee Unions*, 148–50.

²⁹ Montgomery, *Fall of the House of Labor*, 5–6.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 262–81.

³¹ Joyce L. Kornbluh, *Rebel Voices: An I.W.W. Anthology* (Ann Arbor, 1972), 13. This refers to the 1908 wording of the IWW preamble.

³² *Ibid.*, 35. See also Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Chicago, 1969); *Proceedings of the First Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World* (New York, 1905).

³³ S. Fanny Simon, "Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism in South America," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 26 (Feb. 1946): 38–59; Hobart Spaulding, *Organized Labor in Latin America: Historical Case Studies of Urban Workers in Dependent Societies* (New York, 1977), 59; Wayne Thorpe, "El Ferrol, Rio de Janeiro, Zimmerwald, and Beyond: Syndicalist Internationalism, 1914–1918," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 84 (2006): 1005–24.

³⁴ On municipal socialism, see Shelton Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People": The Progressive Movement, the Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism* (Urbana, 2006), 30–31, 76–86; Joan Wallach Scott, "Social History and the History of Socialism: French Socialist Municipalities in the 1890s," *Le Mouvement Social* 111 (Apr.–June 1980): 145–53; E. P. Thompson, "Homage to Tom Maguire" in *Essays in Labour History*, ed. Asa Briggs and John Saville (London, 1967), 276–316; David Montgomery, "Racism, Immigrants, and Political Reform," *Journal of American History* 87 (March 2001): 1266–69.

³⁵ *Machinists Monthly Journal* quoted in Julie Greene, "As I Am a True American: White U.S. Workers, Race, Empire, and Citizenship in the Canal Zone, 1904 to 1914," unpublished paper presented at the OAH annual convention, Apr. 4, 2003; Greene, *"The 13th Labor of Hercules": The United States and the Building of the Panama Canal, 1903 to 1915* (New York: forthcoming), cited by permission of the author; Greene, "Spaniards on the Silver Roll: Labor Troubles and Liminality in the Panama Canal Zone, 1904–1914," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 66 (Fall 2004): 78–98.

³⁶ Richard C. Berner, *Seattle 1900–1920: From Boomtown, Urban Turbulence, to Restoration* (Seattle, 1991), 76, 110–53. On the University of Washington, see Dorothy Fujita-Rony, *American Workers*,

Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919–1941 (Berkeley, 2003), 61–67.

³⁷ William English Walling, *Socialism As It Is: A Survey of the World-Wide Revolutionary Movement* (New York, 1913); Emile Vandervelde, *Socialism Versus the State*, trans. Charles H. Kerr (1914; Chicago, 1919).

³⁸ Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life*, ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (1909; Cambridge, MA, 1965), 169. See also Howard Gillette, Jr., "The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1899–1902: Workshop for American Progressivism," *American Quarterly* 25 (Oct. 1973): 410–25.

³⁹ Jim Zwick, "The Anti-Imperialist League and the Origins of Filipino-American Oppositional Solidarity," *Amerasia Journal* 24 (Summer 1998): 65–85; Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland* (Princeton, 2003), 35–37. The platforms of the Democratic Party continued to advocate independence for the Philippines in 1904, 1908, and 1912. Grayson L. Kirk, *Philippine Independence: Motives, Problems, and Prospects* (New York, 1936), 38–39.

⁴⁰ Nora Faires, "Leaving the 'Land of the Second Chance': Migration from Ontario to the Great Lakes States in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" (unpublished paper in possession of the author); Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860–1914* (Toronto, 1991); Tamara K. Hareven and Randolph Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory City* (New York, 1978); Donald Avery, *"Dangerous Foreigners": European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896–1932* (Toronto, 1979); Carlos A. Schwantes, *Radical Heritage: Labor, Socialism, and Reform in Washington and British Columbia, 1885–1917* (Seattle, 1979); Marie Sarah-Jane Mathieu, "Jim Crow Rides This Train: The Social and Political Impact of African American Sleeping Car Porters in Canada, 1880–1939" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2001).

⁴¹ Gregory S. Kealey and Brian D. Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880–1900* (Cambridge, 1982); Kealey, "1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt" in Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History* (Montreal, 1995), 289–326; Norman Penner, ed., *Winnipeg 1919: The Strikers' Own History of the Winnipeg General Strike*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1975); David J. Bercuson, *Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union* (Toronto, 1978); Bercuson, "The One Big Union in Washington," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 69 (July 1978): 127–34.

⁴² Rouillard, *Syndicats Nationaux*, 12–41; Robert H. Babcock, *Gompers in Canada: A Study in American Continentalism before the First World War* (Toronto, 1974), 38–71; Stuart B. Kaufman, Peter J. Albert, and Grace Palladino, eds., *Samuel Gompers Papers*, vol. 4 (Urbana, 1992), 471n2.

⁴³ Rouillard, *Syndicats Nationaux*, 31–36; Babcock, *Gompers in Canada*, 61–76. Flett could speak no French.

⁴⁴ Rouillard, *Syndicats Nationaux*, 56–59. Both Tobin and Gompers appealed to large strike rallies without speaking French. On the origins of the Boot and Shoe Workers and its union label policy, see Mary H. Blewett, *Men, Women, and Work: Class, Gender, and Protest in the New England Shoe Industry, 1780–1910* (Urbana, 1988).

⁴⁵ Rouillard, *Syndicats nationaux*, 74–82, quote 79; Babcock, *Gompers in Canada*, 85–97; "Excerpts from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Council of the AFL" in *Samuel Gompers Papers*, vol. 6, ed. Stuart B. Kaufman, Peter J. Albert, and Grace Palladino (Urbana, 1997), 134–36.

⁴⁶ Babcock, *Gompers in Canada*, 111–42; Rouillard, *Syndicats Nationaux*, 157–204. In the very different context of the 1960s, that Catholic union movement was to be transformed into the militant and intensely political Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux. See Jacques Rouillard, *Histoire de la CSN, 1921–1981*

(Montreal, 1981).

⁴⁷ AFL, *Report of Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention, 1905* (Washington, 1905), 17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴⁹ The 1900 resolution is quoted in Philip Taft, *The A.F. of L. in the Time of Gompers* (New York, 1957), 422. AFL, *Report of the Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Convention, 1904* (Washington, 1904), 8.

⁵⁰ For discussions of the AFL's insistence on national autonomy in the world trade unionism, see Taft, *A.F. of L.*, 418–26; Bernard Mandel, *Samuel Gompers: A Biography* (Yellow Springs, OH, 1963), 331–33.

⁵¹ Igualdad Iglesias de Pagan, *El Obreroismo en Puerto Rico: Época de Santiago Iglesias (1896–1905)* (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1973), 35–41; Angel G. Quintero Rivera, *Patricios y plebeyos: burgueses, hacendados, artesanos y obreros: Las relaciones de clase en el Puerto Rico de cambio de siglo* (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1988), 247–69. Igualdad Iglesias's biography of Santiago Iglesias has proven especially useful because it reproduces many movement texts at considerable length. For a revealing sample of Ramón Rivera's writing, see Angel Quintero Rivera, *Workers' Struggle in Puerto Rico: A Documentary History*, trans. Cedric Belfrage (New York, 1976), 17–39.

⁵² Iglesias, *Obreroismo*, 37.

⁵³ Iglesias, *Obreroismo*, 194. My translation of Muñoz Rivera's passage, written in 1891: "todavía no hemos sacudir a esas masas, rompiendo el hielo de su indiferencia y encendiendo en su corazón el sacro fuego del patriotismo." Quintero Rivera, *Patricios y plebeyos*, 260.

⁵⁴ Maria Dolores Luque de Sánchez, *La Ocupación Norteamericana y la Ley Foraker (La Opinión Pública Puertorriqueña), 1898–1904* (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1980), 138. For a useful discussion of historians' controversies over Puerto Rican reception of the U.S. invasion, see Luis Martínez-Fernández, "Puerto Rico in the Whirlwind of 1898: Conflict, Continuity, and Chance," special issue on War of 1898, *OAH Magazine of History* 12 (Spring 1998): 24–29.

⁵⁵ Luque de Sánchez, *La Ocupación Norteamericana*, 95–133; Eileen J. Findlay, "Love in the Tropics: Marriage, Divorce, and the Construction of Benevolent Colonialism in Puerto Rico, 1898–1910" in *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.–Latin American Relations*, ed. Gilbert M. Joseph, Catherine C. LeGrand, and Ricardo D. Salvatore (Durham, NC, 1998), 147, 153–54, 158–59. Within a decade, popular tales came to include the theme of dangerously free women who earned their own livings and were defiant toward men. Lillian Guerra, *Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico: The Struggle for Self, Community, and Nation* (Gainesville, FL, 1998), 38–39, 194–96.

⁵⁶ Laird W. Bergad, *Coffee and the Growth of Agrarian Capitalism in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico* (Princeton, 1983), 198–209; Igualdad Iglesias, *Obreroismo*, 57–58, 101–02, 135; Guerra, *Popular Expression*, 181–83, 200–09; Blanca Silvestrini de Pacheco, *Los trabajadores puertorriqueños y el Partido Socialista (1932–1940)* (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1978), 17–18.

⁵⁷ Iglesias, *Obreroismo*, 48–49, 73–74

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 21–24, 47–48. The U.S. military commander did interrogate Iglesias but released him upon concluding that Iglesias was not a supporter of anarchist propaganda by deed. Several prominent statesmen were assassinated by anarchists between 1896 and 1901, among them President William McKinley.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 50. On the SLP, see pp. 73–76. Actually, the organization formed in 1899 was the Federación

Regional de los Trabajadores de Puerto Rico (FLT). The FLT broke away later in the year and reorganized when the original group declared its support for the island's Republican Party. Iglesias went to Washington in 1899 and testified on behalf of the FLT in favor of annexation. Luque de Sánchez, *La Ocupación Norteamericana*, 57.

⁶⁰ Iglesias, *Obrerismo*, 101–06; César Andreu Iglesias, ed., *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega: A Contribution to the History of the Puerto Rican Community in New York*, trans. Juan Flores (New York, 1984), 84–85.

⁶¹ For a study that emphasizes the importance of conspiracy cases to the AFL, see Victoria C. Hattam, *Labor Visions and State Power: The Origins of Business Unionism in the United States* (Princeton, 1993).

⁶² "Excerpts from Accounts of the 1900 Convention of the AFL in Louisville, Ky." in *Gompers Papers*, 5: 278–81, qt. on 280.

⁶³ George Cortelyou to Gov. William H. Hunt, Oct. 19, 1901, Cortelyou Papers, Series 1, Box 2, Letterbook 5, 323, Library of Congress. I am indebted to Grace Palladino for this information. See also William G. Whittaker, "The Santiago Iglesias Case, 1901–1902: Origins of American Trade Union Involvement in Puerto Rico," *The Americas* 24 (Apr. 1968): 378–93; Iglesias, *Obrerismo*, 118–32, 166–82; Iglesias, *Bernado Vega*, 92–96; Santiago Iglesias to Gov. Hunt, Nov. 9, 1901, and Iglesias to Gompers, Nov. 12, 1901, Gompers Papers, microform, reel 53, 513–15, 520–21.

⁶⁴ Quinto Rivera, *Workers' Struggle*, 62–63. AFL-style union practice had already created tensions within the Puerto Rican labor movement. See Arturo Bird-Carmona, "Between the Insular Road and San Juan Bay: The Cigar World of Puerta de Tierra" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1998), 109–13.

⁶⁵ "From Edward Rosenberg," in *Gompers Papers*, 6: 4–5; Kazin, *Barons of Labor*, 29–30, 52.

⁶⁶ Renda, *Taking Haiti*, 310–11.

⁶⁷ Bird-Carmona, "Insular Road," 58–79, 170–83; "An Excerpt from an Article in the *Washington Star*" in *Gompers Papers*, 6: 423–29.

⁶⁸ Quintero-Rivera, *Workers' Struggle*, 52–53.

⁶⁹ Quintero-Rivera, *Patricios*, 110–79; Quintero-Rivera, *Workers' Struggle*, 86–112; Arturo Bird-Carmora, *A lima y machete: La huegla cañera de 1915 y la fundación del Partido Socialista* (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 2001); "To Woodrow Wilson" in *Samuel Gompers Papers*, vol. 9, ed. Peter J. Albert and Grace Palladino (Urbana, 2003), 410–11.

⁷⁰ Francisco A. Scarano, *Puerto Rico: Cinco siglos de historia* (Santafé de Bogota, Colombia, 1993), 654–58, 670–92. The quotations are from the 1919 party program, reproduced in *ibid.*, 655. Between 1919 and 1924, several AFL state federations, especially in the Midwest and Canada, also helped create political parties.

⁷¹ Silvestrini, *Los trabajadores puertorriqueños*, 59–127, 148–57, song on 73; Ruth Glasser, *My Music Is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities, 1917–1940* (Berkeley, 1993), 163–68; Scarano, *Puerto Rico*, 701; Sidney W. Mintz, *Taso: trabajador de la caña* (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1988), 178–84; this is a translation of Mintz, *A Puerto Rican Life History* (Westport, CT, 1974) with a bibliography and chronology by Francisco A. Scarano.

⁷² Scarano, *Puerto Rico*, 694–701; Gerald Meyer, *Vito Marcantonio: Radical Politician, 1902–1954* (Albany, 1989), 150–55. A Nationalist interpretation of these events can be found in Rubén Berríos

Martínez, *La independencia de Puerto Rico: Razón y lucha* (Mexico City, 1983), 104–11, 184–89.

⁷³ Scarano, *Puerto Rico*, 718; cf. Steven Fraser's interpretation of the relationship between the New Deal and the CIO in *Labor Will Rule: Sidney Hillman and the Rise of American Labor* (New York, 1991). For a clear, concise discussion of the partial success of Operation Bootstrap and the subsequent collapse of Puerto Rico's economy in the 1970s, see Rafael Bernabe, "Puerto Rico's New Era: A Crisis in Crisis Management," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 40 (Nov./Dec. 2007): 15–20.

⁷⁴ David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836–1986* (Austin, 1987); Frank Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution: Mexico after 1910* (New York, 1966), 226–30; Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven, 2003); Jesus Silva Herzog, *Un Ensayo sobre la Revolución Mexicana* (Mexico City, 1946); David M. Pletcher, *Rails, Mines, and Progress: Seven American Promoters in Mexico, 1867–1911* (Ithaca, NY, 1958); Friedrich Katz, *Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution* (Chicago, 1981), 226–29, 558.; Michael David Snodgrass, "The Birth and Consequences of Industrial Paternalism in Monterrey, Mexico, 1890–1940," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 53 (Spring 1998): 115–36.

⁷⁵ Katz, *Secret War*, 127–28; Emilio Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas* (College Station, TX, 1993), 17. John Womack, Jr., *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York, 1968); Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, 91–116.

⁷⁶ Richard Ulrich Miller, "American Railroad Unions and the National Railways of Mexico: An Exercise in Nineteenth-Century Proletarian Manifest Destiny," *Labor History* 15 (Spring 1974): 239–60.

⁷⁷ Zamora, *Mexican Worker*, 110–23, 140.

⁷⁸ Vernon H. Jensen, *Heritage of Conflict: Labor Relations in the Nonferrous Metals Industry up to 1930* (Ithaca, NY, 1950), 365–68, 408–19; Andrea Yvette Huginnie, "'Strikitos': Race, Class, and Work in the Arizona Copper Industry, 1870–1920" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1991); Johnson, *Revolution in Texas*, 71–143; James R. Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895–1943* (Baton Rouge, 1978). Differing versions of the Plan de San Diego are presented in Johnson, *Revolution in Texas*, 79–82, and James A. Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan of San Diego, 1904–1923* (Norman, OK, 1992). On Mexican fears that IWW activity in Baja California represented a Yankee annexationist threat, see Lowell Blaisdell, *Desert Revolution: Baja California, 1911* (Madison, 1962), 13–20.

⁷⁹ Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, 4, 91–119 (the 1906 program of the PLM is reproduced on 239–45); Begoña Hernández y Lazo, *Huelga de Cananea* (Mexico City, 1985); W. Dirk Raat, *Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903–1923* (College Station, TX, 1981), 65–91.

⁸⁰ Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, 127, 147; Raat, *Revoltosos*, 41–52, 115–17, 126–27, 162–63; Blaisdell, *Desert Revolution*, 169–72, 198–200; Ethel Duffy Turner, *Revolution in Baja California: Ricardo Flores Magón's High Noon* (Detroit, 1981).

⁸¹ Raat, *Revoltosos*, 162–63.

⁸² Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, 18–42, 205–06, qt. on 181; Katz, *Secret War*, 48; Raat, *Revoltosos*, 212–14.

⁸³ Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution*, 123, 155–57; Katz, *Secret War*, 273; Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, 223–25. On Carranza's nationalism, tempered by fear of war with the United States, see Katz,

Secret War, 134–35.

⁸⁴ John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York, 1970), 193–96, 200–02; Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, 113–14.

⁸⁵ Katz, *Secret War*, 293–94; Womack, *Zapata*, 288–300.

⁸⁶ Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution*, 232–42, 165–72.

⁸⁷ Harvey A. Levenstein, *Labor Organizations in the United States and Mexico: A History of Their Relations* (Westport, CT, 1971), 11, 64–70; John Lear, *Workers, Neighbors, and Citizens: The Revolution in Mexico City* (Lincoln, NE, 2001).

⁸⁸ Katz, *Secret War*, 313–14; Tannenbaum, *Peace by Revolution*, 137; Zamora, *World of the Mexican Worker*, 173–75; Sinclair Snow, *Pan-American Federation of Labor* (Durham, NC, 1964), 9–17; Gompers to M. Grant Hamilton, Sept. 27, 1915 in *Gompers Papers*, 9: 327; Excerpts from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Council of the AFL in *ibid.*, 9: 436–43.

⁸⁹ Gompers to William McAdoo, July 2, 1915, in *Gompers Papers*, 9: 296–300; Snow, *Pan-American*, 56–59.

⁹⁰ Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* (New York, 1969), 40–43, 58–71; Snow, *Pan-American*, 11–18; Solon DeLeon, ed., *American Labor Who's Who* (New York, 1925), 286, 310.

⁹¹ Montgomery, *Fall of the House of Labor*, 356–59, 370–410; John S. Smith, "Organized Labor and the Government in the Wilson Era," *Labor History* 3 (Fall 1962), 265–86; Joseph A. McCartin, *Labor's Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Industrial Relations, 1912–1921* (Chapel Hill, 1997); Melvyn Dubofsky, "Abortive Reform: The Wilson Administration and Organized Labor, 1913–1920" in *Work, Community, and Power: The Experience of Labor in Europe and America, 1900–1925*, ed. James E. Cronin and Carmen Sirianni (Philadelphia, 1983), 197–220; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 369–75, 384–91.

⁹² Ludwig Lore, "The IWW Trial," *Class Struggle*, Sept.–Oct. 1918, 381; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 385–87; cf. Alan Dawley, "Internazionalismo e antimperialismo al tempo dell'IWW" in *Wobbly! L'Industrial Workers of the World e il suo tempo*, ed. Bruno Cartosio (Milan, 2007), 228. See also Austin Lewis, "New Labor Movement in the West," *Class Struggle*, Sept.–Oct. 1917, 1–10; Tatsuro Nomura, "Who Were the Wobblies? The Defendants of the Chicago IWW Trial of 1918: Collective Biographies," *Journal of the Aichi Prefectural University* (Twentieth Anniversary Number, 1986), 135–50 (made available to me by Professor Ferdinando Fasce).

⁹³ David Montgomery, "Nationalism, American Patriotism, and Class Consciousness among Immigrant Workers in the United States in the Epoch of World War I" in *Struggle a Hard Battle": Essays on Working-Class Immigrants*, ed. Dirk Hoerder (DeKalb, IL, 1986), 327–51; Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 382–97; William Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903–1933* (New York, 1963); Office of Naval Intelligence, "Investigation of the Marine Transport Workers and the Alleged Threatened Combination between Them and the Bolsheviki and Sinn Feiners," Dec. 23, 1918, Department of Labor, Chief Clerk's File 20/580, RG 174, National Archives.

⁹⁴ San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 19, 1915, in *Gompers Papers*, 9: 344–46, qt. on 346. It was the same convention that had adopted the resolution to build solidarity among unions of the Americas. See also, Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York, 1983), 53; Frank L. Grubbs, Jr., *Struggle for Labor Loyalty: Gompers, the A.F. of L., and the Pacifists, 1917–1920*

(Durham, NC, 1968).

⁹⁵ See Radosh, *Labor and Foreign Policy*, 103–84; Grubbs, *Labor Loyalty*; Gompers, *Labor and the Common Welfare*, 211–92.

⁹⁶ Samuel Gompers to James Duncan, May 4, 1920, qtd. in Smith, "Labor and Government," 282. On the aspirations and strikes unleashed by the war, see Montgomery, *Fall of the House of Labor*, 330–410.

⁹⁷ Montgomery, *Fall of the House of Labor*, 375–438, GE demands on 447; Elizabeth McKillen, "Ethnicity, Class, and Wilsonian Internationalism Reconsidered: The Mexican-American and Irish-American Left and U.S. Foreign Relations, 1914–1922," *Diplomatic History* 25 (Fall 2001): 553–87, qt. on 578.

⁹⁸ Elizabeth McKillen, *Chicago Labor and the Quest for a Democratic Diplomacy* (Ithaca, NY, 1995), 51.

⁹⁹ Dawley, "Internazionalismo e antimperialismo," 231. My translation from the Italian: "l'immediato primo dopoguerra merita di essere ricordato come il momento piú significativo dell'antimperialismo negli Stati Uniti dopo l'inizio del secolo."

¹⁰⁰ McCartin, *Labor's Great War*, 191–94.

¹⁰¹ Gary Cross, *A Quest for Time: The Reduction of Work in Britain and France, 1840–1940* (Berkeley, 1989), 129–49; Denis MacShane, *International Labour and the Origins of the Cold War* (Oxford, 1992), 21–42; Reiner Tosstorff, *Profintern: Die Rote Gewerkschaftsinternationale, 1920–1937* (Paderborn, Germany, 2004), 130–64; Geert van Goethem, "An International Experiment of Women Workers: The International Federation of Working Women, 1919–1924," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 84 (2006): 1025–47.

¹⁰² Simon, "Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism in South America," 38–59; Snow, *Pan-American*, 28–29, 33–34; Hobart Spaulding, *Organized Labor in Latin America: Historical Case Studies of Urban Workers in Dependent Societies* (New York, 1977), 59. Spaulding argues that the IWW in Chile "never built a mass base" and was overshadowed by the Catholic labor federation, which was captured in 1919 and in 1921 by socialists affiliated with the Communist International.

¹⁰³ Snow, *Pan-American*, 28–30, 45–46; Radosh, *Labor and Foreign Policy*, 352; Levenstein, *Labor Organizations*, 21–65, 73–74.

¹⁰⁴ Levenstein, *Labor Organizations*, 33, 68–71.

¹⁰⁵ Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 382–91; David J. Bercuson, *Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union* (Toronto, 1978), 110–20; Babcock, *Gompers in Canada*, 111–42.

¹⁰⁶ Snow, *Pan-American*, 9–30, 41–46, 53–55; Zamora, *World of the Mexican Worker*, 17–18.

¹⁰⁷ Zamora, *World of the Mexican Worker*, 45.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 61–63, 80–81, 110–13, 162–71; Snow, *Pan-American*, 114–15; Gregg Andrews, *Shoulder to Shoulder? The American Federation of Labor, The United States, and the Mexican Revolution* (Berkeley, 1991), 2–90, 118; Collin Davis, *Power at Odds: The 1922 National Railroad Shopmen's Strike* (Urbana, 1997), 70, 147.

¹⁰⁹ Levenstein, *Labor Organizations*, 101–06, 129; *New York Times*, Oct. 16, 1925, qtd. in Andrews,

Shoulder to Shoulder, 4.

¹¹⁰ Snow, *Pan-American*, 114–15; James D. Cockcroft, *Mexico: Class Formation, Capital Accumulation, and the State* (New York, 1983), 110–33; Paul Friedrich, *Agrarian Revolt in a Mexican Village* (Chicago, 1977); Jocelyn Olcott, *Revolutionary Women in Postrevolutionary Mexico* (Durham, NC, 2005). After Gompers' death, discussions between the AFL and the CROM focused largely on limiting immigration from Mexico to the United States. They produced many AFL convention resolutions demanding the exclusion of immigrants but only ineffective verbal agreements between the two labor federations. Levenstein, *Labor Organizations*, 117–23.

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