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A History of the Washington State Labor Movement,

1885 - 1935

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

1978

Approved by Robert E Ficken
(Chairperson of Supervisory Committee)

Program Authorized
to Offer Degree History

Date 22 November 1978

Chapter 9:

The Conservatives Counterattack: Bringing the "Reds" to Heel, 1923

In 1923 both the WSFL and the SCLC drifted to the Right. A number of locals, which had supported the FLP, defected from the WSFL, leaving the conservatives in a stronger position. The economy, which had been recovering slowly throughout 1922, continued to grow. Although the labor force increased by 1.52 per cent to 600,000, by a greater number than any year since 1910 (except for 1920), employment grew even more rapidly, increasing 7.10 per cent to 588,000. As a result, unemployment declined by 70.36 per cent to 12,300, or 2.05 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1)

The performance of the economy was better than any year since the war. Puget Sound area department store sales jumped 42.05 per cent; postal receipts in western Washington increased by 9.24 per cent; statewide gasoline sales rose 29.47 per cent to 123 million gallons and life insurance sales increased by 22.38 per cent to $121.9 million. Meanwhile, the Seattle consumer price index continued to fall. By now it was lower than the national average. The region's economy was becoming integrated into the national economic system at a rapid rate.[1]

As a result of improving business conditions, the decline in

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[1]Short to W. Hutchinson, 26 Oct. 1923, Box 36, WSFL Records; "Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

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WSFL membership slowed. But it did not rebound quickly from its recent decline. Although the WSFL maintained on its rolls many striking miners, who did not pay per capita taxes and who ultimately dropped out of the organization, membership in the WSFL still fell by 0.51 per cent to 23,237 by June 1923. It represented 3.87 per cent of the state's labor force. The decline in the number of affiliates also slowed down marginally. By June 1923 the WSFL contained 240 affiliates, down 8.04 per cent from the year before. (Table No. 2)[2]

Meanwhile, membership in the SCLC fell by 7.52 per cent, to 11,703. Every trade section, except the Printing Trades Section, lost members. (Table No. 3) The number of affiliated locals fell by 14.67 per cent to 93. At the same time, the number of SCLC locals affiliated with the WSFL decreased by three to 54.[3]

Thus, the labor movement as a whole was still in very bad condition, despite the economic improvement. In its weakened condition labor relied, frequently, on tactics of appeasement. Rid of many of its radical and third party elements. the WSFL sought to don the robes of respectability through improved ties with civic and business leaders. The SCLC, too, praised businessmen for their reasonableness when the Chamber of Commerce recommended profit-sharing, or employee "shop committee" plans, or offered efficiency bonuses. SCLC leaders joined Short in frequently stressing the need for labor peace and labor-management cooperation.[4]

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[2]WSFL Procs., (1923), p. 32.

[3]Ibid., p. 32; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1907-1957, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

[4]Tripp, p. 232; E.F.L. Sturdee to Short, 17 Jan., 2 Feb.

The first signs of improved relations with the business, civic, and political Establishment appeared at the 1923 session of the legislature. The reorganization of the executive branch of state government, mandated under the administrative code bill (1921), had revolutionized labor's relations with the executive departments. Though labor felt, at first, that the law would put too much power into the hands of anti-labor bureaucrats and accused Governor Hart of attempting to encompass their ruin, this attitude did not last. Hart had never been anti-labor, having defended labor unions in civil cases. His main worry was that labor's opposition might interfere with the operation of the new Department of Labor and Industries. Slowly, as Edward Clifford, Hart's appointee as director of the department, began to impress all with his grasp of affairs and his friendly attitude toward labor, labor's doubts began to melt away. In the end, the WSFL became a staunch supporter of the Hart-Clifford administration.[5]

During the first two years of his term, however, Hart's conservative backers inhibited him. He was unable to make concessions to labor. After 1922, however, the expulsion of the WSFL's radicals and the isolation of the third partyists in the SCLC, made it harder to the conservative Republicans to use the "Red Menace" issue against all those who wanted to cooperate with labor. More importantly, the 1922 election results showed that progressive and non-partisan forces--including the WSFL--were on the mend. The election of numerous pro-

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1923; Hunt to Short, 4,11 Sept. 1925, Box 15-2, WSFL Records.

[5]Tripp, pp. 223,231,244-246,248; Cravens, pp. 227-228,232; Pullen, p. 236.

gressive legislators frightened the Republican leadership into greater flexibility. Consequently, the 1923 legislature, though still dominated by its conservative Republican majority, became more responsive to its growing progressive minority. And Governor Hart, who hoped to run again in 1924, came to believe that his only chance for success lay in appealing to these progressive forces. As a vital element in the progressive alliance, labor hoped to have a lot more to say about the governor's labor policies than its actual political strength merited.[6]

Early in 1923 the progressive cause received another boost. The Republican congressman in the fifth district resigned to accept a federal judgeship. In the special election to fill the vacancy the Democrats united behind Sam Hill, who had almost won the seat in 1922, while seven Republicans bitterly contested the primary nomination. In the primary labor supported Tom Corkery, a progressive Republican, but actually was torn between him and Hill, whom the WSFL had supported in 1922. The WSFL's problems were resolved when Corkery lost to a conservative while Hill easily won the Democratic nomination. Soon after the primary the progressives, including Corkery and the WSFL, transferred their support to Hill. As a result, Hill easily won the special election, becoming the second Democratic progressive in the state's congressional delegation.[7]

For these and other reasons the WSFL's political influence increased dramatically. Short had implied as much when, at the opening of the 1923 legislative session, he declared that labor wanted a

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[6]Tripp, pp. 224,250.

[7]Cole, pp. 85-87; Short to A.E. Holder, 29 June 1923, Box 35; Short to A.J. Fabian, 25 Sept. 1923, Box 36, WSFL Records.

flat fifty per cent increase in workmen's compensation awards as its major goal. Still, it was by no means certain that labor would actually obtain these increases. Conservative Republicans remained powerful and well-organized. In the end, however, the labor lobby succeeded. Working closely with Clifford and Hart, Short, Norman, and their progressive allies in the legislature mobilized an effective progressive coalition. Although they failed to achieve all of the increases they demanded, they did get most of them. Once again, support from the Republican leadership proved invaluable. It even seemed that the old progressive alliance of 1909-1911 might revive.[8]

Labor was jubilant at its unaccustomed success. To some extent it balanced the political losses of 1919-1921. In a letter to O.A. Dirkes, a Spokane labor leader, Short wrote:

> ...the final compromise that was agreed to (on the workmen's compensation bill) was a series of something like nineteen amendments to substitute bill (introduced by the employers to defeat the labor-supported bill) which brot (sic) it up to approximately the equivalent of the Clifford Bill (an administration-sponsored effort to grant increases which had labor support in lieu of its own measure) and represented all that it was possible to get thru (sic) this Legislature with. It will amount to between six and seven hundred thousand dollars a year more to injured workmen in this state.[9]

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[8]Short to S.R. Justham, 20 Jan. 1923; Short to A.W. Johnston, 2 Feb. 1923; Short to Tom Blankenship, 27 Jan. 1923; Short to O.A. Dirkes, 1 Feb. 1923, Box 35; Johnson to Barnett, 22 Jan. 1923; Johnson to Short, 31 Jan. 1923; CPPA to Hurn, 17 Feb. 1923; Johnston to Short, 17 Feb. 1923, Box 10-60; H.A. Wise to Short, 15 Feb. 1923, Box 6-19; Short to H.A. Wise, 17 Feb. 1923; Short to O.A. Dirkes, 26 Feb. 1923, Box 35, Legislative Analysis, Department of Labor and Industries, 1923, Box 28-15, WSFL Records; Tripp, pp. 224-249,252-254; WSFL Procs., (1923), pp. 10-12,13-15; Seattle P-I 13 Feb. 1923; Star 7 Feb. 1923; Times 8,11 Feb. 1923; Spokane Spokesman-Review 8 Feb. 1923; UR 28 Dec. 1922; 12 Feb. 1923.

[9]This represented a fifteen to twenty per cent increase. Short to Dirkes, 9 March 1923; Short to A.W. Johnston, 18 May 1923, Box 35, WSFL Records. For more on the legislative session, see:

Short's achievement, however, did not erase his memory. Nor did the AFL forget the unfinished task before it. Both now turned their attentions to the pocket of recalcitrant third partyists in the SCLC. This time it was the conservatives who went on the offensive. They had been planning their drive for more than a year. It had begun in the spring of 1922 when, in response to a complaint from Short about the "Seattle Reds" and Hulet Wells' mission to Moscow, Gompers had sent C.O. "Dad" Young, the patriarch of the state labor movement and now an AFL organizer, to Seattle to conduct an investigation. All during the primary campaign he observed the SCLC's policy of supporting the FLP and its tendency to adopt independent political policies. In October he reported his findings to the AFL's executive council. There the matter rested for several months. Finally, on 10 April 1923, the council issued its decision. Clearly, it had decided to bring the SCLC to heel. It charged that the SCLC had placed non-labor issues, such as recognition of the Soviet Union, ahead of its "legitiamte" trade union interests, that it had defied the AFL's non-partisan political policy, and that it had recognized and seated delegates from suspended unions and dual labor organizations. It gave the SCLC an ultimatum: submit to AFL government, or face revocation of its charter.[10]

The moderate third partyists, who had already made serious moves to amend their policies following the labor-capitalist contro-

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Tripp, pp. 254-256,263-264,293; Call, pp. 21-22,28; WSFL Procs., (1923), pp. 13-16,60-61.

[10]Cravens, pp. 194-195; O'Connell, pp. 222-223; O'Connor, pp. 213-214; UR 19 April 1923; Minutes, 18 April 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

versy, now found themselves with their backs to the wall. If they refused to comply with the AFL's judgment, the AFL could grant a new charter and establish a rival central labor council. All the AFL international unions would order their locals to affiliate with the new "official" central labor council. On the other hand, if they agreed to comply, it would touch off a bitter struggle within the SCLC between those who were loyal to the AFL, above all else, and those who were still primarily committed to independent policies. It was an old story for the SCLC.

The SCLC's response to the AFL ultimatum bore the marks of its previous defeats. The council's first reaction was to avoid a fight. On 18 April Duncan addressed the SCLC. He acknowledged receipt of the charges levied by the AFL and tried to establish the basis of a compromise. He proclaimed the council's purpose was to remain loyal to the AFL if possible. The SCLC was hampered, he argued, by trouble-makers and factions. He proposed that the SCLC send the AFL a:

> ...mildly worded yet frank and firm reply to the letter from the Executive Council of the A.F. of L. in which he denied the allegations in the main: charged that the A.F. of L. Council had been outrageously imposed upon by those in this locality responsible for the gross and malicious statements and contended for every right given this Council under the law and expressed the Council's willingness to accept the A.F. of L. ruling with regard to affiliations and put the responsibility on that Council.[11]

Following this exchange the SCLC appointed a mixed third partyist-loyalist committee to "revamp" Duncan's reply and forward it

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[11]Minutes, 18 April 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Cravens, p. 195; O'Connell, pp. 222-223; O'Connor, pp. 213-214; UR 10,24 May, 7 June 1923.

to the AFL. The committee, however, was less forthcoming than Duncan. It reaffirmed the SCLC's AFL loyalties, but denied that it had endorsed any dual organizations. It also defended its own right to an independent political policy on the grounds of expediency as well as principle. In the first place, the committee argued, non-partisanship had failed to work. The committee also argued that the SCLC should have more leeway, in this instance, as a basic democratic right. If the SCLC did not have this right, it might have untoward results. For example, the AFL had endorsed amending the prohibition laws to allow "light wines and beers," while the SCLC remained ardently "dry". The issue involved deep emotions on all sides. To require complete conformity would force the SCLC to go against its members consciences and might even destroy the council.[12]

Naturally, this reply did not satisfy the AFL, whose real purpose was probably to force Duncan and his third party allies completely out of the labor movement. They responded to the committee's letter by renewing their charges. In the words of Duncan, the AFL set "...forth six stipulations upon which action is requested dealing with positions this Council has never taken." The SCLC then approved, by a vote of seventy-one to nineteen, a second response to the AFL in which it:

> ...deplored the gross error of the letter received stating that the Council had admitted charges it specifically denied and which again denies...

and setting forth that:

> ...the Council is observing every law of the A.F. of L. and

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[12]Ibid.

holding every one of its principles inviolate...

and declaring:

> ...that the only remaining points of difference are over questions of policy, pointing out its inability to agree regarding the proper attitude on policies relating to Political Action, Russia, and Prohibition.

Thus did the SCLC throw down the gauntlet before the AFL. A week later the SCLC voted to publish all its correspondence with the AFL on the issues.[13]

The AFL attack on the SCLC coincided with a renewed effort by the WSFL to eliminate the last strongholds of third party influence in Seattle and the state. After the 1922 elections the WSFL's leadership began to look for ways to solidify its control of the state labor movement. The obvious place to begin, aside from the SCLC, was in United Mine Workers District No. 10, whose president, Martin J. Flyzik, had tried to get the miners to endorse the FLP. Short believed that this had been a mere ploy to so divide the progressive forces that Poindexter would win the Republican nomination. Flyzik, himself, had political ambitions both within and outside the labor movement whose fruition depended on discrediting Short. Thus Short's suspicions may have been well-founded. In any case, shortly following the 1922 elections, Flyzik began a campaign of personal villification against Short, in preparation to challenging him in the 1923 WSFL presidential elections. This proved to be counter-productive and played directly into Short's hands. Flyzik's candidacy merely divided the third party forces and took support away from the third major candidate, James

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[13]Minutes, 23 May, 6,23 June 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Duncan. With his opponents so divided, Short easily won reelection. This opened the way for Short to make a clean sweep of his rivals in the WSFL. Also high on Short's list of enemies was George Maston, who had done so much to ruin his political program in 1922.[14]

Before disposing of Duncan, Flyzik, and Maston, however, Short had to face the WSFL convention, a source of woe to him in the past. This time, after his smashing reelection, Short looked forward to "a very harmonious administration of federation affairs during the coming year." The convention delegates confirmed his expectations and turned back the SCLC's efforts to gain support in its struggle against the AFL. They refused to support the SCLC on the curious grounds that it had no control over the AFL's powers vis-a-vis central labor councils. More to the point, the convention did not want to help the SCLC. The delegates completely ignored the efforts of SCLC unions to put forth pro-FLP programs, including the release of political prisoners, the industrial reorganization of the AFL, and the renewal of trade with the Soviet Union.[15]

This left the matter to be decided at the AFL's 1923 convention in Portland, Oregon. After the WSFL convention Duncan must have seen the handwriting on the wall. He knew that the AFL was set on rubbing out dissent in the SCLC and that he could expect no help from the WSFL.

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[14]Short to Brackinreed, 24 Nov. 1922, Box 35; Philip Tindall to Short, 18 March 1923, Box 23-64, WSFL Records.

[15]Short to Herman Boulanger, 11 May 1923; Short to H. Arends, 8 June 1923; Short to G. Johnson, 15 June 1923; Short to W.J. Schmelzer, 21 June 1923; Short to D. Jones, 26 June 1923, Box 35; Aitken to Short, 21 June 1923, Box 13-19, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1923), pp. 48-49, 54; UR 9-12 July 1923.

After more than a decade of trying to reform the AFL, democratically from within, he realized that he could not go on. The first sign of this occurred at the SCLC's annual elections in August, at which Duncan simply declined to run for reelection. He knew that his presence could only lead to continued attacks on the council. Without him, the SCLC had no institutional leader capable of standing up to the AFL-WSFL leadership. As Short surveyed the labor scene after the SCLC elections, he noted some remaining pockets of radicalism, but was gratified by the extent of his triumph.

> ...Paddy Morris and his little coterie still hang on at the Tacoma Central Labor Council and the red bunch are still quite in evidence in the Seattle Council, altho your friend Jimmie Duncan declined to run for reelection last month and has gone into business for himself in some machine shop. I think we will have the situation at Seattle cleaned up before long and this will lead to a cleanup, also at Tacoma. With the exception of the Central Council at Seattle and Tacoma, they have no hold anywhere.

And later, to an anti-IWW crusader in Tacoma, he wrote:

> I think the time is just about here when there will be an open break between the wobbly element and the real constructive forces of the American Federation of Labor.... However, we will not be in a position to deal with it until after the American Federation of Labor convention....[16]

The reason Short wanted to wait until after the AFL convention was that he expected to receive Gompers' blessing for his campaign. His only opposition came from a lonely three-man delegation from the SCLC. Even then, it was divided. It consisted of Business Agent C.W. Doyle, a conservative; Phil Pearl, a non-communist radical and third partyist; and James Duncan, who was performing his last

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[16]Minutes, 11,23 July, 1 Aug. 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Short to C.P. Taylor, 15 Aug. 1923; Short to Robert S. Doubleday, 22 Sept. 1923, Box 36, WSFL Records.

official function for the council. Prior to the convention they had met with Gompers in an effort to reach an accomodation. Ominously Gompers had told the delegation that he did not want to revoke the SCLC's charter, but might be forced to do so if the council did not obey the AFL constitution and continued to "exercise functions not vested in them." Lacking any real alternative the delegates agreed to Gompers' demands. In return he agreed to help the council retain its charter, but all this proved was that he could do whatever he wanted to do. If Duncan expected the delegates to stand up for the SCLC's rights he was mistaken. They were more interested in retaining their charter than their independence.[17]

At the convention the AFL's executive council continued to insist on draconian terms. The council's conservatives pushed through a resolution to "purge" the SCLC of its dissidents, declaring them "guilty" of the violations listed in their letter of 10 April and ordering them to sever all their ties to the FLP. Later, despite the objections of J.C. Kennedy and other FLP supporters, the SCLC accepted the AFL's terms and Gompers, expressing his "gratification" at the outcome, asked to be placed on the SCLC's mailing list again.[18]

Rid of his main third party nemesis, Short now turned to deal with Flyzik and Maston. Flyzik was the easier target because he was a member of an AFL union which was on the verge of extinction. Flyzik and Sam Caddy, his predecessor as president of Mine Workers District

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[17]Minutes, 12,26 Sept. 1923, 10,11,24 Oct. 1923, 21 Nov. 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Cravens, p. 198.

[18]Ibid.

No. 10, had long opposed Short within the union and the WSFL. They supported John L. Lewis for president of the AFL, while Short had endorsed Gompers and was allied with Frank Farrington, of the Illinois Mine Workers District, Lewis' deadliest enemy within the UMW. In late 1923 Flyzik and Caddy launched a vitriolic personal attack on Short. They charged that he had once been "tried and convicted in the highest tribunal of our organization of certain offenses." In particular, they alleged he had held "booze parties" at the union's expense and that he and other WSFL leaders had lied about him (Flyzik) at the WSFL convention. To back up his charges, Flyzik brought a libel suit against Short.[19]

Short responded to this attack in his own inimitable way and brought a counter-suit for libel. Denying that he had had anything to do with the district since had had resigned as its secretary (1918), he alleged that Flyzik's real intent was to distract attention from his failure as a union leader, from his failure to lead District No. 10 into the FLP camp, and from his disastrous campaign for WSFL president. He accused Flyzik and Caddy of following policies which had compounded the failure of the miners' strike and which had:

> ...brought ruin and disaster to the homes of thousands of miners' families, as those of us who understood the problem, and were loyal to the miners' interests, predicted it would.

Short's vigorous defense of his position was completely successful. In the end labor was saved the embarrassment of a court fight when

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[19]Minutes, 18 July 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Short to All SCLC locals, 12 Nov. 1923; Short to M.J. Dunn, 18 Dec. 1923, Box 36; Puckett to Short, 15 Dec. 1923; Resolution supporting Short, 15 Dec. 1923, Box 17-17, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1924), pp. 14-15; UR 20 Dec. 1920.

Flyzik agreed to an out-of-court settlement. In the meantime, however, the battle rocked the labor scene all through the 1924 election campaign and brought credit to neither party to the dispute. The Flyzik-Short contest, however, did contribute to the growing stability of the labor movement. In the end Short had gained near dictatorial control of the WSFL. As a result of Short's victory Flyzik was forced out of the labor movement. In his frustration he sought a home in the conservative wing of the Republican Party, where he became a "labor expert". As a reward for his support in his 1924 gubernatorial campaign, Roland Hartley appointed Flyzik as supervisor of safety in the Department of Labor and Industries. From this position he made life miserable for the WSFL for the next eight years, but was never able to influence the internal policies of the WSFL again. Freed from the threat of attack from the Left, Short devoted the rest of his tenure as president of the WSFL to improving labor's relations with the business and cultural Establishments. His only important rival within the labor movement was George Maston, of the Railroad Brotherhoods. Maston primarily contested with Short for leadership of the progressive forces, but after the failure of the railroad strike and the split up of the CPPA he had a declining influence. A new era was dawning for Washington labor. The road ahead was rough and the future uncertain for the WSFL conservatives and their AFL loyalist allies. Never again would they compromise their conservative craft unionist and political policies until forced to this extreme by the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the 1930's.[20]

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[20]Tripp, pp. 231,239.

Chapter 10:

Disillusion:

The End of Ideology, 1924

In 1924 the rate of economic recovery slowed. Coal production declined by 9.87 per cent to 2,655 tons. Yet the economy did grow. Department store sales in western Washington increased by 0.65 per cent, postal receipts increased by 6.74 per cent, gasoline sales increased by 16.26 per cent to 143 million gallons, and sales of life insurance increased by 2.13 per cent to $124.5 million. The Seattle consumer price index rose by 0.42 per cent, the first such increase since 1920.[1]

The improvement in the economy, however, did not significantly benefit workers, organized or unorganized. Again, the labor force increased at a faster rate than usual, rising by 1.66 per cent to 610,000, but total employment fell by 1.53 per cent to 579,000. As a result unemployment, which had been falling since 1921, increased by 148.78 per cent to 30,600, or 5.01 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1) Though less severe than the postwar depression the slowdown caused much hardship among workers unprotected by social insurance. Industrial workers in particular suffered from the contraction. Technological improvements led to increased production with fewer jobs. While farmers benefited from a rise in prices manufacturing earnings stagnated

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[1]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

and the total number of production workers employed in manufacturing industries declined markedly.[2]

As a result, membership in WSFL affiliates declined by 12.79 per cent, to 20,263, or 3.32 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 2) Though a large part of this decline can be attributed to the removal of defunct or consolidated mine workers locals from the membership rolls the number of locals affiliated with the WSFL did not decline. In an unusual spurt of activity the WSFL managed to gain the affiliation, reaffiliation, or reinstatement of an equal number of locals. Thus the number of locals remained stable at 240.[3]

On the other hand, membership in the SCLC increased for the first time since 1919. Several large conservative locals, which had seceded from the SCLC rather than follow its third party tactics, rejoined the council after it had accepted the AFL's ultimatum. Membership in SCLC affiliates increased by 5.27 per cent to 12,320. All of this growth was concentrated in three areas: the Brewery/Provision Trades, Miscellaneous Trades, and Building Trades sections. All of the rest continued to lose members although at a slower rate. (Table No. 3) In particular the various Teamsters locals showed dynamic growth. While the number of locals affiliated with the SCLC declined sharply by 15.05 per cent to seventy-nine, the number of locals affiliated with the WSFL increased by 5.55 per cent to fifty-four. This further re-enforced the influence of AFL loyalists in the SCLC.[4]

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[2]Johansen, pp. 626-628.

[3]WSFL Procs., (1924), p. 26.

[4]Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1907-1957, Box 11, KCCLC Records; WSFL Procs., (1924), p. 26.

The reduction in the rate of economic growth greatly alarmed Short and the WSFL's other non-partisan leaders. The prospect that they might lose the fruits of their recent triumphs over their ideological enemies within the labor movement and in the electoral arena frightened them. Thus they eagerly sought a new direct legislation vehicle to prepare the ground for the 1924 election campaign, a device which had worked admirably in 1922. They found such a vehicle in the movement for public power production.[5]

In 1923 public power forces had tried to gain passage of a bill, introduced by FLP State Senator Homer T. Bone and supported by J.D. Ross, director of Seattle City Light, which would have allowed municipal plants to sell power outside their city limits. The bill failed due to lack of support from eastern Washington, where it was seen as favoring Seattle and Tacoma City Light companies.[6]

In December 1923, after the defeat of the Bone Public Power Bill, the public power forces met in Seattle to discuss their next move and repair the damage to their coalition. To their displeasure they found the rift unhealed. Seattle City Councilman O.T. Erickson led a group which favored a new statewide public power system, based on the Ontario (Canada) Hydroelectric Commission's plan. Labor and the political Left also preferred this solution. On the other hand, Frank Goss, Fred Chamberlain, and other eastern Washingtonians had given up on Bone's proposal and favored another plan, which would link new rural power districts with the already established urban systems.

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[5]For more on the early history of public power in Washington, see: Pullen, pp. 297,301-308; Johansen, pp. 513-516,519-520.

[6]Pullen, pp. 309-311,316-317.

Bone and Ross supported the Grange plan, realizing that they needed eastern Washington support to pass any sort of public power program. But despite numerous efforts to compromise, the two groups at first could not agree on a single proposal and the public power forces were forced to approve an initiative campaign to put both the Erickson and Grange proposals on the ballot.[7]

Early in 1924, however, Bone and his allies got Erickson to withdraw his proposal and unite with the other public power forces working behind a milder, revised, and expanded version of the Bone bill. Besides allowing publicly owned utilities to sell power outside their city limits, it included a provision allowing them to condemn transport facilities to aid construction of power plants. It also included a provision giving the utilities the power of eminent domain in siting the plants.[8]

These changes pleased some, but angered others. The changes convinced some western Washington public power groups, including those in Aberdeen, to join the public power campaign. The FLP, which had supported public power since 1920, also endorsed it, as did the WSFL, which had supported public power for many years (although it, too, preferred the Erickson Plan). The WSFL and most of its affiliates resigned themselves to Bone's proposals because their own was "too far advanced...to put over at this time," but some electrical workers locals continued to insist on the Erickson Plan. The WPG, too, refused to abandon the Erickson Plan. The strongest opposition to the proposal,

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[7]Ibid., p. 320.

[8]Ibid., pp. 321,324; Cravens, pp. 206-207; UR 7,10 April 1924; Minutes, 9,16 April 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

however, came from private power interests.[9]

Unfortunately for the public power forces the opposition succeeded in portraying the initiative as a "big city" bill because most of its support came from the Seattle-Tacoma area. Thus, although it gained the requisite number of signatures to appear on the 1924 ballot, it was defeated in the November elections by a vote of 139,492 to 217,393. Worse, instead of helping the progressive forces it divided them and helped mobilize the anti-progressive forces. The most damaging aspect of the bill proved to be its vagueness. The condemnation provision was especially vague and helped stimulate rural fears about the bill. The only redeeming feature of the election for labor was that the private power Reed Power bill, which was on the ballot as a referendum, was also defeated by an even larger majority than the Bone bill.[10]

Another important reason for the Bone bill's failure was the split between the WSFL and the Grange over another initiative on the

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[9]For more on the support for and opposition to the compromise Bone bill initiative, see: Pullen, pp. 321-323,327; WSFL Procs., (1924), pp. 12-14,51,63-64,67; Short to Louis M. Gear, 27 May 1924, Box 36-14, WSFL Records; Minutes, 28 May 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records; UR 2 April, 2 May 1924; Cole, pp. 103-105.

For more on the WPG and labor opposition to the initiative, see: Cravens, pp. 206-207; UR 10 April 1924; WSFL Procs., (1924), p. 51; B.F. Gordon, et al. to WSFL, 1923, Box 11-41; Blomquist to Short, 9,12 June 1924, Box 8-59; Short to Blomquist, 10,19 June 1924, Box 36-16, WSFL Records.

For more on private power and eastern Washingtonian opposition to the proposal, see: Pullen, pp. 312,314,323-327.

[10]Ibid., pp. 327-328; Cravens, p. 244; Short to Bone, 22 Sept. 1924, Box 36-23; Bone to Short, 19,24 Sept. 1924; Bone to J.R. deSpain, 24 Sept. 1924, Box 7-38; Heighton to Short, 30 Oct. 1924, Box 13-2, WSFL Records.

1924 ballot: the Forty Mill Tax Limitation bill. Following the defeat of the Grange's Income Tax Limitation bill (HB 29) in the 1923 legislature, the Seattle Realty Board led an effort to draw up an initiative for the 1924 elections which would embody the main features of the defeated bill. Primarily they intended to limit the property tax. Labor had opposed the property tax limitation because it would have placed greater burdens on state revenues which derived largely from urban tax payers. The new bill included several provisions designed to meet labor and business criticisms. Under the tax limit plan, any district that needed more money than it had available under the forty mill limitation could raise it through a special levy, providing sixty per cent of the voters approved. The initiative made no other provision for making up lost revenues, which would obviously have to come from the state treasury.[11]

Support for the new measure materialized quickly. The Tax Limit League and the Grange both strongly supported it. Labor, on the other hand, vigorously opposed the measure. Both the WSFL and the SCLC came out strongly against it, despite the efforts of FLP State Secretary J.C. Kennedy to convince them otherwise. The most powerful force behind the opposition, however, was the Washington Education Association. While the farmers were aggrieved that they had to bear a disproportionate percentage of the state's tax burden, labor and the WEA were also concerned with school funding and teachers' jobs. Both groups feared that a tax limitation would force school districts to economize by slashing teachers' salaries, or increasing

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[11]Pullen, p. 166.

their work loads. As a result of such opposition, the initiative was defeated by a vote of nearly two to one. This embittered relations between the Grange and the WSFL and hampered their cooperation in the public power campaign. At the same time, however, the differences between the WSFL and the WEA over collective bargaining and the use of the strike weapon inhibited the development of closer ties between them. Thus, unlike 1922, the direct legislation campaign produced ominous signs of things to come for the progressive coalition.[12]

The lack of unity in the state's progressive forces reflected similar disunity on the national level. The confusion this produced came back to haunt the WSFL and its political allies. It ended for many years any hopes they may have had for political success.

Rebuffed by the CPPA some radical elements in the national FLP, led by John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, attempted to form a new alliance for the 1924 elections. They invited all liberal, intellectual, and farmer-labor groups, including the communists, to attend a conference in Chicago in July 1923 to put together such an alliance. The conference, however, attracted so little support that its sponsors tried, at the last moment, to abandon their effort to establish a new national third party. The SPA, the AFL, the Railroad Brotherhoods, and the other major non-partisan forces, refused to attend, suspecting that the communists would try to manipulate the conference for their own benefit. The socialists refused to attend, arguing that no labor party could succeed without trade union

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[12]Ibid., pp. 165-168; Minutes, 11,25 June 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records; A.I. Champlin, "The Washington Education Association, 1889-1964," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Utah, 1967), pp. 50-51,66-68,86,218; UR 1 Nov. 1924.

support. Only the communists seemed genuinely excited by the proposed conference. They welcomed the chance to participate in a new "united front" and accepted the invitation to attend. Under their leaders, William Z. Foster and Charles Ruthenberg, the communists managed to take real control of the conference and establish a new third party, the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. As a result, "legitimate" FLP leaders, such as John Fitzpatrick and his ally, Ed Nockels, decided to bolt their own conference. The FFLP became, in effect, a mere extension of the communists' Workers Party.[13]

The failure of the conference had serious implications for the progressives and non-partisans in Washington State. This derived from the fact that not all of the FLP's "legitimate" leaders broke with the communists. Among those who did not break with them were the top leaders of the Washington State FLP, including James Duncan, William Bouck, and J.C. Kennedy. Both Bouck and Kennedy received appointments to the FFLP's national executive council. Although they, themselves, were not communist, their affiliation with the communists made their positions very difficult. J.C. Kennedy, in particular, found himself in an awkward spot as a delegate to the SCLC. In order to maintain his labor position, he had to deny the obvious communist influence in the FFLP. He was able to engage in this balancing act for a while

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[13]Cravens, pp. 199-200; Saposs, pp. 33-44; James Weinstein, "Radicalism in the Midst of Normalcy," passim; Theodore Draper, American Communism and Soviet Russia, (New York: Viking Press, 1960), pp. 29-51; Oneal, pp. 161-170; Benjamin Gitlow, I Confess, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Sons, 1940), pp. 180-185; R.M. Lovett, "The Farmer-Labor Fiasco at Chicago," New Republic 35 (18 July 1923), pp. 196-198; New York Times 15 July 1923; UR 3,5,6 July 1923

because non-communists still retained control of the Washington FFLP and because the communists in the new party refrained from using Foster's crude divide and conquer tactics.[14]

Although the communists and non-communists, including the trade union third partyists, continued to work together in the Washington FFLP, they did not blend together well and the party did not flourish. By fall 1923 the FFLP was under increasing attack by anti-communist socialist and radicals, such as Phil Pearl and David Levine, who had always opposed communist participation in the old FLP, even though they favored radical policies. They were still hoping to revive the SPW, which had been defunct since 1920, as a non-communist third party for 1924.[15]

Following the failure of the Chicago conference, William Mahoney, editor of the Minnesota Union Advocate and Henry C. Teigan, secretary of the National Non-partisan League and a legislative secretary to Senator Magnus Johnson (FLP-Minnesota), attempted to launch their own national Farmer-Labor Party for the 1924 elections. Both were leaders of the Minnesota FLP and strong anti-communists. They had boycotted the Chicago conference, expecting it to fail because of the communist influence. Now, with the support of the Minnesota Federation of Labor, they called for a new national FLP. To accomplish this, they called for a national conference of progressives, to be held in St. Paul in November 1923, to establish plans for a national nominating convention the following spring.

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[14]Cravens, pp. 200-201; UR 7,11,25 July, 15 Sept. 1923; Litchman to Adella Parker Burnett, 26 Aug. 1923, Litchman Papers.

[15]Ibid.

The St. Paul conference was far more successful than the Chicago conference had been. Attended by numerous national progressive, farm, and labor leaders, the conference agreed, unanimously, on the need for unity in the 1924 elections. They also agreed to call the proposed national nominating convention on 30 May 1924, also to be held in St. Paul. In addition, they tentatively agreed on a progressive platform. The general expectation of all except the communists was that the presidential nomination would go to Senator Robert M. LaFollette, the progressive Republican from Wisconsin. J.C. Kennedy told Teigan that, while he stood "for a more radical program than Bob LaFollette has ever advocated," there was "no denying the fact that he would be a wonderfully strong candidate for president on a straight Farmer-Labor ticket." Teigan agreed. LaFollette, he said, was a "fighter," and "the one man in the U.S. Senate for a considerable period of time," who had "actually grown more radical the longer he remains in that body." The biggest problem with LaFollette was that he refused to have any dealings with communists.[16]

By this time the communists had realized their mistakes at the Chicago conference and were so eager to join a united front with the FLP and the CPPA that they were even willing to accept LaFollette as party leader. They wanted desperately to join the new "class" party. Some in the new organization wished to accept their membership. Mahoney and the Minnesota Farmer-Laborites were willing to accept the

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[16]For more on the St. Paul conference and details of its tentative platform, see: Minnesota Union Advocate 21 June, 12,19 July, 16 Aug., 13 Sept., 22 Nov. 1923; Morlan, p. 343; James Weinstein, "Radicalism in the Midst of Normalcy," passim.

communists' support in the belief that they would still be able to convince LaFollette to head the ticket. They assumed that the Republican Party would reject LaFollette's candidacy. They also counted on the CPPA to ignore communist participation in the new party if it had LaFollette for a candidate. The CPPA had encouraged this view when it warned that if both the old parties nominated reactionaries, "a great new party will be organized overnight." Both these assumptions proved erroneous. The Railroad Brotherhoods, the AFL, and the CPPA all opposed formation of a third party and still insisted on the non-partisan route and LaFollette had no intention of working with the communists. The CPPA's warning had merely been intended to encourage the Democrats to nominate William G. McAdoo, who was the Railroad Brotherhood's favorite progressive candidate and the current front-runner for the nomination.[17]

In Washington State the presidential campaign began early in 1924. The first organization to begin campaigning was the somewhat revived SPW. By February the SPW had established locals in Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett and hoped to field a full slate of candidates, focussing on the need to free political prisoners. This lonely

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[17]McAdoo, secretary of the Treasury in Wilson's administration, had also been in charge of the railroads during the war. McAdoo had developed a strong following among southern and western Democrats, including the Washington State Party. He was the candidate of the rural, dry, native-born, Protestant elements in the party. By February 1924, however, his candidacy was in real trouble. His support melted away when Edward L. Doheny, testifying in the Teapot Dome scandal hearings, revealed that McAdoo had received "retainers" worth $150,000 from his oil company. Though McAdoo denied that he had performed any services in exchange for the retainers, it crippled him politically.

Cole, p. 101; Hicks, p. 94; David A. Shannon, Between the Wars: America, 1919-1941, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965), pp. 60-61.

crusade ended in failure, since people had forgotten political prisoners still existed.[18]

The major parties behaved as expected. In June 1924 the Democrats' national convention deadlocked. The factional animosities between regional, ethnic, and sectarian "provincialisms," which had so hampered the 1920 campaign, reemerged. After more than 100 ballots neither McAdoo nor his major rival, Governor Al Smith of New York, could win a two-thirds majority. Finally, the party bosses turned in desperation to another dark horse candidate: John W. Davis, a conservative and unexciting West Virginian-turned-Wall St.-lawyer, whose main virtue was that he gave no real offense to the main party factions. For vice-president the Democrats nominated Governor Charles W. Bryan of Nebraska, the brother of William Jennings Bryan. The choice of the conservative Davis, however, antagonized the western agrarian radicals, while the choice of Bryan alarmed eastern conservatives. The Republicans had fewer internal problems. They easily turned aside the candidacies of the progressives: senators Hiram Johnson of California and Robert LaFollette and rejected all demands for a progressive platform. Instead, the convention endorsed conservative, anti-labor, anti-farmer, anti-reform policies and nominated Calvin Coolidge for a full term as president in his own right. Since his accession to the presidency upon the death of Harding, Coolidge had benefited from an improving economy and from his dissociation with the Harding administration scandals. The vice-presidential nomination went to able Charles G. Dawes, the director of the budget, who was

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[18]Cravens, p. 203; UR 28 Feb. 1924.

more of a businessman than a politician. The behavior of the major parties convinced many progressives that the only way they could get their policies enacted would be to run their own candidate for president. The question was, who? and under what banner?[19]

The failure of the Democrats to nominate McAdoo and of the Republicans to nominate LaFollette or Johnson, seemed to play into the hands of the third partyists. Now the CPPA and the Railroad Brotherhoods and the WSFL would have to turn to them, if they wanted to support a progressive candidate. If LaFollette agreed to run under their banner, they would have no alternative. Instead, the Railroad Brotherhoods set out to nominate LaFollette as an independent and to destroy the third party movement. At first, however, Teigan and Mahoney continued to act as if LaFollette would have to turn to them. In February they both attended the CPPA's preliminary meeting in Cleveland. Although both knew that the CPPA hoped to nominate LaFollette evidence suggests they hoped they would endorse him on the FLP ticket at their St. Paul convention in late May.[20]

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[19]The state Democratic Party was solidly in McAdoo's camp. The WSFL was primarily interested in Democrats because George W. Berry, international president of the Printing Pressman's Union was running for the vice-presidential nomination. Though the WSFL agreed to support him, he failed to win the national nomination.

Al Smith, the other major contender for the Democratic presidential nomination was the candidate of the eastern, urban, immigrant, Catholic forces in the party. Economically, there was little to distinguish between either of the conservatives who won major party nominations.

Cole, pp. 103-105; Hicks, pp. 90-99; Shannon, Between the Wars.., p. 60; Short to Berry, 5 May 1924; Short to Dill, 26 June 1924, Box 36-16, WSFL Records.

[20]Minnesota Union Advocate 21 Feb. 1924; James Weinstein, "Radicalism in the Midst of Normalcy," passim.

The AFL, meanwhile, watched in alarm from the sidelines. They wanted to endorse LaFollette but they did not want to become involved in organizing a new third party. Thus, they set out to make sure that LaFollette did not accept the FLP's nomination. Gompers warned the progressive politicians that the communists controlled the new party and that the new FLP would "play into the hands of Moscow."[21]

Unable to convince the politicians to abandon the FLP en mass, the AFL and Rilroad Brotherhoods sought to bring pressure directly on LaFollette to do so. Here they had more success. On 29 May 1924 LaFollette released a letter in which he said that he would not attend the FLP's St. Paul convention because the FLP had made the "fatal error" of submitting to control by communists acting under "orders from the communist international in Moscow." Coming just a day before the opening of the FLP convention this destroyed any hopes they may have had of unifying the progressive forces.[22]

LaFollette's statement completely disrupted the St. Paul convention. As soon as it appeared the FLP began to lose supporters to the CPPA. When, on 17 June, the St. Paul convention finally did convene, only 542 delegates attended, eighty per cent fewer than expected. The delegates, feeling the need to preserve unity at all costs, nominated Duncan McDonald for president with the proviso that if the CPPA convention nominated LaFollette McDonald would withdraw in LaFollette's favor. Though the communists strongly opposed this compromise, they

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[21]For more on Gompers' conference, see: New York Herald Tribune 29 May 1924; James Weinstein, "Radicalism in the Midst of Normalcy," passim.

[22]Ibid.

agreed to it in the interests of unity. The fact that McDonald was a member of the Workers Party also helped. In addition, the convention nominated William Bouck of the Western Progressive Grange of Washington State for vice-president.[23]

The failure of the St. Paul convention and the willingness of many progressive Republicans and Democrats to bolt their parties lent special excitement to the national CPPA convention which met 4 July in Cleveland. Many kinds of organizations sent delegations, including Left-wing farm groups, trade unions, the Railroad Brotherhoods, the SPA, and the Wisconsin progressive Republican Party. Only the communists were rigorously excluded.[24]

Although many of the delegates still wanted the CPPA to form a third party, the convention had to face the fact that LaFollette, the AFL, and the Railroad Brotherhoods would not run at the head of such a ticket. They believed that such a party would weaken the many progressives who remained in the major parties. Lacking a viable alternative the convention agreed to nominate LaFollette on an independent national ticket, leaving each CPPA organization free to endorse their own state and local candidates in the major parties. The conservatives then chose Democratic Senator Burton K. Wheeler (Montana) for vice-president, hoping that Wheeler, a younger and more vigorous man than LaFollette, would be able to bear most of the burden of the campaign.[25]

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[23]Minnesota Union Advocate 19,26 June, 3 July 1924; Theodore Draper, American Communism and Soviet Russia, (New York, 1960), pp. 115-116.

[24]Shannon, Between the Wars, pp. 61-62; Hicks, pp. 97-99.

[25]Ibid.; For more on the CPPA's political support in 1924, see: Hicks, pp. 99-100.

By July the political factionalism in Washington State was intense. The FLP's state convention developed into a desperate struggle for dominance between the communist delegates who wanted the FLP to keep its affiliation with the Workers Party and the non-communist delegates who wanted the FLP to remain independent, to endorse the CPPA or SPW tickets. But the FLP's party battles had less and less to do with political reality. The FLP now contained far fewer members from a much more restricted area of the state than it had in 1920. Its membership had also changed. Whereas in 1920 farmers had made up a large segment of the membership by 1924 most of the delegates came from a few radical and Left-wing trade unions. The only farmers left in the FLP were those few still affiliated with the WPG. Most of the delegates came from King County and a few other Puget Sound urban areas.[26]

At the convention the Duncan-Kennedy faction lost control of the party machinery to the communists. When the communists moved to get a number of Workers Party delegates seated as official delegates the ruling faction split. Duncan, as chairman of the convention, ruled that the proposal was out of order since the WP had not been invited to send delegates. This led to a show of strength. At first the convention voted thirty-two to thirty to uphold Duncan and to exclude the communists from official representation. Later in the day, however, the communists succeeded in forcing a second vote on the issue. This time they won, overruling Duncan by a vote of fifty-four to eleven. It was a crushing defeat for the non-communists in the

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[26]Cravens, p. 222; UR 2 July 1924.

FLP. By its actions, the party committed itself to an alliance with the communists.[27]

Following this the convention nominated State Senator Robert Oman for governor. Oman was a member of the radical Tacoma Railroad Shop Crafts Federation but, despite this, remained on good terms with Short, who termed him a "good fellow." The party had more trouble in selecting a presidential candidate. Some members--including the socialists--wanted to endorse the LaFollette-Wheeler ticket. Others wanted to endorse the national FLP ticket, consisting of Duncan McDonald and William Bouck. Finally, against the better judgment of a majority of the members the convention endorsed the McDonald-Bouck ticket in order to keep the farmers and the communists in the FLP and adopted a platform marked by an inward-looking Left-wing ideological approach. It included a few traditional-styled reform planks, designed to appeal to a broad cross-section of the electorate, but its most important features were designed to satisfy the extreme Left, hardcore elements of the party.[28]

Having marked itself out as the party of the Left, the FLP now expected that the SCLC would break with the WSFL and support it. In line with its promise to the AFL, however, the SCLC refused to do so, since it was obvious that the FLP could not survive very long in its self-induced isolation. Any tendency the WSFL might have felt to gloat was soon dampened, however, when the SCLC vowed not to partici-

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[27]Cravens, p. 224; UR 7 July 1924; P-I 6 July 1924.

[28]Cravens, pp. 224-225; P-I 6 July 1924. For details on the FLP platform, see: Cravens, pp. 225-226; UR 2,7 July 1924; P-I 6 July 1924.

pate in either national or state politics. Later in the campaign the SCLC did agree to endorse the WSFL's political policy, but never granted it any active support.[29]

The SCLC's action was not so severe as the blow dealt the FLP by its own national leadership. Soon after the FLP's state convention endorsed the McDonald-Bouck ticket the national FLP abandoned it. Under pressure from the communists the national FLP switched its support to the Workers Party ticket, headed by William Z. Foster and Benjamin Gitlow. Naturally, this came as a profound shock to the state FLP, which had endorsed the St. Paul ticket specifically to accomodate the WP and WPG and which expected the party to endorse the CPPA ticket. When news of the communist betrayal spread among the non-communist members of the party many of them deserted the FLP altogether and went to work for the CPPA. Finally, the FLP's non-communist leadership called a new conference and passed a resolution severely criticizing the national FLP's actions and endorsing the LaFollette-Wheeler ticket. As a result, the communists walked out and meeting on their own voted to offer their own slate of electors committed to Foster and Gitlow. This ended all remaining communist influence in the FLP, but left that organization a hollow shell.[30]

The WSFL, too, was thrown into confusion by the summer's events. After the Democrats nominated Davis and Bryan and the

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[29]Minutes, 16 July 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[30]Cravens, p. 229-230; Oneal, p. 204; UR 11,16,24 July 1924; P-I 15,24 July 1924.

Republicans failed to nominate a progressive, the WSFL turned eagerly to the CPPA ticket. This meant, however, that Short would have to cooperate with George Maston, his rival for leadership of the state CPPA. While Maston and his allies on the CPPA's state executive committee, led by Mrs. Axtell, still favored forming a third party, Short and his WSFL and Grange allies were equally convinced that the major conservative-progressive struggle would still take place in the Republican primaries. Believing that the FLP had become too weak and that the Democrats had become too divided to be more than incidental to the issue, Short had influenced the WSFL convention to concentrate labor's efforts in the Republican gubernatorial primary. He had argued that, with Governor Hart retiring, the conservatives would lack a strong candidate. This he felt would open the way for a progressive to win the nomination. To win, however, the progressives would have to be united behind the candidate. It was this miscalculation which led Short to cooperate with Maston. He was encouraged at first when Maston agreed to give up his dream of an independent party.[31]

Once again, however, Short's dreams never came true. In order to get Maston to agree to stay in the Republican primaries Short was forced to agree to let each organization have the right to endorse its own candidates. Thus, in addition to the refusal of the SCLC to endorse its candidates, the WSFL also had to face a proliferation of progressive candidates in the Republican gubernatorial primary. By primary day a total of ten candidates vied for the Republican nomination.

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[31]Cravens, pp. 226,231-232; Cole, pp. 110-113; UR 15 Jan., 7, 12 July, 9,11,12,15 Aug. 1924; P-I 8 July, 6,11,12 Aug. 1924; WSFL Procs., (1924), p. 35.

Seven had practically no chance to win, but might split the progressive vote and defeat Edward Clifford, who had resigned as Governor Hart's director of Labor and Industries and who had the official support of Short and the WSFL. To add insult to injury, Martin J. Flyzik, Short's former rival for power in the WSFL, was busy supporting the candidacy of Roland H. Hartley, the arch-conservative, anti-labor candidate who had come so close to capturing the Republican nomination in 1920.[32]

In the Democratic gubernatorial primary four major candidates vied for dominance. None had a state-wide reputation, or strong personal base of power. The favorite was Ben Hill, the progressive mayor of Walla Walla. Hill's presence in the race compounded the CPPA's problems by attracting progressive votes in eastern Washington.[33]

Although the CPPA's campaign in Washington State was better organized than the one in 1922, it was no more united. Trouble came primarily from the same old source: the personal conflict between Short and Maston. Early in August the CPPA's executive council agreed to follow the policy laid down by the national CPPA, which "is one of unalterable opposition to any independent ticket covering state offices being attached to the LaFollette candidacy...." This was just what Short and most of the non-partisans had in mind but, for Maston and the

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[32]For more information on the Republican gubernatorial primary candidate and their support, see: Cravens, pp. 227-228,232-233; Tripp, pp. 244-246; Pullen, pp. 52,362; Gunns, pp. 69-71; Cole, p. 113; WSFL Procs., (1924), pp. 42,56; Brackinreed to Short, 24,27 Aug. 1924; A.W. Johnston to Short, 18 April, 1924, Box 43-2; Lamping Campaign Material, 29 July 1924, Box 36-17; Short to Clifford, 25 April 1924, Box 36-12; Short to C.O. Young, 9 June 1924, Box 36-15; G.W. Roberge to Short, 5 Aug. 1924, Box 1-26; Short to All Affiliated Unions, 29 July 1924, Box 36-17, WSFL Records; Spokane Chronicle 17 April 1924.

[33]Cole, p. 116.

third partyists, it was practically unthinkable. In an attempt to forestall application of the national policy, Maston and a group of like-minded progressives planned to call a convention on primary day to choose just such an independent state ticket, committed to LaFollette, but running separately. Furthermore, the conference, as proposed by Maston, was purposefully designed to under-represent the WSFL. Short feared, quite rightly, a repetition of the last-minute conferences of 1922. He did not want the WSFL to be "out voted at every turn in the road and made a monkey out of--which, no doubt, Maston and Gilmore (Maston's ally in the scheme) who are forming the program, are planning to do."[34] Thus, Short took the position that, if the Railroad Brotherhoods refused to endorse Clifford, their alliance with the WSFL was dissolved.[35]

He also knew, however, that this could produce disaster for the progressives. In 1922 only the fortuitous victory of Dill in the Democratic primary had averted catastrophe. In 1924 this was unlikely to recur. To avert the looming calamity Short tried to influence the state CPPA to appoint James A. Taylor, one of his own labor allies from the general strike-OBU era, to represent LaFollette's interests on the committee. Unless this were done, he warned that:

> ...there is a very great danger of the whole program being busted up here because of Third Party activities and the evident encouragement being given such activities by Maston, which if permitted to be carried out, would force open cleavage between them and the

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[34]Short to A.W. Johnston, 28 July 1924, Box 36-17; Short to O.M. Nelson, 9 Aug. 1924, Box 36-19, WSFL Records.

[35]Short to Brackinreed and Parberry, 13 Aug. 1924, Box 36-20, WSFL Records.

State Federation forces who are anxious to program for LaFollette, but cannot tolerate sabotage of their own state program.

Unity was temporarily preserved when the Spokane CPPA endorsed Short's suggestion.

In addition to the third party forces Short had to deal with the activities of Flyzik. Besides working for Hartley, Flyzik was also working against the Bone initiative. By this time Flyzik was less dangerous to the non-partisans because District No. 10 was virtually defunct politically and because Short had long ago edged Flyzik out of the CPPA and the labor movement. Still, Flyzik's presence in Hartley's campaign did much to remove the anti-labor stigma which had clung to Hartley since his earliest days in politics.[36]

On primary day, 9 September 1924, the state CPPA held its nominating convention and endorsed LaFollette-Wheeler ticket. It also adopted the name "Progressive Party," evidently as a concession to the third partyists, but it did not endorse its own candidates for state and local offices. Instead, it endorsed Clifford for governor in the Republican primary and the Bone bill initiative. The CPPA thus rejected Maston's divisive strategy, but only at the cost of his effective

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[36]This could only be a temporary solution because the Spokane organization was dominated by Maston's forces and because the WSFL forces there were split. The Spokane Labor World, the organ of the central labor council, for example, wanted to endorse Davis, in the mistaken belief that he was a secret liberal.

Ibid.; Von Schritz to W.J. Coates, 14 July 1924, Box 9-18, WSFL Records; Cravens, p. 243; UR 4 Nov. 1924.

For more on Short's problems with the CPPA and Flyzik, and the role of the press in the campaign, see: Gunns, p. 67; Cravens, p. 234; C.P. Taylor to Short, 17 Aug. 1924, Box 26-35, WSFL Records; UR 8 Sept. 1924; Seattle Times 1 Aug., 7-9 Sept. 1924; Star 6 Sept. 1924; Spokane Spokesman-Review 15 Aug., 7-9 Sept. 1924.

support.[37]

Meanwhile J.R. Oman won the FLP primary as expected. Lacking any opposition his candidacy stirred little public interest. At the same time Ben Hill won the Democratic primary with even fewer votes, mostly from eastern Washington. In the Republican primary Hartley won with a plurality of the votes, out-distancing E.L. French by about 2,000 votes. Overall, Clifford came in a poor third, winning only in Kitsap County. Thus, in the general elections, a strong Republican conservative would face two weak progressives, the very thing Short had hoped to avert.[38]

It was not so much the defeat, as the magnitude of the loss, which stunned the labor movement. Out of 240,000 votes cast, Clifford won just over 33,000. At first the WSFL had difficulty assimilating it. The SCLC consoled itself that it had won a number of local races, but the WSFL had no such recourse. Only in Kittitas County was it possible to blame the defeat on Flyzik's work among the miners. Elsewhere, explanations which did not reflect unfavorably on the CPPA were hard to find.[39]

Lacking their own progressive candidate to support in the general election, with a real chance to win, the CPPA coalition proceeded to fall apart. The primary results convinced the WSFL that Hartley was going to win and that there was nothing labor could do about it. The Railwaymen, on the other hand, decided to support Oman.

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[37]Cravens, pp. 232-233; UR 5 Sept. 1924.
[38]Cravens, pp. 234,242; Cole, p. 117; Gunns, pp. 68-69.
[39]Minutes, 10 Sept. 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records; E.K. Herron to Short, 24 Sept. 1924, Box 13-58, WSFL Records.

Belatedly, however, they also realized that without WSFL support Oman could not win and that the WSFL would never endorse the FLP and so, reluctantly, they determined to endorse Hill in order to gain WSFL support for a non-partisan campaign in his favor. But after the events of the spring and summer Short was in no mood to cooperate with Maston. In response to requests for his support, Short employed his considerable powers of sarcasm to remind the Brotherhoods of their recent perfidy. In a letter to O.S. Benjamin, secretary and legislative agent of the Spokane Railway Conductors Union, he said:

> My memory may be a trifle hazy, but I seem to have a faint recollection that yourself and a number of your colleagues not long ago...took the position that it be inconsistent with your national policy to endorse any State candidates for State office, and gave that as your reason for refusing to endorse the candidacy of Edward Clifford, who had been endorsed by the Washington State Federation of Labor, and on this basis withheld your endorsement and support, and thus aided in delivering the Republican nomination to Col. Hartley...

And, when the WSFL's executive board met to decide on a political policy for the general elections, he said:

> ...such action as will be taken, if any, will be direct through the Federation itself and not in association with any of those whom we have so much reason to no longer regard as our friends.[40]

There followed several abortive attempts to eliminate, or consolidate, the progressive tickets. All these failed because the WSFL no longer trusted the "double-crossing" Railroad Brotherhoods. In response to suggestions from the FLP that a consolidation conference be called, Short replied, colorfully mixing his metaphors:

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[40]Minutes, 10 Sept. 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records; E.K. Herron to Short, 24 Sept. 1924, Box 13-58; Benjamin to Short, 21 Sept. 1924, Box 24-101; Short to Benjamin, 24 Sept. 1924, Box 36-23, WSFL Records; Cravens, p. 242.

> Our former experience with conferences of that kind has been that the people you want to come there, are too busy to come, while all the nuts in creation assemble like moths around a flame, and only add to the confusion that already exists.[41]

In fact, the election no longer held much interest for Short. In a letter to Vice-president Brackinreed, he mused about calling an WSFL executive board meeting to discuss the campaign, but he was not enthusiastic. He just thought that it might be "better to talk about it" than to sit and sulk. Continuing, he said:

> Now that the atmosphere has been cleared and we know how badly jumbled up the mess is, we can at least talk about it now and know what we're talking about, which we would not have been able to do prior to the...failure of the conferences between Hill and Oman forces to work anything out looking towards elimination (of the competing progressive candidates).[42]

In early October the executive board did meet to decide on a political policy. By then, however, all its options had been pre-empted. The board contented itself with endorsing the LaFollette-Wheeler ticket and voted to leave endorsement of congressional candidates to the central labor councils and local unions. Thus, the WSFL, which had helped create the FLP in 1920, refused to support it in 1924, while the Railroad Brotherhoods, which had refused to support the FLP in 1920, abandoned the WSFL to endorse it's gubernatorial candidate in 1924.[43]

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[41] O.M. Nelson to Short, 13 Sept. 1924, Box 19-17; Short to Brackinreed, 8 Oct. 1924; Short to C.E. Brower, 8 Oct. 1924, Box 36-24; Short to C.W. Cotton, I.B. Chipman, et al., 25 Sept. 1924, Box 36-23, WSFL Records.

[42] Brower to Short, et al., 3 Oct. 1924, Box 21-6; Short to Brackinreed, 8 Oct. 1924, Box 36-24, WSFL Records.

[43] For more on the executive board's actions, see: Cravens, pp. 242-243; Cole, p. 121; Minutes, 29 Oct. 1924, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Short to E.K. Herron, 14 Oct. 1924; Short to H.T. Bone, 14 Oct. 1924, Box 36-24; T.C. Stephens to Short, 7 Oct. 1924, Box 9-29; Short to

The failure to reach agreement with the WSFL forced the Brotherhoods to go on alone. Though in a hopeless position, they officially endorsed Oman on 7 October. They also endorsed a complete slate of congressional candidates, some on the Democratic, others on the FLP, and one on the Republican ticket. They also endorsed the Bone bill initiative, but they did not endorse candidates in other local or state races.[44]

In the wake of these decisions the LaFollette-Wheeler campaign absorbed the bulk of the WSFL's political energies. As a result, Republican congressional incumbents had a field day attacking their Democratic and FLP rivals as "red, radicals, and dangerous to the country." They were well-financed, well-organized, and well-supported by the state's business interests. In the second district, for example, one worker for Lloyd Black, the labor-endorsed candidate, reported that the lumber companies were threatening to close down the mills if the Republicans did not win. He further reported that such threats had intimidated the progressives and prevented the mobilization of labor voters. Only in the fifth district, where Sam Hill, the Democratic incumbent, was running for his first complete term, did the progressive cause make headway.[45]

The election results fully confirmed Short's worst fears. In

Stephens, 23 Oct. 1924, Box 36-25, WSFL Records; UR 21 Oct. 1924.

[44]UR 8 Oct. 1924; Short to Brackinreed, 8 Oct. 1924, Box 36-24, WSFL Records; Cravens, p. 242.

[45]Short to W. Pilson, 27 Oct. 1924, Box 36-25; McMonnies to Gompers and Morrison, 5 Nov. 1924, Box 36-26; Hill to Short, 30 Oct. 1924, Box 13-11, WSFL Records.

the legislative races the Republicans added seven new seats to their already large majority. They picked up four at the expense of the Democrats and three at the expense of the FLP. They now controlled ninety-one of ninety-six House seats. The progressives, whose hopes had risen so high after 1922, were virtually annihilated. The FLP was left without representation in the House. In the Senate the Republicans also retained their iron grip. They held thirty-nine of forty-two seats. The FLP lost one seat and the Democrats picked up one seat. In the new legislature the Republican conservatives would have no need to compromise.[46]

As expected, Hartley won the gubernatorial contest. In only a few cases--like Snohomish County--was the race close at all. Here, in his home county, Hartley managed to eke out a victory with strong rural support.[47]

Later, the WSFL blamed Hartley's victory on the failure of their progressive allies to maintain their solidarity in the primaries. The election returns suggest that this may have been true. The total "progressive" vote surpassed the total "conservative" vote in the Republican primary but, by the time of the general election, this was a moot point. Hartley got more votes than his two opponents combined. The election returns also reveal an improved performance by the Democratic Party and a corresponding decline in the FLP performance. Between 1920 and 1924 the Democratic vote for governor increased from

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[46]Cole, p. 126.

[47]For more on the gubernatorial election results, see: Gunns, p. 70; Cole, pp. 125,211; Cravens, pp. 244-245; Benjamin W. Sherwood to Short, 24 July 1926, Box 22-2, WSFL Records; Johansen, p. 614.

66,079 to 126,477, while the FLP vote for governor declined from 121,371 to 40,073. The Republican vote remained nearly stable, rising from 210,622 to 220,162. Clearly, better organization and greater unity might have carried the day for the progressives.[48]

Virtually the only progressive victory in the whole election came in the fifth congressional district, where Congressman Sam Hill defeated his Republican challenger by about 100 votes in 70,000 cast. J. Edward Ferguson, the Republican, carried Spokane City by about 1,000 votes, but Hill's large rural majority preserved his seat. Here, however, labor played only a small part in the campaign.[49]

In the presidential contest Coolidge and Dawes carried Washington easily, with margin of 18,899 votes, or fifty-two per cent of the votes cast. Significantly, however, their percentage was much smaller than in 1920. Most of the decline is attributable to the impact of the LaFollette-Wheeler ticket, which won thirty-six per cent of the vote. Davis, the Democrat, came in third with about ten per cent of the vote. Although the progressives had made nearly every possible political blunder, they still managed to show that a great number of Washingtonians hungered for active government efforts to solve social problems. If ever they managed to put their squabbling behind them and found a way to carry the urban counties, they would become a force to be reckoned with.[50]

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[48] WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 5; Johansen, p. 614.

[49] Cravens, p. 244; Cole, pp. 125-126; Johansen, pp. 618,623.

[50] Edgar E. Robinson, The Presidential Vote, 1899-1932, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1934), p. 364; Cravens, p. 244; Cole, pp. 124-125; Johansen, pp. 618,622-623.

The behavior of the labor voters in the 1924 general election is interesting. While only forty-one per cent of the electorate voted, nationally; and only fifty-five per cent of the state's electorate went to the polls; Cline estimates that ninety-two per cent of the eligible union members he studied voted. He also found that, of those who voted, more than eighty-two per cent voted the LaFollette-Wheeler ticket. If the rest of organized labor voted in the same percentage for the progressive national ticket, they accounted for perhaps thirty per cent of LaFollette's vote in Washington. They also help account for the fact that LaFollette's percentage of the vote in Washington was more than twice as high as the national average. Had the progressive alliance held together, LaFollette might well have carried Washington State.[51]

Thus ended Short's dream of a broad, non-partisan, progressive coalition. It had been destroyed by those same centrifugal forces which had crippled it in the past: personal ambitions and rivalries, ideological exclusivity, and ethnic, religious, and regional parochialism. In the face of strong conservative opposition, which benefited from the economic rebound since 1922, the diverse elements of the progressive coalition could not stand together.

Hartley, in his quest for power, had provided a haven for many of Short's enemies in the labor movement, including such former third partyists as Flyzik. Now they were established in positions where they could take their revenge and Short, who had preached labor-management cooperation and who had hoped to work with a friendly government

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[51]Cline, pp. 138-139.

and with friendly employers once the radical menace was eliminated, found neither and was in a poor position to defend the labor movement. It is clear that the battle against the Left had drained the labor movement of its vitality. The "old regime" had won out, but it had been a Pyrrhic victory.

On 13 December 1924, as if to symbolize the end of an era, Samuel Gompers died. He was the patriarch of the American labor movement and the man in whose name Short and the conservatives had fought. Although he died at a moment of personal triumph within the labor movement, he died a bitter man. His causes and his policies had won out in the labor movement, but his dream of labor-management peace and cooperation were unfulfilled. It remained to be seen whether his heirs could bring his dreams to fruition.[52]

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[52]WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 59-60; Bernstein, The Lean Years, pp. 90-94.

Chapter 11:

New Directions:

Labor and the Rise of Dave Beck, 1925

In 1925 Washington State's economy picked up steam. In western Washington department store sales increased 2.61 per cent, postal receipts increased by 8.05 per cent, statewide sales of life insurance increased by 13.81 per cent to $141.7 million and gasoline sales increased by 13.98 per cent to 163 million gallons. In eastern Washington the economy was less robust, but wheat production and exports continued to recover. In western Washington the 4.95 per cent decline in coal production remained a worrisome dark spot. In the Pacific Northwest as a whole freight car loadings of logs and forest products increased by 11.35 per cent to 804 thousand cars, while loadings of all products increased by 6.89 per cent to 1.38 million cars. Overall value added by manufacture also began to recover. Another sign of recovery was the 2.17 per cent rise in the Seattle consumer price index. As the regional economy improved merchants sought opportunities to increase their profits.[1]

The return of prosperity, however, did not benefit the labor movement significantly. In large part the new prosperity was based upon the growing integration of the regional and national economies.

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[1] "Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111; Johansen, p. 626.

As labor efficiency and the scale of production in the national market increased, as new technologies broadened product markets, widened distribution systems, and made people aware of cheap new mass-produced items, regional and local industries, like Washington's coal industry, stagnated and laid off workers. This tended to keep a large segment of the labor force unemployed for the balance of the decade. In 1925, however, the labor force increased by only 0.08 per cent to 615,000 and employment, which increased by 3.79 per cent to 601,000, grew fast enough to eat into the level of unemployment. The unemployment level fell by 52.28 per cent to 14,600, or 2.37 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1) Increases in productivity had a particularly bad effect on industrial workers. The total number of production workers employed in manufacturing industries in Washington tended to decline throughout the mid-1920's. This placed great difficulties in the way of organized labor. In 1925 membership in WSFL affiliates increased by only 5.53 per cent to 21,385, or 3.47 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 2) Meanwhile the number of WSFL affiliates increased by 4.1 per cent to 250. After the settlement of the disputes between the WSFL and the SCLC the number of locals suspended for disobediance to AFL policies, or consolidated, disbanded, or had their charters revoked, declined dramatically. They were more than balanced by the seventeen new affiliations.[2]

By 1925 political failure, combined with the defeat of the dissidents, forced a new emphasis on the structure of the WSFL. The proceedings and records of the WSFL reveal a growing emphasis on structure. From 1925 onwards the WSFL became more and more concerned

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[2]Johansen, pp. 626-628; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 25.

with keeping track of its statewide operations and providing services to its far-flung locals. This was a matter of some importance. The WSFL began to develop a much more intense interest in labor conditions throughout the state. As a result new kinds of information became available in the WSFL's records. These records reveal that in 1925 local labor conditions in Washington improved despite the economic difficulties. In the Aberdeen-Hoquiam area, for example, eighteen WSFL-affiliated locals reported lower unemployment, while only two, the Pile Drivers and Stage Employees, reported sharp increases in unemployment.[3]

In Bellingham and Bremerton the number of WSFL-affiliated locals stabilized at twelve and thirteen, respectively, but conditions differed. In Bremerton the locals prospered, buoyed by navy yard construction, whereas in Bellingham unemployment reached ten to twelve per cent in a number of locals. Only a few locals reported favorable trends. The Culinary Workers Union Local No. 29, for example, managed to win a new contract and proudly announced that it specifically excluded orientals. At the same time the Bellingham trade unionists reported that, with the support of conservative building trades leaders, Mayor John Kellogg had won reelection on a pro-labor platform.[4]

In a few areas, notably Everett, the labor movement was still preoccupied with the old battles. There the radicals and third party-

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[3]Yearbook, (1925), pp. 25,27,31,33,37; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 25.

[4]Yearbook, (1925), pp. 25,27,29,31,33,37; WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 10,59; Roaney to Call, 16 Nov., 11 Dec. 1925, Box 8-59, WSFL Records.

ists still held control. In 1925, however, the conservatives began to make a comeback. A number of conservative locals reaffiliated with the central labor council, or proposed to do so. This emboldened Council President Ray Carroll to inform Short that he was beginning a campaign against:

> ...the bunch that talk Communism and work for Hartley. I had the intense delight in putting the famous twins (Flyzik and Hartley?) on the mat last Weds. Eve. And bill (sic) it would have done your heart good as the different organizations took turns in giving them their dues and it has been the first time in a long while that such a concerted barrage was delivered to the opposition.
>
> Will continue the music this coming Wedy. Eve. when I hope to be able to oppose Mr. Flyzicks (sic) workins (sic) and believe me we will show up some of the four flushers here. And I believe that Mr. Hartley has no doubts as to the stand of organized labor in Everett, as a special letter was sent to him letting him know that the slight statement in the paper did by no means represent the real feelings.

Soon after, the Culinary Workers announced their support for Short in his struggles against the radicals. The formerly radical Newsboys Union also fell into line and requested WSFL aid in securing a new contract. Most of the fifteen WSFL locals in Everett reported lower unemployment and higher wages in 1925.[5]

In Spokane labor conditions were mixed. The central labor council reported that things were "quiet" and that a "number" of men were unemployed. The council organized a Trade Union Promotional League, like the one in Seattle, and some locals, including the Bakers, City Employees, Plasterers, Plumbers, Pressman and Typographers reported improved conditions and wages. Other locals, however, including

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[5] Yearbook, (1925), pp. 27,29,33; WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 10, 25; T.J. Hitten to Short, 5 Aug., 18 Dec. 1925, Box 9-4; R. Carroll to Short, 19,26 Jan. 1925; Underwood to Short, 5 Oct. 1925, Box 13-43; A.G. Bixby to Short, 19 May 1925, Box 21-61, WSFL Records.

the Carpenters, Cigar Makers, Culinary Workers, Lathers, and Meat Cutters, reported unfavorable, or worse conditions than in 1924. And, after a year at work, the secretary of the Trade Union Promotional League wrote to Short:

> I suppose the time is near in this state when the womens (sic) wage law will be killed the same as in the state of Arizona. (It probably will be a good thing, for some of them, they may wake up and organize.) It is hard to talk to some women on organization, they think they have got the eight hour day and the minimum scale and that's all is necessary, they dont (sic) realize how much it cost the organized men to get that.[6]

In Tacoma the situation was a little more complicated. The Carpenters, Garment Workers, Plasterers, and Teamsters all reported good, improved, or excellent conditions. Meanwhile, however, the Bakers, Cooks, Musicians, Stone Cutters, and Street Carmen, reported deteriorated conditions. The Street Carmen, for example, complained that employment was down slightly due to use of buses. The Musicians were under heavy attack from Federated Industries of Washington after attempting to break the open shop at the Winthrop Hotel. The Fire Fighters and Cigar Makers, on the other hand, reported that their conditions had not changed.[7]

In the Kelso-Longview area, where a number of highly efficient new lumber mills, paying high wages, were going into production, bitter

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[6]Yearbook, (1925), pp. 25,29,31,33; (1926), p. 27; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 10; J.B. Swett to Short, 25 April 1926, Box 8-9; Graf to Short, 9 Nov. 1925, Box 9-24; Reddy to Short, 18 March 1925, Box 10-25, WSFL Records.

[7]Yearbook, (1925), pp. 25,29,31,33; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 10; Federated Industries of Washington Weekly Business Letter, No. 217-858 (24 Aug. 1925), Box 12-17; Cast to Short, 8 July 1925, Box 22-43, WSFL Records.

labor conflicts persisted, though less over doctrinal and ideological issues than over jurisdiction of the new work and the personality of the leaders. Bill Keckler, secretary of the central labor council, and C.D. Long, secretary of the building trades council, were bitter rivals. They became embroiled in a dispute over fund-raising for the building trades councils's organization drive. The conflict spilled over into all aspects of the labor movement, including politics. The city council refused to confirm several of pro-labor Mayor Todd's appointments--including Keckler as water superintendent--because of friction within the labor movement. The building trades council helped oppose Keckler and he, in turn, refused to help the building trades council raise money, even though the council needed money desperately. One by one, throughout the late 1920's, both organizations lost affiliates. In 1925 there were seven WSFL-affiliated locals in the area; by 1924 only two remained.[8]

In the other smaller towns of the state--Montesano, Olympia, Puyallup, Raymond, Sedro-Woolley, Centralia, and Tumwater--conditions improved generally, or at least stabilized, although a number of strikes did occur.[9]

As in most of the rest of the state labor conditions in Seattle improved in 1925. The SCLC created a Women's Trade Union League to

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[8]Yearbook, (1925), p. 33; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 25; (1926), p. 30; (1927), p. 3; (1928), p. 30; (1929), p. 18; C.D. Long to Short, 8,18 Jan., 7 March 1925, Box 1-24; Long to Short, 11 March 1925; McLeod to Short, 9 June 1925, Box 9-9, WSFL Records.

[9]Yearbook, (1925), pp. 25,27,29,31,33,35,37; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 25; Fryon and Beckwith to Short, 11 July 1925, Box 7-13, WSFL Records.

cooperate with the Women's Label League and create greater demand for union labels, shop cards, and buttons. Most locals reported less unemployment. Some reported higher wages. In general labor peace replaced the chaos of the early twenties, although a number of disputes continued. The Bakers were involved in a difficult and long-drawn-out strike against the Golden Rule bakery and had difficulty working with the management in several other cases. The Amusement Trades strike against the John Danz Theatres continued.

For the most part, however, labor-management peace was preserved through negotiation and arbitration. For the first time in several years, employers associations became willing to negotiate with their employees. Mayor Brown and other civic leaders lent their support in several cases. At the same time an anti-Japanese campaign was in full swing, with generally favorable results for labor. For example, Barbers Union Local No. 195 succeeded in getting the Japanese shops to cease undercutting union scales. On the other hand, Laundry Wagon Drivers Union Local No. 566 (Teamsters) reported that the unfair Lincoln Laundry "...is a Jap laundry...and is being patronized by white people and if they do not discontinue they will be reported."[10]

Although economic conditions plagued the Seattle labor movement, the SCLC fared better than the WSFL, as a whole, in the late 1920's. In 1925 membership in SCLC affiliates increased by 12.12

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[10] Yearbook, (1925), pp. 25,27,29,31,33,37; (1926), p. 27; WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 5,10; Minutes, 4 March, 1,15 April 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records; F.H. Perry to Short, 7 May, 14 Nov. 1925, Box 21-63; McGuern and B. Swain to Short, 10 June 1925, Box 4-14, WSFL Records.

per cent to 13,801. Most of this growth was concentrated in the Brewery/Provision Trades, Miscellaneous Trades, and Building Trades sections. The Printing Trades, too, picked up membership. The industrial unions in the Maritime and Metal Trades sections continued to lose membership. (Table No. 3) The number of locals affiliated with the SCLC, on the other hand, remained virtually unchanged for the rest of the decade. In other words, growth primarily occurred within established locals. In 1925 the number of SCLC affiliates increased by one over the previous years. Meantime the number of SCLC affiliates also affiliated with the WSFL grew much faster. This represented a continuation of a long-term trend. In 1925 the number of SCLC affiliates in the WSFL increased by 5.55 per cent to 57.[11]

Politically, Seattle labor was quiescent in 1925. Only one of the three city council candidates endorsed by the SCLC was elected. On the other hand, labor did work effectively to oppose a city manager plan initiative proposed by the Municipal League.[12]

Here, as in Everett, the issue of labor radicalism simmered near the boiling point. Although radical influence was much-diminished many in the SCLC still resented the WSFL's "interference" in their local affairs. The radicals and third partyists were no longer a threat to labor peace but, through the Workers Party and by "boring from within" the trade unions, they persisted in attacking and criticizing the

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[11] WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 25.

[12] For more on the campaign and labor's participation, see: Dickson, pp. 60-62,109,137-138,140; Cline, pp. 140-142,153-154; Minutes, 21 Jan., 18,25 Feb., 4 March, 21 Oct. 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Seattle Citizens Committee Proposed Charter, (1925), Box 21-58; E.W. Allen to Short, 12 March 1925, Box 18-4; Short to Allen, 14 March 1925, Box 36-31, WSFL Records.

conservative leadership. The patience of the leadership became exhausted when, in January 1925, a radical delegate to the SCLC requested the council grant the floor to Norman Tallantire, "an admitted communist," who was calling upon the SCLC to endorse a fund drive to release a number of communists from prison. As always, the Left chose an awkward issue to embarrass the leadership. The leadership, however, was much stronger than in the past and determined to end influence of the radicals. A conservative delegate then moved that the request be denied thus precipitating an uproar. Later the Workers Party organ, the Daily Worker, described the events which followed under the headline: SLAMMED THE FAKERS.

> He (i.e., the conservative delegate) was followed by other reactionaries, who urged that the floor not be granted to Tallantire. In turn the Communist delegates let (sic) by Paul Mohr, (Joe) Havel, (William) Jones, and others landed heavily on the reactionaries, the result being a vote of 45 to 36 in favor of granting the floor.

After all they had been through, however, the conservative leadership was in no mood to let even the slightest sign of resurgent radicalism or dissidence go unpunished. On 3 February the Seattle Building Trades Council requested the SCLC to "unseat" all its communist delegates and "live up to the principles and policies of the parent body..." on the grounds that the AFL was "definitely on record against Communism and communists" and had revoked the credentials of William Dunn at its Portland convention when Dunn admitted to being a communist.[13]

Within days the SCLC was inundated with letters supporting the

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[13] Daily Worker 17 Feb. 1925; Paul Mohr Trial Transcript, 1925; G.W. Roberge to C.W. Doyle, 3 Feb. 1925, Box 6; J.N. Belanger, et al. to Building Trades Council, 13 Feb. 1925, Box 6, KCCLC Records.

building trades council's stand and filing charges against Mohr, Havel, Jones, and several other SCLC delegates, including H.G. Price, M. Hansen, and J.C. Carlson, who had participated in the debate. Still, the SCLC moved slowly waiting for the anti-communist momentum to grow. At the same time the SCLC leadership requested support from the AFL. In response President William Green, who had succeeded Gompers, informed the SCLC that it was:

> ...clearly within its rights in declaring a delegate ineligible to represent organized labor provided such a delegate is duly and legally charged with being a Communist and after a fair trial is found guilty. Any delegate so charged may appeal from the action... (to the AFL).[14]

In the weeks which followed the SCLC strike and grievances committee heard the cases against the accused. Of the six only Paul Mohr attempted to defend himself. The chief evidence against him was the Daily Worker article. In response to the charges against him, Mohr made the following statement:

> I want to state this: I refute all of it (i.e., the charges) for this reason. I came into the Labor Movement in its infancy and I was one instrumental in building up this Movement. Never did and dont (sic) now submit to the idea that the A.F. of L. is the Parent Body. In fact, we know little or nothing about it...
>
> We have had struggles in the Labor Movement, several with the K. of L. (i.e., the Knights of Labor). I was a member of the K. of L. I helped to organized the Bakers Union. Was Bakers Union first President. We unseated delegates that were represented in the K. of L. Assembly, Bridges, O'Donnell; never was a question raised as to whether other delegates were members of K. of L. The only thing we concerned ourselves about was men that were willing to go out and do something...
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> I circulated their (i.e., the Bakers Union's) first contract. I paid the price that every man must pay. Nine months I worked on the streets of Seattle to make a living; couldn't get a job as a

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[14]Minutes, 4,11,18-25 Feb., 4,18 March 1925, Box 8; Freen to C.W. Doyle, 6 Feb. 1925; Report of Strike and Grievance Committee of the Trials of Delegates Price, Hansen, Carlson, Mohr, Havel, and Jones, 18 March 1925, Box 6, KCCLC Records.

baker. Men came from Everett and Bellingham to our paid business agent to do their business; they couldn't keep a man in the field. I was one of the strikers during that time; we didn't pay anybody; I never got a cent from my Local. I felt, personally, all that time that we had built up this union, not the A.F. of L....

Our International never did anything for us; we did it all. For two years never paid any dues. We finally got those fellows out that was disrupting our organization and from that time to this we have had peace and harmony in our International; they never expell (sic) anybody. Yet we gave three days of our Convention time trying a man and then didn't expell (sic) him...

I have only this in my mind of the A.F. of L. Everytime they sent workers out here it was to destroy something that we had built up. I believe that this central body should be the parent body of the Labor Movement and that it should have the right in the strike on the P-I to pull our pressmen off the P-I (even though they had a valid contract). Should go down the line and fight for any organization to the finish. This is my idea of the Labor Movement...

I can't agree with everything Brother Belanger (i.e., the leading prosecutor) has set forth. The A.F. of L. expelled Dunn; dont (sic) know the details or what he said about certain officials; he was'nt (sic) even tried...

I feel this force in socialism here in America which is organized and which is called the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, is a force that will within its influence and it is influential, destroy the Labor Movement; are putting over propaganda in every way possible...

Personally, I would'nt (sic) care right now if I was expelled from the Central Labor Council; it would be of benefit to Paul K. Mohr. Maybe I would have a night at home. For 35 years I have been active in the Labor Movement. (Here, Committee Chairman David Levine interrupts and asks Mohr his age. Mohr replies he is 60 years old.)

It is the Labor Movement that made me what I am. What little I know and what little I have, I give labor and the Labor Movement the credit.

Levine then asked Mohr if he was, "satisfied with the trial given him." Mohr replied, "I am perfectly satisfied with the trial given me," and was excused as a witness.[15]

On 18 March the committee made its lengthy preliminary report to the SCLC although the radicals packing the galleries managed to delay the proceedings. The next week the debate on the committee's report began. SCLC President John Jepsen helped insure a favorable decision

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[15]Paul K. Mohr Trial Transcript, 1925, Box 6, KCCLC Records.

when he refused to consider a motion to open the galleries. He said the visitors at the previous meeting had not shown the proper respect and the SCLC sustained him by a vote of sixty-eight to forty-five. Prosecutor Belanger wasted no time on the five other defendants but he was concerned about Mohr's case. Mohr's obvious sincerity and lack of malice made him a difficult target. Apparently the committee was searching for a way to spare Mohr. This is especially plain in the committee's recommendation to the council in his case:

> Delegate Mohr, admitted that he had stated several times on the floor of the Central Labor Council that he was a "Communist." He outlined to the committee just what he believed to be the definition of Communism, declaring it synonomous with Christianity--that he believed Jesus Christ was the first Communist. Delegate Mohr stated that he was absolutely opposed to the accepted means employed by Communists within the Trade Union Movement. Delegate Mohr stated further that to him his International was his first pledge and if he was asked to do anything that in any way violated that pledge or obligation, he would refused to do it. In other words, "he was a Trade Unionist first." Brother Mohr was the only defendant charged who in any way attempted to be fair and of any assistance to the committee in reaching their findings. His admission that he was a Communist is not in accord with what the committee believes to be Communism as understood by the American Federation of Labor. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT THE CHARGES BE 'NOT SUSTAINED'.

Belanger and the conservatives, however, disliked half-measures. Belanger moved that the report be amended to recommend that all six defendants be unseated since all had admitted to being communists. Quickly his motion was carried and adopted as part of the committee report. Finally the SCLC voted to accept the amended report and expel all six defendants. The only surprising thing was the narrowness of the vote: seventy-eight to seventy-one. Apparently many delegates still sympathized with Mohr.[16]

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[16]Report of the Strike and Grievance Committee to the SCLC, 18

The uproar over the expulsions did not die away immediately. Many delegates were particularly upset about the outcome in Mohr's case. They felt that he had been misled and deep down was a "constructive" trade unionist. But Belanger and the conservatives would not relent. On 1 April Belanger responded to the pro-Mohr arguments with new evidence. He:

> ...stated that at last nights (sic) meeting it was called to his attention that at least one of the defendants (i.e., Mohr) instead of always being a constructive trade unionist had been identified with every secessionist movement that has ever been started, viz, dual central labor council and O.B.U. movement.

The conservatives were also reenforced by President Green who sent a letter to Jepsen sustaining the council's decision in unseating the communists.[17]

Despite this the unseated delegates did not give up hope. Time and again they showed up at SCLC meetings with credentials from various locals asking to be seated as delegates. Time and again the SCLC officers refused to seat them. Finally in July 1925:

> ...owing to the repeated efforts on the part of some unions to have re-seated delegates that have been expelled from the council, Brother Jepsen made it very clear in a statement he made to the members that the matter was out of the jurisdiction of council and these members only redress was the (AFL's) Ex (executive)-Council and in future secretary stand instructed if any more credentials come in for these members to immediately notify their respective local of the council's action. His remarks meet (sic) with the hearty approval of most of the delegates present....[18]

March 1925; G.M. Roberge to E.F. Marchand, 18 Jan. 1926; C.W. Doyle to F.J. Plant, 23 June 1925, Box 6; Minutes, 18,25 March 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records; O'Connell, p. 181; Dickson, p. 76; UR 5 March 1925.

[17]Minutes, 1 April 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[18]Minutes, 8,15 April, 13 May, 8 July, 12 Aug. 1925; 12,26 Jan., 27 July, 17 Aug. 1927; 2 Aug. 1933, Box 8; Resolution, 15 Jan. 1929, Box 6, KCCLC Records.

Thus ended the long conflict between Left and Right within the SCLC. Although the communists continued to seek readmittance to the council as late as 1933, they were perfunctorily denied. The SCLC's position is best summarized by Harry Call, acting secretary of the WSFL, in an article entitled "Communism a Menace" which appeared in the Washington State Labor News' 1925 Yearbook. Communism, he believed, was a "menace" because the dictatorship of the working classes is "just as undesirable and just as un-American as would be dictatorship of the middle classes or groups, or a dictatorship of capital." Force, he affirmed, cannot cure the "ills of industry." Communism, as he described it, was a movement for "destruction," not "construction" and was an appeal to hatred. Rather, he believed, the AFL was the hope of labor--throughout the world. Labor, he believed, should learn to follow the teachings of Christ and reject the "lying effrontery" of communism.[19]

Meanwhile, the WSFL faced serious problems of its own. The most immediate danger the WSFL faced came from Olympia. What would be the fate of those pro-labor Republicans who had served in the Hart administration? The signs were not promising. In December 1924 State Safety Engineer C.H. Younger wrote to Harry Call, former international secretary of the defunct Timber Workers Union and more recently an employee of the Department of Labor and Industries, concerning proposals to reorganize the department under Hartley. According to Younger all those who had supported Clifford in the 1924 primaries were "slated to go." The man behind these changes, according to Younger, was

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[19]Yearbook, (1925), p. 38;

Clarence Parker who was in charge of the State Safety Council's Bellingham office.[20]

Confirmation that such, indeed, were Hartley's intentions were not long in coming. Upon taking office, Hartley appointed Claire Bowman as director of the department. Bowman, a professional "safety enginner," described himself as an "industrial relations expert" and had a strong anti-labor orientation. He believed in the open shop and opposed workmen's compensation awards increases. Under instructions from Hartley he limited the department's investigations and enforcement of safety legislation and called safety "conferences" without informing WSFL representatives. He undermined the minimum wage laws by his lax enforcement and over-burdened the industrial insurance appeals procedures by refusing to make adequate workmen's compensation awards and turning each appeal into a long, drawn-out battle. According to Short he dismissed most of the pro-labor inspectors in the department and refused to appoint sufficient replacements to do the job adequately. As supervisor of safety he chose Martin J. Flyzik, Short's great enemy. Luckily for the labor movement the state supreme court continued to uphold the basic labor laws else these too might have been in jeopardy.[21]

With such events as these in mind the WSFL was in a despondent

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[20]One may discount certain of Younger's motives, since he was promoting the candidacy of Claire Bowman for the departmental directorship. Bowman had very poor labor credentials as far as the WSFL was concerned.

H. Call to Short, 30 Dec. 1924, Box 8-2, WSFL Records.

[21]Gunns, pp. 93-94; Tripp, pp. 277,289-293; WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 5-6; H.L. Hughes to Short, 4 May 1925, Box 28-13, WSFL Records; Portland Oregonian 15,17 July 1925.

mood. Referring to Flyzik's appointment, Secretary Si Gotchy of Olympia Carpenter's Union Local No. 2109 wrote ironically to Short:

> You have easier a harder fight this year than last. What do you think of our dago friend now....the "Spegatti" kid Martin F(lyzik), Hartley can take lessons from him for quite a while yet.[22]

When the legislature convened this trend became even clearer. The WSFL's main legislative priority in 1925 was approval of the Child Labor Amendment to the United States Constitution. Child welfare had been a part of the WSFL program since at least 1920 when the convention had memorialized Congress to create a Children's Bureau. In 1922 and again in 1924 the WSFL had urged Congress to pass the Child Labor Amendment and, after its passage, had urged its ratification. By July 1924 ratification had seemed certain. Governor Hart had declared his support and both major parties endorsed the idea. In November, however, the voters had strengthened the anti-amendment forces in the legislature and by the time the session convened the pro-amendment momentum had melted away. By January twelve states had rejected the proposal and Washington seemed likely to follow shortly.[23]

In his inaugural address Hartley reconfirmed labor's suspicions in strong language. He made no pretense of conciliation and described the amendment as

> ...the popularly and appealing but wholly erroneously so-called Child Labor Amendment, 'to limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of all persons under 18 years of age.'

In addition to arguing that exploitation of under-fourteen year olds was disappearing of its own accord, due to local sentiment, he swore

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[22]Gotchy to Short, 19 Jan. 1925, Box 8-40, WSFL Records.
[23]Tripp, pp. 282-283.

that:

> As Governor of Washington I most earnestly object to a surrender of its complete and exclusive jurisdiction over its youth. And certainly with my approval, no youth of the State of Washington between the ages of 14 and 18 will have his or her most valued right, born in every American child--the inalienable right to work for a living, to further his own education and advancement, to aid his parents and family and to enjoy the fruits of his labor--taken away or denied him, nor shall it be exercized subject to the control of anybody, other than the parents and the youth himself.

Hartley went on to accuse supporters of the amendment of being "revolutionary," "socialists," "radicals," and "pusillanimous blatherskites." Finally, he recommended that the legislature confine itself to two issues in the coming session: rejection of the amendment and the economy in government.[24]

Under Hartley's encouragement the legislature complied. Additionally, it rejected all of labor's other proposals, including efforts to increase workmen's compensation awards pensions for widows. It also rejected the WSFL-endorsed Old Age Pension Bill, sponsored by the Fraternal Order of Eagles. Bowing to the wishes of the governor, employers, and farmers the legislature voted ninety-nine to thirty-nine against the amendment. Proponents of the measure tried to salvage something by proposing the measure as a referendum, but this too failed.[25]

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[24]WSFL Procs., (1920), p. 104; (1922), p. 86; (1924), pp. 42,55, 65; Tripp, pp. 256-257; Gunns, pp. 79-83; For more information on Child Labor in Washington, see: Tripp, p. 5; and United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Population-Occupations, By States," Fifteenth Census of the United States (1930), vol. IV (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), pp. 84,1723.

[25]For more on the WSFL's legislative goals and policies in 1925, see: WSFL Procs., (1924), pp. 49,57-59,61-64,66-70; (1925), p. 6; Call, pp. 15-16; Tripp, pp. 277,282-286,291-293; Gunns, pp. 80,82-84,92-93,181; Portland Oregonian 6 May 1925; Seattle Times 6 May 1925; New York Times,

By March 1925 Short had come to believe that Hartley "has already proved the worst Governor we have ever had" and that he was irretrievably anti-labor. Hartley's dismissal of "inconvenient or obstreperous" officials in the executive branch especially displeased Short. By late July he was actively organizing public opposition to most of Hartley's programs.[26]

At the same time, the WSFL began to mobilize its forces for an organizational campaign. At its 1924 convention the AFL had voted to urge its affiliates to begin such a campaign. The response to the WSFL campaign as indicated by the membership statistics, however, proved very disappointing. It proved, in fact, to be only the first in a long series of organizational failures. The AFL failed to provide promised funds and technical assistance. The international officers suspected the motives of the local organizers and withheld needed assistance. The local conservatives, with their craft union prejudices, responded poorly to the needs of the poorly paid, unorganized industrial and white collar workers. In addition to containing

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6 May 1925; Minutes, 21,28 Jan. 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Minutes, WSFL Convention, 22 July 1925, Box 9-4; Dowd to Short, 1 April 1922, 28 Sept. 1923, 19 Oct. 1923, Box 11-32; Dowd to WSFL, 13 Dec. 1924, Box 11-30; Charles Crickmore to Short, 17 Sept. 1924, Box 22-21; Short to E.P. Rouse, 31 Dec. 1924, Box 36-28, R. Hestketh to Short, 15 Jan. 1925, Box 20-50; A.S. Goss to Short, 17 Oct. 1924, Box 20-14; Elizabeth Christman to Short, 24 Feb. 1925, Box 19-4; H. Olson to Short 2,31 Oct. 1925, Box 19-38; Mrs. F.H. Perry to Short, 14 Nov. 1925, Box 21-63; C.F. Roaney to Short, 8,15 Jan. 1925, Box 8-59, WSFL Records.

[26]Cole, pp. 139,179; Gunns, p. 143; Spokane Spokesman-Review 15 April 1925; Robert Montgomery to Short, 7 June 1925, Box 18-1; Short to R. Montgomery, 10 June 1925, Box 36-39; Short to Helen Olson, 29 July 1925, Box 36-42; J.W. Gordon to Short, 7 Aug. 1925, Box 12-44, WSFL Records.

many new immigrant workers the large pool of unemployed workers in these industries made organizing especially difficult. Also, non-WSFL unions distrusted the WSFL conservatives and refused to affiliate. The result was that, despite a significant expenditure of effort and a temporary spurt of growth in 1926-1927, the WSFL grew very slowly. (Table No. 2)[27]

Despite the overall failure of the campaign there were a number of vigorous local efforts. The Laundry Workers organized an effective Pacific Northwest District Council. The Bremerton Draftsmen's Union Local No. 12 began a successful drive, coordinated by the central labor council, to organize shop teachers. This campaign was aided by the fact that F.J. Pratt, president of the local, had been elected chairman of the school board. Later the WSFL and "several" locals affiliated with the Workers' Health Bureau, whose aim was to coordinate workmen's compensation campaigns in the various states, in the hopes of increasing their leverage. Aside from these small achievements the campaign proved disappointing.[28]

At the WSFL's convention in 1925 the main issues were what to do about the remaining radicals in the labor movement, organization of a movement to recall Governor Hartley, and formation of a legislative program for the special session of the legislature scheduled for the fall. Aside from these issues, it was one of the quietest conventions

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[27] WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 59; (1926), p. 17; James O'Connel to Short, 28 Feb. 1925, Box 2-13; Gast to Short, 8 July 1925, Box 22-24; H. Jones to Short, 1 March 1925, Box 15-36; Oass to Short, 6 Feb. 1925, Box 11-28; Short to F.G. Stecker, 6 April 1925, Box 36-35, WSFL Records.

[28] Ibid.

in many years. Matters which formerly might have disrupted the convention were handled privately in committee. For example, the credentials committee refused to accept the credentials of Martin J. Flyzik, who had attempted to participate in the proceedings. The committee charged that he had made unfounded and untrue attacks against the convention, its officers, and its delegates; that he had openly opposed the WSFL's political program in 1924; and that he had accepted an appointment in an anti-labor administration. In only one major case did the convention, as a whole, have to deal with such matters. This case arose over charges levied against Phil Pearl for his actions at the 1924 convention. The main charge was that Pearl had attended the 1924 convention on forged credentials, his union having voted--at Pearl's own instigation--not to send a delegate. Pearl, a radical of long standing in the WSFL, received short shrift from the delegates, who tried and convicted him on the charges. Following his conviction Pearl's local, Seattle Barbers Union Local No. 195, withdrew from the WSFL. Later Pearl resigned from the local and took a position with the Seattle Master Builders Association, an employers organization. In Short's opinion this showed, "in whose interests he has always worked, although, this is the first time he has made public knowledge that he is directly in their employment and being openly paid by them."[29]

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[29]Gunns, pp. 93-94; WSFL Procs., (1924), p. 29; (1925), pp. 5-6, 27,44-45,48-49,55; (1926), p. 14; Yearbook (1927), p. 23; Short to Jepsen, 21 Dec. 1925, Box 36-50; R. Carroll to Short, 18 June 1925, Box 9-4; Short to R. Last, 28 July 1925, Box 36-42; Short to J.C. Shanessy, 30 Sept. 1925, Box 36-45; 1 Oct. 1925, Box 36-46; Short to F. Holmes, 19 Aug. 1925, Box 36-44, WSFL Records.

In other major respects the convention reenforced the conservatives. The incoming executive board closely resembled its predecessor. Conservative L.N. Morrisette of Yakima replaced C.L. Gallant as third district vice-president. John Jacobs, of the Tacoma Teamsters Union, replaced the equally conservative William F. Dau, also of the Tacoma Teamsters, as fifth district vice-president.[30]

Following the convention, Short seemed pleased with his work. In a letter to Rae Last, of the Oregon State Federation of Labor, he wrote:

> There has been practically no discussion in the Seattle labor movement re: the action against either Pearl or Flyzik which indicates that it must have met with general approval. As an example, when the delegates reported back to the Seattle Central Labor Council on the work of the Convention, their report was unanimously accepted and not a word of criticism of any kind voiced. As you know that is the first time that has occurred in many years, and you can easily judge accordingly the degree of improvement which has come about in our labor movement.[31]

The WSFL's legislative program also followed Short's line. In addition to a proposal to reintroduce the Child Labor Amendment, it included: amendments to the workmen's compensation laws; increases in the crews and reductions in the workweek for street carmen; substitution of Section 20 of the Federal Clayton Act for Section 2 of the State Anti-injunction Act (1919). The convention also proposed, or supported, federal legislation to: increase pensions for federal employees, abolish the Personnel Classification Board (established in 1923) and

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[30]On 14 September 1925, when J.N. Belanger, the vice-president of the sixth district (Seattle) resigned, he was replaced by Walter Roberge, of the Seattle Sheet Metal Workers Union. Roberge, who was also president of the Sheet Metal Workers Northwest District Council, was a strong conservative trade unionist.

Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

transfer its duties to the Civil Service Commission. The convention also recommended establishment of a national museum of safety devices and increased veterans pensions. It also passed a resolution calling on the AFL to protest the use of United States armed forces to repress workers in China. The convention's most urgent request of the federal government, however, was for a bill to limit immigration from the western hemisphere as strictly as that from Europe.[32]

When the special session of the legislature convened, early in November 1925, the WSFL concentrated its efforts on the four pieces of legislation noted above. Short doubted that labor would achieve any of these bills, but any hopes he may have had were shattered by the governor's opening address. Hartley proudly listed his economies in various fields and recommended legislation to increase the workday of state employees. He then launched into a thinly veiled attack on Dr. Henry Suzzallo, president of the University of Washington, who had been lobbying for increased appropriations against Hartley's wishes. Hartley proposed legislation to weaken the independence of the boards of higher education by making them more directly accountable to the governor. Similarly, he attacked the administration of the public school superintendent and proposed cutting or elimination of various boards and departments. Finally, he proposed a series of reforms in railroad, public utility and timber regulations highly favorable to business interests.[33]

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[32]For more on the 1925 WSFL's legislative program, see: WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 55-64.

[33]Gunns, pp. 97-102; Short to H.J. Allsopp, 3 Nov. 1925, Box 36-48; Short to James Lydon, 28 Dec. 1925, Box 36-50; Short to H. O'Connor, 26 Jan. 1926, Box 37-1; Short to W.C. Bindall, 9 Oct. 1925, Box 36-

Realizing the increased strength of the anti-labor forces the WSFL prepared well for the session, especially on behalf of the Workmen's Compensation Bill (HB 204), to increase widows pensions and total disability pensions from $20 per month as provided in the 1919 Act, to $35 per month. The 1923 Act had increased awards only for those cases filed after June 1923 thus neglecting to cover many previous accident victims and their dependents.[34]

The WSFL hired Kenneth Durham, formerly a director of the Department of Labor and Industries, to make "a thorough investigation of all the records and to compile material from the records to sustain us in the fight on behalf of unfortunate widows and cripples." Durham's investigations produced evidence showing that there were "sufficient funds in the widows pension fund to cover the proposed increases," but that since 1919 this surplus had been transferred, annually, into the state's general fund.[35]

Federated Industries, the statewide employers' lobby which, Short believed, "seemed to control things at Olympia this session," fought hard against the bill. Still, despite the obstacles, Short was optimistic for the future. He said:

> ...we have been able to break down all the barriers that formerly stood in the way and if the bill is not passed at this session, I believe we will be able to put it through without any doubt at the session a year from now.

His hopes, however, were not well-founded. The anti-labor forces, led by the administration, joined together to defeat the measure. Finding

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46; Short to W.J. Finn, 23 Oct. 1925, Box 36-47, WSFL Records; Minutes, 21 Oct., 9 Dec. 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records,

[34]Executive Council Report to the Twenty-fifth WSFL Convention, 1926, Box 60, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 7-9.

[35]Ibid.

no strong argument against it they turned to delaying tactics. Claire Bowman, Martin Flyzik, and other officials testified on behalf of Federated Industries at the House Industrial Insurance Committee hearings. They questioned the constitutionality and the cost of the proposal. This raised sufficient doubts in the committee members' minds for them to call on the commissioner of industrial insurance to make a recommendation. Two weeks later he returned with a cost estimate confirming the WSFL figures. At the same time the assistant attorney-general approved its constitutionality. But by this time the session was nearly over. The WSFL had to be content with a committee resolution recommending passage of the bill at the next session.[36]

Although WSFL refused to accept this verdict, there was little it could do except denounce the legislature's actions. The WSFL's anti-injunction proposal met a similar fate. In the words of William Short the Anti-Injunction Bill (SB 135) produced:

> The most bitter fight of the session, insofar as labor was concerned. (The fight) was waged in the Senate over the proposal to substitute the exact language of the Federal Clayton Act for our present law covering the subject of injunctions in labor disputes and the right to peacefully picket, which was destroyed over a year ago by a decision of the State Supreme Court.

After several weeks of effort the bill was finally placed on the Senate calendar. This, said Short, resulted in "one of the most shameless and disgraceful scenes ever witnessed in the legislative chambers in our State." Federated Industry agents tried to have the bill declared "out of order" and used "every parliamentary artifice" to hinder it. When they failed, Senator Conner, a King County Republican, tried to

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[36]Ibid.; Short to Mrs. R. Fluckiger, 28 Dec. 1925, Box 36-50; M.H. Wright to P. Allen, 19 Dec. 1925, Box 26-37, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 6-12.

brand it as "un-American." Then, Senator Myers, a Republican from Lincoln County, attacked the bill. According to Short he "slandered" organized labor in the process. Progressives "made a courageous and commendable fight for the passage of the measure," and Lt. Governor Lon Johnson was "most friendly and fair in his rulings...", but the Senate voted twenty-eight to eleven against the bill.[37]

The day after the vote Short "served notice on the Senate committee that the WSFL would not shrink from exercizing its constitutional rights and swore that the Senate would be picketed the next morning." The next day labor pickets did, indeed, appear but they were not disturbed. They had made their moral point but nothing else.[38]

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[37]Executive Council Report to the Twenty-fifth WSFL Convention, 1926, Box 60; Short to All Senators, n.d., Box 35, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 6-12.

[38]Ibid; F.L. Gill to Short, 18 Dec. 1925, Box 22-52; Short to J. Taylor, 27 Nov. 1925, Box 36-49; Short to O'Hare, 6 Nov. 1925, Box 36-48; Short to Warren A. Lewis, 20 May 1926, Box 37-10; Manufacturers Association of Washington, Notice to All Furniture, Bedding, and Canvas Manufacturers, Oct. 1926, Box 16-29, WSFL Records; Minutes, 28 Nov., 23 Dec. 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Call, p. 22.

The Street Carmen's Bill (SB 69) to give street carmen one day off in eight received a seventeen to sixteen majority, but not the required constitutional majority and thereby failed to pass.

The Prison-Made Goods Bill (HB 133) failed to even get out of committee due to hostility of the Rules Committee, but, with the cooperation of some manufacturers, labor kept its hopes alive.

The rest of the WSFL program suffered similar fates. A Painters Health Bill (SB 96) was defeated twenty-four to nine in the Senate. The Daylight Kitchen Bill was killed in the House Rules Committee. A Miners Examining Bill died in the House Mines and Mining Committee. Several bills, including: the Eagles Old Age Pension Bill (SB 57), a bill enabling cities to pension old employees (SB 48), a Vocational Rehabilitation Bill (SB 113), a Credit Union Bill (SB 177), passed both Houses of the legislature, only to fall victim to Governor Hartley's veto.

Labor now sought political success by cooperating with other groups to restrict immigration. It was virtually the only thing left in labor's program which still had non-labor popular support. In May, for example, United States Labor Commissioner E.P. Marsh arrived in Washington to see whether restrictions should be placed on Mexican immigration. He was well-received when he requested to speak at the WSFL convention. The convention responded by endorsing the anti-immigrant proposal mentioned above. The WSFL also corresponded with Paul Scharrenberg, secretary of the California State Federation of Labor and a leader of a movement to restrict Japanese immigration. The WSFL reaffirmed its opposition to oriental immigration of all kinds and calmed his fears that the WSFL might be backing away from its strong stand on the Japanese "problem."[39]

The extinction of the communist "menace" marked the end of one era and the beginning of a new era. This new era is best exemplified by the rise of the Teamsters Union to great influence in the labor movement. In August 1925 John H. Jepsen of the Milk Wagon Drivers Union Local No. 66 (Teamsters), who had presided over the communist trials, was overwhelmingly reelected as president of the SCLC. He was accompanied by a heavily conservative slate of running mates. We have seen how the Teamsters were forged in the bitter struggles of 1913-1914 and 1917, how over-the-road, long-distance trucking got its start in World War I and how the international officers crushed local efforts to expand the Seattle Joint Council No. 28 into a regional

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[39]E.P. Marsh to Short, 19 May, 1 June 1925, Box 25-13; Scharrenberg to Short, 20 Aug. 1925, Box 8-2; Short to Scharrenberg, 25 Aug. 1925, Box 36-44, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1925), p. 63.

structure. We have also seen that the Teamsters constituted one of the few organizations which continued to grow vigorously while others retrenched and that they consistently took the conservative side in SCLC and WSFL debates. It is now time to examine the Teamsters in more detail.[40]

One of the oldest, largest, and most powerful Teamsters Locals in the Pacific Northwest was Seattle General Local No. 174. When it affiliated with the SCLC in 1910, paying dues on 190 members, it was only the third Teamsters affiliate to do so. It joined Sanitation Wagon Drivers Local No. 639, which paid dues on fifty members (and disbanded a few years later), and Milk Wagon Drivers Local No. 66, which paid dues on sixty-five members that year. There may have been other Teamsters locals in the vicinity which were not presently affiliated with the SCLC. In the past a number of Teamster locals had been chartered but most had dissolved within a year or two. It was by no means certain that Local No. 174 would fare any better. Yet, despite great hardships, it did prosper. In 1910 Local No. 174 began paying dues on 200 members; by 1913, the year of the great strike, it was paying dues on 300 members. After the strike Local No. 174's membership began to increase rapidly. By 1916 it was paying dues on 500 members and serving as defender of the growing number of other Teamsters locals in the SCLC.

As Local No. 174 grew larger many new, specialized locals were chartered, hiving off from the general local. By 1917 Local No. 174 had been joined by Auto Drivers Local No. 234, Garbage Wagon Drivers

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[40]Minutes, 12 Aug. 1925, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Local No. 238, and Laundry and Dye Wagon Drivers Local No. 566. They paid dues on a membership of 1,211, or 7.77 per cent of the SCLC's total membership. Between 1918 and 1925 membership in the Teamsters locals continued to grow. By 1925 there were eight Teamsters locals affiliated with the SCLC with a total membership of 1,853, or 13.42 per cent of the council's total membership. Local No. 174 paid dues on 750 members or nearly half of the total Teamster membership. Meanwhile, a number of smaller, weaker Teamsters locals were chartered in other areas of the state. Of these, the most important was Tacoma Local No. 313. Because of the influence of Local No. 174, it is perhaps ironic that despite its relative small size and weakness, it was Seattle Laundry and Dye Drivers Local No. 566 which produced Dave Beck, who was to become the most dynamic and powerful Teamster leader in the nation.[41]

Dave Beck was born on 16 June 1894 in Stockton, California but in 1899 he moved, with his family, to Seattle. After leaving school in his third year of high school, Dave held a variety of jobs. He delivered typewriters. He worked in an electrical company warehouse. Finally, he took a job as an inside worker in the laundry where his mother was employed. Soon, he got a job as a commission salesman, driving a truck for the laundry, and joined Laundry Workers Union Local No. 24.[42]

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[41]The statistics for Teamsters membership are conservative. Actual membership may have been three times as high. Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1907-1957, Box 11, KCCLC Records; Western Conference of Teamsters, Report of Proceedings of the First Meeting, (n.p., 1937?), p. 2; Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 118-119.

[42]For more on Beck's early life and education, see: Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 143-144.

On 3 April 1917 Beck became a charter member of Laundry and Dye Drivers Local No. 566 and took part in the successful strike which won recognition for the local and resulted in its first contract.[43]

After serving in the Navy during World War I, Beck returned to Seattle, married, and went to work as a driver for a laundry which offered higher commissions than he had received. Soon he won a promotion to route supervisor. Along with this new status, he became more active in his union. He regularly attended sessions of the Joint Council and found that he had a talent for making speeches. He was so effective a speaker, in fact, that he was elected as a member of the executive board. Although he consistently opposed radicalism and sympathy strikes, his powers of speech and aggressive tendencies led to conflicts with his employers. After one argument with his boss he resigned and returned to his old job at the laundry where his mother worked. There he worked under a new arrangement. Drivers were being forced to buy their own trucks and work on a straight commission basis. The competition was especially intense because truck manufacturers offered very easy terms for men to enter the business. But, because of his drive and ambition, Dave was one of the few to prosper under this system. Soon, he was earning between $100 and $110 per week and was one of the best paid drivers in the city.[44]

In 1923 Beck was elected president of the Seattle Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28. Here he became involved in a dispute with the leadership of his own local over its lack of progress. In December

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[43]For more on Beck's early union and wartime experiences, see: Garnell, Vol. I, pp. 145-146.

[44]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 147-148.

1924 the dispute led him to successfully challenge the incumbent secretary-treasurer in the union elections. Beck did not take the decision to seek union office lightly for it meant a decline in his income of $45 per week. From the very beginning Beck prided himself on his ability to earn far more than his union salary in the outside business world.[45]

Immediately upon taking office Beck launched upon an organizational drive and began negotiating directly with employers. He knew as much about the operations of their businesses and the economic problems they faced as they did. Moreover, he believed in the right of employers to earn a profit. He began making speeches and writing articles extolling the virtues of free enterprise, profits, and private property. This fitted in well with Short's campaign for labor-management understanding and led to warm ties with the WSFL. Short adopted Beck as his protege. With increasing frequency Beck was invited to address chambers of commerce, medical societies, the American Legion, the Elks, and other fraternal organizations. These associations stood him in good stead when businessmen's fears of radical unions increased again in the late 1930's. In many cases they invited him in to organize their industries to forestall more radical organizers like Harry Bridges of the Longshoremen's Union.[46]

Beck realized that the problems of the small, undercapitalized units in the teaming trades were extremely complex. Typically, the

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[45]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 148-149.

[46]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 153-155; Carter Brown, "The Teamsters Union in Seattle," (B.A. Thesis: Reed College, Portland, Oregon, 1938), p. 29; For more on Bridges, see: Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 256-259.

biggest business expense of the laundry, bakery, drayage, and over-the-road trucking firms was for labor. The small amount of capital they needed was easy to acquire. The low capital requirements, the lack of governmental regulation, and the encouragement of manufacturers led to almost unrestricted entry into the market. Thousands of truck-owners, including part-time farmers, flooded the market and under-cut the existing price structure. This forced the already established employers to cut their costs even further. They failed to provide proper maintenance, went without insurance, neglected safety techniques, and worked ever longer hours. To stay in business and pay off their debts, however, these small operators needed to control their labor costs. The commission sales system was designed to encourage this. Salesmen cut their own profits to keep their customers' business, knowing that if they did not, their customers would switch to a man who offered lower prices.[47]

Beck's contribution was to attempt to take wages out of competition. To achieve this he sought to "help industry" by "stabilizing" wages. He sought to minimize or even eliminate the pressures of competition which forced employers to cut wages and commissions. To do this he developed several techniques, some of which went far beyond traditional labor-management cooperation. He sought, for example, to unify wages, hours, and working conditions throughout each product market (Seattle laundries or bakeries). This became a standard union policy to prevent wage cutting. Where every employer knew that all his competitors faced the same labor costs, regulated

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[47]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 155-156.

by the union, he was forced to compete by improving his services, or better advertising, or achieving economies of scale, rather than by cutting wages.[48]

Beck also sought to expand union influence over other areas which had greater impact on profits and the ability of employers to pay higher wages. If an employer argued that he could not afford to raise wages, Beck was prepared to be understanding. Beck would analyze the employer's situation and try to find ways to enable that employer to raise his prices, thus increasing both his own profits and his employees' wages.[49]

Beck's most innovative technique, however, was the use of the Teamsters' over-the-road, long-distance, highway trucking jurisdiction as economic leverage to increase the union's power within its entire jurisdiction. For this he relied, in large part, on Seattle General Teamsters Union Local No. 174. As previously mentioned, Local No. 174 was the first Teamster local to organize the rapidly growing highway trucking industry. Other larger, more powerful Teamster organizations, such as those in San Francisco, never did organize these workers. In the more populous California and east coast localities they tended to foul jurisdictional arrangements and to compete with long established local drayage operations by taking business from the railroads, a main source of Teamster employment. The Seattle product market for highway trucking was not so encumbered. By 1925 there were approximately 200

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[48]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 156-157; Richard Neuberger, Our Promised Land, (New York: MacMillan Co., 1938), p. 184.

[49]Ibid.

carriers operating between Seattle and Portland, alone. Many of them were organized. Still, many leaders of Joint Council No. 28 doubted that they should try to use their trucking jurisdiction to organize unorganized localities. Beck realized he would have to win them over. His own Local No. 566 was small and too poor to finance a large scale campaign to organize a whole new jurisdiction on its own. He could expect little assistance from International President Daniel Tobin, who feared that local officials might organize a dual labor union and refused to advance funds for such operations. The only place he could realistically expect support to materialize was in Joint Council No. 28, but to get this help he needed the support of Harry Dail and Frank Brewster, the president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, of Local No. 174 and the dominant figures in the Joint Council. At first, however, Beck could not convince Dail and Brewster. Like the California Teamster leaders, they were not empire builders. Beck persisted anyway. Gradually, step by step, he demonstrated to them how to use the highway truckers and Local No. 174's treasury to help organize the weaker outlying locals in the state, then in the Pacific Northwest, and finally, in the whole West Coast. Though they still doubted the wisdom of Beck's strategy they agreed to contribute liberally to Beck's organizing activities. Using Local No. 174's strategic economic position and financial resources Beck was able, ultimately, to organize fully the Teamsters' jurisdiction in Washington State and to expand their influence over the entire western part of the United States and into many non-traditional jurisdictions such as warehouses, canneries, and breweries. Eventually, as Brewster and

Dail saw the advantages of Beck's strategy, his opposition within the Joint Council dissipated.[50]

Beck's rise to power was meteoric and he soon came to the attention of the union's international leadership. In the spring of 1925 Beck proved instrumental in preventing a strike between Local No. 174 and the Truck Owners Association of Seattle. In the summer and fall he also played an important role in concluding an agreement, through arbitration, between Local No. 566 and the Laundry Owners Association. These activities gained Beck unusual prominence because, while the issue was still in doubt, Teamsters delegates from all over North America were arriving in Seattle for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters' 1925 convention. Among those who sat in on the negotiations were International Vice-president "Bloody Mike" Casey, head of the San Francisco Teamsters, and Dan Tobin. Both were very impressed with Beck's performance.[51]

Besides leading the Joint Council's negotiating team, Beck also found time to chair the Arrangements Committee for the convention. Harry Dail, who by reason of his seniority should have done the job, did not want the extra, un-paid, work and delegated it to the enthusiastic Beck, who saw in it a chance to further impress the international

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[50]For more on Beck's technique, see: Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 119-159; Neuberger, p. 199; Daniel Bell, "Labor's New Men of Power," Fortune, (June 1953), p. 156; "Life on the American Newsfront: Labor Leader Dave Beck is the Boss of Seattle," Life (25 Oct. 1937), p. 38; For more on Beck's relationships with Joint Council No. 28's leadership, see also: Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 26,119,122,124,130-131,198-199; Vol. II, p. 517; Neuberger, p. 198.

[51]Garner, Vol. I, pp. 91,149; WSFL Procs., (1925), pp. 10-11.

leadership. Due to Beck's efforts, the convention proved to be a triumph. Everything went smoothly and all praised Beck's arrangements, including the hotel accomodations, the food, the service, and the excursions, particularly those to the theater, Snoqualmie Pass, and to Victoria, B.C.[52]

Beck's greatest moment, however, came during the final day of the convention week. Three Canadian delegates introduced a resolution to amend the constitution to require the international to send a delegate to the annual Canadian Trades and Labor Council. This matter had come before the IBT's executive board in 1920 and, again, in 1922. On both occasions the board had left the matter to Tobin's discretion and he had taken no action. Since the CTLC's constitution required all delegates to be members of Canadian locals, Beck surmised that Tobin opposed this as a potential source of division. It might create tensions between Canadian and American Teamsters. Further he wanted to retain personal control over all international appointments. Already he felt the Teamsters were too decentralized. Thus when the matter came before the convention's constitutional committee it had voted against adoption of the resolution and issued, instead, a resolution leaving selection of the delegate to the executive board.[53]

When the resolution came up for a vote, however, the committee's version almost lost. Had it done so, it would have been an unprecedented defeat for Tobin and the leadership. Never had the convention so

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[52]Garnel, Vol. I, p. 150; Seattle Times 16 Sept. 1925; UR 16 Sept. 1925; Authors' Interview with Dave Beck, 25 Feb. 1925, Seattle, Washington.

[53]IBT Procs., (1925), Officers Reports, pp. 92,112; Beck Interview.

disregarded their opinion. The likliest explanation for their failure is provided by Donald Garnel, who has written extensively on the history of the West Coast Teamsters. Garnel writes that when the amendment was introduced on the floor Tobin signalled John Gillespie, his floor manager, to have it referred back to committee where it could be killed quietly. Gillespie, however, had missed the signal and lacking leadership the delegates had voted their inclinations, which were to continually weaken the leadership.

Birt Showler, the leader of the Canadians, seized the chance to act while the leadership was in disarray. It was at this point that Beck noticed Tobin's frantic gesticulations. Realizing the danger Beck moved on his own to re-refer the resolution to the committee. Had he not done so Tobin might have gone down to an exceedingly embarrassing defeat.

Immediately Showler counterattacked and tried to point out that nothing in his resolution affected the delegate's nationality. Beck's action, however, had given the leadership time to regroup. A series of leadership spokesmen, culminating with Tobin himself, focussed on the nationality issue. Tobin pointed out that while the resolution technically allowed him to appoint an American delegate, it effectively prevented him from appointing a non-Canadian to the CTLC, since the CTLC would only accept Canadian delegates. Since less than 1,000 of the international's total membership was Canadian (about two per cent) this would discriminate against the vast majority of members. Within a short while the leadership was again in control and after some further debate the convention agreed to send the matter back to

committee.[54]

According to Garnel Beck's action "saved the day," but Beck believes Tobin could have defeated the proposal without him. Beck argues that his main accomplishment was to save Tobin from an unseemly floor fight. In any event Tobin was grateful to Beck and sought ways to reward him. On the advice of Mike Casey he offered Beck the honor of being one of the Teamsters' delegates to the next five AFL conventions. Since Tobin did all the real work of the Teamsters delegation, personally, this assignment was in the nature of a fully paid vacation. Beck, however, refused. As he puts it he was interested in organizing in the Pacific Northwest not in paid vacations or in empty honors. Moreover he knew that if he accepted the appointment it would create friction in Joint Council No. 28 between himself and Harry Dail. Beck knew that Dail wanted the appointment and would be bitterly disappointed if he failed to get it since it was traditional for the senior man in the host city to get the delegateship.[55]

In declining Tobin's offer Beck acted shrewdly. He sought to turn a potentially disruptive occasion to his benefit. He explained to Tobin that he was forced to refuse the honor because his personal friend, Harry Dail, wanted and deserved it and that he was not

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[54]Garnel is in error when he states that the proposed resolution would have required one member of the International Executive Board to be a member of a Canadian local.

When the resolution re-emerged from committee later in the day, it did so in a much improved form from Tobin's point of view. It gave the executive board power to appoint whomever they pleased. In this form, it passed easily.

IBT Procs., (1925), Fifth Day, A.M., pp. 3-6; P.M., pp. 13-14; Garnel, Vol. I, p. 150.

[55]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 151-153; Beck Interview.

interested in such tokens of appreciation. He explained to Tobin that, if he was chosen in place of Dail, it might split the Seattle Teamster movement and limit its organizing potential. Thus, Beck sought to show both his loyalty to his friends and to the Teamsters organization.[56]

Tobin, however, would hear none of it. He refused to consider Dail for the position since he had been feuding with Dail for many years. In 1920 Dail had sent fourteen delegates to the WSFL convention, but had not sent a single delegate to the 1920 International Brotherhood of Teamsters convention. To Tobin, who held an exaggerated view of the honor and dignity of his office as international president of the Teamsters, this was an unforgivable affront to the majesty of the Teamsters Union. Tobin, whom Beck believes would rather have been president of the Teamsters than president of the United States, "went into a tailspin" over the slight and vowed revenge. Yet he did not make haste. Tobin was a powerful figure in the AFL, but within the Teamsters Union he was weak. He had had to endure many such snubs in his career from the numerous local Teamster potentates who were the real powers in the union. Tobin saw this as his chance to punish Dail and was loath to give it up.[57]

Still, Beck refused to accept the appointment for himself. He continued to refuse the delegateship even when Tobin offered it to him a second and third time and even when Tobin said that if he refused it would go to someone other than Dail. Neither Beck nor Tobin

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[56] Ibid.

[57] When Casey learned that Dail was trying to get the delegateship, without first consulting him, either, he too was outraged. Thus, there was never any chance that Dail would win the appointment.

Ibid.

would relent. In the end the previous delegate was reappointed for another five year term.[58]

Beck's tactics proved highly successful. In refusing the delegateship he strengthened his friendship with Dail and solidified the Joint Council behind himself, personally. He showed the Seattle Teamsters that he had bigger objectives in mind than "...what Beck could get out of things." At the same time, he proved to the international leadership that he was a man with a future. He was a good organizer, an adept parliamentarian, and was loyal to his friends even at some cost to himself. Tobin, in particular, was deeply impressed and joined Short and Casey in advancing Beck's career. Thereafter he took a close, personal interest in Beck's activities. Shortly after the convention, for example, Short wrote to him concerning their mutual protege:

> Our good friend, Dave Beck, is forging rapidly ahead and is the warmest friend I have in the State and like yourself, I am very much interested in his development.[59]

In succeeding years Tobin personally invited Beck to attend the AFL conventions as his guest. In fact, Beck attended every AFL convention until he resigned from the Teamsters Union in 1957. Tobin also sought other ways to reward Beck's labors. He wanted to keep this promising young man from leaving the Teamsters. The only problem was that others had perceived Beck's promise as well. In 1926, for example, Lewis Schwellenbach, a young lawyer who later became United States Senator and Truman's Labor Secretary, and Robert McFarlane, who later

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[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid; Short to Tobin, 12 March 1926, Box 37-3, WSFL Records.

became president of the Northern Pacific Railroad, tried to steal Beck away from the labor movement. They offered him a job at a much higher salary as manager of their new laundry chain. Beck was torn and informed Casey that he wanted to remain in the union but the money he was being offered was too good to resist. Could the Teamsters make a counter-offer? Casey then asked Tobin to appoint Beck as an organizer on the international's payroll but, try as he might, Tobin could not find a place for him as a full-time organizer. Instead he offered to subsidize Beck's salary as a local union officer so that it exceeded what he had been offered and promised to increase it in annual increments until, by 1930, it would match that of a full-time organizer. Beck accepted and became a part-time international organizer for the Pacific Northwest. The next year Beck received an appointment as a full-time organizer under Casey's direction and gave up his job as secretary-treasurer of Local No. 566. He became, instead, president of the local, a job which he held until his resignation. Thus, the Teamsters kept the services of its most promising organizer.[60]

In the years which followed the Teamsters and the other AFL loyalists in the labor movement benefited greatly from Beck's services. Without his vigorous leadership the AFL might not have survived the struggle of the 1930's. Certainly, without him, the Teamsters would never have played the critical role they did play in the successful campaign to combat the industrial unionist challenge and to destroy

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[60]Garnel, Vol. I, pp. 151-153; Beck Interview.

the open shop system in its California strongholds. Beck's importance lay in his unique ability to break the AFL's conventional jurisdictional concepts without, at the same time, challenging its ideological or factional status quo. In doing so he provided a model for bridging the gap between craft and industrial unionists.

PART THREE:

Under The Old Regime,

1926 - 1930

Chapter 12:

The Search For a New Identity:
The Hartley Recall and Shingle Tariff Campaigns, 1926

After the controversies of the earlier post-war years, 1926 was a quiet year for the Washington labor movement. Following the disappointments of the 1924 election campaign, the expulsion of the communists from the SCLC, and the debacle of the 1925 legislative session, there remained little to fight about. The labor movement was now mired in a grim struggle for survival. On the one hand the economic hardships of the recent past had reduced the labor movement to a hardy core element: the conservative, craft unionist, AFL loyalist old immigrants. In successive battles, they had defeated and expelled the radical new immigrant, industrial unionist, and third partyist groups. This had effectively prevented radicalization of the labor movement, but it had also inhibited organization in the new immigrant-dominated mass production industries and it had sapped the labor movement of much of its vitality. The remaining elements of the labor movement sought primarily to maintain their existing economic relationships and to avoid risky undertakings.

In the later 1920's, the leadership of the labor movement, particularly that of the WSFL and the SCLC, sought primarily to maintain the status quo. As a rising tide raises all ships, the labor leadership could assume that the improving economy would benefit all

workers. In this respect 1926 was, perhaps, a prototypical year. The labor force increased by 1.95 per cent to 627,000, a rate of increase nearly as rapid as in 1920. At the same time, employment increased by 2.66 per cent to 617,000. As a result, unemployment continued to decline by a further 28.76 per cent to 10,400, or 1.65 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1) Though this did not reflect a permanent improvement in economic conditions, it gave that illusion. The number of production workers engaged in manufacturing and the real value added by manufacturing in the state increased scarcely at all.[1]

The improving employment statistics came in the wake of improving economic indicators. Inland Empire shipments of fruit increased 18.73 per cent to 56.4 million carloads. In the Puget Sound area lumber production increased by 8.02 per cent to more than ten billion board feet, a level which would not be surpassed until 1950. At the same time, western Washington department store sales increased by 3.82 per cent, postal receipts rose by 6.30 per cent to $4,234,000, and bank debits increased by 4.94 per cent to $3.374 million. Statewide gasoline sales increased by 13.43 per cent to 185 million gallons. Coal production, which had been declining, stabilized. Most of these improvements depended in part upon an increase in purchasing power. After rising for three years the Seattle consumer price index declined by 0.16 per cent. Thus each dollar a worker earned was worth slightly more.[2]

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[1]Johansen, pp. 626-627.
[2]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

Meanwhile membership in the WSFL and its affiliates continued to grow but most of this growth was concentrated in the SCLC. In 1926 membership in the WSFL increased 6.43 per cent to 22,762, or 3.63 per cent of the state's labor force. (Table No. 2) The total number of WSFL affiliates declined by 4.8 per cent to 238 due to a dramatic increase in the number of locals suspended (29), consolidated or disbanded (9), or withdrawn (3), which was only partially balanced by the number which affiliated, or were reinstated (29). Thus the impact of the WSFL's organizational efforts was weak at best.[3]

In 1926 membership in SCLC unions increased by 4.80 per cent to 14,464. Since 1923 membership in SCLC had increased 22.09 per cent while membership in the WSFL had declined by 0.83 per cent. Most of this increase reflected the return of conservative unions to the council and the growth of the Miscellaneous, Printing, and Amusement Trades sections. The returning conservative locals neatly balanced the disaffiliating radical locals and the number of SCLC-affiliates remained constant. The number of WSFL-affiliates also affiliated with the SCLC, however, increased by one to fifty-eight. (Table No. 3)[4]

In Seattle relations between some of the old radicals and the AFL loyalists continued to be strained. Newsboys Union Local No. 15,384, for example, vigorously protested an increase in the AFL's per capita taxes complaining that the rise from five to thirty-five cents per member per month was too great for a union whose members were minors. In doing so they spoke for all the poorly paid industrial

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[3] WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30.

[4] WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1907-1957, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

unionists. In the main, however, peace prevailed. Symbolic of this the SCLC endorsed Short's new journalistic endeavor, the Washington State Labor News, as a replacement for the nearly defunct UR. Meanwhile the radicals in the independent Electrical Workers Union Local No. 944 reaffiliated with the SCLC and got their old number seventy-seven back.[5]

Similarly, Meat Cutters Union Local No. 81 reaffiliated with the WSFL. The Meat Cutters had successfully convinced the Seattle City Council to pass a health ordinance for butcher shops and were looking for support in the expected court battles. The Meat Cutters were trying to use the ordinance to restrict Japanese meat markets whose late hours "gives them a chance to smuggle in bad beef," and had sued one of the Japanese markets for violating the ordinance, vowing to carry the case to the highest courts if necessary. This was just one of the forces impelling reconciliation between the SCLC and WSFL unions.[6]

The most trying problem to face the SCLC in 1926, however, was the contract negotiations between the Laundry Workers Union Local No. 24 and the Laundry owners association. In July 1925, Local No. 24

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[5]For more on Local No. 77 and relations in the SCLC, see: Yearbook, (1927), p. 31; (1938), pp. 39-40; Minutes, 6 Jan., 16 June 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[6]Unfortunately, the WSFL was unable to prevent the courts from ruling the ordinance unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, however, a bill proposed by Plumbers Union Local No. 32, making it compulsory for all plumbers, journeymen and masters, to have a license to work in Seattle, passed the city council and was upheld in the courts.

Yearbook, (1927), pp. 31,39; Short to Ferries, 11 June 1926, Box 37-12; Short to G. Mills, 21 April 1926, Box 37-6, WSFL Records; Minutes, 17 Feb., 28 April 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

had submitted a new contract to all Seattle laundries where they had contracts calling for substantial improvements. During 1925 no agreement could be reached. During the legislative session, negotiations had recessed. On 11 February 1926, following the legislature's adjournment, the negotiations resumed, but with no greater success than before. Failing to reach an agreement both sides submitted to community pressure and agreed to place the outstanding issues before an arbitration board headed by Dr. Mark Matthews, who had urged the employers to make concessions. On 22 February the parties reached a tentative four-year agreement calling for a union shop for inside workers, a wage increase, the end of the old apprenticeship program, establishment of a grievance procedure, and providing for contract re-negotiation should the need arise. For the Laundry and Dye Drivers Union Local No. 566, the board reached a three-year agreement calling for wage increases and revision of both commission rates and working conditions. Labor's negotiating team, headed by Dave Beck and William Short, was aided by Mike Casey of the Teamsters. By their efforts labor finally eliminated the non-union shop in the Seattle laundry industry.[7]

In the 1926 Seattle municipal elections, the SCLC endorsed Bertha K. Landes rather than "Doc" Brown, the incumbent mayor. The SCLC refused to endorse Brown again because they suspected him of

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[7]On 1 March 1926, after the membership ratified the agreement, the new contract went into effect. Later, on 13 August 1926, the West Seattle Laundry Co., long a non-union stronghold, sold out to the Superior Laundry Service, Inc., and reached a unionization agreement with the unions.

WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 65-66,44-45,63-64; Yearbook, (1927), p. 31; Weaver to Metropolitan Laundry Co. employees, 22 Jan. 1926, Box

collusion in police "fixing" cases. Still, they did not support Landes with much enthusiasm. Their lack of enthusiasm for Landes is explained by her stand on the city manager plan.[8]

The Seattle Municipal League's city manager plan was one of the main issues in the 1926 elections. After the defeat of their 1925 plan the SML had revised it, to allow the city council to appoint the comptroller and other city officials in place of the city manager. Mayor Brown opposed the new plan and even asked some of his supporters to resign their city posts to oppose it publicly. Associated Industries, Federated Industries, the United Veterans, the Civil Service League, the policemen's and firemen's associations, the SCLC, and the WSFL also opposed it. Landes, Republican conservatives, and Seattle's three major daily papers, on the other hand, supported the plan. Labor's opposition to the plan was due largely to the conservative support for it. The UR described the revised plan as a scheme to make the city council into a dictatorship. It would also make direct legislation campaigns more difficult. Instead, labor proposed an even more sweeping reform proposal.[9]

At the 9 March elections, labor's policy was vindicated. Landes defeated Brown in the mayoral race by a vote of 48,700 to 42,803, while the city manager plan was defeated, narrowly, by a vote of 36,709 to 36,598. At the same time, two out of three of

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18-11; D. Tobin to Short, 27 Feb. 1926, Box 23-14, WSFL Records.

[8]Dickson, pp. 62-66,137-141; O'Connell, pp. 231-232; UR 6 Feb.-10 March 1926, passim; Yearbook, (1927), passim; Parsons to Short, 1 Feb. 1926; B. Kinnear to Short, 1 Feb. 1926, Box 21-57, WSFL Records; Minutes, 17 Feb., 3 March, 6,13 Oct. 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[9]Ibid.

labor's city council candidates won their races. Also, the voters approved a proposal to continue the effort to revise the city charter.[10]

As a result of their successes, the SCLC's conservative leadership further cemented their grip on the council. In the annual elections of council officers, Business Agent C.W. Doyle was returned without opposition. President John Jepsen probably would have won reelection had he not accepted an appointment as WSFL vice-president for the Seattle district as a reward for his role in communist trials. In his place the delegates elected David Levine, president of the small Jewelry Workers Union Local No. 30 and a member of that union's international executive board. A Russian-born Jew, Levine had been active in SCLC affairs since 1905. He had served as an SCLC vice-president, as chairman of the Political Welfare Committee, and on numerous other civic and governmental committees. In the early 1920's he had supported the SCLC's moderate faction yet he had never broken with the conservatives. He retained close links to eastern European immigrant communities. Levine was succeeded as SCLC vice-president by M.J. Murray, president of the Street Carmen's Union Local No. 587. Murray, of Irish-Catholic descent, helped balance the ticket. He had got his start in the labor movement before the turn of the century as a member of the old Knights of Labor in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Since moving to Seattle he had held many offices in the state and international Street Carmens organizations and had always been identified

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[10]The new charter revision proposal was defeated in the fall elections.

Ibid.

with the SCLC's conservatives.[11]

Overall labor conditions throughout the state continued to improve modestly in 1926. Most districts reported increased membership and affiliations. Most also reported a diminution in the amount of internal conflict.[12]

Four major problems confronted the WSFL in 1926. They were, in order of their importance: the organizational campaign, the Hartley recall drive, the movement to enact a tariff on Canadian shingle imports, and a drive to prohibit competition from prison labor.[13]

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[11] Yearbook, (1927), p. 21; Call, p. 56; WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 45; Minutes, 18 Aug. 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[12] For more on WSFL Vice-presidential District No. 1 (Skagit-Whatcom County), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30; Sewell to WSFL Secretary, 10 Dec. 1926, Box 22-23, WSFL Records.

For more on Vice-presidential District No. 2 (Spokane-Spokane County), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30; Belandger to Short, 30 March 1926, Box 37-4; Graf to Short, 17 June 1926, Box 16-41; 14 Aug. 1926, Box 9-24, WSFL Records.

For more on Vice-presidential District No. 3 (Yakima-Walla Walla County), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30.

For more on Vice-presidential District No. 4 (Grays Harbor-Willappa Harbor County), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30; Yearbook, (1927), p. 19; Short to A. Johnson, 27 Feb. 1926, Box 37-2; Wheeldon to Short, 26 April 1926, Box 8-25; Hege to H.W. Call, 12 June 1926, Box 20-50; Carter to WSFL, 26 Sept. 1926, Box 8-28, WSFL Records. See also: Johansen, p. 628; Yearbook (1935), p. 24; C. Frank to Short, 3 Nov. 1926, Box 8-21, WSFL Records, for more information on labor conditions in Port Angeles and the Olympic Peninsula.

For more on Vice-presidential District No. 5 (Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30; H.W. Call to Skinner, 20 Dec. 1926, Box 37-27; Claire Covert to Call, 15 Jan., 24 April, 11 May 1926, Box 10-74, WSFL Records.

For more on Vice-presidential District No. 7 (Island-Snohomish-Chelan County), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 30; O.F. Wefferling to Short, 13 Feb. 1926, Box 9-24; Underwood to Short, 16 Jan. 1926, Box 13-43, WSFL Records.

[13] The WSFL also endorsed a project to build a railroad tunnel through the Cascade mountains, but nothing ever came of it. WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 63; Moyer to Short, 6,22 May, 30

The WSFL's 1926 organizational campaign grew out of the struggles of the early 1920's. The labor conservatives had argued then that they constituted the "real" trade unionists and that their industrial unionist and third partyist opponents were actually "destructionists" who would never be able to organize the workers. Thus, in order to justify their continued control of the labor movement, the conservatives needed to demonstrate their ability to build up the movement.

Early in 1926 evidence began to accumulate concerning the need to organize various groups of workers and the possible areas where success might be attained most easily. Reports filtered in to Short about the poor conditions of unorganized workers in the cannery industry and about the conditions of employees of the Washington Cooperative Egg and Poultry Association. Instead of pursuing these promising avenues, however, the WSFL resolved upon an easier, more traditional, course. On 21 April Short launched a three-pronged effort to win affiliation of existing unions and to organize their jurisdictions more thoroughly. The first prong of his campaign involved an attempt to get the non-affiliated locals of AFL international unions to affiliate with the WSFL. He sent out dozens of letters urging these locals to join the State Federation. Basing his campaign on the WSFL's legislative achievements and on its role in adjusting labor disputes, especially on behalf of women workers, he pointed proudly to his success in the laundry workers negotiations.[14]

June 1926, Box 17-10, WSFL Records.

[14]Haines to Short, 13 Jan. 1926, Box 12-54; C. Covert to Short, 21 Jan. 1926, Box 10-74; Short to C. Miller, P.E. DeVall, C. Wetzel,

The second prong of his campaign was directed towards the international unions. He hoped to convince them to bring pressures to bear on their local affiliates to join the WSFL.[15]

The third prong was directed at the regional and state labor organizations in Washington, especially at the trades departments and the state councils, urging them to organize within their jurisdictions. He devoted special effort to Machinists District Council.[16]

The response to Short's appeal was uniformly weak and disappointing. None of the locals and central labor councils he contacted responded at all. Many of the internationals which responded agreed to ask their locals to affiliate, but some of those which agreed to do so had few members (e.g., the Photographers and Lithographers). None agreed to put stronger pressure on their locals.[17]

This utter failure was a severe blow to Short's prestige in the labor movement, one from which he never recovered. In December he was forced to report to Frank Morrison, secretary-treasurer of the AFL, the full extent of his failure. It was particularly difficult to admit failure in the case of the Timberworkers, since their international

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C. Covert, 21 April 1926; Short to Leo Ledwich, J.S. Hoffman, 27 April 1926, Box 37-6; Short to E.P. Wheeldon, 28 April 1926, Box 37-6, WSFL Records.

[15]Short to W. Kerngood, 24 April 1926; Short to D. Evans, W. Sullivan, G.M. Bugniazet, C.A. Summer, Frank Duffey, H.P. Schmal, F.J. Belair, W.F. Cramer, R.J. Green, C.C. Coulter, 29 April 1926, Box 37-7, WSFL Records.

[16]WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 67; Call to Szymanski, 5 Oct. 1926, Box 37-21, WSFL Records.

[17]Evans to Call, 3 May 1926, Box 11-57; T.E. Hughes to Call, 4 May 1926, Box 23-14; R. Green to Call, 4 May 1926, Box 22-21, Box 12-5; D'Allessandro to Call, 5 May 1926, Box 13-14; Yoder to Call, 4 May

union had lent their full support.

> We started about a year ago to launch a campaign to organize among the lumber workers through our State Federation of Labor. We succeeded in getting one or two locals established but were again unable to hold them together while we were endeavoring to extend the organizational work in other places. It might be possible to do something with the shingle-weavers a little later on, but in so far as the general run of the men employed in the logging camps and sawmills, I can see little immediate hope of accomplishing anything in the way of organization among them. They are in the main an itinerant class of workmen with the itinerant psychology and won't stay with anything of this kind long enough to accomplish results. It is this psychology among them that is largely responsible for the failure of every effort that has been made to organize them, and I see nothing in the way of a change that would warrant any effort along that line just now.

C.O. "Dad" Young, the AFL's organizer in the Pacific Northwest, held similar views on organizational prospects in Washington. In response to a query from Harry Call, acting secretary of the WSFL, concerning the possibilities of doing organizational work in Shelton, he wrote:

> ...I am sure that your correspondent (i.e., S.W. Carter, secretary of Shelton Carpenters Union Local No. 1803?) over estimate (sic) the possibilities for organization there. Teamsters and Clerks, in such a town, would seem to a sensible person impossible of organization. At least organize (sic) to such an extent that the union could function. But, as said I will, as soon as convention, go to Shelton.

Altogether the number of WSFL affiliates increased by 15.12 per cent (1926-1927) to 274, and the number of rank and file members increased by 18.79 per cent to 27,080. Though at first glance this seems a significant achievement in reality it was very disappointing. Most of the new members and locals soon disbanded and left the labor movement. Without constant support and supervision they could not survive

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1926; O'Connor to Call, 18 May 1926, Box 15-29; Keogh to Call, 13 May 1926, Box 17-43; Kerngood to Call, 29 April 1926, Box 18-5, WSFL Records.

on their own.[18]

It was at the WSFL's 1926 convention that the rest of labor's program was established. On the surface, the convention was quite successful. According to Call it was the largest and best since 1920 and was very "harmonious" and "constructive." This was primarily due to the fact that Short, Call, and the executive board had taken all the important decisions, beforehand, and merely presented them to the delegates for ratification. On 23 May the board had agreed, unanimously, to recommend to the convention that the WSFL:

> ...devote every resource to elect friends, defeat enemies in the legislature and recommend to all locals and affiliates to lend their fullest moral and financial support...
>
> ...that we confine our legislative program to the following measures: a federal Clayton Act, increased pensions under Workmen's Compensation so that those covered before 1 July 1923 have parity with those covered after, inclusion of occupational diseases under Workmen's Compensation, placarding prison-made goods, a shingle tariff, and an increase in the salaries of state legislators to $600.00 per biennium.[19]

The board, led by Short and Call, also decided that its primary political energies should be directed toward recalling Governor Hartley. This was a tactical decision. Hartley had recently dismissed Henry Suzzallo as president of the University of Washington. As a consequence, the labor leaders thought that the tide of public opinion was running strongly against the governor. The anti-Hartley feeling seemed especially strong in Seattle, but existed throughout the state. Most of the state's commercial press, including the Times and

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[18]Short to F. Morrison, 24 Dec. 1926, Box 37-27; C.O. Young to Call, 10 Oct. 1926, Box 34-29, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1927), p. 8.

[19]WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 59; Minutes, 23 May 1926, Box 60; Call to R.H. Baker, 2 Aug. 1926, Box 37-26, WSFL Records.

P-I, had turned against him. Thus Short and the labor leaders believed that public opinion would welcome labor's support in the effort to recall Hartley. They, in turn, were eager to join forces with those of the other pro-recall leaders. They saw in the anti-Hartley campaign a new chance to defeat one of their strongest critics and, at the same time, revive the progressive coalition. Since feeling in the labor movement was strongly anti-Hartley it also promised to help unite the labor forces. Thus when Short presented the board's proposal to the convention it was approved unanimously.[20]

Labor's secondary objective was a legislative program which concentrated on passage of an Anti-Injunction Bill incorporating the wording of the federal Clayton Act, increased pensions for widows and other dependents and inclusion of occupational diseases under the Workmen's Compensation Act, and measures requiring placarding of prison-made goods and establishing a prison industrial program whose products could not be sold on the open market.[21]

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[20]WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 18-19; Gunns, pp. 178-179,181-182; B.W. Sherwood to Short, 24 July 1926, Box 22-2; Executive Board's Report to the WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60; List of Anti- and Pro-Hartley Newspapers, n.d., Box 53-2, WSFL Records.

[21]For more on the WSFL's 1926 legislative program, see: WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 18,58-68; (1927), pp. 7-10,14-16,83-84; Finn to Short, 27 May 1927, Box 9-24; A.S. Goss to Short, 13,18 Oct. 1926, Box 20-15; H. Call to A.S. Goss, 13 Oct. 1926, Box 37-21; Call to Goss, 29 Oct. 1926, Box 37-23; Call to C. Oldendorff, 18 Jan. 1927, Box 37-29; Call to E.P. Marsh, 24 Feb. 1926, Box 37-32; Minutes, Spokane Central Labor Council, 28 Feb. 1927, Box 9-24; Short to Engell, 3 Aug. 1926, Box 37-16; Short to A.J. Schrader, 20 Dec. 1926, Box 37-29; Call to A.J. Schrader, 14 Jan. 1927, Box 37-29; Call to C. Oldendorff, 28 Jan. 1927, Box 37-30; Call to W.C. Coffeen, 3 Feb. 1927; Short to Mary Laufer, 8 Feb. 1927, Box 37-31, WSFL Records; Minutes, 12,26 Jan., 2,9,16 Feb., 16 March 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

The convention also gave important consideration to "Labor's Moving Picture Campaign," one of labor's most innovative programs. Beginning on 4 January trade unions in fifteen of Washington State's largest towns had begun presenting showings of the film, "Labor's Reward," in connection with their organizational activities. By June labor estimated that 12,000 people had seen the film and reported that hundreds had had to be turned away. R.E. Van, general organizer of the Cigar Makers International Union, lectured during the reel changes on the need to organize, C.O. "Dad" Young served as advance agent, and Harry Call routed the film through WSFL headquarters. It was, in fact, a major part of labor's organizing campaign and, quite possible, its most successful element. Short reported that following showings of the film a number of requests for organizational help had been received. Had not Short been heavily involved in the Laundry Workers negotiations the film campaign might have been even more successful.[22]

Meanwhile the convention approved a constitutional amendment increasing and re-allocating the per capita tax. It also endorsed and agreed to purchase stock in the Union Labor Life Insurance Company, another one of those "Labor-Capitalist" enterprizes against which the radicals had railed in vain. This time no one spoke against the proposal. The company was owned by a number of AFL organizations and had previously been endorsed by the AFL. It was designed to supplement union benefit schemes at lower cost than the so-called "industrial policies" provided by public companies. Since January 1926 Short had

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[22] WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 13.
For more on the WSFL's 1926 convention, see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 34; Yearbook, (1927), p. 23; Chambers to Short, 26 June 1926, Box 8-59; Minutes, 23 May 1926, Box 60, WSFL Records.

been a member of its executive board.[23]

The WSFL's political program for 1926 was as simple as it was unlikely to succeed. In Short's opinion labor should promote its interests and welfare "along whatever line opportunity best presents itself." He believed that non-partisan politics were still a necessity. Because labor "embraces every part of the political spectrum" it should confine its efforts to "promotion of its interests and welfare" rather than engaging in independent political activities. In practice this meant a return to the Republican primaries though this now meant working through the party controlled by the Hartley forces. The Democratic Party alternative, though more realistic than in the past, still promised little success.[24]

Putting this policy into practice, however, was very difficult. One of the problems was that, in the absence of a strong progressive movement, the state's congressional delegation had shifted to the Right. Democratic Senator C.C. Dill and Congressman Sam Hill continued to boast strong labor support but of the Republicans only Congressman Albert Johnson retained labor's strong support. The WSFL approved his successful efforts to pass the Immigration Restriction Act (1924). In the end, labor had a negligible impact on the election. Senator

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[23]Short's involvement with this and other schemes reflect his growing disenchantment with his labor career. After he defeated the radicals and third party forces, he saw no more worlds he could conquer in the labor movement. At the same time, his efforts to organize the workers within the limitations of the craft union philosophy were not bearing fruit. Thus, Short began to look for a way to bow out of the presidency, gracefully.

WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 61; Matthew Woll to Short, 22 Jan. 1926, Box 24-1, WSFL Records. For more on the per capita tax changes, see: WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 51,62.

[24]Yearbook, (1926), p. 5.

Jones went on to win the Republican primary and the election. The rest of the Republican congressional ticket also won renomination. In the general election the Democrats even lost Dill's old seat in the fifth district.[25]

In the process of these campaigns, Short visited most of the WSFL's affiliated central labor councils in the state. In one of his most vigorous political efforts, he urged the councils and their political committees to begin to organize. But he elicited only a weak response. The experience enervated both Short and the labor movement. Although Short later reported that all of the central labor councils, except the Tacoma Central Labor Council, had agreed to convey his message to their memberships, "...in most instances the general apathy existing among the voters and particularly among the labor forces prevented a satisfactory measure of success from attending their efforts." This was especially noticeable in the Hartley recall campaign. With Short's support the Hartley recall forces filed a draft of their charges against Hartley with the secretary of state and established a skeleton state organization, but otherwise there was very little activity.[26]

The legislative elections more than confirmed these early omens. Although some of labor's enemies were defeated the net result was "far from satisfactory" and produced yet another conservative-

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[25]Cole, pp. 149-165; Call to T.R. McNally, 4 Dec. 1926, Box 37-26; O.M. Nelson to Short, 26 July 1926, Box 19-7; Short to O.M. Nelson, 31 July 1926, Box 37-15; Short to C.E. Brower, 14 Aug. 1926, Box 37-17, WSFL Records; Minutes, 12,19 May, 21 July, 4 Aug. 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Johansen, p. 618.

[26]WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 58; (1927), p. 5.

dominated Republican legislature indifferent to labor's needs. In 1927 the executive board reported to the WSFL convention that "with but one or two exceptions the nominees of the primary elections on the republican ticket were elected at the general election." The Republicans lost two seats in the House, but gained one in the Senate. The Democrats gained two seats in the House. The FLP lost its last Senate seat to the Republicans.[27]

On election day, 1926 the actual Hartley recall campaign finally began to get under way. A limited number of field workers appeared at a few of the polling places to get petition signatures. The campaign had been given its first real boost on 13 October at a large mass meeting in Seattle, attended by between five and six thousand people. An estimated 70,000 others heard the rally over the radio. When the oral vote supporting the recall drive was taken the sound was heard many blocks away. This display was so impressive that the WSFL's executive board voted unanimously to reaffirm their commitment to the

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[27]Ibid; Executive Board Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records; Cole, pp. 126,167.

For more on labor's role in the legislative elections, see:

Auburn Senate race: Walsh to Short, 13,20 July, 22 Aug. 1926; Walsh to Benjamin, 9 Aug. 1926, Box 21-7; Short to Walsh, 14 Aug. 1926, Box 37-17; L.A. Borden to W.W. Conner, 31 Aug. 1926, Box 21-15; Short to C.H. Brower, 31 July 1926, Box 37-15, WSFL Records;

King County Legislative races: Minutes, 1 Sept. 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Report of the SCLC's Political Welfare Committee, 1 Sept. 1926, Box 37-19; Tom Smith Resolution, 4 Aug. 1926, Box 8-40, WSFL Records;

Thurston County House race, see: Short to J.C. Ware, 3,10 Sept. 1926, Box 37-19; Ware to Short, 6 Sept. 1926, Box 9-15, WSFL Records;

See also: Hazen to WSFL, 15 Sept. 1926, Box 13-1; E.E. Shields to Short, 1 Oct. 1926, Box 22-3; Short to F.M. Blomquist, 16 Oct. 1926, Box 37-21; Short and Call to W. Clouston, 23 Oct. 1926, Box 37-22, WSFL Records.

drive.[28]

In the next few weeks a large number of locals and central labor councils shook off their lethargy and registered their support for the anti-Hartley forces but an even larger number refused to do so. Many of those who refused to join the campaign claimed that the expense would be too great, or argued that Hartley had supported some of their special interests, or that it was beyond their jurisdictions, or violated their constitutions to become involved in politics.[29]

The campaign seemed to be stalling just as it was beginning and Short became worried. In a letter to Minnie McMahon, secretary of the Seattle Garment Workers Union Local No. 17, he urged her to take more interest in the campaign. The anti-Hartley forces needed to have enough signatures before the WSFL's bills were introduced in the legislature "because we know, no matter how successful we are in getting passage in the Legislature, he (i.e., Hartley) will veto them." But such entreaties had no noticeable impact. Outside of Seattle the issue failed to excite the voters. In Tacoma, Walla Walla, Everett, Spokane, Bellingham, and Aberdeen, the campaign lagged and, finally, ground to a halt long before the legislature convened. The

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[28]Executive Council's Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL convention, 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 5-6.

[29]Pro-Recall: Witte to Short, 23 Oct. 1926, Box 8-40; Call to Helen Olson, 30 Oct. 1926, Box 37-23, WSFL Records; Minutes, 3 Nov., 1,8 Dec. 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Anti-Recall: Johnson to Short, 19 Oct. 1926; R.A. LeRouse to Short, 25 Oct. 1926, Box 13-27; Short to F.M. Blomquist, 26 Oct. 1926; Short to LeRouse, 26 Oct. 1926, Box 37-22; Short to L. Witte, 30 Oct. 1926, Box 37-23; Short to W.B. Nicholl, 5 Nov. 1926, Box 37-24; Short to A. Leslie, 6 Dec. 1926, Box 37-26; Nicholl to Short, 3 Nov. 1926, Box 11-44; McDonald to Short, 1 Dec. 1926, Box 12-37; Leslie to

inevitable result, as Short had predicted, was another series of defeats in the legislature.[30]

At the same time that the WSFL's political campaign was going forward the WSFL became active in the campaign to force Congress to enact a tariff on imported Canadian cedar shingles. The WSFL and the cedar shingle industry complained that the imported Canadian shingles were being made by firms which employed vast numbers of oriental workers and non-union American ex-patriotes. As many as fifty-four to sixty per cent of the Canadian shingle weavers were orientals. According to the Americans this was causing periodic annual unemployment among American shingle workers and their unionized Canadian counterparts. In turn the WSFL maintained this made it very difficult to organize shingle weavers on both sides of the border and nullified the "benefits" of the immigration restriction and oriental exclusion acts.[31]

To solve the problems caused by importation of cheap Canadian shingles the United States cedar industry's trade association recommended a tariff. Early in February 1926 the Washington State labor movement received invitations from the industry to join the movement. In that month the SCLC endorsed the tariff. Several weeks later the matter came to the attention of Short when the cedar industry's tariff

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Short, 29 Nov. 1926, Box 23-58; Wefferling to Short, 18 Dec. 1926, Box 9-4, WSFL Records.

[30]H.W. Call to M. McMahon, 9 Nov. 1926, Box 37-24; Gravey to Short, 2 Dec. 1926, Box 9-29; Ohlson to Short, 26 Nov. 1926; C. Hay to Short, 27 Nov. 1926, Box 12-62; I Parberry to Short, 11 Dec. 1926, Box 43-2; Short to Brackinreed, 22 Dec. 1926, Box 37-27; E.P. Rouse to Short, 5 Dec. 1926, 8 Jan. 1927, Box 21-31, WSFL Records.

[31]Perry R. Bengough to All Central and Building Trades Councils, 9 Dec. 1926; Short to William Green, 1 Jan. 1927, Box 37-28, WSFL Records.

committee asked for his assistance and claimed that competition from Canadian mills had forced shingle mills in the Pacific Northwest to run only ninety-five days in 1925.

> The (present) law operates to the direct detriment of the American home owning and family rearing workman in favor of the Oriental, and to the exclusion of the American workingman from employment that the Oriental may have employment in Canadian mills.

Soon, other central labor councils endorsed the tariff proposals and the tariff committee's rhetoric grew in vehemence:

> The Canadian Chink, Jap, and Hindu is simply too much for our American workers and their industry, and we do not want to even try to compete with them, but we believe that America and its markets belong first to American labor and its industries, to the exclusion of all other nations, and this is really the gist of our campaign for the Shingle Tariff.

For a time it seemed that the tariff campaign, with its emphasis on racial stereotypes, could bring together the divided elements of the Washington State political spectrum. On 27 March 1926, for example, Short shared the platform at a mass rally in Seattle to boost the shingle tariff with none other than Governor Hartley. The WSFL reasoned that since every other industry was protected by some form of tariff, why not the shingle industry, too? At least it might help revive the Shingle Weavers organization. Short then detailed Harry Call to assist the Tariff Committee. By June, however, the campaign began to falter. Nothing concrete had yet been accomplished. There were mutually antagonistic elements among the pro-tariff forces. It was for this reason that the WSFL convention was asked to get into the fray.[32]

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[32]Short to A.C. Edwards, 4 Feb. 1926; Short to Gust Anderson, 15 March, Box 37-1; A.C. Edwards to Short, W. Finn, and H. Call, 20,26 Feb., 6, 7 March 1926, Box 26-20; Short? to Edwards, 9 March 1926, Box 37-3; Finn to Call, 25 Feb. 1926, Box 9-24, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 14-15.

In response to these protests the Coolidge administration temporized. In August Coolidge appointed a committee to investigate the shingle industry with orders to report by 15 November. When the date arrived, however, the committee report was kept secret. Apparently Coolidge had appointed the committee merely to keep the tariff from becoming a campaign issue. There the matter stood, pending Coolidge's 1927 State of the Union address.[33]

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[33]Edwards to Short, 22 Nov. 1926, Box 26-20, WSFL Records.

Chapter 13:

Changing the Guard:

The Regency of Harry Call, 1927

In 1927 the rate of economic growth declined. In the Puget Sound region postal receipts increased by only 2.26 per cent to $4,331,000, bank debits increased by only 1.41 per cent to $3,423 million. Meanwhile, statewide sales of gasoline increased by 10.27 per cent to 204 million gallons, the lowest rate on record, and life insurance sales increased by only 0.19 per cent to $152.3 million. At the same time many indicators of production actually declined. Pacific Northwest lumber production declined by 3.79 per cent to 9,811 million board feet, freight car loadings of lumber products declined by 3.76 per cent to 1,397 thousand. The same pattern appeared in eastern Washington to an even greater degree. While eastern Washington department store sales increased by 16.12 per cent, freight car loadings of fruit declined by 21.8 per cent to 44,100 and wheat production and exports declined by 50 per cent. Overall the value added by manufacturing in Washington State remained practically unchanged, but due to the growing efficiency of production, the number of workers engaged in manufacturing actually declined slightly. Only coal production, which increased by 1.81 per cent to 2,631 thousand tons, and the new pulp and paper industry

showed buoyancy.[1]

The economic impact on the labor movement of these conditions was cushioned, somewhat, by a decline in the Seattle consumer price index of 1.88 per cent. Most alarming for the WSFL was the unemployment situation. While Washington's labor force increased by 1.91 per cent to 639,000, faster than at any time since 1920, employment fell by 0.81 per cent to 612,000. As a result unemployment increased by 157.69 per cent to 26,800 or 4.19 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1)

The failure of employment to grow as rapidly as consumer demand meant that the benefits of production were being enjoyed by fewer and fewer people. This led in turn to a temporary increase in labor militancy. It was largely responsible for the initial success of the WSFL's organization drive. By June 1927 membership in the WSFL had increased by 18.79 per cent over the previous year to 27,080 or 4.23 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 2) The number of affiliates suspended, consolidated, disbanded, or which had their charters revoked, or which withdrew from the WSFL, declined to eighteen. The number of new affiliates, reaffiliations, or reinstatements increased to fifty-four. As a result the number of WSFL-affiliates increased by 15.12 per cent to 274.[2]

Unlike the previous year most of this growth was concentrated outside the SCLC. Membership in SCLC-affiliates actually declined by 1.92 per cent to 14,185 in 1927. The unions which suffered most

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[1]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111; Johansen, pp. 626-628; WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 17-18.

[2]WSFL Procs., (1927), p. 28.

severely were those in the Miscellaneous and Amusement Trades sections. The Metal Trades and Printing Trades sections showed continued increases in membership. (Table No. 3) The number of SCLC-affiliates increased by two to eighty-two. The trend for SCLC-affiliates to join the WSFL, however, grew stronger. Six new SCLC locals joined the WSFL for a total of sixty-four, for an increase of 10.34 per cent. Only 21.95 per cent of the SCLC's affiliates remained outside the WSFL.[3]

Aside from the lack of growth labor conditions in Seattle and its environs were generally better than elsewhere in the state. Part of this was due to increased construction of naval vessels at Bremerton. At the same time much was due to a general improvement in labor-management relations and the continuing control of the labor movement by the conservatives. Early in the year Teamsters Local No. 174 reached an amicable settlement with the Shell Oil Company. And in May 1927 E.B. Ault and Saul Haas of the UR helped settle a dispute between the building trades unions and the employers association. For this they received commendations from the Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries, and the Retail Trade Bureau, all of whom had been old enemies of Ault and Haas. Later in the fall, when an SCLC official addressed a joint meeting of labor and business representatives and stated, "There is no labor problem in Seattle...labor and capital go hand in hand," no sign of disapproval came from the workingmen present.[4]

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[3]Ibid.; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1927, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

[4]O'Connell, p. 234; Thompson, p. 85; WSFL Procs., (1927), pp.

In fact, however, it was mainly the conservative unions which saw "no labor problem in Seattle." Former radical locals like Auto Mechanics Union Local No. 289 and Blacksmiths Union Local No. 48 reported that in the face of employer opposition and unemployment they were barely holding on.[5]

Much of the good feeling between the employers and the conservative unionists carried over into the Seattle municipal election campaign. All three of labor's city council candidates won their contests. The voters also approved a plan to establish a pension system for municipal firemen and passed an ordinance providing for free life, health, and accident insurance for municipal employees (except for firemen and policemen who already had their own system).[6] In August the conservatives again demonstrated their control of the SCLC by sweeping the council's elections. Levine, Murray, and Doyle all won reelection by overwhelming margins.[7]

In 1927 trade unions across the state reported mixed conditions. In eastern Washington, where about twenty-five per cent of the soft fruit crop was lost due to poor weather, WSFL unions reported "considerable progress" in organizing the Walla Walla region and looked forward to more success in the future. Despite these claims, however, there was no increase in the number of affiliates in the

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13-14,17; W. Jones to H. Call, 6 April 1927, Box 14-27, WSFL Records.

[5]J.A. Duncan to Call, 4 June 1927, Box 16-10; J. Davis to Short, 16 May 1927, Box 7-28, WSFL Records.

[6]Dickson, pp. 127-128,137,140-141; Minutes, 16,23 Feb. 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Seattle Times 27 Oct. 1927.

[7]Minutes, 17 Aug. 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

area.[8]

Meanwhile, the WSFL's efforts to recall Governor Hartley faltered. By January 1927 the campaign was clearly in trouble. Recall petitions needed three times as many signatures as initiative petitions and no paid workers were allowed, which placed a high premium on time. The WSFL needed to show progress on the campaign in order to help gain passage for its legislative program. Speed, however, was out of the question. Many of the anti-Hartley organizations were practically ignorant of the recall laws and too few workers volunteered. In the few areas where house-to-house canvasses were conducted satisfactory results accrued but in most areas the campaign lagged. At the same time Governor Hartley moved to undercut the appeal of the recall drive. Although his basic antipathy to labor remained unchanged he very shrewdly dropped his outspoken attacks on the labor movement and adopted more sophisticated methods.

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[8]For more on the Skagit-Whatcom County District, see: WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 17-28.

For more on the Spokane-Spokane County District, see: WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 13,17,32; Minutes, Spokane Central Labor Council, 28 Feb. 1927; W.J. Finn to H. Call, 4 March 1927; Graf to Call, 6 Sept. 1927, Box 9-24, WSFL Records.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla County District, see: WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 16-17,28.

For more on the Grays Harbor-Willappa Harbor District, see: WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 17-18,28; See also: L.E. Canfield to H. Call, 17 March 1927, Box 1-23; McGuire to Call, 22 June 1927, Box 20-50; Call to E.P. Marsh, 7 Nov. 1927, Box 37-47; Johansen to Call, 27 Aug. 1927, Box 21-47, WSFL Records; See also: A.W. McLean to Call, 10 Aug. 1927, Boc 8-21; Call to McLean, 18 Nov. 1927, Box 37-47, WSFL Records, for more on Port Angeles and the Olympic Peninsula.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County District, see: WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 17-18,28,42,83; (1928), p. 7; Brock to All Affiliated Locals, 30 June 1927, Box 15-32; Brunett to WSFL, 27 July 1927, Box 8-16; P. Writer to WSFL, 4 Aug. 1927, Box 8-17, WSFL Records.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County District, see: WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 16-17,28,56,88; H. Call to Lane, 13 Jan. 1927, Box 37-29, WSFL Records.

In December 1926, for example, he appointed E.H. Guie, an Associated Industries attorney, as his legal advisor on labor issues. Thereafter his public positions on labor issues moderated. In particular he agreed to sign two of the three labor bills which passed the legislature. Although he vetoed the credit union bill (HB 197), he signed the prison-made goods bill (HB 260) which provided for "placarding" in all stores which stocked prison-made goods for sale. The measure especially benefited the Garment Workers locals in Seattle and Tacoma. He also signed the barbers licensing bill (SB 120) which was strongly support by the Master Barbers (employers), the State Department of Licenses, and the Barbers Unions.[9]

The rest of the WSFL's legislative program fared poorly. In view of Hartley's opposition, the labor lobby did not even try to gain ratification of the Child Labor Amendment. The widows pension bill (HB 176), to equalize the pensions of widows and orphans who came under the Workmen's Compensation Act prior to 1 July 1923, with those covered under the Act since 1 July 1923, was defeated in the House.[10]

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[9]The credit union bill, modelled on a Massachusetts law, would have legalized credit unions for workers and city employees as well as businessmen. Hartley had already vetoed it once. Though it passed by a large majority, the legislature could not override his veto.

Hartley also vetoed the Eagles' old age pension bill (SB 57). Though this bill was not part of the WSFL program labor had actively supported the Eagles' campaign for it. Together they had succeeded in placing the bill on the legislative calendar in plenty of time for the committees to act on it. Here too the bill passed with a large majority, but supporters could not come up with two-thirds majority needed to override the governor's veto. The failure to pass the bill was a bitter disappointment to labor.

WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 7-10; (1928), p. 6; Call to E.P. Marsh, 24 Feb. 1927, Box 37-32; Lewis to Call, 28 Nov. 1927, Box 16-29, WSFL Records; Minutes, 29 Dec. 1926, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[10]WSFL Procs., (1927), p. 7; Minutes, 12 Jan., 16 Feb. 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Short to A. Johnson, 4 March 1927, Box 37-33; Call to

Although the WSFL's legislative program was severely mangled in the legislative process the labor lobby did manage to achieve some notable successes. In particular it was successful in defeating an effort by the Hartley administration to pass an industrial insurance bill (HB 230) which had been drafted by Federated Industries. The bill, introduced by the Republican leadership on behalf of business interests, would have "robbed injured workmen of all defense and protection." It was the first time an administration tried to alter the law without at least consulting the WSFL. With the support of many employers, who "proved more tolerant to labor," the House Labor Committee readily agreed to rewrite the bill. Upon reconsideration several "vicious" provisions, including a requirement that appellants sue in the Thurston County Superior Court no matter where in the state they lived, were eliminated from the bill. Though not entirely satisfactory from labor's perspective the substitute bill was a great improvement. At this point, however, the Hartley-Federated Industries forces lost interest in the bill and it failed to pass. Labor had

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C. Oldendorff, 18 Jan. 1927, Box 37-29; Call to Oldendorff, 28 Jan. 1927, Box 37-30; Call to W.C. Goffeed, 3 Feb. 1927, Box 37-31; Short to M. Laufer, 8 Feb. 1927, Box 37-31; Executive Council Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records.

For the defeat of labor's vocational rehabilitation bill (SB 113), see: WSFL Procs., (1927), p. 10; Executive Council Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records.

For the defeat of labor's daylight kitchen bill (HB 179), see: WSFL Procs., (1926), pp. 65-66; (1927), p. 10; Executive Council Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 16 Feb., 16 March 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

For the defeat of the one day off in eight for street carmen bill, see: WSFL Procs., (1926), p. 65; (1927), p. 10; Executive Council Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 9 Feb. 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

failed to get the needed changes in the Workmen's Compensation bill, but at least it had prevented erosion of the present industrial insurance program.[11]

The governor's mid-January conciliatory gestures, slight as they were, encouraged A.S. Kenny, the leader of the Recall Hartley Movement, to abandon his campaign. This came as a shock to many, particularly those in the labor movement like Short, who still believed it could succeed. This split in the anti-Hartley ranks encouraged Hartley's labor supporters--specifically the followers of Martin Flyzik, who were concentrated in Mine Workers District No. 10--to renew their attacks on Short. Flyzik, who had been actively working against the recall movement since early December, was always willing to discomfit his old enemy. Short's supporters had had considerable success in countering Flyzik's propaganda, but with the disruption of the recall movement, they lost their motivation for doing so. Flyzik's forces grew more and more vocal. During the legislative session their cries reached a crescendo. They claimed that Short's allies had prevented Flyzik from responding to the charges against him at a labor-sponsored recall meeting, and made statements, "alleging malicous representations appeared in the press relative to the outcome of (a) recall meeting...at which Bros. Short and Harlin attended." They tried to claim that the Short forces had "ousted" Flyzik from the meeting.[12]

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[11] WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 7-10; Minutes, 12 Jan. 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Executive Council Report to the Twenty-sixth WSFL Convention, 1927, Box 60; Call to C.W. Doyle, 4 Feb. 1927, Box 37-31, WSFL Records.

[12] WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 6-7; Minutes, 5 Jan. 1927, Box 8,

Some of Short's old supporters rushed to defend and encourage him. E.P. Rouse wrote:

> I see in the Tac. Times you have nailed Flysik's (sic) and his damable (sic) lies and I want to congratulate and compliment you for it. I get a wounderful (sic) boot out of it because I hate to see that fourflushing Wop get away with anything. Carry the fight to the big tomato and keep him dizzie (sic) explaining and defending himself. Don't you go on the defense, for in politics like other fights, a fellow is half-licked when he goes on the defense.

In fact, however, there was no real fight left in Short. In October 1926 he had accepted positions as president of the Railroad Brotherhood's Brotherhood Bank and Trust Company and of the Pacific Brotherhood Investment Company. Added to his involvement with the Union Labor Life Insurance Company these activities were taking an increasing portion of his time and promised to keep him so occupied for many years. Since October he had been planning to resign. He had withheld the announcement due to the beginning of the recall campaign, the approach of the general elections, and the legislative session on the grounds that it would be dangerous to have an inexperienced hand at the helm at this juncture. Meanwhile Short was actively grooming Harry Call to step into his shoes as president of the WSFL.[13]

As soon as the Hartley recall campaign disintegrated and the WSFL's legislative program had achieved all that it was going to achieve Short announced his resignation. This set off a contest for

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KCCLC Records; Allsopp to All WSFL Locals, 14 Dec. 1926, Box 17-12; A. Leslie to Short, 29 Nov. 1926, Box 23-58; C.E. Goldthorpe to Short, 5 Jan. 1927, Box 9-4; C.E. Ellington to Call, 8 Jan. 1927, Box 11-55, WSFL Records.

[13]Short planned to remain as editor of the Washington State Labor News.

WSFL Procs., (1920), pp. 56,62; (1921), pp. 53,55; (1927), pp. 11-13,86; Call, pp. 44-45,56; Yearbook, (1927), p. 25); UR 2 Jan. 1920; Ellington to Call, 8 Jan. 1927, Box 11-55; E.P. Rouse to Short, 8 Jan. 1927, Box 21-31; S.R. Justham to Short, 17 Jan. 1927, Box 14-

the succession. The two main contenders, aside from Call who lacked a power base in the WSFL, were: William J. Finn, secretary of both the Spokane Central Labor Council and Molders Union Local No. 338, and Robert J. Harlin, formerly president of Mine Workers District No. 10. He had also served as an international vice-president and had edited the Mine Workers Journal. During World War I he had served in the Wilson administration as a member of the United States Fuel Administration. Since the destruction of District No. 10, however, he had been on the payroll of Teamsters Local No. 174, which provided his major backing.[14]

Finn also had powerful support from William Coates, a member of Spokane's influential Pressmen's Local No. 81 and very active in Spokane labor and civic affairs, who also owned the operated the Spokane Labor World in addition to a general printing business. Coates, who had served as a WSFL vice-president and president of the Spokane Central Labor Council from 1910 to 1919, nurtured a grudge against Short for forcing him to remove the line from the Labor World's masthead which read "Owned and Operated By Organized Labor." Coates was also heavily involved in the Anti-Recall movement. In fact, he had chaired the Spokane Anti-Recall organization. In the past he had attacked Short for trying to use the Labor World to defeat C.C. Dill and elect Stanley Webster in the fifth congressional district. As a result, Finn's campaign revolved around his opposition to Short's continued use of the Washington State Labor News to attack Flyzik and Hartley.

29, WSFL Records.

[14]Ibid.

To avoid a divisive struggle for the presidency, Short offered to make concessions if, in return, Coates and Finn would agree to cease their "abusive attacks" on him. But they refused. Short's allies in Spokane, led by A.W. Johnston, tried to defend him, but without much success.[15]

Meanwhile a number of relatively minor candidates, including Short's protege, Harry Call, entered the field against Finn and Harlin. These included M.J. Murray, president of both the Seattle Street Carmen's Union Local No. 587 and the SCLC, and Leo F. Flynn, president of the State Council of Carpenters and business agent of Seattle Carpenters Union Local No. 131. Flynn also was active in the SCLC and Seattle Building Trades Council. In addition James A. Taylor, a vice-president of the International Association of Machinists, business agent of the Puget Sound Machinists District Council, and former president of the Pacific Coast Metal Trades Council, also entered the contest. Taylor was a member of the Seattle Metal Trades Council and was a former WSFL vice-president.[16]

The first serious contest for the presidency of the WSFL since 1918 thus attracted a number of eager candidates. They so divided the potential support that no single candidate could claim a majority of the membership's support. By late February Call estimated that the race for nominations of local unions was so close he could not predict

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[15]Call, p. 43; WSFL Procs., (1919), pp. 78,87; Finn to Short, 18 Jan., 2 Feb. 1927, Box 9-24; Short to Finn, 28 Jan. 1927, Box 37-20; Coates to Call, 30 July 1926, Box 10-47, WSFL Records.

[16]Yearbook, pp. 17,21; WSFL Procs., (1919), p. 28; (1926), pp. 46-47; Call, p. 46; UR 7,19 Jan. 1920.

the outcome. The two major candidates, Finn and Harlin, were running "nip and tuck."[17]

The election was complicated by the contest to fill a vacancy which had occurred on the WSFL's executive board when G.W. Roberge, vice-president of the Seattle district since he had taken over for J.N. Belanger in mid-1925, resigned, effective January 1927.

Immediately upon Roberge's resignation a subsidiary fight broke out to obtain the appointment to the balance of his term on the executive board. Within a short while, the matter was decided, when the Seattle Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28 swung their support behind John H. Jepsen, president of the SCLC and chairman of the council's Political Welfare Committee.[18]

No other candidate could match Jepsen's support and so, on 27 March 1927, the executive board unanimously appointed him to the vacant seat. Jepsen was more conservative than Roberge and he signified the continued growth of Teamster power within the WSFL. The Teamsters now controlled two seats on the executive board in addition to Harry Call who was an ex officio board member. On the other hand, with the appointment of Jepsen to the board, it became extremely unlikely that Call or Harlin could be elected president and greatly improved Finn's chances. Short, however, did not want to let Finn win the election and so he endeavored to improve Call's chances. On 27

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[17]Call to E.P. Marsh, 24 Feb. 1927, Box 37-32, WSFL Records; Minutes, 23 Feb., 2,9 March 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[18]For more on the vice-presidential contest and on Roberge and Jepsen, see: Yearbook, (1927), p. 23; WSFL Procs., (1927), p. 13. Yearbook, (1927), p. 19; Minutes, 9 March 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Brewster and Dail to Short, 9 Nov. 1926, Box 23-17, WSFL Records.

March, the same day that Jepsen was appointed to the executive board and a scant week before nominations for the WSFL presidency were due, Short publicly declared his resignation, effective 31 March. This had the desired effect. By refusing to serve out his full term he forced the executive board to make an interim appointment. In turn, the board accepted Short's recommendation by appointing Harry Call to serve the remainder of Short's term.[19]

Short's actions had the temporary effect of giving Call an advantage over the other contenders for the presidency and they also disrupted the anti-Short campaign. But the most serious effect they had was to remove an important stabilizing influence from the WSFL

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[19]Harry Willis Call was born 5 November 1887, in Woodville, Michigan, of Irish-German parentage. He first entered the labor movement at Fairhaven, Washington where, in 1903, he joined the Shingle Weavers Union Local No. 8. He was thus the first WSFL president whose origins in the labor movement post-date the formation of the WSFL. In the years after 1903 Call served his local as president and secretary. He represented it in the Bellingham Central Labor Council, which he also served as president and secretary from 1914-1918. From 1912 to 1913 he also served as president of the International Shingle Weavers Union. From 1914 to 1918 he served as president of the International Timberworkers Union. From 1921 to 1923, he served as its secretary-treasurer. From 1912 to 1920 he served as a general organizer for these international unions and later was one of the founders of the Timberworkers International Union even while spending six months on active duty in the signal corps during World War I. From 1914 to 1918 Call also served as a vice-president of the WSFL. In 1916 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the legislature from Whatcom County.

Call's career in the labor movement never seemed to get off the ground. This was apparently not his fault since the lumber industry was notoriously difficult to organize. Despite his failure to organize the industry the labor movement recognized that he was a capable and loyal trade unionist. In 1925 following the demise of the Timberworkers Union, Short appointed him as acting secretary of the WSFL. From this post Call continued to edit the Timberworker. He also helped Short edit the Washington State Labor News. Also, since the demise of the Timberworkers, he had been accepted as an organizer by Seattle Teamster Union Local No. 174. Thus, as Short took less and less direct interest in the labor movement, Call was in a good position to pick up the policy reigns.

WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 11-13,17,86; Call, pp. 45-46; Gunns,

for, until Harlin dropped out of the race, it divided the loyalties of the Teamsters between Call and Harlin. As a result, the election turned into a shambles. This may well have been the very sort of result Short intended, for it resulted in a prolongation of Call's regency.

After Short's resignation the leaders of the various factions contending for the presidency seemed to lose their sense of proportion. There was a tremendous upsurge of election fraud and maladministration. Many locals, especially the Roslyn and Cle Elum locals which supported Harlin, held their elections ahead of schedule--in April rather than in May as prescribed by the WSFL constitution--apparently to assure that other candidates could not cut into his support. The business agent of the Seattle Laundry Workers Union Local No. 24, who was a strong supporter of Taylor, cast all of the local's ballots by himself and refused to cast any dissenting ballots. Seattle Iron and Steel Workers Union Local No. 2, which also supported Taylor, allowed non-members to vote. Tacoma Bakers Union Local No. 153, which also supported Taylor, failed to check on the eligibility of those who did vote. Most seriously, Seattle Teamsters Union Local No. 174 rolled up the vote for Call by keeping the polls open for the whole month of May without checking on the members' eligibility and thereby allowing multiple voting. Those candidates whose supporters found themselves out-maneuvered by these tactics complained to the executive board and demanded that the results be voided. So many complaints were received that the board saw no alternative and recommended to the

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p. 143; Yearbook, (1927), p. 17; Executive Council Minutes, 27 March 1927, Box 60, WSFL Records.

convention that the whole election should be nullified and held over again. The board also recommended a whole series of constitutional reforms to prevent future abuses. This ruling allowed the present incumbents to continue in office until a new election could be held in November. Later the WSFL convention approved the board's decision by a secret ballot vote of 118 to 99.[20]

In addition to approving the board's dispositions in the election fraud charges the convention also approved a number of the board's suggested constitutional changes. It also approved submission of a constitutional amendment to the rank and file to reestablish the office of secretary-treasure (Referendum No. 4). The delegates also approved a referendum to require candidates for WSFL vice-president to be nominated by at least three locals (Referendum No. 1). This was designed to limit the number of weak candidacies. The convention also adopted a series of three referenda (Nos. 2,3,5) which related to the conduct, funding, and disbursements of funds for organizational work, the relationship between the secretary-treasurer and the departmental committees, and the filling of vacancies on the section trades committee. These reforms divided the organizational funds according to the amount paid in by each section "as nearly as possible." It represented a further retreat from the idea that strong unions should help weaker unions

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[20]Following the WSFL convention, Call seized the opportunity provided by his continuing incumbency to organize a more effective campaign for the presidency. He was encouraged by the fact that William Finn decided not to run for the presidency again and instead decided to challenge Short's ally A.W. Johnston for the Spokane district vice-presidency.

WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 45-54; Call to H.A. Perrin, 28 July

organize. It was in addition an attempt to focus the WSFL's organizational energies on those unions most likely to survive. This was one of the chief complaints levied against Short's most recent campaign.[21]

Without an election to conduct the convention's main order of business was to approve a new legislative program. What is remarkable about the measures approved is the lack of any new proposals. The convention approved bills calling for legislative reapportionment, passage of the Eagles' old age pension bill, establishment of a civil service retirement system, an anti-injunction bill, and a two-platoon system for Spokane firemen.[22]

The convention's most important legislative proposals, introduced on the floor of the convention by unanimous consent and without reference to committee, consisted of demands that the legislature investigate evidence of maladministration in the state's Industrial Insurance Department. With the same unanimity the convention also endorsed a bill to equalize school taxes between urban and rural districts.[23]

The convention limited its national legislative agenda to endorsing four bills proposed by the National Federation of Federal Employees, calling for improved wages and conditions of employment for federal employees. They also re-endorsed a bill establishing a civil service court of appeals and a bill calling for the election of

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1927, Box 37-40, WSFL Records; Minutes, 22 June 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[21] WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 86-88; J.A. Taylor to M. Cayeau, 16 May 1927, Box 38-2, WSFL Records.

[22] WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 81-82,85-86.

[23] Ibid., (1927), p. 89.

federal judges.[24]

Perhaps the least controversial aspect of the convention's work was its efforts to support the sale of union-made and Washington State-made products especially those produced by union-owned firms. The convention also approved resolutions petitioning the Massachusetts governor to spare the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti, the "two labor champions sentenced to die," and became involved in an effort to patch up the dispute which had caused the Carpenters to secede from the rest of the building trades unions. The conflict, which had been simmering for a number of years, derived from the fact that the Carpenters had succeeded in making inroads upon what the others regarded as their jurisdictions. This national conflict was disturbing otherwise peaceful local relationships. The convention appealed to the AFL to get the Carpenters to reaffiliate with the AFL's Building Trades Department.[25]

Finally, the delegates approved four resolutions adding to the Unfair List. Three of the new additions were companies--Mannings Coffee Houses, Associated Oil Company, and the Puget Sound Bridge and Dredging Company--which had refused to allow union organization, or had adopted labor-saving devices at the cost of union jobs. The fourth addition to the list was the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. The ACWU had seceded from the United Garment Workers Union and from the AFL but had continued to use a label similar to the UGWU's label. In placing the union on the list the WSFL recognized that it was a dual labor body. The delegates ordered the WSFL to publicize

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[24]Ibid., (1927), pp. 81,84,88.
[25]Ibid., (1927), pp. 78,82-87,88-89.

the fact and to encourage use of the UGWU label.[26]

Following the convention the campaign for the WSFL's presidency resumed. This time there were fewer violations of the rules. After Finn decided to drop out of the presidential contest and seek, instead, the Spokane district vice-presidency, Call's chances improved and he began to conduct his campaign more openly. When Call attempted to increase his chances for victory by interpreting Section No. 10 of the WSFL's new election code in his own favor and tried to convince the executive board to rule that the elections must be all held on a single "day" of no more than twenty-four hours, the board paid not the slightest attention to him and ruled, instead, that a "day" really consisted for forty-eight hours. Finally, after numerous entreaties the board approved Call's request but it was too late to turn the tide in his favor. Not only did this revive fears of a managed election but it threw the election to James A. Taylor who, until the withdrawal of Harlin and Finn, had been a minor candidate. The SCLC exploited the division within the conservative ranks, passed a motion condemning it, and succeeded in building support for Taylor, whom the council had previously endorsed. Call's position in the labor movement had never been very strong and without strong conservative backing, his campaign was doomed. In November Taylor won the election to succeed Call. His victory represented the full re-integration of the SCLC into the labor movement. At the same time, William F. Finn defeated Short's incumbent ally, A.W. Johnston, for the Spokane

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[26]Ibid., (1927), pp. 8,84-87.

district vice-presidency, and John C. Varco, secretary of the Yakima Barbers Union Local No. 619, defeated L.N. Morrisette, another incumbent Short supporter, for vice-president in the Walla Walla-Yakima district. No sooner had Short disappeared from the labor scene than his supporters followed him from their seats of power.[27]

Before the next convention met, however, the method of filling vacancies on the executive board was tested again. In early January 1928 John H. Jepsen, who had just won election as vice-president of the Seattle district, "disappeared" along with Seattle Milk Wagon Drivers Union Local No. 66's entire treasury. According to Dave Beck he had taken the money and "gone South." The local was considerably disrupted by the disappearance of its chief officer but it's SCLC delegate reported that:

> ...they regret the unfortunate happenings of recent date in their local but that the morale of the local is fine and their only thought was to do everything in their power to further the interests of the labor movement and that they were going full speed ahead.

Later the local reported that it was:

> ...all squared up, ready for business after the little unpleasant setback which shocked the members. Bro. Beck has been of valuable assistance to the local and the morale is 100%.

Coming as it did on the heels of the disastrous election campaign the disappearance of Jepsen greatly embarrassed the labor movement and tested its new, untried election reforms. Moreover, it led to a significant, but temporary, reduction in Teamster influence over the WSFL. Rather than appoint anyone to take Jepsen's place the executive

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[27] Yearbook, (1927), p. 25; WSFL Procs., (1927), pp. 5,7-8; J.A. Taylor to All Affiliates, 4 Aug. 1927, Box 23-7; Call to A.W. Johnston, 22 April 1927, Box 37-36, WSFL Records; Minutes, 14 Sept., 19-26 Oct. 1927, Box 8, KCCLC Records; See also Footnote No. 24.

board called for a special election. On 11 June 1928 Rowland Watson of the Seattle Plasterers Union Local No. 77 was elected to his unexpired term. With both Call and Jepsen no longer on the WSFL's executive board the Teamsters' influence receeded somewhat. Only John Jacobs of Tacoma remained on the board.[28]

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[28]WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 11,38; Call, p. 50; Minutes, 11,18 Jan. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Chapter 14:

Labor and Government:
The Yellow Dog Contract Fight
and the Election Campaign, 1928

In 1929 the pace of economic activity in Washington State increased again. Virtually every economic indicator, in almost every area of the region showed definite improvement. Industrial production, as indicated by the value added by manufacturing, had recovered from its recent slump. The total number of production workers in Washington also showed marked improvement. The most dramatic gains occurred in eastern Washington where, despite a marked decline in wheat production and exports, the consumer economy boomed. Department store sales increased by 12.03 per cent and shipments of fruit grew by 44.21 per cent to 63,300 carloads. In the Puget Sound region the economy was not so robust. Lumber production grew by 1.69 per cent to 9,977 million board feet but did not surpass the 1926 level. Coal production slumped by 4.16 per cent to a new low of 2,520,000 tons. Total Pacific Northwest shipments of lumber products, however, showed a modest gain of 3.74 per cent to 804,000 car loads. The most promising area of the economy was in consumer goods. Statewide gasoline sales increased 11.27 per cent to 227 million gallons. In western Washington department store sales rose by 7.97 per cent, bank debits grew by 11.11 per cent to $3,803 million, and gross postal receipts increased by a

more modest 3.09 per cent to $4,465 million. Meanwhile, the Seattle consumer price index dropped a further 1.00 per cent, to a post-war low. Any man with money in his pocket could see it increase in value.[1]

Once again, however, labor failed to benefit significantly from economic improvement. While the total labor force increased by 1.87 per cent to 651,000, total employment increased by only 1.30 per cent to 620,000. As a result, unemployment grew by 14.55 per cent to 30,700, or 4.71 per cent of the labor force. This was the highest level of unemployment since the depression year of 1922. (Table No. 1)

After growing by 18.79 per cent as a result of its 1926-1927 organizing campaign, membership in the WSFL slumped in 1928 by 6.83 per cent to 25,230 or 3.87 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 2) In the absence of strong WSFL efforts to support its newer, weaker affiliates, many of them lost membership. Despite this the number of WSFL affiliates remained basically stable, declining by only two locals to 272. The number of new affiliations, reaffiliations, or reinstatements (21), nearly balanced the number of affiliates suspended (1), consolidated, disbanded, or charter revoked (5), or withdrawn (1). Many of the new locals showed remarkable tenacity, even without WSFL support.[2]

Despite the poor economic climate, in most areas of the WSFL's jurisdiction, labor leaders reported somewhat improved labor conditions.

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[1]Johansen, pp. 626-627; "Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

[2]WSFL Procs., (1928), p. 30.

In the Skagit-Whatcom County district a new Tri-City Central Labor Council was established and was in "healthy" condition. Conditions in the mining districts, however, remained very bad. Only in Everett and Bremerton did labor report truly satisfactory conditions.[3]

Conditions in the King-Kitsap County district were, of course, much more complicated. Membership in SCLC locals increased by 5.45 per cent to 14,959. Most of this growth was concentrated in the Printing, Amusement, and Miscellaneous Trades sections. The Maritime Trade Section actually lost membership. (Table No. 3) For the first time in a number of years the trade unions began to display a militant spirit. The Seattle Building Trades Council signed a new agreement which satisfied all but the Painters and Building Laborers locals. The Butchers Union local, with the support of both the WSFL and the SCLC, were involved in one of the bitterest strikes in its history against the Frye Meat Packing Company ("the octopus"). Meanwhile, the Amusement Trades' strike against the John Danz Theatres continued. At the same time the Bakers continued their stubborn fight against the Golden Rule Bakery which, despite the intervention of United States Labor Commissioner E.P. Marsh, rejected all compromises. The Culinary Crafts were among those reporting the most progress. With the aid of

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[3]For more on the Skagit-Whatcom County district, see: Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Washington State Council of Hotel and Restaurant Employees, 8,9 July 1928, p. 5, Box 13-48, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 14-15,17-19,30,73-74.

For more on the Spokane-Spokane County district, see: Ibid.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla County district, see: Ibid; Moran to J.A. Taylor, 16 June 1928, Box 8-11, WSFL Records.

For more on the Grays Harbor-Willappa Harbor County district, see: Ibid.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: Ibid.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, see: Ibid.

the WSFL and the SCLC their fight against Mannings Coffee House was "going nicely." They had completed the organization of the Wenatchee Drug Store Company and Waitresses Union Local No. 240 reported that they were ready to hire an assistant business agent. The SCLC established a special "war committee" to lead these struggles. Similarly, the Auto Mechanics Union Local No. 289, on strike against the William O. McKay auto dealership, reported making "splendid progress," while the Structural Iron Workers Union Local No. 86 amalgamated with an "outlaw" union and ended a long-standing internal dispute. Yet, overall, the leadership of the district reported only stable conditions. In view of the fact that conditions in Bremerton were "better than average," this probably reflects the fact that serious difficulties persisted in the smaller outlying locals. In fact, it was only in Seattle that growth really continued in the district. For the first time since 1919 the number of SCLC affiliates increased significantly, rising by five to eighty-seven. Meanwhile, in a reversal of a long-term trend, the number of WSFL-affiliates in Seattle declined by one to sixty-three.[4]

In 1928 the main energies of the Seattle labor movement were focussed on the effort to organize the high school teachers and win a salary increase for them. This effort overlapped the municipal election campaign and served to rally labor's political forces as no issue had done in a number of years. The issue first arose early in 1928 when the Seattle High School Teachers League, formerly a professional organization, decided to convert itself into a bona fide trade union.

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[4]Ibid.

After the school board refused to grant wage increases the teachers asked incoming WSFL President James A. Taylor to support their demand that the board approve a levy proposition on the March ballot which would allow the board to pay the higher salaries. Taylor quickly responded to their call for help. In one of his first acts as president of the WSFL Taylor welcomed the teachers into the labor movement. Saying he was "gratified to learn that your organization (has) decided to cast its lot with the American Federation of Labor," he offered to help them win the higher wages they asked for and suggested that if the board did not want to bear the responsibility for the added costs it could transfer that responsibility to the voters via the referendum route. Labor's initial efforts to convince the school board to enact the increases, or allow the voters to do so, failed. Instead, the teachers, by now organized as Seattle High School Teachers Union Local No. 200, decided to pursue the same ends by campaigning against the anti-labor school board members. In particular, they directed their campaign against the two members of the board most strongly opposed to Local No. 200. Uniting behind the candidacy of John B. Shorett, who filed as a "people's candidate," the Teachers then requested additional support from both the SCLC and the WSFL.[5]

Unfortunately for the Teachers the election changed nothing to their advantage. The two anti-labor members were defeated, but labor's

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[5]Seattle High School Teachers League Bulletin III, No. 2, (Jan. 1928), Box 22-52; O.D. Stoddard to Taylor, 18 Jan. 1928; E. Post to Taylor, 23 Feb. 1928, Box 13-9; L.A. Morrow to Taylor, 28 Jan. 1928, Box 23-10, WSFL Records; Minutes, 8,29 Feb. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

opposition merely antagonized the school board which still contained an anti-labor majority. Following the elections the board set out to destroy Local No. 200. They demanded that all teachers in the Seattle district withdraw from the AFL and sign a contract expressly giving up their right to be represented by a trade union as a prior condition of employment. This was, in effect, a so-called "Yellow Dog Contract," such as those commonly employed in the great coal and steel industries to inhibit union organization. The newly elected pro-labor members of the board could only protest ineffectively.[6]

This outrageous violation of the Teachers' constitutional liberties attracted national attention. AFL President William Green and the leadership of the American Federation of Teachers condemned the board's action and urged the labor movement to aid Local No. 200 to defeat the board, "by every honorable means." Support also came from the SCLC, the WSFL, the Chicago Federation of Women's High School Teachers, and the Portland Central Labor Council. Mostly, this consisted of moral encouragement. The Teachers received very little financial support. The Teachers, however, did win a temporary restraining order preventing the school board from imposing the Yellow Dog Contract. The judge, however, refused to issue a permanent injunction against the board and, when the WSFL appealed this decision to the State Supreme Court, the court refused to issue a writ preventing the board from acting until the case could be heard. Thus, the board went

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[6]WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 15,63-64; (1929), pp. 50,59; Taylor to G.M. Smith, 9 May 1928; Taylor to Miss Amy A. Fox, 9 May, 4 June 1928, Box 38-7, WSFL Records; Minutes, 16 May 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

ahead and imposed the contract pending the court's decision.[7]

The WSFL appealed the court's decision as a "denial of personal liberty" and as "Un-American," but could get no satisfaction. A year later the case was "still hanging over the high school teachers' heads." In March 1929 two more of the school board's anti-labor members were defeated for reelection, but even this did not change the board's policies and the fight continued. Finally, in June 1930 Local No. 200's case was heard by the State Supreme Court. In December 1930 the court ruled, with only one Justice dissenting, and upheld the lower court's decision allowing the Yellow Dog Contract to stand. This ruling destroyed any possibility of organizing the high school teachers until a pro-labor majority was elected to the school board.[8]

Seattle labor was interested in several other political contests in 1928. In particular labor was concerned in the mayoral and city council contests. The SCLC's Political Welfare Committee endorsed Mayor Landes. C.W. Doyle and David Levine spoke on her behalf and gave several radio talks for her. Landes also had the support of all of the city's newspapers and its business leadership for her strong support of Seattle City Light. Even ex-Mayor Brown supported her. In addition she had built up a strong precinct organization. City employees, represented by the Seattle Civil Service League, who remembered her support for the 1926 city manager plan, however, opposed her strongly. Together with private power interests they induced Frank Edwards to run

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[7]Ibid; WSFL Procs., (1929), p. 8; "Teachers Union Defeated in Seattle," School Review 38 (May 1930), pp. 229-230; Minutes, 18 June, 3 Dec. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[8]Ibid.

against her. This opened a split in the SCLC. The Civil Service League was supported by a number of municipally employed unions including the Firefighters, the Street Carmen, the Electrical Workers, and the Policemen. In addition a number of other locals, including the Soft Drink Workers, opposed her.

As a result of the split in the public power forces Edwards won a complete triumph. He carried most of the city's neighborhoods. Landes won only in the University District. Following the election the split widened. Several of the pro-Edwards locals, led by President M.J. Murray of the Street Carmen, introduced a motion censuring Doyle and Levine for supporting Landes without proper authorization and proposing that the SCLC apologize to Edwards for not supporting him more strongly. Nothing like this had been seen since 1924. Doyle and Levine, however, received a round of applause and a vote of confidence from the delegates. Both subsequently won reelection to their SCLC offices. Murray, who had challenged Levine for president, lost his seat on the SCLC's executive board to Harry Dail, president of Teamsters Union Local No. 174.[9]

Although in 1928 the WSFL was preoccupied with the congressional and state elections, it also found time to ponder the internal political problems which had hampered the 1927 WSFL election campaign. Under the pressure of events the 1927 convention had approved appoint-

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[9]The only other change on the SCLC's executive board occurred in October 1928, when Robert Hesketh resigned to become secretary of the International Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union and moved to Indianapolis. He had served on the board since 1911 and had long been a Seattle city councilman.

Dickson, pp. 68-73; Seattle Times 22 March 1928; Minutes, 8 Aug., 24 Oct. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Yearbook, (1927), p. 17; For more on the city elections, see: Minutes, 15,29 Feb. 1923, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

ment of special committees to revise the constitution and to report on the condition of workers education programs. It had also combined the executive board's various organizational and political funds. These committees, however, had been stacked with men opposed to fundamental changes. As a result they failed to recommend any deep-seated changes in organizational structure. The organizational fund was re-divided among the trades sections. It was even further divided by the addition of a Provisional Trades Section, which included locals not covered by the three existing sections. Essentially these changes prevented the WSFL from using funds from the existing unions to help organize new ones. As if to confirm their conservative approach the convention delegates reelected their existing executive board without alteration.[10]

The WSFL did take a few feeble efforts to help new unions organize. It voted to support the efforts of Seattle Teachers Local No. 200 and Technical Engineers Union Local No. 17 to win recognition. It also voted to encourage central labor councils to do more in this line. However, the continued failure to do anything to organize the lumber industry, in which fifty per cent of the state's labor force was employed under miserable conditions--low wages, blacklists, and company unions--constituted a continuing and growing danger to organized labor. As long as the lumber industry remained unorganized the vast majority of the new immigrant workers remained outside of the trade union movement. As long as the WSFL refused to reach out to these workers, they would look upon it as an exclusive club, dominated

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[10] WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 35,50-51,55-58; Taylor to M. Cayeau, 16 May 1929, Box 38-2, WSFL Records.

by old immigrant, skilled workers, who only wanted to hold on to what they had. Indeed, the WSFL practically admitted as much. Its limited efforts to support employment in the lumber industry--such as the shingle tariff campaign--had been directed at the highest-paid lumber workers. And even these efforts had not achieved anything. The WSFL's response to the inaction in Washington, D.C. had been to "study" the situation, to lay the facts before the AFL and labor organizations in neighboring states, and to ask for a major organizational effort. The WSFL also asked the AFL to make a major effort to prop up Canadian unions in the hopes that higher Canadian wages would make imports of Canadian shingles more expensive and less attractive in American markets. None of these actions dented the problem. Jurisdictional jealousies between the various international unions and the strong opposition of employers prevented the AFL from organizing the lumber industry in a comprehensive way.[11]

Aside from the problems of organization the WSFL also considered adopting a political program for the elections. At the head of the WSFL's list of priorities was a federal convict labor bill, the Cooper-Hawes bill. The state Prison Labor Act, which had passed the legislature in 1927, required that all stores stocking prison-made goods imported into the state, be appropriately placarded. While the act had successfully met lower court challenges, it had not yet been tested in the Supreme Court. The WSFL hoped to provide insurance against an adverse ruling by supporting national legislation. The Cooper-Hawes bill had the support of the state's congressional

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[11] WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 63-64,71.

delegation.[12]

The WSFL also renewed its call for ratification of the Child Labor Amendment and began to urge support for a migratory auto tourist labor bill, the Barr-Walsh bill, which were currently before Congress. The Barr-Walsh bill would have made it illegal to hire transient labor on federal projects where local labor was available. The WSFL continued to support the bill even though a provision requiring payment of the "prevailing wage" on such projects was striken from the bill.[13]

Among the WSFL's most important national priorities were a number of bills which concerned the Seamen's Union, the shipping industry, and the long-delayed Columbia Basin irrigation project. The WSFL also endorsed the Shipstead Anti-Injunction Act and the Jones Prosperity Act, which would have expanded public works projects as a solution to chronic unemployment. Among the most far-seeing of the WSFL's legislative endorsements was the Wagner Public Employment bill (SB 4151), which promoted federal-state cooperation to establish public employment offices. Yet none of these bills had widespread support in Congress. Even if they all had passed they would probably not have helped the labor movement very much.[14]

In sum, the WSFL's federal legislation program reflected both

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[12]By this time the Four L's were far less significant than they had once been.

Ibid; (1928), p. 74; Taylor to A. Leslie, 6 Oct. 1928; Taylor to Senate Interstate Commerce Committee and House Labor Committee, 19 Feb. 1928, Box 38-1, WSFL Records.

[13]WSFL Procs., (1928), p. 64; Taylor to A. Leslie, 6 Oct. 1928, Box 31-1, WSFL Records.

[14]WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 63,70; Taylor to Hon. John F. Miller, 13 March 1928, Box 38-1, WSFL Records.

For more on the Seamen's bills, see: WSFL Procs., (1928), pp.

labor's weakness and its lack of imagination in trying to gain more control over its economic fate. Many AFL trade unionists doubted the benefits to be gained through federal legislation and, perhaps as a consequence, there were few legislators willing to support such programs. Those few trade unionists and congressmen who believed that the federal government could and should try to help trade unions were forced to do so indirectly, through immigration restriction, controls on foreign shipowners, tariffs and the like.

The WSFL's state legislative program carried over from the 1927 convention. The 1928 convention reiterated the WSFL's continuing support for the Eagles' Old Age Pension bill which, though "subject to improvement," was "fundamentally sound." It's main virtue was that it "did away with poor houses," and "established the principle of an Old Age Pension Plan." The WSFL, however, did advance a revised version of an old program when it supported a new initiative drive to enact the Grange Public Power bill. It would allow rural districts to create public utility districts with the same rights as urban districts in order to develop their own power resources. The WSFL hoped that the plan would relieve the anxieties of eastern Washingtonians and rural groups about urban control of power resources and so permit them to unite behind a public power proposal. The WSFL, in endorsing the campaign, asked all central labor councils to cooperate. This was the first test of President Taylor's political acumen.[15]

65-66.

For more on the Anti-Injunction bill, see: Ibid.

[15]The signature campaign began immediately after the 1928 election and soon had collected more than the 50,000 signatures required to

The WSFL then went on to approve an extensive legislative program for the 1929 session which consisted mostly of the unfinished agenda of previous conventions. The only really new proposal was for a compulsory automobile insurance bill, but the convention's legislative committee requested and the convention agreed to leave this measure to the discretion of the executive board.[16]

Under Taylor's leadership, the WSFL attempted to revive the alliance with the Grange. Their support for the public power bill was intended to cement this tie, which was central to Taylor's political policy. Prior to the WSFL convention he had attended the Grange's state convention and attempted to patch up their disagreements. Addressing their convention he had pledged full cooperation and recommended that both organizations "agree to disagree" on minor matters so that they might achieve success in important areas. The recent decline in wheat prices and production undoubtedly contributed to the Grange's amiability at this point.[17]

When the WSFL convention agreed to leave the details of its political policy up to the executive board it gave Taylor's policy a big boost. The executive board, in turn, endorsed it. In the final event, however, neither the WSFL nor the Grange could agree on a common slate of candidates. They were most deeply split over the

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qualify for the 1930 general election ballot.
WSFL Procs., (1929), p. 6; Minutes, 21 Nov., 5,19 Dec. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Executive Board Minutes, 6 Jan. 1929, Box 60, WSFL Records.

[16]For more on the WSFL's state legislative program, see: WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 48,65,68-73; Taylor to A. Leslie, 6 Oct. 1928, Box 38-1, WSFL Records.

[17]WSFL Procs., (1928), pp. 16,72; Cole, p. 198; Minutes, 5

gubernatorial candidates. The WSFL's executive board ultimately endorsed Scott Bullitt who was running in the Democratic primary. Bullitt, who appeared before the board to defend his policies, was a very attractive personality. His only disadvantage, as far as labor was concerned, was that he favored conservative economic policies. Still he was far superior to the second Democratic candidate, Judge Stephen Chadwick, who was both too "dry" and too conservative. The third Democratic contender, George F. Cotterill, was liberal economically and sympathetic to many of labor's programs, but he was also too "dry" for the WSFL and did not seem likely to win. In each case the Grange found something to object to in the Democratic candidates labor could support: Cotterill was too liberal, Bullitt was too "wet". Both the Grange and the WSFL would probably have preferred a progressive Republican but, since Hartley had the Republican nomination within his grasp, they had no alternative but to operate in the Democratic primary. In the end the Grange endorsed a fourth candidate who did not seem likely to win either and whom labor could not support either.[18]

In the primary elections labor achieved its basic goal. Bullitt easily defeated Chadwick, by a vote of 20,739 to 13,804, with Cotterill and the Grange's candidate trailing far behind. In the Republican primary Governor Hartley easily defeated E.L. French, his

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Sept., 3,10,17 Oct. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Minutes, 24 Sept. 1928, Box 60, WSFL Records.

[18]The WSFL also endorsed John A. Gellatly for Lt. Governor and Bruce Blake for Supreme Court Position No. 4. The WSFL's main worry in the Lt. Governor's race was to see that Senator W.W. Connor, who had opposed the Anti-Injunction bill in the 1925-1926 special session, did not win.

Ibid.

opponent, by a vote of 143,505 to 124,312.[19]

In the congressional primaries, the WSFL had some successes. In accordance with the convention's wishes, Taylor submitted questionnaires to all congressional candidates asking them to state their positions on labor's legislative program and whether they would agree to confer with the WSFL on AFL-sponsored bills. Of the Democrats both Senator Dill and former-congressman Sam B. Hill, who was running to regain his old seat in the fifth district, responded favorably on all counts and the executive board endorsed them. In addition, the board also endorsed the four of the six incumbent Republican congressmen: Miller, Hadley, Johnson, and Summers. All four had always been endorsed by the WSFL and all four went on to victory in the primaries.[20]

In the Democratic senatorial primary, Dill easily defeated his Anti-Saloon League challenger by nearly seven to one. He then faced a challenge from Supreme Court Justice Kenneth MacIntosh in the general election. Campaigning across the state in his roadster, Dill cut a "homey" figure. He stood on his record as an independent progressive and defeated MacIntosh by a vote of 261,524 to 227,415. This represented a nine per cent improvement over his 1922 showing.[21]

In the congressional elections, Hill reclaimed his old congressional seat for the Democrats, and all of the Republican incumbents, including those endorsed by the WSFL, retained their seats. But this

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[19]Cole, p. 198; Gunns, pp. 213-216; For more information on the gubernatorial primary, see: Seattle P-I 5-6 Sept. 1928.

[20]J.A. Taylor to Hill, June 1928, Box 38-1; Dill to Call, 30 Aug. 1927, Box 11-18; Minutes, 24 Sept. 1928, Box 60, WSFL Records; Johansen, p. 618.

[21]Johansen, p. 618; Cole, pp. 199,204-205,210-211.

was small comfort for the labor movement. Although it represented one of the most successful political campaigns the WSFL had ever conducted it presaged no improvement in labor's legislative fortunes and little improvement in labor's political isolation.[22]

The WSFL had even less luck in the legislative races. Most of the progressive candidates endorsed by the central labor councils and local unions ran in the Republican primaries. In King County, the SCLC supported all but four of the Republican incumbents. All but one of these progressives went on to victory but these were already strong progressive seats. Overall the Republican conservatives maintained their control. In the general elections, the Republicans picked up one seat in the House and another one in the Senate, both at the expense of the Democrats.[23]

By far the WSFL's greatest effort in the general elections was to upset Governor Hartley's reelection chances. Hartley's primary vote was ten times greater than Bullitt's. To be sure much of the state's press, including the Seattle Times, which had led the recall drive, still opposed Hartley. Since the unsuccessful effort to recall him, however, some papers had become more even-handed in their treatment of him. He still received strong support from the Seattle Star and the Spokane Spokesman-Review. Both supported him on the grounds that Bullitt was too "wet". Bullitt, who had moderated his stand on prohibition in order to win the nomination, also shifted

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[22]Johansen, p. 618.

[23]Minutes, 5 Sept., 24,31 Oct. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Cole, pp. 251-252.

his emphasis during the campaign to economic reform and improved social services. He attacked Hartley as autocratic and insensitive to the common man.

The election results confirmed the problems of the anti-Hartley movement. Hartley defeated Bullitt by a vote of 281,991 to 214,334. But the election also held hopeful signs for the Democrats and the labor movement. All of the other statewide candidates endorsed by the WSFL, with the exception of Supreme Court Position No. 4, won. Also Hartley trailed his party's presidential candidate, Herbert Hoover, by a wide margin. In the absence of a third party candidate the Democrats increased their share of the vote. If they ever surmounted their difficulties with the prohibition issue, and abandoned their archaic economic policies, they might seriously challenge for political dominance. They still needed an issue to rally the opposition to the Hartley forces, however, and did not appear likely to acquire it.[24]

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[24]Johansen, pp. 614,618; Cole, pp. 200-201,206-208,211-212; Gumns, p. 217; WSFL Procs., (1929), p. 6.

Chapter 15:

On the Brink of the Precipice:
The Anti-Filipino Campaign, 1929

In 1929 the economic problems which had emerged in the previous two or three years in Washington State suddenly became much more serious. In some sectors of the economy industrial production continued to grow but without the buoyancy noted in 1928. Coal production increased by 2.82 per cent to 2,592,000 tons, lumber production west of the Cascades increased by 1.42 per cent to 10,119 million board feet, but elsewhere in the region production declined. Pacific Northwest shipments of lumber products declined by 2.48 per cent to 784,000 cars. Indeed, Pacific Northwest shipments of all products declined.[1]

In eastern Washington the problems of production were even more severe. Wheat production and exports, which had begun to fall in 1928, continued to fall sharply. Fruit exports declined by 12.28 per cent to 55,800 cars. The truly alarming aspect of the problem, however, was the continued high rate of consumer activity. Consumers were maintaining their lifestyles by borrowing money, or spending their savings. Eastern Washington department store sales sagged only slightly.[2]

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[1]Johansen, pp. 626,628; "Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

[2]Ibid.

Similarly, in western Washington consumer sales remained high. Bank debits increased by 10.47 per cent to an all-time high of $4,200 million. Department store sales rose by 1.7 per cent, postal receipts increased by 2.9 per cent to $4,600 million, and the number of lines of newspaper advertising in Seattle and Tacoma grew by 6.47 per cent to 59.2 million lines. Statewide, too, consumer sales increased. Gasoline sales rose by 12.77 per cent to 256 million gallons and life insurance sales increased by 8.51 per cent to $166.8 million. At the same time the long-term deflationary trend reversed itself. Ominously, the consumer price index rose 0.59 per cent. Obviously, consumers in western Washington, like those in eastern Washington, were borrowing or digging into savings, to maintain their standards of living, even as the economic basis of prosperity eroded. For, even as consumers tried to keep up appearances, they cut back on large scale purchases and investment. Perhaps the most ominous sign of this, in western Washington, was a five per cent decline in the value of building permits issued. The value of building permits issued in eleven western Washington cities fell by 10.88 per cent to $40.1 million in 1929.[3]

To a certain extent, the spurt of borrowing and consumer activity masked the underlying economic malaise by propping up the economy. Labor felt this more clearly than most, but labor's sensitivity was confused by the sharp drop in unemployment. While the total labor force increased by only 0.76 per cent to 656,000, total employment increased by 3.87 per cent to 644,000. As a result unemployment fell by 61.23 per cent to 11,900, or 1.81 per cent of the

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[3]Ibid.

labor force. The sharp increase in consumer spending helped keep employment, especially employment of production workers, rising. In 1929 factory employment reached 143,000 in Washington State. (Table No. 1) This type of economic regime could not last for it depended, ultimately, on a continued rapid rise of economic confidence and the willingness of bankers and investors to continue to extend their credit.

Because of these economic factors, WSFL's membership increased by a mere 33 members over 1928, an increase of 0.48 per cent to 25,353, or 3.86 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 2) The WSFL compounded its difficulties by continuing to organize weak new locals. Even as its membership remained stable, twenty-eight locals affiliated, reaffiliated, or received reinstatement, more than balancing the nine suspended, consolidated, disbanded, withdrawn, or which had their charters revoked. The number of WSFL affiliates increased by nineteen to 291, an increase of 6.98 per cent. The problem was that these new locals depended on continued prosperity for their survival.[4]

Labor conditions in the WSFL's vice-presidential districts also appeared to benefit from continued economic improvement. While this reflected more wishful thinking than actual progress, in several areas organized labor did achieve some progress. Conditions in the Spokane region were especially improved and the central labor council achieved some notable political successes. President Andy Fabian, who also served as secretary of Pressmen and Assistants Union Local No. 8, won election to the Board of City Commissioners.[5]

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[4]WSFL Procs., (1929), p. 18; Johansen, p. 627.

[5]For more on the Skagit-Whatcom County district, see: WSFL

In the vital King-Kitsap County district most locals reported improved conditions. As usual Bremerton, with seventeen affiliated locals, reported the best conditions, but most Seattle locals also reported good conditions. Many reported higher wages and labor leaders noted that the five-day week movement was "gaining momentum." The SCLC, however, did become involved in a number of conflicts on a number of fronts. It was engaged in continuing strikes with Frye and Company Meat Packers, the Golden Rule Bakery, Mannings Coffee Houses, William O. McKay Automobile Company, the John Danz Theatres, the Eggert Shoe Company, and the Putty Doughnut shop. In addition, the Van De Kamp Bakery, headquartered in Los Angeles--the heartland of the open shop--had begun to branch into the Seattle areas and was stiffening resistance to the Bakers Union. The Molders Union was involved in strikes with both the Renton Car and Foundry and Pacific Stove companies. The Boilermakers were fighting the Lake Washington Shipyard Company in Kirkland. Overall the SCLC was trying to use economic prosperity to win improved conditions and running into resistance from employers pressured by growing resistance to sales. By June membership in SCLC affiliates was practically unchanged over the year before. Paid-up membership had increased by only 0.98 per cent to 15,107. No trade section reported dramatic changes, but one may

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Procs., (1929), pp. 10,18.

For more on the Spokane-Spokane County district, see: Ibid., (1929), pp. 8-10; Yearbook, (1925), pp. 31,33.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla County district, see: Ibid.

For more on the Grays Harbor-Willappa Harbor County district, see: Ibid; Bonallo to Taylor, 9 Dec. 1929, Box 23-24, WSFL Records.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 40-41,45,57.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, see: Ibid., (1929), pp. 11,18.

notice several interesting shifts of emphasis. While the conservative craft unions--the Miscellaneous, Building, Printing, and Amusement Trades sections--reported slight increases, or decreases, the formerly radical industrial unions--the Maritime, Metal, and Brewery/Provision Trades sections--reported stable or rising memberships. The number of SCLC affiliates remained stable at eighty-seven, but the number of WSFL-affiliates increased by five to sixty-eight. (Table No. 3)[6]

The SCLC suffered politically from its continuing difficulties with the Civil Service League. Despite the council's electoral successes in 1928, the split with the league hurt. The SCLC accused the league of "usurping...the functions of the Trade Union Movement and (insisted that) the League refrain from negotiating matters pertaining to wages and working conditions of City Employees unless specifically requested to do so by the (SCLC)." The SCLC, however, refused to engage in real negotiations with the league over the issue on the grounds that the league was a "dual" organization. This destroyed any hope of compromise or the creation of a joint policy.[7]

Aside from the dispute with the Civil Service League over who should negotiate on behalf of municipal employees, two primary political issues arose. Neither was new: immigration restriction and the municipal elections.[8]

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[6]Ibid., (1929), pp. 10-11,18; Minutes, 30 Jan. 1929, Box 8; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1929, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

[7]Minutes, 18 Sept., 2,9,16 Oct. 1929, 2 Feb. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[8]Minutes, 16 Oct., 18 Dec. 1929, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Early in 1929, however, the most pressing political problem to confront the SCLC was the current "wave" of Filipino immigration. Labor had long found immigration restriction to be its most effective weapon in gaining political support. Increasingly, labor turned to it whenever the economic future looked dark. Thus it is not surprising to note labor's interest in a new anti-immigrant campaign in 1929. In January the SCLC endorsed a recommendation from its legislative committee "to do all in its power to have legislation passed restricting immigration." In the past Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans, and eastern Europeans had served as a focus. In the late 1920's the Filipinos arose to take their place. Despite the relatively small volume of Filipino immigration labor succumbed to fears of a new asiatic "menace." Thus the SCLC endorsed the federal Walsh bill (SB 13900), which repealed the law permitting Filipinos, who had served in the United States Navy, Marine Corps, or Naval Auxiliary Services, from becoming naturalized citizens. The demand for restrictions on Filipino immigration came, originally, from the Seamen's Union and it was on this basis that the WSFL had endorsed the Seamen's bills in 1928, but it soon attracted widespread support in the WSFL. The Washington State labor movement had been born in the midst of racial conflict and it was an essential part of labor's ideology. Moreover, there was an element of truth to these fears. The Sailors Union, for example, pointed out that the Tacoma Oriental Steamship Company was displacing "white" crews with Filipinos and the SCLC's board of business representatives complained that there was insufficient enforcement of existing immigration laws and regulations. The board recommended

that labor deal with the

> ...influx of Filipinos (by getting the) central labor council (to) cooperate with city and federal officials to see that immigrants from (the) Philippine Islands and the Orient pass rigid examinations before being admitted.

Later the SCLC voted send a message to President-elect Hoover, "regarding the hordes of Mexican and Filipino laborers coming into this country." At about the same time the SCLC also endorsed the King bill, which it said was designed "to prevent smuggling of Chinese into the United States." It also endorsed the Bacon bill which would have forced the federal government to employ only resident labor on government construction projects. Later in the summer the SCLC decided to put its anti-immigrant policy into more effective practice on a local level. The council appointed a special committee to visit the Seattle YMCA "regarding (charges of) the employment of Filipinos in place of White girls and the training of waitresses." After an investigation, the committee reported that the management of the YMCA was "considering the Filipino question" and promised to meet with representatives of the Waitresses Union Local No. 240 to discuss the issue.[9]

Meanwhile the SCLC also faced the problem of finding someone to replace Robert Hesketh on the Seattle City Council. In December 1928 the council had called a special election to fill the vacancy caused when Hesketh resigned to take a job with his international union. Immediately, the Political Welfare Committee began a search for a labor candidate. They found this a difficult task, however,

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[9]Minutes, 9,16 Jan., 6 Feb., 13 March, 3 April, 26 June 1929, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

"owing to the sacrifice one would have to make to run." Lacking a volunteer the committee, thereupon, "drafted Brother (Robert H. "Bobby") Harlin who had reluctantly consented to enter the race." Harlin, who since his unsuccessful attempt to win the WSFL presidency had served as a secretarial assistant to President Taylor, was an ideal candidate. Politically and ideologically conservative he took a vigorous rhetorical stand in favor of the "common man."[10]

The WSFL approved Harlin's selection without dissent and allowed him to retain his WSFL position while he campaigned. Many Mine Workers locals endorsed him and the SCLC quickly approved him as labor's candidate. Running on a platform promising to improve the rapid transit system, Harlin finished second in the thirteen-man primary. In the general election he won the seat. Afterwards he thanked all the workers for his victory, but reserved special praise for Harry Dail, the Teamsters, and the Seattle Card and Label League who had done much to make his victory possible. Once on the council Harlin was a strong force for improved conditions for city employees and led the fight for higher wages for Street Carmen. In this way he helped ease tensions between the Civil Service League and the SCLC.[11]

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[10]Minutes, 19 Dec. 1928, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Minutes, 6 Jan. 1929, Box 60, WSFL Records; Cravens, p. 115; Call, p. 56; WSFL Procs., (1920), pp. 56,62; (1921), pp. 53,55; (1928), pp. 38,41; (1929), pp. 27,30; UR 6 Sept. 1919, 2 Jan. 1920.

[11]The SCLC's own election followed the same pattern. The only change in the SCLC's executive board was the election of James A. Duncan as Reading Clerk. Duncan had not held an SCLC office since 1925, but apparently hoped to make a modest come-back in a relatively insignificant position. He joined the basically conservative majority which still dominated the board.

Minutes, 16 Jan., 6 Feb., 6,13 March, 14 Aug., 11,25 Sept., 16 Oct. 1929, Box 8, KCCLC Records; WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 8,49,59.

The WSFL began 1929 with high hopes. In February it held a special organizing convention in Seattle "in harmony with the 'Double Our Membership' declaration of the (AFL's 1928) New Orleans Convention." Most of the delegates to the conference came from western Washington. In conjunction with this conference, a number of international unions sent organizers into the state. Had the AFL responded in this way earlier, in 1926 or 1927, larger gains might have accrued. As indicated by the membership statistics, however, the campaign resulted in few successes. A number of new locals were organized, but the WSFL's membership did not grow. An example of the difficulties experienced by the AFL-WSFL organizational campaign can be seen in the lumber industry. The AFL, with the permission of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, launched a tentative effort to organize the shingle weavers in the "chaotic timber industry." This was a logical place to begin as the shingle weavers were known for their esprit and had previously managed to organize unions on several occasions. While the shingle weavers were "marking time" deciding whether to take steps leading toward affiliation with the AFL, however, the WSFL was working at cross-purposes. When the WSFL announced that the time was not yet "right" to organize the shingle weavers the AFL campaign languished and then collapsed. Then the WSFL decided, instead, to organize the workers in the new, but rapidly-growing pulp and paper industry. To do so they needed to get permission from the unions with jurisdiction in the industry, the International Pulp and Sulphite Workers and the International Paper Makers unions. By 1930 both these organizations had given the campaign their blessings, but

the WSFL had succeeded in organizing only one mill. As long as the AFL, the international unions, and the WSFL failed to coordinate their efforts, it was unlikely that anyone could organize the industry. By convention time 1929 it had become clear that none of labor's organizational initiatives would succeed although labor was still unprepared to admit as much.[12]

By the same token labor's legislative program in 1929 also failed. Labor's inability to make inroads in the conservative ranks at the 1928 elections led to inevitable failure. The legislators defeated the bulk of the labor program. Part of what they did approve, Governor Hartley vetoed.[13]

Indeed it is surprising that any part of the WSFL program passed. While the conservatives succeeded in gutting the basic elements of the labor program, a number of labor bills, permitting trade unions to write group insurance (HB 395) and regulating barber schools, apprentices, and students (SB 251) passed into law. In addition, the governor approved a firemen's pension bill (Subst. SB 65) and a

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[12] WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 9,40-41,45; (1930), pp. 9-10.

[13] While the volume of legislation which labor introduced, but which failed to pass the legislature and the governor, was large and while the conservative Republicans continued to run the session, by now it was clear that they were fighting a rear-guard action and that those who supported labor's measures were gradually increasing their strength. The most graphic display of this changing balance was passage of the Eagles' Old Age Pension bill. Though Hartley vetoed the measure, the mere fact that it passed the legislature was a clear sign that the times were changing. For more on the unsuccessful labor program, see:

WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 6-7; (1930), p. 44; Minutes, 6 Jan. 1929, Box 60; Taylor to E. Miller, 2 Jan. 1929, Box 38-2, WSFL Records; Pullen, p. 329; For more on the WSFL's labor program, see also: Minutes, 16,23 Jan., 6,20,27 Feb., 13 March 1929, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

policemen's pension bill (Subst. SB 64). It further unanimously approved, with the governor's concurrence, a petition to Congress calling for amendments to the tariff to protect the shingle industry (HJM 1). In all the labor lobby succeeded in getting twelve bills voted on in the House and seven bills voted on in the Senate. Finally, while the Grange's district power bill was defeated in the Senate by a vote of twenty to seventeen, a Grange-WSFL petition drive succeeded in placing the issue on the 1930 general election ballot. Thus while labor failed to achieve its most important goals it could still hope for passage in the future.[14]

The WSFL convention in 1929 responded to the legislative challenge by renewing its call for passage of its program and expanding some elements of it. In addition it added a number of entirely new measures to it. At the same time it rejected the perennial proposals of a few delegates for creation of a new Labor Party. The convention did approve bills calling for a complete overhaul of the Industrial Insurance Act and appointed a committee to amass and study the facts of the matter in preparation for the next legislative session. It also re-endorsed the Cascade Tunnel project, the Eagles Old Age Pension bill, and adopted a resolution empowering the executive board to work with the Eagles to jointly publish a pamphlet concerning the need for pensions. The convention went on to endorse bills to protect savings deposits in banks, to amend the coal mine code, and to increase state expenditures on roads and bridges. It also endorsed the auto mechanics

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[14]Call, p. 22; Pullen, p. 329; WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 5-7; (1930), p. 7; Minutes, 27 Feb. 1929, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

proposed health code and recommended that the legislature approve creation of an elective Highway Commission.[15]

One major change did occur in the WSFL's legislative program. In the past the WSFL's state legislative program had received top priority over its federal program, but in 1929 a great reversal occurred. In large part this was due to the simple fact that in 1929 it was apparent that even if the legislature approved its program, in toto, this would still not remedy labor's ills. As never before in WSFL history the convention became aware of the need to enact federal legislation. Only by federal legislation could the WSFL hope to boost employment and limit oriental immigration. To increase employment in Bremerton, for example, it was necessary for Congress to appropriate funds for more naval construction. When the convention responded to pressure from the rank and file and the SCLC called for stricter immigration restrictions, independence for the Philippines, new laws governing Filipino immigration, and smaller quotas for Mexican immigration, it had to seek federal action. The reasoning behind the call for Filipino independence is obvious. The WSFL reasoned that if the Philippines were independent they would lose their right to emigrate to the United States. Bills to these ends had already been introduced in Congress.

In this period the anti-Filipino campaign was labor's most prominent and effective political issue. Labor accused employers of encouraging "the Mongolian influx." By taking unskilled jobs the

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[15] WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 42,44-47,50,54,57,59.

Filipinos displaced elderly workers and women. The WSFL also charged that the Filipinos "preyed" on their female co-workers, they were unhealthy and spread disease, they were a "menace," and "both an economic and social canker." Furthermore, President Taylor noted a definite increase in the rate of Filipino immigration and protested that the Philippines had been plastered with posters advertising good jobs in America. In response to this appeal the convention instructed Taylor to attend the AFL convention so as "to better enable him to bring important matters to the attention of the delegates in attendance at the Toronto convention."[16]

Soon after the WSFL convention Taylor addressed the American Legion's state convention in Yakima and stressed the anti-Filipino issue. They responded to his call for a unified stand with a unanimous endorsement. With this support Taylor and an SCLC delegation carried their anti-Filipino movement to the AFL convention. There they ran into strong opposition; none of their resolutions passed. "The Easterners," Taylor complained, "don't understand the issue." The Washingtonians salved their disappointment by recollecting that the convention did endorse the three other WSFL-sponsored resolutions calling for higher tariffs on imported logs, lumber, and shingles. The tariffs, Taylor argued, was "also anti-oriental, since they are designed to protect (White American) workers against Orientals in

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[16]At the AFL convention, Taylor and the other anti-Filipino delegates from the West Coast faced the considerable apathy of eastern delegates. Despite all his efforts the AFL refused to get involved in the anti-Filipino crusade.

Ibid., (1929), pp. 5-6,30,47,50-51,54,58; (1930), pp. 5-6.

in Canada." With the support of AFL President Green the tariff bills advanced through the Senate. Later, when the House eliminated the lumber tariff, the WSFL wired "our Senators" to oppose the whole bill if it was not reinstated. As a result the conference committee put the lumber tariff back in the bill and it became part of the 1930 tariff.[17]

Another important aspect of the WSFL's federal program was its effort to secure legal reform, especially of the laws concerning labor injunctions. The convention reiterated its often-voiced plea that "government by injunction in labor cases must cease" and called on the state's congressional delegation to support legislation to this effect. A number of delegates thought that the best way to accomplish this was by a bill of impeachment against Chief Justice William Howard Taft who had written many of the Supreme Court's anti-labor injunction decisions. This idea, however, never got out of committee. Later, Taylor attended the 1930 Republican state convention in Bellingham and argued before the platform committee that they should include an anti-injunction plank, but his request was voted down in executive session. Also, in the coming year, Taylor worked strenuously and successfully in the campaign to prevent the nomination of Judge Parker to the United States Supreme Court because Parker had supported Yellow Dog Contracts. While this negative success cheered labor, it was no substitute for a

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[17]The failure to enact anti-Filipino legislation had serious consequences. In both Washington and California a series of anti-Filipino riots and demonstrations occurred in which many people were injured as native-born White agricultural laborers tried to drive out the Filipinos who were taking their jobs. The WSFL hoped for a time that this would convince the "Easterners" of the need for effective legislation, but they were wrong.

Ibid., (1929), pp. 38,42,56-57; (1930), pp. 5-6,10.

reversal of the court's policies.[18]

Turning aside from its political chores the convention then considered its own organizational problems. After reelecting the entire executive board, the convention next considered a long-neglected problem--the huge extent of the sixth vice-presidential district (King-Kitsap County). The sixth district had become too large for a single vice-president to handle. Therefore, the convention approved a request from the Bremerton Central Labor Council to create a new vice-presidential district consisting of Kitsap County, from the sixth district, and of Jefferson, Mason, and Challam counties, from the fourth district (Grays Harbor-Willapa Harbor areas). The new district, the first created since the formation of the WSFL in 1902, would be large enough to pay more per capita taxes than either the Bellingham or Yakima-Walla Walla districts and could therefore well-afford to sustain itself. For its vice-president the Bremerton district later chose H.E. Wheeler, president of Bremerton Teamsters Union Local No. 762 and secretary of the central labor council. A member of the Teamsters Union since 1904 Wheeler had been the chief instigator behind the new district. With him on the executive board the Teamsters were once again the most influential group of trade unions in the WSFL.[19]

In an afterthought the convention also considered the pleas of a number of IWW's and their supporters who wanted to help secure the

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[18]Ibid., (1929), pp. 50-51,60; (1930), p. 6; Hicks, p. 238.

[19]WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 23,42,59; (1930), p. 8; Call, p. 51; Yearbook, (1927), p. 27.

For more on the convention's actions, see: WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 45-47,59-60; Taylor to M. Cayeau, 16 May 1929, Box 38-2, WSFL Records.

release of Mooney and Billings and the Centralia prisoners. But in doing so the WSFL made it clear that they in no way endorsed the political viewpoints of the prisoners, or their supporters. Rather, the WSFL believed that there had been a "miscarriage of justice" in the Mooney-Billings case caused by the "abnormal state of public mind" at the time and that the Centralia prisoners, though guilty, had "suffered enough." In both cases the WSFL agreed to join the appeal for clemency. And, following the convention, the executive board did send a series of letters on behalf of the men but without any noticeable success.[20]

In the last few months of 1929 the economic outlook, which had appeared so promising, turned grim. In the fall unemployment also became an issue again. After the stock market crash the SCLC issued an urgent appeal to President Hoover to do something to avert the spread of the crisis, to prop up economic confidence before the economic effects of the crash affected the stagnating "real" economy. Even so labor did not respond to the crisis with unusual alarm. Not until 1933 did unemployment and economic privation begin to shake the labor movement out of its conservative approach.[21]

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[20] WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 45,50-51,56; (1930), p. 8.
[21] Minutes, 16 Oct., 18 Dec. 1929, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Chapter 16:

Labor and the Economic Crisis:
Unemployment and Public Power, 1930

The first year of the Great Depression was a transition year for Washington labor. Most of the issues which had arisen earlier in the 1920's persisted. The rippling effects of the 1929 financial crash did not have an immediate, dramatic impact on the state's economy. Primarily, it served to intensify labor's economic problems. It did not lead to a reassessment of basic economic and political doctrines. Rather, it evoked a grim determination to make old policies work, whether they fitted the new conditions or not.

The chief problem limiting future economic growth was probably the maturation of the state's extractive industries, particularly the lumber, coal mining, and agricultural industries. With new technologies, they no longer demanded large new labor supplies. As prices fell and demand for their products dropped, they need fewer workers. This momentous development had been masked, for a time, by the effects of World War I, which tended to prop up these industries. After the war, however, their decline resumed. The result was that in the 1920's and early 1930's Washington was transformed from one of the most rapidly growing regions of the country into a region of below average growth. By 1930 the census showed that Washington had a

population of 1,563,396, an increase of only 15.24 per cent over the previous census. Furthermore, while the migration of people from rural to urban migration was transforming the rest of the country, Washington's rural-urban balance remained practically unchanged over 1910. The future for growth seemed bleak.[1]

With the collapse of the post-war systems of international credit and trade new demand for Washington's industrial products dried up. As a result employers cut back production. For the year, lumber production west of the Cascades fell by 25.38 per cent to 7,553 million board feet, the lowest on record. Similarly, coal production fell by 11.61 per cent to 2,291 thousand tons, also the lowest on record. Railroad shipments of lumber products from the Pacific Northwest fell by 27.03 per cent to 572,000 carloads, while shipments of all products fell by 18.58 per cent to 1,139,000 carloads. In western Washington the value of building permits issued fell by 3.24 per cent to $38.8 million.[2]

By the same token indexes of consumer and retail activity declined all over the Pacific Northwest. In western Washington department store sales fell by 11.17 per cent. Gross postal receipts fell by 1.78 per cent to $4,514 million. Statewide total income fell 11.05 per cent to $982 million. As a result, the Seattle consumer price index declined by 2.01 per cent to the lowest level on record. Only statewide gasoline sales, which rose by 3.63 per cent, continued to rise. In eastern Washington, too, the economy declined ever more rapidly as the year progressed. Falling wheat prices led to declines

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[1] Johansen, pp. 607,621.
[2] "Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

in production and exports. Due to the even more rapid decline of industrial production, however, agriculture grew in relative importance.[3]

As a result of these cut-backs in production and consumer spending unemployment grew increasingly severe. The total number of production workers in the state as a whole fell sharply by mid-1930. While the available labor force increased by 1.21 per cent to 664,000, total employment in Washington State declined by 4.03 per cent to 618,000. Factory employment fell by 20.55 to 113,600. As a result, unemployment increased by 289.91 per cent to 46,400, or 6.98 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1) Not since the depression year of 1922 had the problem of unemployment been so severe and there was no prospect of improvement.[4]

In view of the economic situation it was clear that labor's organizational goals could not be achieved. But labor still hoped for some success. In 1921-1922 economic conditions had been even worse but had recovered within a few years. Furthermore, after stabilizing in 1929, membership in the WSFL had begun to grow again, rising 6.16 per cent to 26,915, or 4.05 per cent of the labor force. Many workers, fearing loss of their jobs within the near future, apparently sought the protection of trade unions. Although the time was late for such a solution it made labor's prospects seem less bleak than it really was. (Table No. 2) The number of affiliates suspended (10), consolidated, disbanded, or which had their charters revoked (4), or which withdrew from the WSFL (2), was easily balanced

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[3]Ibid.
[4]Ibid; Johansen, pp. 626-628.

by the number of new affiliates, reaffiliations, and reinstatements (19). The total number of affiliates increased by 8 to 279, nearly matching the level of mid-1921.[5]

This impression is generally borne out by the WSFL's annual survey of its vice-presidential districts. Most districts reported some positive results. In Spokane Len Funk, of Carpenters Union Local No. 98, a member of organized labor for thirty-five years and an "old war horse" of the labor movement, was elected mayor. Despite this most districts reported increasing difficulties with unemployment. In particular the mining districts reported intense suffering. Only the new Kitsap-Olympic Peninsula district reported unalleviated success.[6]

In its report for the year the King County district (No. 6) reported that they were "going forward." They announced that they had won improved wages and conditions. They had made "steady gains" in their campaign for the five-day week and several locals were trying to

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[5] WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 31.

[6] For more on the Skagit-Whatcom County district, see: Ibid., (1930), pp. 10-12.

For more on the Spokane-Spokane County district, see: Ibid., (1930), pp. 10-12,31.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla County district, see: Ibid.

For more on the Grays Harbor-Willappa Harbor County district, see: Ibid.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: Ibid; Yearbook, (1930), pp. 35,38; H.W. Dail to Taylor, 19 Feb., 31 Dec. 1930, Box 23-17; Report Filed with J.B. Sherman, Chairman of Special H.R. Investigating Committee, Aug. 1932, Box 23-63, WSFL Records.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 13.

For more on the new Mason-Kitsap-Jefferson-Clallam County district, see: Ibid.

get the six-hour day established. Bakers Union Local No. 9 had won a four-year, seven-hour day agreement with the Continental Bakeries, which it described as the "first of its kind in the United States or Canada." Still, major fights for union recognition continued against Frye and Company Meat Packers, Golden Rule Bakery Company, William O. McKay Automobile and Majestic Radio dealers, John Danz Theatre Company, Van De Kamp's Bakery, and the General Petroleum Company. And many locals reported great increases in unemployment. By strenuous efforts the SCLC and the WSFL managed to hold their own in the district. The WSFL and the SCLC even added one new affiliate apiece. Membership in the SCLC declined by only 0.98 per cent to 14,976, mostly concentrated in the Metal Trades and Amusement Trades sections. The Miscellaneous Trades and Building Trades sections actually gained a few members. (Table No. 3)[7]

The lack of real organizational progress and the inability of the conservatives to explain their failure contributed to a search for scapegoats. Again, the prime candidates were the Filipinos and institutions which employed or aided them. In July 1930 the SCLC refused to attend an Anti-Tuberculosis League meeting at the Seattle YWCA because, despite the SCLC's protests, the YWCA had "discharged their white girls (and were) employing Philipinoes (sic) in their places." The council continued to protest the YWCA's position until September, when the YWCA finally decided to "dispense with the services of the Filipinoes."[8]

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[7]WSFL Procs., (1930), pp. 12-13,21; Minutes, 8 Jan., 19 March, 11 June, 21 Aug., 3,10 Sept., 26 Nov. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; See also: WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 10; Yearbook, (1930), pp. 20,49.

[8]Minutes, 2,9 July, 17 Sept. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; WSFL

Various SCLC locals, too, sought to use the Filipino "menace." Cooks and Assistants Union Local No. 31, for example, complained that the Filipinos were undercutting union wages. Only a few locals found the Filipinos beneficial. One of these, Meat Cutters Union Local No. 81, thanked the Filipinos when it was "reported that the Philippinos (sic) at Frye (and Company Wholesale Meat Packers) lettuce rance (sic) near Monroe went on strike against the intolerable (sic) conditions under which they were working." The WSFL, too, continued to press the anti-Filipino issue. On 10 June, for example, WSFL President Taylor asked the Eagles state convention to endorse a resolution excluding Filipinos and all other "Orientals" from the United States.[9]

For the first time the SCLC also joined an effort to exclude Mexican laborers from the United States. In April the council endorsed a bill pending before Congress to restrain Mexican immigration (HR 10343). The SCLC also took time out to listen to speeches by E.P. Marsh and John T. Thorp, vice-president of the International Association of Machinists. Thorpe, who connected the worsening unemployment situation with the influx of foreign workers, said that the problem was

> ...especially serious in the Southwestern States where thousands of American Workers have been displaced by Mexican Peons. (He stressed) the importance of labor getting busy an (sic) see(ing) to it that Congressmen (be) elected this Fall who favored legislation restricting immigration of Mexicans and Filipinos.

The official minutes reported that Thorp's remarks were "well received" by the SCLC.[10]

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[9]The Eagles responded by unanimously endorsing the WSFL position. Ibid.

[10]For more on the SCLC anti-immigrant policies and its general

In the fall the SCLC added a measure to its anti-immigration program at the behest of the Seamen's Union "protesting against ship owners operating under the American flag, and receiving (a) heavy postal subsidy (while) employing Chinese seamen on ships operating between (the) Pacific Coast and Europe.[11]

It was at this point, too, that the SCLC began to devote a large part of its political effort towards the problem of unemployment. In part this was because labor's preferred solutions--increased government spending and public works construction projects--found little favor with city officials. The mayor felt that the best way to deal with their budget problems was to cut expenses. And in July the city council went ahead with what the Technical Engineers Union Local No. 17 termed the "mayor's so-called economy program." This consisted of abolishing numerous city positions. It ignored the Civil Service Commission's recommendations for re-classification of some workers and abandoned the idea of allowing any wage increases in 1930. The pro-labor councilmen protested in vain.[12]

By November 1930 the unemployment problem in Seattle approached a crisis. Interest in unemployment insurance became so intense that the SCLC opened its hall for a debate between two University of Washington students on the subject, a forum never before used for such a debate. Following the debate the SCLC leadership began to organize

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federal legislative program, see: Minutes, 9,16,23,30 April, 11 June, 22 Oct. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Minutes, 30 July 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

public support for unemployment insurance. They made arrangements to speak about unemployment on KOMO radio and established a special committee on unemployment, funded jointly by the trade sections and the council. Later, the SCLC endorsed the committee's recommendation that the council "open up a place to take care of those who had no means of subsistence." Such measures, although well intended, were inadequate responses to the situation. At least, however, they indicated a tentative groping for more effective solutions. By March 1931 even these weak relief measures had collapsed for lack of funds. Labor attempted to obtain city funds for relief, but this proved impossible, too, because of the mayor's opposition and because of divisions within the SCLC. The mayor's main efforts were devoted to budget cutting and avoiding responsibility for relief costs. At one point, for example, he tried to force city employees to donate one day's pay for relief. The SCLC's legislative committee protested, pointing out that unemployment was not labor's fault and drawing the mayor's attention to President Hoover's statement to that effect. The committee recommended, instead, that he appoint a committee to meet with an SCLC committee on the issue. The whole council approved the committee's suggestion, but some locals, including the Technical Engineers, believed the mayor's proposal deserved a try. Meanwhile AFL President Green peppered the SCLC with requests for more information about local unemployment problems and offered suggestions that they give the issue more publicity but otherwise provided no practical assistance.[13]

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[13]Green's appeals and requests continued throughout 1931. Minutes, 12,19,26 Nov., 8,10 Dec. 1930, 7 Jan., 25 March, 8 July, 19 Aug., 9 Sept., 25 Nov. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

In the Seattle municipal elections labor faced great difficulties. The Teachers Union Local No. 200 canvassed the city, including many "workers districts," and said they found that most of them had low voter registrations (i.e., under forty per cent of those eligible) while the non-worker districts were heavily registered (i.e., over eighty-five per cent of those eligible). More than anything else weak labor turn-outs led to the defeat of labor's school board slate. The Yellow Dog Contract continued in force. Despite this, the pro-labor candidates came quite close to winning. Under the pressure of economic hardship, it seemed that a new progressive coalition was forming.[14]

By the time the WSFL convention met in Bellingham in June the WSFL had begun to focus more clearly on the issues that would dominate the Depression years: unemployment, relief, and organization. There were no easy answers. And the issues of the past did not vanish overnight. Political policy remained an important consideration. Indeed, the WSFL's political influence grew considerably. Since 1928, at least, the Republican conservatives in the legislature had been governing by obstructing most reform efforts. They had been supported by the governor's veto. As a result, they had succeeded in preventing any effective measures to deal with the economic problems facing the state, but each year their task became more difficult. They were, in effect, gambling that the crisis would blow over as it had in 1921-1923. The longer they resisted efforts to relieve hunger and unemployment, the

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[14]For more on labor's role in the campaign, see: Minutes, 29 Jan., 26 Feb., 5,12 March, 2 April 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; WSFL Procs., (1930), pp. 46,65.

greater grew labor's political appeal.[15]

Similarly, foreign workers still received much attention. Prior to the beginning of its sessions the convention heard an address by A. Reddick, a fraternal delegate from the Eagles. Then, thanking the WSFL for its support, he requested more stringent application of the Immigration Act, saying:

> We do not want the Japanese, Hindos (sic), Mexicans and Filipinos marrying our daughters, nor do we want the Filipinos acting as chambermaids in our Y.W.C.A.'s of this country, when white men are not allowed in the lobbies.

He congratulated Senator Dill (also in attendance) for his progressive works in the Senate and for his support of the Eagles Old Age Pension bill. He "regretted" Hartley's veto of the bill and promised to re-introduce the measure at the next session of the legislature.

In his own speech Senator Dill dwelt on his efforts to obtain an anti-injunction bill in Congress and received a "prolonged, enthusiastic reception" when he said that the "Federal Courts are the greatest barricade against labor securing justice today in their handling of the injunction law." He urged the WSFL to support congressmen who favored the exclusion of Filipinos and Mexican laborers, as a test for political candidates in the fall, but did not make this the central point of his attack. He seemed much more assured when he urged that labor re-endorse the Eagles Old Age Pension bill and the Grange's public power bill, which were both on the fall ballot and promised to campaign actively for them during the summer.[16]

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[15]WSFL Procs., (1930), pp. 25,40,42-44; Minutes, 21 Jan., 15 June 1930, Box 60, WSFL Records.

[16]Ibid.

Leadership of the convention was in the hands of Vice-president Rowland Watson of the Seattle district, who presided in the place of President Taylor, who had been stricken with pneumonia. Watson disagreed with Taylor on few issues and the convention program had largely been determined beforehand by the executive board. During the convention no great challenge appeared to the board's authority. For the third straight year the board was reelected in its entirety. The WSFL's "old regime" remained solidly in place.[17]

The first real business of the convention was to approve President Green's requests, that they endorse the work of the AFL, pledge opposition to the Yellow Dog Contract, and inform the state's congressional delegation where they stood on the AFL's current legislative program. Although this was the first time that the AFL had sought to mobilize political support in the states the WSFL was quick to approve the entire package. The convention then proceeded to consider a series of programs to relieve unemployment. The first measure they considered called for adoption of the six hour day and the five day week. Here a split developed on the resolutions committee. Nine of the sixteen committee members favored a substitute resolution which agreed to "stand united" for the principle of a shorter work day and week to keep pace with the increased productivity of machinery and for increased wages to fight under-consumption. The majority resolution further pledged to aid locals raise wages, reduce hours, and end unemployment. It also committed the WSFL to support national

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[17] WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 32.

and international unions in their organizational efforts. The majority plan, however, failed to acknowledge specific goals, such as the six hour day or five day week. Clearly, a new split was developing. This time the issue was over tactics. Both sides held the same ends in common but disagreed over the means to those ends. After some argument the resolution passed in its watered-down and amended form. The WSFL's most specific request asked Congress to make a survey of the wives of federal employees who also held government jobs and, if many were found, to "relieve the situation" by securing their removal.[18] Among the other important elements of the AFL program, which the WSFL endorsed, were a federal employees retirement bill and establishment of a civil service court of appeals.[19]

Following this, the legislative committee endorsed and the convention approved the executive board's efforts "in behalf of Filipino expulsion" and urged "authorization of steps as appear practical to cope with the influx of cheap Mexican labor" as a solution to the unemployment problems. Hard times, apparently, were forcing the labor movement to protect its members' jobs by forcing others out of theirs.[20]

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[18]Ibid., (1930), pp. 48,52-53,59,63,67.

[19]On its own the WSFL also proposed a measure to "conscript" wealth to fight the Depression; several bills for Bremerton navy yard workers; a bill reactivating the Columbia Basin irrigation project; a bill which requested the federal government to begin an immediate public improvements program to provide employment; and a bill which opposed changes in the consent decree (requested by the meat packers to prevent union organization).
Ibid., (1930), pp. 48-50,52,65,67-68.

[20]Ibid., (1930), pp. 48,60.

The WSFL also approved a series of resolutions supporting the organizational efforts of various trades and combatting unemployment within the state. The most important of these was approval of a charter for a statewide Building Trades Council subordinate to the WSFL. Its purpose was to organize un-organized building trades workers outside of the major urban areas and to improve the cooperation among the existing organizations. This was, in effect, a backhanded recognition that the industrial unionists had been right all along, but it did not alter the fact that each union remained independent of the others, nor did it acknowledge that their independence was an obstacle to trade union organization.[21]

Similarly, the convention also endorsed a program of state legislation to relieve unemployment. This included bills giving preference to resident contractors in state work, enforcing the prison made goods act, and the Sunday merchandising act. To help the individual trade unions the convention approved a series of special interest bills. These included measures changing the state miners code to improve safety and reduce their hours; to regulate engineers' practices; to increase the salaries of county engineers; and to change the lien laws as they applied to property surveys, making it possible for surveyors to collect over-due debts. In addition, the convention approved recommendations to establish a teachers tenure system which would protect school teachers from arbitrary dismissal; to provide

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[21]For more on labor's organizational program, see: Ibid., (1930), pp. 9,42,45-46,50,53,59-60,62-65,69; Minutes, 30 April 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

one day off in eight for street carmen, and to establish a state plumbing code. Most of these measures had been introduced before, in one form or another, but had failed to pass.[22]

In the field of industrial insurance and safety the convention endorsed an important series of proposals. It supported legislation to redraft the pure food and sanitary inspection act, to establish an elevator standards act, and to establish a medical-dental clinic for school children. The most important of these proposals, however, was a series of four measures amending the industrial insurance act and a fifth measure which amended the firemen's pension act. For the next five years these continued to be labor's priority items. Beyond increasing awards and pensions these measures sought to make the claims procedure easier and simpler, to regain for workmen the right to compensation for injuries despite any pre-existing injuries which slowed healing (a proviso enacted by the 1929 legislative session), and to extend coverage to culinary workers. In most respects these proposals had prior executive board approval.[23]

Labor's most important immediate political objective in 1930 was passage of its direct legislation program in the fall elections. In WSFL convention approved a program endorsing two of the initiatives and two of the referenda amending the constitution. The main burden of putting this program into practice, however, fell on the executive board. Following the convention, the board, on its own, endorsed yet

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[22]WSFL Procs., (1930), pp. 42;51-52,59,62,66-67.

[23]Ibid., (1930), pp. 40,51-52,63,66,69; Minutes, 21 Jan., 15 June 1930, Box 60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 30 April, 7 May 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

a third constitutional amendment, in the belief that labor would "be in a much better position if we could stand behind all five bills appearing on the ballot."[24]

The two initiatives also on the ballot, however, were far more important to labor than the referenda. Despite a constitutional provision calling for re-apportionment of the legislature after every census Washington's legislature had not been re-apportioned since 1901. The result was a considerable maldistribution of political power in favor of rural conservative Republican districts. In 1929 labor had supported a re-apportionment bill (SB 116) in the legislature. It had passed the Senate by a vote of thirty to eleven, but had failed to pass when it was delayed in the House Rules Committee, a rural stronghold. Following the session, labor had joined in the effort to pass the measure by an initiative, but did not take the leading role, although it was prominent in the drafting of the measure.[25]

All major groups in the WSFL responded favorably to the call to support the reapportionment bill (Initiative 57). They played a

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[24]Of the three WSFL-sponsored referenda, only one failed to pass in November. For more on the campaign, see: WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 7; (1931), pp. 5-6; Taylor to A. Johnston, 7 Oct. 1930, Box 38-3; Johnston to Taylor, 13 Nov. 1930, Box 10-60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 15 Oct. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[25]The effort to get the initiative on the ballot in 1930 is a story worth telling. After the initiative was drafted it was submitted to the secretary of state for his approval. He, after approving it, submitted it to the attorney-general for the latter's concurrence. The attorney-general, however, ruled that while the legislature had violated the constitution this was not a question of initiative action. The reapportionment forces were thus forced to carry their appeal to the State Supreme Court. Finally, the court ruled in their favor. Following this the WSFL helped draft an even more comprehensive bill. By July 1930 the petitions were being circulated for a new Reapportionment Initiative 57. The WSFL convention voted to endorse it and asked all labor organizations to support it.
WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 7.

strong part in the campaign for its passage in November 1930. After the voters approved Initiative 57, by a 6,000 vote majority, all the supporters of the initiative (according to the WSFL) agreed that the WSFL had been responsible for its passage. With passage of Initiative 57, the rural, conservative Republicans lost their iron grip on the legislature. This opened the way for labor future success in getting its legislative proposals approved.[26]

Even more important than the initiative for labor, however, was the Grange's public power bill (Initiative 1). Initiative 1 grew out of all those attempts in the early and mid-1920's to enact a system of publicly-owned utilities. Initiative 1 allowed otherwise unincorporated areas to organize public utility districts to build dams and to generate, purchase, and distribute power. This caused some opposition from Seattle and Tacoma City Light managers, who still hoped to create a single statewide public power system which they could dominate, but it had the advantage of minimizing rural opposition to public power.[27]

Initiative 1 was the most controversial issue before the voters in 1930. It dominated the press. Four-fifths of the state's newspapers and the private power forces opposed it. The political parties and most candidates, however, simply tried to avoid taking public positions of it. The Democrats, for example, sacrificed it to their need to support repeal of Prohibition. Of all the Democratic congressional

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[26]Ibid., (1931), p. 5; Minutes, 30 April, 11 June 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Johnston to Taylor, 13 Nov. 1930, Box 10-60, WSFL Records; Call, p. 29.

[27]WSFL Procs., (1929), p. 6; (1930), p. 7; Cole, pp. 233,239-242, 247-248; Johansen, pp. 520-521.

candidates only C.C. Dill endorsed it wholeheartedly. Of the Republican congressional candidates only Homer T. Bone and J.T. McCutcheon endorsed it. Bone, who was close to Tacoma City Light forces, led the fight for the bill.

The Grange and the WSFL had been pressing for a public power bill since the failure of the Bone bill in 1924. The Grange continually emphasized the growing importance and increasing uses of electricity, complained about the monopoly control of private utilities, and tried to educate the public about the weaknesses of private ownership. But, in the 1920's public faith in the nation's business leadership was not conducive to such appeals. It took the Depression to shock the public out of its lethargy. Now, high rural power rates, increasing usages of electricity, scandals in private power company management, growing unemployment, lower incomes, and lower farm prices led people to consider private utilities--and, indeed, all businessmen--in a new, less favorable and awe-inspiring light. Public regulation, ownership, and operation of utilities no longer seemed so evil, nor so revolutionary. Above all, the new conditions made the WSFL and the Grange willing to cooperate with one another to a degree unimaginable in the 1920's.[28]

Also important was the fact that Grange-WSFL cooperation extended beyond the public power issue. On 29 August, following the WSFL convention, the executive board met and formed itself into a committee to work for the four direct legislation bills approved by the convention and to decide on a non-partisan slate of primary candidates.

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[28]Ibid.

In eastern Washington, where the Grange was strongest, the WSFL agreed to cooperate with the Spokane CPPA organization to elect progressives on both the Republican and Democratic primaries. In western Washington the WSFL retained more direct control of its endorsements, choosing mainly progressive Republicans. It was for the "people's power bill" more than for any candidate that the WSFL sent its representatives into the field. It aroused a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and very little opposition in the labor movement. Although the SCLC did not endorse it, it opened its forum for an extensive debate on the subject and many individual locals supported it. Meanwhile the Spokane Central Labor Council endorsed it, as did Republican Senator George Norris, the Nebraska progressive. In the end the voters approved Initiative 1 by a vote of 152,487 to 130,901. This was not an overwhelming triumph and not until the late 1930's were many public power districts created. It proved, however, that the underlying political conditions, which had favored private business and conservative political interests in the 1920's, were eroding rapidly and presenting tremendous opportunities for progressives in both parties.[29]

There were few real contests in the congressional races.

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[29]By 1939 only four districts were producing and/or distributing electricity. The narrow passage was due to the fact that urban areas with existing public utility systems--especially Seattle and Tacoma--tended to vote against it. The bill received majorities in twenty-seven out of the state's thirty-nine counties, especially those dominated by the private power companies.

Cole, pp. 249-251,329; WSFL Procs., (1930), pp. 53-54; (1931), p. 5; Johnston to Taylor, 13 Nov. 1930, Box 10-60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 24 Sept., 29 Oct., 5 Nov. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Johansen, pp. 513-526.

Although the WSFL had good success with its endorsements the Republicans managed to retain their margin in House seats and even increased their percentage of the vote. In the state legislative races the results were similar. The Republicans retained their hold on both houses. Many of the freshmen in both parties, however, held marked progressive sympathies and a number of Spokane progressive Republicans even tried to endorse their own candidate for speaker when the Republican leadership's candidate promised to support amendments to the recently-passed reapportionment bill. Their effort failed when a number of progressives refused to break with the Republican leadership. Their failure had serious consequences for labor's legislative program, but paved the way for labor's ultimate political success after 1932.[30]

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[30]Johansen, pp. 618,625; Cole, pp. 243-245,259; WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 5; Minutes, 13 Aug., 8,22 Oct., 5 Nov. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Johnston to Taylor, 12 Sept., 13 Nov. 1930, Box 10-60, WSFL Records.

For more on labor's role in legislative, state, and local races, see: Cole, pp. 251-252; WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 5; Minutes, 13 Aug., 3 Sept., 8,15,22,29 Oct. 1930, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Johnston to Taylor, 13 Nov. 1930, Box 10-60; Taylor to Johnston, 18 Sept., 7 Oct. 1930, Box 38-3, WSFL Records.

PART FOUR:

The Depression,

1931 - 1935

Chapter 17:

The Great Depression:
Unemployment and the Search for Relief, 1931

The economic decline accelerated in 1931. Virtually every index of economic activity dropped rapidly. In western Washington the decline was especially severe. The volume of department store sales fell by 22.64 per cent and postal receipts fell by 8.9 per cent to $4,110,000. More importantly bank debits declined by 21.73 per cent to $2,813 million. Indexes of business activity in eastern Washington and in the lower Columbia River regions also fell sharply. Statewide sales of life insurance declined by 25.49 per cent to $124.8 million and even gasoline sales declined 1.88 per cent to 260 million gallons.

Indexes of production tell the same story. Pacific Northwest lumber production fell by 29.70 per cent to 5,310 million board feet, the lowest cut on record. Freight carloadings of logs and forest products declined by 37.75 per cent to 356,000 cars and shipments of all products declined by 18.58 per cent to 830,000 cars. Meanwhile Washington State coal production fell by 19.74 per cent to 1,838 thousand tons, by far the lowest on record. Most dramatically, however, was the decline in the western Washington construction activity. Largely due to the collapse of credit the value of building permits issued in eleven western Washington cities fell by 66.03 per cent to

a mere $13.2 million.[1]

As a result of these reductions in production and business activity, labor suffered severe deprivation. While the labor force grew 0.90 per cent to 670,000, total employment in Washington State fell by 8.89 per cent to 563,000. The overall rate of unemployment increased by 129.31 per cent to 106,400, or 15.88 per cent of the total labor force. (Table No. 1) Total factory employment declined by 24.38 per cent to 113,600.[2]

The Depression, however, had a lesser impact on organized labor than on the economy as a whole. Organized workers had some protection, at least initially, from the waves of economic dislocation sweeping the region. Although the gains made in 1930 were quickly wiped out, membership in the WSFL fell by only 7.83 per cent to 24,305, or 3.70 per cent of the labor force, and the number of affiliates fell by only 2.5 per cent to 272. (Table No. 2) It could have been much worse. Despite widespread wage reductions, the WSFL could at least congratulate itself that it was protecting the jobs of its members. In addition those workers who retained their jobs benefitted in another way, as deflation deepened. The Seattle consumer price index fell by 8.74 per cent. Thus, employed workers saw the value of their paychecks increase.[3]

This overall impression must be tempered by the understanding that particular localities endured conditions far worse than the state

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[1]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111; Johansen, pp. 501,626-628.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid; WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 25.

as a whole. The WSFL's annual district survey of labor conditions revealed that, in certain areas, labor conditions were much worse than the overall membership and affiliation statistics indicated. Only in the Yakima-Walla Walla and in the new Bremerton district did organized labor seem to be doing above-average. In the former, labor's growth depended on the "fair amount of building now going on" and, in the latter, to activity at the Navy yard.[4]

In the Seattle-King County district labor conditions deteriorated rapidly. Similarly, due to growing unemployment and the lack of official relief programs, conditions among the unemployed deteriorated rapidly. Large numbers of camps, containing thousands of homeless and transient persons, sprang up on vacant land.

As the Depression deepened membership in trade unions still cushioned workers from its harshest effects. This tended to keep up membership figures. Membership in SCLC-affiliates declined by only 2.97 per cent to 14,587. (Table No. 3) The decline was sharpest in the Metal Trades Section. Despite the sharp drop in construction, membership in Building Trades Section locals actually increased

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[4]For more on the Bellingham-Skagit Valley district, see: Ibid., (1931), pp. 14;

For more on the Spokane district, see: Ibid., pp. 12,14,68; Minutes, 17 June 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla district, see: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 14-15.

For more on the Grays Harbor-Willappa Harbor district, see: Ibid., p. 15; See also: Ibid., (1932), p. 14.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: Ibid., (1931), p. 15; (1932), p. 14; Minutes, 22 April 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 11-12,17.

For more on the new Kitsap-Mason-Clallam County district, see: Ibid., (1931), pp. 10,17.

slightly. The Building Trades Council won a new three-year contract with the Seattle contractors association at the old wage rate despite the lack of construction activity. Bakers Union Local No. 9 and the Bakery Salesmen's Union Local No. 227, on the other hand, were still locked in combat with the Golden Rule and Van De Kamp bakeries, the Amusement Trades long strike against the John Danz Theaters continued, Auto Mechanics Union Local No. 289 was still striking William O. McKay, Meat Cutters Union Local No. 81 was still striking Frye and Company, and Seattle Garment Workers Union Local No. 17 was still fighting a lock-out by the A.V. Love Dry Goods Company which resulted when the new owners refused to meet union demands. Rather than comply the company locked out all its union employees.[5]

These conditions led the SCLC to place greater emphasis on politics and propaganda than it had done in nearly a decade. The SCLC began regular broadcasts of "labor's message," over KOMO radio. During fall and winter the SCLC set aside one meeting per month for speeches from members on these important topics and, in the municipal elections the SCLC endorsed a full slate of city council candidates and a number of charter amendments. It also endorsed one of its own members, Councilman Robert Harlin, for mayor. Labor overcame strong

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[5]Ibid., (1931), pp. 12,13,16,42-43,59; (1932), p. 15; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1931, Box 11, KCCLC Records; For more on Seattle labor conditions in 1931, see: Minutes, 14 Jan., 4 Feb., 7 Oct. 1931, Box 8; Associated Industries of Seattle, Members Bulletin, (5 March 1931), Box 7, KCCLC Records; George D. Early to Taylor, 11 April 1931, Box 1-26, WSFL Records; Yearbook, (1931), p. 24; WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 12; (1932), pp. 14,16.

The best overall account of the early development of public welfare and relief is: Bruce Dudley Blumell, "The Development of Public Assistance in the State of Washington during the Great Depression," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Washington, 1973), pp. 1-60,428.

opposition from Associated Industries, and Harlin became the first labor-elected mayor of Seattle. A number of labor's candidates also won seats on the city council. Despite this, the political balance on the council remained against labor.[6]

In the SCLC's own elections, in August, two new officers rose to prominence. For the second year in a row, however, the elections were uncontested. Both of the new officers represented rapidly growing Teamsters unions. William McGuern, the SCLC's new president, represented Bakery Salesmen's Union Local No. 227; Sam Gibboney, the new vice-president, represented Laundry Drivers Union Local No. 566, Dave Beck's old local. Both men were prominent in Joint Council No. 28 and in their local unions.[7]

In dealing with the unemployment crisis, however, labor was nearly paralyzed. Its basic doctrines held that business was responsible for unemployment and should bear the burden of providing relief. In consequence the SCLC refused to cooperate with various groups, such as the Seattle Civil Service League, which might have been able to force the city council to take effective action, but which disagreed with labor. Instead the SCLC created its own Civil Service Trades section to compete with the league for the loyalties of municipal employees. Labor's isolation allowed the city government to

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[6]For more on the Seattle municipal elections, see: Minutes, 4,11,25 Feb., 4,11,25 March, 8 April, 3 June 1931, Box 8; Associated Industries Members Bulletin, (5 March 1931), Box 7, KCCLC Records.

[7]Minutes, 12 Aug. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Yearbook, (1935), p. 25; Washington State Labor News, 31 Aug. 1934.

think in terms of balancing the budget by cutting jobs and salaries and by raising taxes. At one point the SCLC refused to renew its subscription to Labor Age magazine, justifying its action by pointing out that "the publication has been unfriendly to the American Federation of Labor ..." Lacking an effective policy the SCLC failed to do anything to stem the tide of unemployment. The first steps to relieve unemployment came from outside the mainstream of the labor movement.[8]

The first initiatives to deal with the unemployment crisis came from Hulet Wells, a former socialist and ex-president of the SCLC, who had served a term in federal prison for his anti-war activities during World War I. He and Carl Branin of the Seattle Labor College, an offshoot of A.J. Muste's Brookwood Labor College, decided to organize the unemployed to work for their own relief. In the summer of 1931 they organized the Seattle Unemployed Citizen's League. Immediately, the league became a popular success. By the end of 1931 it had 12,000 members. By the end of 1932 it had affiliated with other such organizations and had a statewide membership of 80,000. In the absence of official relief programs and in view of the inadequate private and church-related private programs the league provided a means whereby the unemployed could help themselves. The league sought self-help, relief, and employment for the unemployed. Later, when unemployment grew even worse, it added a fourth objective: political action. It was at this point that the league turned to the city for help. The city council responded by voting $462,000 for the relief of Seattle's able-bodied unemployed. This, in effect, transformed the league into

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[8]Minutes, 6,20 May, 29 June, 11,18 Nov. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

an organ of the city government and its commissaries became the city's chief relief agency.[9]

While the SCLC was letting the Unemployed Citizen's League seize the political initiative the WSFL wrestled with its age-old legislative problems. The 1931 session opened amid much gloom, since the labor lobbyists saw little prospect of success. The WSFL merely hoped to prevent a new assault on its position in the name of economy in government. For example, the labor lobby decided not to re-introduce its anti-injunction bill into the legislature. The State Supreme Court had just ruled that picketing within 100 feet of an unfair premises was constitutional and the WSFL did not want to re-open the subject before "such a biased legislature."[10]

Labor's discretion was probably wise, for the legislature did attempt to gut the modest labor program. The conservative Republicans, especially those from rural areas, were alarmed at the passage of the reapportionment bill at the 1930 elections and made it their chief target. The Republican leadership introduced their own reapportionment bill (HB 398), which would have nullified the intentions of Initiative 57. When Governor Hartley vetoed the bill, on the advice of his Attorney-General, the legislature passed a second reapportionment

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[9]For more on the league, see: Bernstein, The Lean Years, pp. 416-418; Clark Kerr, "Productive Enterprizes of the Unemployed, 1931-1938," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of California, 1939), pp. 1188-1268; Robert C. Hill, "Seattle's Jobless Enter Politics," Nation (29 June 1934), pp. 718-720; George R. Leighton, Five Cities, (New York: Harpers, 1939), pp. 319-322; Tom Jones Parry, "The Republic of the Penniless," Atlantic, (Oct. 1932), pp. 449-457; Hulet M. Wells, "They Organize in Seattle," Survey, 67 (15 March 1932), pp. 665-667.

[10]WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 8.

bill (HJR 5) to be submitted as a constitutional amendment at the November 1932 elections. HJR 5 provided that no county, regardless of the size of its population, should have more than twenty-one per cent of the legislators in the legislature. Clearly, it was designed to limit the political influence of the Seattle-Tacoma bloc of urban voters and ensure agrarian control of the legislature indefinitely.[11]

While Governor Hartley's veto of HR 398 was instrumental in forcing the legislature to submit their reapportionment proposals to the voters and thus, indirectly, helped the labor movement his other vetoes had the opposite effect. As the Depression deepened public opinion moved in labor's direction. This forced the Republicans to rely, increasingly, on Hartley's vetoes to defend the state budget against all efforts to relieve unemployment.[12]

By far the largest and most important parts of the WSFL program, however, never even passed the legislature. A large number died in House committees. A number of important labor bills died in the House Committee on Commerce and Manufacturing, but other committees also obstructed the labor program. The House Industrial Insurance Committee, for example, delayed the vocational rehabilitation bill

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[11]HJR 5 was defeated at the polls in November 1932.
Ibid., (1931), p. 5; Call, p. 29; Johnston to Taylor, 13 Nov. 1930, Box 10-60; Legislative Voting Records, 1931, Box 3-1, WSFL Records.

[12]Among the bills passed by the legislature and supported by labor which failed due to Hartley's vetoes were: civil engineers' licensing bill (HB 114), the firemen's pension bill (SSB 15), the credit union bill (SB 73), the dental clinic for schools bill (SB 55), and the Showalter school tax bill (SB 62). For more on Hartley's behavior with regard to public welfare and relief, see: Blumell, pp. 64-69.
WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 6-7; Legislative Voting Records, 1931, Box 3-1; C.W. Doyle to Taylor, 20 Jan. 1931, Box 9-20, WSFL Records.

(HB 50) so that it later died in the education committee and Washington continued as one of only four states without such legislation. Similarly, a bill giving the Department of Labor the right to collect bills for wages for working men and women (HB 59) "died a natural death in the official graveyard, the Rules Committee." Other bills met the same fate. Meanwhile the House Appropriations Committee killed several labor bills. In fact, the House committees seemed to be taking turns gutting the labor program.

In the Senate the labor program met a similar fate. The Senate Constitution Revision Committee killed the Child Labor Amendment (SJR 6) simply by failing to issue a report. Meanwhile, the Senate Committee on Industrial Insurance killed the WSFL's proposal to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act (SB 96). Despite a strong labor effort in its behalf economic conditions were so poor and opponents of the bill proposed so many changes that no compromise could obtain majority support. Later, President Taylor reported that he was

> ...willing to do almost anything to bring about a better compensation act for the State of Washington; however, industrial conditions are such at the present time that unless they change previous to next January we will very likely find ourselves in (a) rather hopeless position in trying to bring about any real advantageous changes to the Industrial Act.[13]

Three labor proposals passed the Senate, only to meet defeat in the House. The redemption of delinquent property bill (SB 91), which would have given owners two years to redeem property confiscated for non-payment of property taxes, passed the Senate, but died in the

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[13]For more on the fate of the WSFL's legislative program, see: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 6-8; Legislative Voting Records, 1931, Box 3-1; Taylor to B. Sulgrove, 18 June 1932, Box 38-5, WSFL Records; Minutes, 14 Jan. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

House. Similarly, the Eagles old age pension bill (SB 29) passed the Senate by a vote of twenty-nine to ten. The House Rules Committee, however, delayed consideration until the session was nearly over. Then it failed to pass as the result of a forty-six to forty-six tie vote.[14]

There is some evidence that these bills were pawns in a greater game. The WSFL believed the House Rules Committee's actions were an "evident attempt" to force the Senate to change its attitude on HB 17, the administration's proposal to allow the state Tax Commission to appoint county tax commissioners. Labor strongly opposed HB 17, arguing that it would centralize control of expenditures in the state government. Finally, the measure died in conference committee. The WSFL counted this negative achievement as one of its "successes" of the session.[15]

In addition, the WSFL helped to defeat three other measures, inimicable to its interests. These included Senator E.B. Palmer's anti-picketing bill (SB 213), "which would make unions powerless in controversies" according to the WSFL. Labor also played an important part in the defeat of the street railway re-financing bill (HB 245). Labor complained that the bill "would give nine businessmen complete control of the street car system." Finally, the WSFL also played a role in the defeat of the individual income tax bill (SB 29). Despite their opposition to the bill, however, it was Governor Hartley's veto

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[14] WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 7-8; Call, p. 28; Legislative Voting Records, 1931, Box 3-1, WSFL Records; Minutes, 4 Feb. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[15] Ibid.

which actually killed it.[16]

The only part of the WSFL program to pass unscathed through the legislative meat grinder in 1931 was the technical engineers lien bill (SB 78), which helped surveyors collect bills for wages due them.[17]

Following the session, President Taylor addressed the SCLC and gave a

> ...detailed account of his experiences with the recently adjourned unfriendly legislature. He stressed the fact that highway appropriations are the greatest menace to wholesome legislation and advocated taking (the) same out of politics. He further reminded his hearers that more interest at election time would mean less grief at legislature time.

Later, he recommended to the WSFL convention that the WSFL leave the operation and financing of its political program to the executive board, which would work in close conjunction with the central labor councils and their political welfare committees for the passage of a workmen's compensation initiative. He saw no other way to break the conservative hold on the legislature.[18]

In their great necessity the WSFL and the SCLC began to draw closer to one another. In July the WSFL moved its headquarters into

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[16]For more on the WSFL efforts to defeat anti-labor legislation, see: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 8-9; Call, p. 28; Legislative Voting Records, 1931, Box 3-1, WSFL Records; Minutes, 4,25 Feb. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[17]WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 6; Call, p. 22; Legislative Voting Records, 1931, Box 3-1, WSFL Records.

[18]For more on Taylor's legislative recommendations, see also: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 9,67-68; Minutes, 25 March 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Minutes, 31 March 1931, Box 60, WSFL Records.

the SCLC's labor temple. At the same time, however, the WSFL alliance with the Grange, which had helped to pass the public power bill, came under renewed pressure. Neither organization saw the Depression in the same light. As Taylor analyzed it, in an article entitled "Industrial and Economic Readjustment," the Depression was caused by under-consumption resulting from the loss of foreign markets, the unwillingness of financial and industrial leaders to make the domestic market prosper, labor-saving devices, and competition from American-owned factories in Europe. Taylor said American businessmen compounded their errors by opposing tariffs on imports from their European factories, thereby increasing American unemployment and limiting purchasing power. Much of his analysis is sheer demogoguery, but it contained the germ of truth.[19]

The Grange, on the other hand, blamed everything on the high cost of government. Farmers had long felt that they bore the brunt of taxation due to the regressive property tax system. When the Depression cut agricultural incomes they sought to relieve their burdens by forcing government employees to accept wage cuts. The Spokane Pomona Grange, for example, passed a resolution which demanded that county employees accept a general wage cut. This created an unbridgeable gap with labor which was committed to the use of government to maintain wages. Although state Grange Secretary Fred Chamberlain urged delegates to the WSFL convention to support the Grange's tax

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[19] Yearbook, (1931), p. 3; WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 52,59-61,63, 65.

For more on the WSFL-SCLC reconciliation, see also: WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 11,13,66; Minutes, 8 July, 11 Nov. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

limitation proposals, the basis for a renewal of the coalition did not exist. The convention voted to condemn the Grange for its wage cut proposals and called on public officials to ignore these requests. A further resolution to sever all WSFL ties to the Grange was referred to the executive board. Never had the Grange so outraged the labor movement. The Spokane Central Labor Council, for example, protested that:

> Labor has always supported farmers without question; the President of the United States has taken a stand against wage cuts; such a cut in purchasing power would hurt both farmers and manufacturers.

The WSFL-Grange alliance remained barely alive. It would not take much to kill it. At the same time the convention endorsed the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project to "help the unemployment situation" and "provide land" with water.[20]

The WSFL then proceeded to outline its state and federal legislative programs in light of its defeats in the recently-adjourned session. The latter was predicated upon the cooperation of the AFL convention later in the fall. The state program consisted primarily of efforts to cut the hours and raise the wages of state employees and the mine workers who were suffering terribly from unemployment.

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[20]In addition Chamberlain called on the WSFL to help organize an initiative campaign to enact a non-partisan Road Commission.

Besides rejecting the Grange's wage cut proposals, the WSFL convention also suggested other means of propping up purchasing power. The delegates went on record in opposition to wage and price cuts in other industries and condemned them as unpatriotic. It approved resolutions opposing the use of new products such as "Frosted and Semi-Frosted Meats" and "Mechanized Music" for cutting the number of available jobs. It further requested changes in government policies to help keep up wage rates.

Ibid; For more on the convention's educational and organizational activities, see: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 60-61,64-71.

It also included efforts to help enforce the state laws by paying for litigation, to limit the size of "Auto Trucks," to amend the law regarding the sale of tax delinquent properties, to prevent the interstate shipment of convict-made goods, and to amend the state barber's code. It also resolved to oppose an anti-labor city manager plan initiated in Seattle and called on Governor Hartley to release the Centralia prisoners. These proposals differed only in detail from those proposed again and again by the WSFL.[21]

The most important aspect of the WSFL's state program were proposals to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act. Besides increased awards the WSFL called, once again, for inclusion of culinary workers under provisions of the act. The WSFL also called for extension of medical aid to culinary workers and argued that, with the introduction of new electrical machinery, the pace of work in commercial kitchens had accellerated resulting in an increase of accidents and the need for further coverage.[22]

There were three main aspects to the WSFL's federal legislative program. To relieve the unemployment crisis, the WSFL convention urged President Hoover to call a special session of Congress to appropriate at least $5 billion for public works at existing wage scales. It also endorsed William Randolph Hearst's $5 billion public works relief program. The program should "be made available by the issuance of emergency credit notes by the United States Treasury Department, which shall be retired by a tax on wealth--on those best able to pay." In other words the WSFL sought to spend the United States out of the Depression

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[21]Ibid., pp. 10-11,59-60,63-66,67,69.
[22]Ibid., pp. 62,68-69.

and redistribute incomes at the same time.[23]

The second element of the WSFL's federal program, carrying over from years past, was immigration restriction. The WSFL complained that the federal government had passed no new legislation to "restrict or exclude immigration" and since the AFL had begun agitating for Filipino Independence, the Philippines had eased their own agitation for independence. The convention, therefore, adopted resolutions reiterating their stand against Filipino immigration and in favor of independence for the Philippine Islands. In addition, they approved a number of Seamen's bills, including those introduced by Senator LaFollette on behalf of the International Seamen's Union. All of these measures were, in one way or another, designed to keep out non-White immigrants.[24]

The final element of the WSFL's federal program was a resolution endorsing repeal of the Prohibition Amendment. The WSFL argued that this was necessary in order to reduce crime, graft, and lawlessness.[25]

Then, for the third year in a row, the convention reelected its entire executive board without alteration. The only close election came in the Everett district vice-presidency where the conservative Henry Arends was tied in the first vote and survived only after

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[23]Ibid., pp. 59,61-62,70.
For more on the WSFL's federal legislative recommendations, see also: Ibid., pp. 9-10,61,69-71; Minutes, 11 Feb. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[24]For more on the anti-immigrant and Seamen's bills, see: WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 10,67,69; Minutes, 18 Feb. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[25]WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 65.

a special election.[26]

The WSFL delegation played a prominent role at the AFL's 1931 convention in Vancouver, B.C. The WSFL's resolutions on oriental exclusion and Philippine independence now passed easily. The WSFL delegation also helped to pass a resolution urging the federal government to purchase only United States-made goods. The AFL also approved the Columbia River Irrigation Project, despite some opposition. Similarly, the AFL approved a resolution calling on Congress to adopt the Repeal Amendment.[27]

Up until this point, the AFL convention was all sweetness and light. Beneath the surface, however, tensions mounted which, within five years would lead to the rupture of the AFL. The conflict was a continuation of the divisions which had hobbled both the AFL and the WSFL since their earliest days. Arguments over unemployment insurance and organizational reform struck at the basic nature of the AFL. They would have required the AFL to impose unconstitutional conditions upon its international unions. They also involved requiring the AFL to violate its basic understanding of the nature of the relationship between labor and the state.

The unemployment insurance issue split the AFL into those who favored compulsory government-funded unemployment insurance and those who favored continuation of the AFL's traditional stand in favor of the "voluntaristic principle." Many times in the past decade the anti-voluntarists had introduced compulsory insurance measures only to see

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[26]Ibid., pp. 32,37; (1932), p. 12.
[27]Ibid., p. 5; Minutes, 9 Sept. 1931, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

them defeated by large margins. On one side were members of unions which were strong enough to provide insurance to their own members, or which were well-enough organized that they could force their employers to provide the insurance. On the other side were the members of weaker unions, which needed government support because they and their employers were too weak to do so on their own. By the very nature of the labor movement the strongest support for the voluntarists came from the strongest unions--the conservative craft unions--and the strongest support for the compulsory insurance schemes came from the weakest unions--the industrial unions in the largely unorganized mass production industries. The conflict came out into the open when James Duncan, a delegate from the SCLC, introduced a motion calling for a government system of unemployment insurance. We have, he said,

> ...brains enough in our Executive Council to work out a system of unemployment insurance that will thoroughly safeguard the working people of the United States.

The proposal was defeated by a two-to-one margin, along basically industrial versus craft union lines. The AFL's executive council, dominated by the voluntarists, vigorously opposed Duncan's proposal and restated their opposition to any government-sponsored or controlled system of unemployment compensation on the grounds that it would jeopardize the independence of the labor movement. They also charged that Duncan had failed to provide adequate details for the plan. Despite its failure the compulsory plan succeeded in galvanizing the industrial union forces. And, as the Depression deepened, they picked up support in unexpected places. Many unions on the verge of

destruction from unemployment lost their fear of compulsory insurance. Indeed, Irving Bernstein concludes that the Depression broke the "back of voluntarism." By July 1932 the AFL's executive board was to accept the need for compulsory unemployment insurance.[28]

The second crucial issue, industrial versus craft unionism, was closely related to the first. It came to a head when the president of the Federal Employees Union introduced a motion calling on the convention to endorse a bill to increase the number of classifications of government work each of which had a different pay scale. He further proposed to give the Federal Employees Union jurisdiction over these workers. The problem was that many of these civil service employees were already organized in some twenty-six organizations of skilled mechanics which objected to losing their members. They also disagreed about the need to increase the number of job classifications. The old, well-established, skilled trades unions had been fighting for twenty-five years to reduce the number of job classifications from five to three and they refused to concede their point to the smaller, weaker Federal Employees Union. The AFL did make an unsuccessful effort to resolve the conflict. It agreed to assist the Federal Employees Union in drafting and urging passage of a bill satisfactory to them. On the other hand, it voted to exempt those unions, primarily in the Metal Trades Department, which refused to be included in the bill.[29]

The AFL failed to resolve the central issue. No one could see a way to organize the un-organized without cutting across existing organizational lines. At the same time no one could see a way to

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[28]Bernstein, pp. 348-351.
[29]WSFL Procs., (1931), pp. 12-13.

convince the industrial unionists not to demand these changes. In the wake of the AFL's decision the Federal Employees Union's executive board met and voted not to comply with the convention's decision if it meant that they could not organize metal trades workers employed by the federal government. It decided to place the whole issue before the rank and file membership with a recommendation that the international should withdraw from the AFL. Later, although two of the union's smaller Washington State affiliates voted against secession, the national membership approved withdrawal. By December 1931 the Federal Employees Union had left the AFL. This, in microcosm, reveals the basic contradiction in the AFL--it had become a union of the already organized, without the will to organize the unorganized.[30]

Shortly before the AFL convention the SCLC endorsed the WSFL-AFL stand on repeal of prohibition. It did so despite its reputation as a pro-prohibition stronghold on the grounds that it would create jobs. But although it voted to support the AFL resolution, it refused to help register voters in the effort to repeal the amendment. At the same time, the unemployment situation was growing worse and worse. Union after union reported a growing number of unemployed members. As the situation deteriorated a new wave of demands for action arose. The SCLC responded by endorsing the WSFL's demands for more public works. The SCLC endorsed a call from the Milwaukee Central Labor Council demanding that the federal government appropriate $5 billion for unemployment relief. Similarly, when AFL organizer C.O. "Dad" Young addressed the council and:

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[30]Ibid., (1933), p. 13.

> In viewing the present inexcusable condition (he charged) the financial interests with responsibility and advocated that Uncle Sam start his printing presses and put sufficient paper money in circulation to force the bankers to loosen up. Delegates endorsed this sentiment with hearty applause.

But, when W.D. McMahon, president of the Street Carmen's International Union, addressed the SCLC,

> He deplored the indifference of so many workers in the matter of organization and reviewed conditions throughout the nation. He recalled that the protest and message of labor used to be sent out from Seattle and heralded throughout the whole nation and deplored that now, in the midst of this great cirisis (sic), Seattle remains silent. Vigorous applause greeted his statements.

Indeed, the SCLC could do little. When the city council voted to pay relief workers wages lower than the "regular scale paid by the city," the SCLC protested. It also asked the AFL to support President Hoover's Committee on Unemployment Relief. Neither of these actions induced the government to take effective action, but it is not clear that the SCLC recognized the inadequacy of their actions. The SCLC did, however, endorse the sentiments of those who called upon them to take stronger actions to combat unemployment. Council President William McGuern, for example, appointed a committee to organize an unemployment mass meeting for 13 October 1931. AFL President William Green and Mayor Robert Harlin accepted invitations to address the rally. Later, the committee reported that the meeting had been a "decided success and most profitable to the labor movement" because it aroused public concern, but it resulted in no concrete achievements.

By the end of the year the SCLC was in deep trouble. More than anything else it was this which impelled it to take effective action to end its conflicts with other workers' organizations. In turn, it was this which, finally, produced the first tentative

governmental responses to crisis. In November the SCLC recognized the debilitating effects of its jurisdictional disputes with the Civil Service League and removed that organization from its unfair list. This was undoubtedly one of the principal reasons for the city council's sudden change of heart on the relief pay scale issue. Encouraged by Mayor Harlin the council changed its position and voted seven to two to pay its relief workers $4.25 per day, the prevailing wage. At the same time the SCLC endorsed a motion to hold an unemployment joint session with the mayor, city council, and the county commissioners, "for the purpose of devising ways and means of coping with the present emergency...." At least it seemed as though the various responsible bodies were finally coming to grips with the problem. To what extent they succeeded will shortly become apparent.[31]

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[31]Minutes, 9,16,23,30 Sept., 7,14,21,28 Oct., 4,11,18 Nov., 30 Dec. 1931, 6 Jan. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Chapter 18:

The Democratic Alternative:
Labor and the Roosevelt Coalition, 1932

In 1932 labor suffered under even more powerfully adverse economic forces. All indexes of business, trade, production, and consumption fell even more sharply than in 1931. In the Inland Empire the index of business activity fell by 18.17 per cent. The number of lines of Spokane newspaper advertizing fell by 24.74 per cent to 13.7 million. Gross postal receipts in four major eastern Washington cities fell by 10.12 per cent to $1,207 thousand. Bank debits fell by 32.96 per cent to $464 million. Department store sales in the region declined by 20.89 per cent. This decline was due, primarily, to the collapse of agricultural production. Pacific Northwest freight carloadings of grain fell by 24.92 per cent to 40,200. Freight carloadings of fruit fell by 6.19 per cent to 49,900. Only freight carloadings of livestock, which increased by a surprising 54.97 per cent to 20,000, enlivened the gloom.[1]

In the Lower Columbia region, including northern Oregon and southwestern Washington, the story of economic contraction was the same. More importantly for Washington labor, conditions in the Puget Sound area also deteriorated. Lumber production west of the Cascades fell by 41.36 per cent to 3,114 million board feet and coal production

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[1]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.

fell by 12.67 per cent to 1,605 thousand tons, the lowest levels recorded. Production of electric energy in Seattle and Tacoma, fell by 10.35 per cent to 1,063 million kilowatt hours. The value of building permits in eleven western Washington cities fell by 58.33 per cent to $5.5 million, down from $45 million in 1928. Similarly indexes of consumer activity declined. Bank debits declined by 33.40 per cent to $1,874 million, newspaper advertizing in Seattle and Tacoma contracted by 34.52 per cent, and department store sales declined by 34.14 per cent. Gross postal receipts fell by 7.77 per cent to $3,791 thousand. Statewide indexes of consumer demand behaved likewise. Gasoline sales fell by 5.05 per cent to 247 million gallons and sales of life insurance declined by 21.11 per cent to $96.1 million. Nothing had ever equalled this record of economic despair.[2]

The impact on the state's labor force was necessarily severe. Total factory employment in Washington fell by 26.66 per cent to 63,400. The value added by manufacturing and the total number of production workers in the state also fell by similar percentages. Meanwhile, total employment fell by 10.12 per cent to 506,000. Because of the fact that the labor force (i.e., those willing and able to work had jobs been available) continued to increase inexorably, unemployment increased by 58.64 per cent to 168,800, or a full 25 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1) As a result total annual income in the state declined 24.70 per cent to $601 million. Reflecting this loss of purchasing power the Seattle consumer price index fell by 9.11 per cent.[3]

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[2]Ibid.
[3]Ibid; Johansen, pp. 626-628.

The effect of these conditions on the labor movement was devastating. Membership in the WSFL practically melted away. The number of paid-up members declined by 22.7 per cent, to 19,172, or 2.34 per cent of the total labor force, the smallest percentage since 1916. Meanwhile the WSFL suffered a net loss in the number of its affiliates of 9.92 per cent to 245, the lowest since 1924-1925. This was primarily due to a drastic rise in the number of suspensions for non-payment of per capita taxes. (Table No. 2)[4]

In its annual survey of its vice-presidental districts the WSFL exposed the full extent of the crisis. In most districts unemployment was a staggering problem. Many locals were forced to accept wage cuts or part-time work. Only in the Spokane and Bremerton districts were any signs of progress noted. Even here there was much bad news to report. Though a few individual locals reported success in strikes or other controversies the overall picture remained very gloomy. Everywhere, the suffering was acute.[5]

Of all the WSFL's districts none suffered more from the Depression than the King County district. SCLC officials reported that labor conditions were "very bad," but this understated the

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[4] WSFL Procs., (1932), p. 29.

[5] For more on the Bellingham-Skagit Valley district, see: Ibid., pp. 18-19.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla district, see: Ibid., p. 20.

For more on the Willappa Harbor-Grays Harbor County district, see: Ibid., p. 20.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: Ibid., pp. 13-14,20-21.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, see: Ibid., (1928), p. 37; (1932), pp. 21-22.

For more on the Kitsap-Mason-Clallam County district, see: Ibid., p. 22.

problem. More than 60,000 destitute people were living from hand-to-mouth with "barely enough to live on," surviving on relief and breadlines. By 1932 membership in trade unions was no longer a sure protection against the ravages of the Depression. Membership in SCLC affiliates fell by 18.95 per cent to 11,874, the lowest level since 1923. (Table No. 3) Membership in most trade sections contracted sharply. Membership in the Metal Trades Section fell from 807 to 499, membership in the Miscellaneous Trades Section fell from 5,987 to 4,982, and membership in the Building Trades Section fell from 3,737 to 2,349. Both the Printing and Amusement Trades sections also lost membership. Only the Maritime Trades and Provision Trades sections gained members. The total number of SCLC affiliates fell by 9.57 per cent to 85. Only 23.52 per cent of the survivors were not affiliated with the WSFL.[6]

Economic conditions forced the trade unions to accept many cuts in wages and conditions. After a seven month period of negotiations amid massive unemployment, the building trades council accepted a 10-20 per cent wage cut in all trades. The SCLC continued to lead strikes against the William O. McKay Automobile and Radio dealerships, the John Danz Theatre Company and the Van De Kamp Bakery and Golden Rule Bakery companies and added a number of firms to its unfair list, including Joe McDermott's Barber Shop, the Georgetown and Collins Undertaking Parlors, and J. Parrad's Fashion Bootery. The Garment Workers reported that their strike against the A.V. Love Company had

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[6]Ibid., p. 29; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1932, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

forced the company into bankruptcy. These new efforts, however, were not on the scale of the council's previous struggles. The Depression had sapped the SCLC's strength.[7]

In the SCLC elections most of the officers were reelected, without opposition. James Duncan, however, was defeated for reelection as reading clerk by a margin of better than two to one. It is tempting to speculate that his actions in favor of prohibition at the 1931 AFL convention were responsible.[8]

Meanwhile, the inability to deal with the unemployment situation forced many locals to rely upon traditional anti-oriental sentiment. Seattle Cooks and Assistants Union Local No. 33, for example, introduced a resolution in the SCLC to send a notice to all employers:

> ...protesting against the employment of Orientals in place of White people, who are walking the streets hungry. This situation is destroying American ideals and standards of living and threatening the moral status of our young people.

The resolution also requested that union members patronize May Moral, who planned to open up "the old Merry-Go-Round" restaurant with "all White help, and 100% union."[9]

In the 1932 municipal elections the SCLC endorsed Mayor Harlin, City Councilman David Levine, and School Board Member John B. Shorett and Judge Austin E. Griffiths. The SCLC made the most intense examination of each candidate. Each was required to give their positions on

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[7] WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 16,21,29; Minutes, 27 Jan., 6,27 April, 5 May, 15 June, 3 Aug., 14 Sept., 22 Oct., 2 Nov., 7,14 Dec. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Minutes of the Seattle Building Trades Council, 15 April 1932, Box 1-26, WSFL Records.

[8] Minutes, 17 Aug. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[9] Minutes, 18 May 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

the city's relief responsibilities, their remedies for the unemployment crisis, and on the five day work week for city employees. Had the SCLC taken these pains a year or two earlier it might have achieved great success. By 1932, however, the initiative had passed to others. The Unemployed Citizen's League, facing the collapse of municipal and private relief efforts, was running its own slate of candidates, headed by John F. Dore. At this time the league represented approximately one-third of the eligible voters. Dore, who campaigned on a platform which advocated taking the huge fortunes away "from those who stole them from the American workers," won the largest plurality in the city's history and labor lost its first mayor in history. David Levine and the other labor candidates, however, managed to retain their seats on the city council and school board.[10]

The sting of labor's defeat did not last very long for, immediately upon taking office, Dore moved to gain the support of the trade unions by assuming a less radical posture. One of his first steps was to take the relief machinery away from the Unemployed Citizens League. He even threatened to use machine guns against unruly demonstrators. Bitterly disappointed the jobless began calling him "revolving" Dore. Dore's betrayal led the league to seek cooperation with the SCLC. On 11 May a committee from the league met with a similar SCLC committee in an effort to develop a joint relief program in hopes of forcing Dore to take action. After

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[10]Minutes, 6 Jan., 10,17,24 Feb., 2 March 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; C.W. Doyle to SCLC Members, 29 Feb. 1932, Box 9-20, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1932), p. 21; Bernstein, The Lean Years, pp. 416-418.

hard negotiating the two committees managed to agree on a relatively moderate multi-point program of local, state, and federal action to aid the unemployed in the present crisis.[11]

Shortly thereafter, on 30 May 1932, the league met in Tacoma, with representatives of similar leagues around the state. They formed the United Producers League of Washington and called upon farmers to join them. But Dore's betrayal hurt the movement and the mildly-worded joint program with the SCLC failed to satisfy the demands of many radicals in the league. The league was especially discouraged when, in the summer of 1932, Dore began cutting city employees' wages by 10-25 per cent. The result was that, by the winter of 1932-1933, both the SUCL and the UPLW were declining in membership. Their self-help efforts and political action had both proved fruitless. While

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[11]The joint SCLC-SUCL program called upon the city to provide two days work per week for all those able to work, at $4.50 per eight hour day for common labor and the "going rate" for skilled labor. It also asked the city to survey and list necessary projects in order of their "value to the community," to establish priorities. Further, they called upon the council to grant all public employees the six hour day and the five day week.

The joint program also called for legislative action. It called for the state to tax employers for every hour over six hours per day their employees worked, with the proceeds to go to the unemployed. In addition, it called for a special session of the legislature to meet with state's "obligations" to the unemployed, to enact public improvements, the Cascade Tunnel project, and ratify the Child Labor Amendment. It also demanded that the legislature grant state employees the six hour day and five day week at "just compensation" and tax employers who worked their employees longer. In addition, it called on the legislature to approve unemployment insurance, old age insurance (pending establishment of a federal program), and a state income tax on the federal model.

The joint program also called on the federal government to approve a national program devoted to these ends.

WSFL Procs., (1932), p. 68; Minutes, 13 April, 11 May, 9 June 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Unemployment Program, 12 May 1932, Box 9-21, WSFL Records; Business Week, (4 May 1932); Arthur A. Hillman, "The Unemployed Citizens League of Seattle," (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1934) (Its: Publications in the Social Sciences, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 181-270).

relief had become a public obligation under Dore's administration no city employment programs had emerged. In February 1933 the communists took control of the league and it became irrelevant to Seattle's problems.[12]

By early 1932 one thing was very clear politically. If the Democratic Party's legendary intramural factionalism did not destroy it, the party's nominee would win the presidency. The leading presidential candidates, Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York and his predecessor, Al Smith, both had their adherents in Washington State. Roosevelt, however, had much more strength in Washington State than the "wet," urban, Irish-Catholic Smith. As early as March 1931 Senator Dill and the eastern Washington progressives, who had supported Roosevelt's stand in favor of public power, had offered him their support. Even Steve Chadwick, the leader of the economically conservative Smith faction in western Washington, looked favorably on Roosevelt's candidacy since they felt that he was much more likely to win. In particular, they liked his call for a constitutional convention to repeal prohibition.[13]

Soon the Roosevelt campaign gained even more momentum. Scott Bullitt and Lewis Schwellenbach, the two most popular Democrats in the state, united behind Roosevelt's candidacy. The main issue in the

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[12]Bernstein, pp. 416-418; Minutes, 22,29 June, 6 July, 3 Aug. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 21,71; "Unemployment Captures the Political Stage: Unemployed Citizens' League Takes Over Politics," Business Week, (4 May 1932), p. 4; Earl W. Shimmons, "Revolt in the Far Northwest," Nation, 135 (9 Nov. 1932), pp. 452-453.

[13]For more on the support of the major Democratic candidates, see: Cole, pp. 263-266.

campaign, public power, tended to activate Roosevelt's supporters. Throughout the summer of 1931 the Roosevelt forces organized. They encouraged the formation of Democratic Party Clubs and tried to obtain the allegiance of county and state convention delegates. James Farley, Roosevelt's campaign manager, came to Seattle to develop local contacts and help in the organizing effort. As this process continued it became more and more obvious to the economic conservatives in the party that the Roosevelt coalition was going to be "top-heavy" with "irregular Democrats" (i.e., people who had voted for LaFollette in 1924, or Hoover in 1928, or both) who favored repeal of prohibition and liberal economic policies. Although they became increasingly disenchanted as the party was organized by their political enemies, the party regulars were increasingly irrelevant.[14]

When, on 10 January, the Democratic State Central Committee met in Seattle to plan an early state convention representatives from every county attended, the first time in the memory of anyone present that this had happened. The efforts of the conservatives to halt the Roosevelt bandwagon and approval of a progressive platform proved ineffectual. In the county conventions the Roosevelt forces won clear victories.[15]

Despite significant support for Roosevelt in trade union circles, however, many union leaders doubted he could win and, over the years, they had endorsed many more progressive Republicans than Democrats of any kind and still had many friends in the Republican Party. Distrust

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[14]Cole, pp. 262-263,266-267.

[15]Cole, pp. 268-271; Minutes, 31 Aug., 7 Sept. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

of the Democrats was widespread in the Washington State labor movement. They remembered Roosevelt as a Wilsonian "Internationalist" and a "Dry" prohibitionist. If the Republicans made strong moves to endorse progressive programs they would find many labor leaders eager to support them. The non-partisans in the WSFL were particularly anxious that the labor movement not become captured by the Democrats. Hoping to push the Republicans in progressive directions President Taylor appeared before the Republican state convention's platform committee and made a strong plea for progressive policies. In response the Republicans endorsed the Norris-LaGuardia anti-injunction bill and the Cooper-Hawes bill enabling states to ban interstate shipments of convict-made goods. They also approved a plank calling on the state to pay prevailing local wages to employees on state projects whether working under contract, or sub-contract. For the Republicans these represented far-reaching concessions. However, they refused to endorse planks calling for the right of state employees to organize and bargain collectively, or for ratification of the Child Labor Amendment. Instead they were much more concerned with writing an acceptable plank on prohibition. In the end the party was forced to adopt a compromise which pleased no one. They agreed to a plank which called for enforcement of the Constitution but mentioned neither the Eighteenth Amendment nor the Volstead Act. And, when the Republican national convention renominated President Hoover, pro-Republican labor leaders became even more discouraged by the party's lack of consideration.[16]

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[16] WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 7-8,10; See also: Clark, The Dry Years, pp. 226-227.

By the time the WSFL convention met in June, it was clear that the Republicans did not mean to grant even labor's minimum demands. While the Hartley administration agreed to pay prevailing wages on state highway and construction projects and ceased employing convicts at state institutions reports of numerous labor-law violations kept coming in to WSFL headquarters. The WSFL was more and more convinced that Hartley's policy of cutting wages and taxes could not end the Depression or unemployment. It insisted more and more strongly that the only solutions to the Depression were reduction of hours, federal guarantees for savings deposits, and greater participation of all levels of government in relief efforts.[17]

As a consequence of their rigid insistence upon the status quo, the Republicans forced the WSFL into the arms of the Democrats. There was no real argument at the WSFL convention over this. There was, however, a marked difference in the method of formulating political policy. Previously the convention had decided in explicit detail the policies and programs to be followed and enacted. In the post-1925 period, however, the executive board had gained greater leeway by virtue of the extinction of organized opposition within the WSFL and the conventions granted the executive board more authority. By 1932 the existing board had been in office, unchanged, since 1928 (except for the addition of Henry E. Wheeler in the new Bremerton district). Fewer and fewer resolutions had been introduced from the convention floor, without prior approval of the executive board. More and more of the convention resolutions had been drafted and approved by the board prior to the conventions.

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[17] WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 12-13,15-18,71-73; Minutes, 14 Sept. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

As the board amassed autocratic powers, debate died out. The Depression had served to accentuate this tendency.

When President Taylor addressed the convention he did not need to convince his listeners about programs and policies. What he did was issue a call to arms, a call to go out and work for common goals. Organized labor, he said, had always been in the political minority in Washington State because:

> ...there are so many workers who refuse to be organized, and who try to justify their attitude by refusing to agree with some leader or some policy of the labor movement...

Still, he could not counsel a complete break with the past. He recommended that the WSFL take:

> ...no action on behalf of any candidate. This is a non-partisan organization. With political prospects in the future so dim we would recommend that this convention take action to leave the matter in the hands of the Executive Council...in conjunction with the political committees...(of the WSFL's affiliates).

Obediently the convention complied, brushing aside requests from several Mine Workers' delegates who favored formation of a Labor Party. Some of those who had already submitted political proposals, proceeded to withdraw them.[18]

But if the convention did not commit itself to a particular political party or candidate it did not hesitate to outline a legislative program for the coming year. The convention approved, for example, several direct legislative proposals, including the Grange's income tax bill (Initiative 69). President Taylor had been considering it for

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[18]Duncan's abortive candidacy undoubtedly contributed to his defeat for reelection as the SCLC's reading clerk several weeks later. WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 11,59,64,66; Minutes, 29 June, 6,10 July 1932, Box 60, WSFL Records.

some time, without reaching a decision. The Grange initiative was a highly complicated measure, based on an existing Wisconsin law, with which the WSFL disagreed on a number of points. President Taylor complained that the bill was still regressive. But, after James Duncan announced his support for the measure, all opposition to it vanished.[19]

The WSFL also endorsed several petition campaigns, including an initiative to appropriate $100,000 to make a survey of the Cascade Tunnel Project (Initiative 65), which Governor Hartley had vetoed in 1931. It also agreed to support the joint SCLC-SUCL unemployment insurance bill (Initiative 68), although some delegates doubted whether it would be of any use in the "present crisis." On the other hand, the convention refused to endorse a butter substitute bill initiative, which would have prevented sale of non-dairy butter substitutes. President Taylor opposed the bill on the grounds that it would raise the cost of living and because it contained an emergency clause.[20]

Besides supporting the SCLC-SUCL unemployment insurance program the convention also endorsed their call for a special session of the legislature. For this eventuality, the WSFL proceeded to adopt a series of special interest measures requested by various unions. To this the WSFL appended its long-sought amendments to the industrial insurance act increasing benefits and expanding coverage, and making

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[19] WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 9,53-54; Minutes, 17 June 1931, 29 June 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Taylor to A. Leslie, 19 June 1932, Box 38-5, WSFL Records.

[20] WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 9-10; Minutes, 6,30 April, 29 June 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

the program fairer. In addition the WSFL proposed to introduce a new version of their anti-injunction bill based on the recently passed Norris-LaGuardia Act.[21]

Next, the convention heard a review of the WSFL's relations with the federal government. President Taylor told of his efforts on behalf of an embargo on foreign-made military provisions and the alternative purchase of domestic munitions. He also told of his efforts in behalf of federal aid for the unemployed and for the Seamen. He described his opposition to proposed wage reductions as a means to balance the budget and reviewed the impact of the new Tariff Act on lumber, oil, coal, and copper industries. Taylor was particularly incensed about a "rider" to the act which provided that, if coal exports to Canada exceeded imports of coal from Canada, the tariff became void. It was, he said, unfair since most exports of coal benefited eastern states while most imports hurt American mines in the Pacific Northwest. He also complained that the federal government was still refusing to pay prevailing wages on the Cle Elum dam project. Following this Taylor criticized the Republican Congress. He was especially incensed at the failure of two Filipino independence bills. The Congress, he said, had accomplished "little" and had spent most of its time "balancing the budget," or "trying to cut wages." The only important bill to emerge was the Norris anti-injunction anti-

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[21] In addition the WSFL endorsed a number of amendments to the banking and real estate acts. These proposals came to nought, for the moment. Realizing that a special session could only produce irresistible demands for reform and increase the political strength of his opponents, Governor Hartley refused to call the legislature together.

WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 64-75; Minutes, 6 April 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Yellow Dog Contract act. Bills authorizing the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project had been introduced, but Congress had not acted upon them.[22]

The WSFL's response to this unsatisfactory session was to repeat its previous demands. These consisted of a demand for a federal employees pension program, creation of a civil service court of appeals, and opposition to limitations on the number of employees at the Bremerton Navy Yard. Finally, the WSFL also re-endorsed repeal of the state's "Bone Dry" prohibition act, the Volstead act, and the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution.[23]

Turning from political to organizational matters the convention approved the various on-going strikes in Seattle and Spokane. It supported the organizational efforts of the Mine Workers District No. 10, which was "fighting for its existence," it reformed the WSFL's unfair list by making all branches of a corporation unfair whenever one of its branches appeared on the list, and it appealed to the AFL to lower its per capita taxes for the Newsboys Union. The convention also heard of the settlement of the long-standing dispute between the State Federation of Butchers and the Frye and Company Meat Packers and removed the company from the unfair list. But aside from this Taylor could report little other organizational success.[24]

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[22]WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 6-7; For more on federal legislation, see: Bernstein, The Lean Years, pp. 393,410-414,508; United States Statutes at Large, XLVII, 72d Cong., 1st Sess. (23 March 1932), pp. 70-72; Auerbach, pp. 222-227; Minutes, 3,10 Feb., 16,23,30 March, 13,20 April, 8 June 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[23]For more on the WSFL's stand on Prohibition, see: WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 5-6,66-67,74-75; Minutes, 30 Nov. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[24]WSFL Procs., (1932), pp. 51,65,69-70,72,75; (1933), pp. 5-6.

In 1932 the AFL took several important steps which directly affected the WSFL. At its Cincinnati convention the AFL reversed its stand against unemployment compensation and agreed that there should be a compulsory, state-administered system of unemployment compensation. It decided, too, that industry should bear the whole cost, that employees should be exempt from contributing, and that the payments should be as large as possible. Nevertheless, "to protect union membership," the AFL also decided that the program whould not be a national program, but should be enacted by the states through the efforts of the state federations. This was a move to conciliate the industrial unionists. In the final analysis, however, it proved impractical to rely upon state action and did little to reconcile the industrial unionists to the craft union leadership.[25]

The virtual paralysis of the AFL is also clearly illustrated by the way it dealt with the problems of the Federal Employees Union. Despite its withdrawal the AFL and the WSFL had continued to act as if nothing had happened. But in July 1932 the AFL's executive council established a new organization, the American Federation of Government Employees, to take over the jurisdiction. This was a difficult decision for all concerned. It was especially difficult in Washington State, where neither the three Federal Employees' Union locals nor the WSFL wanted to compete with each other. Once the executive council made its decision, however, old friendships fell by the wayside. The WSFL expelled the Federal Employees and proceeded to organize and admit three new locals to take their places.[26]

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[25]Ibid., (1933), pp. 5-6; Beck Interview.
[26]Ibid.; Minutes, 31 Aug. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

Soon after the WSFL convention the primary election campaign began. It attracted a flock of candidates who sensed that the Republicans were extremely vulnerable, especially on the prohibition and public power issues. While the Democrats had been moving away from prohibition and toward public power the Republicans had clung to their opposite positions. The results confirmed that a great switch in political alignments was in process. The Democrats vote quadrupled over 1930. In large part this was due to an upsurge in voter participation. Voter participation in the Democratic primary increased in every region of the state. It was particularly significant in the major urban areas, in Puget Sound, and in southwest Washington, where the Republicans had long held sway.[27]

Though labor voters were certainly very important in the Democratic primary, it is less certain that they benefited from the outcome. Clarence D. Martin, a wealthy businessman from eastern Washington and formerly the mayor of Cheney and chairman of the State Democratic Party, won the guvernatorial nomination. An ally of Spokane Party leader James Geraghty, he defeated Lewis Schwellenback and William H. Pemberton for the nomination. Schwellenbach, a Seattle attorney and an early Roosevelt organizer, and Pemberton, a retired State Supreme Court justice and a former LaFollette progressive, both had strong labor support in western Washington. All three candidates supported the national ticket, but differed somewhat over economic policy. Schwellenbach emphasized tax reduction and non-governmental

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[27]Fayette F. Krause, "Democratic Party Politics in the State of Washington During the New Deal: 1932-1940," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Washington, 1971), passim.

unemployment relief, while Pemberton, who blamed the Depression on business, called for massive federal and state relief and public works programs. Between them they split the labor vote, allowing Martin the victory. Martin's campaign was designed to appeal to the business community without alienating labor voters. The candidate was pictured as a responsible, non-partisan, public servant. His victory left Martin in an excellent strategic position.[28]

In the Republican primary, Governor Hartley was defeated by Lt. Governor John A. Gellatly of Wenatchee. In the years since his reelection in 1928 Hartley had expended the bulk of his political capital in the party and was now recognized as more of a liability than an asset. As a progressive Gellatly had strong labor support, especially from some of the building trades unions and seemed to have a good chance for victory. Despite the poor economic conditions the Republican vote total far surpassed the Democratic total. The problem for Gellatly was that he needed more progressive support to win and if he made concessions to keep their support, he might alienate the Republican Right-wing.[29]

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[28]The Democratic primaries also introduced some unique "characters" to the Washington political scene. Among the most colorful was Vic Meyers, who won the Democratic nomination for Lt. Governor. Meyers, popular Seattle band leader and a former candidate for mayor, was also a member of Seattle Musicians Union Local No. 77. He went on to a long career in elective office.

Cole, pp. 282-286; Johansen, p. 503; Taylor to All Affiliates, 28 Sept. 1932, Box 38-5, WSFL Records.

[29]State Representative Judson F. Falknor, a 100 per cent pro-labor progressive won the Lt. Governor nomination.

Gunns, p. 220; Taylor to All Affiliates, 28 Sept. 1932, Box 38-5, WSFL Records.

Most of the WSFL's energies, however, were expanded in the congressional primaries. The WSFL successfully supported progressive Republicans in the First, Second, Fourth, and Sixth Congressional districts and pro-labor Democrats in the Third and Fifth districts.[30]

In the crowded Democratic senatorial primary labor faced a less pleasant outcome. Homer T. Bone won a clear majority over three opponents. He decided to enter the race only after Roosevelt won the presidential nomination on a progressive platform. It is easy to understand why many trade unionists, particularly the conservatives and the Republicans, objected to him. They remembered his FLP and socialist past. He received little support from the WSFL leadership, although he had strong support among the labor rank and file, especially in the Seattle-Tacoma area.[31]

The WSFL's distrust of Bone is easy to understand, but they had little choice in the matter. His opponents were either too conservative or unlikely to win. Neither could they support Senator Wesley Jones, the winner of the Republican primary. He was too closely associated with the policies of the Hoover administration. Given the alternatives, even AFL President Green urged the WSFL to endorse Bone.[32]

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[30]For more on the congressional primaries, see: Cole, pp. 279-282,285-286; Johansen, p. 503; Minutes, 7,21 Sept. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Clark, The Dry Years, pp. 211,215-216,220,221,227,232; Minutes, 25 Sept. 1932, Box 60, WSFL Records.

[31]For more on the Democratic senatorial primaries, see: Cole, pp. 276-279,284,286-287.

[32]Ibid; Johansen, p. 503; Robert A. Acena, "The Washington Commonwealth Federation: Reform Politics and the Popular Front," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Washington, 1975), passim.

Following the primaries, the WSFL's executive board met to make their endorsements. After endorsing Roosevelt the board faced a most unusual choice in the gubernatorial contest. Both Martin and Gellatly appeared before the board, agreed to choose a trade unionist as the director of the Department of Labor and Industries, and to endorse the WSFL's legislative program. Never before had both major gubernatorial cnadidates sought labor's endorsement. Rowland Watson, the vice-president for the Seattle district, then moved that the board endorse Gellatly. Ida Parberry, from the Bellingham district, seconded the motion, but the vote ended in a tie forcing Taylor to cast the deciding vote. He voted against endorsing Gellatly. Then William J. Finn, from the Spokane district, moved that the board take a neutral stand: that "either would be satisfactory from a legislative standpoint...." John C. Varco, of the Yakima-Walla Walla district, seeing this as a way out of a nasty situation, seconded the motion. As a result, the board decided not to endorse either of the two candidates. The same problem cropped up in the Lt. Governor's race and the board sought the same solution. Thus it seemed likely that no matter which candidate won labor would benefit.[33]

Following this the board proceeded to endorse Bone for senator, a congressional slate of three Democrats and three Republicans, and an equally non-partisan slate for state offices.[34]

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[33]Call, pp. 50,53; WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 10; Yearbook, (1927), pp. 23,25,27; (1932), pp. 8-9,13,15; (1935), p. 16; Minutes, 25 Sept. 1932, Box 60; Taylor to All Affiliates, 28 Sept. 1932, Box 38-5, WSFL Records.

[34]Minutes, 25 Sept. 1932, Box 60; Taylor to All Affiliates, 28 Sept. 1932, Box 38-5, WSFL Records.

The board also had to consider what to do about the direct legislation proposals on the ballot. This was less difficult since the WSFL had long-expressed opinions on most of them. It opposed the reapportionment referendum (HJR 5) and the Grange's forty mill property tax limit (Initiative 64). On the other hand it endorsed the amendment to increase legislators' salaries (HJR 16) and the permanent registration of voters (Initiative 58). It also endorsed Initiative 69, requiring payment of a graduated income tax on the incomes of persons, firms, corporations, etc. These decisions were expected.[35]

In the general election campaign the presidential campaign attracted the greatest interest because most of Washington's economic problems could be dealt with only through federal action. The main question remaining in the minds of many voters was whether or not state Democrats could work with a Roosevelt administration. Roosevelt settled this issue when, in his Portland speech, he embraced Homer Bone, welcomed him into the party, and promised that the next great federal hydro-electric project would be on the Columbia River. This virtually guaranteed a Democratic victory in Washington State. The Republican congressional delegation had long supported this proposal, but had never been able to overcome Hoover's objections to it. The only untoward event in the whole campaign occurred during Roosevelt's campaign visit to Seattle. The State Democratic Committee, the hosts, planned to use a police band in the welcoming parade. Musicians Union Local No. 76 protested and asked the Democrats to hire union

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[35]Minutes, 25 Sept. 1932, Box 60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 29 June, 26 Oct. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; WSFL Procs., (1931), p. 5; (1933), pp. 7-8.

musicians. The committee, however, insisted that they lacked the funds to pay for professionals and "did nothing to stop the (police) band." This was only a minor disturbance. Labor support went strongly for Roosevelt and Roosevelt went on to win an overwhelming triumph, defeating Hoover by a plurality of 91,706 votes. A great shift occurred as progressive voters abandoned the Republicans for the Democrats.[36]

Meanwhile Homer Bone and the entire Democratic congressional ticket was also elected. In the gubernatorial contest Martin defeated Gellatly by 150,000 votes. Ironically, the utter defeat of the Republicans, so long desired by the WSFL, produced not victory for the WSFL but frustration. Since it had failed to endorse Martin and three of the Democratic congressional candidates after the primary, Martin felt no obligation to labor. When it came time to appoint a director for the Department of Labor and Industries, Martin failed to appoint a trade unionist. Labor benefited greatly under the Democrats but not because the Democrats owed anything to the labor movement.[37]

The Democratic tide was most noticeable in the legislative races. The Democrats increased their representation in the House from eight to seventy and in the Senate from one to twenty-five. The

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[36]Johansen, pp. 502-503,618,623; Cole, pp. 289-291; Minutes, 21 Sept., 2 Nov. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Election Returns, 1932, Box 53-3, WSFL Records; Seattle P-I 21-22 Sept. 1932.

[37]A third party, the Liberty Party, collected 41,710 votes. It was not enough to effect the outcome, but indicative of the tremendous sense of alienation in the state.
Johansen, pp. 503,614,618,622-623,625; Election Returns, 1932, Box 53-3, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 7.

Republicans suffered a corresponding loss from eighty-eight to twenty-nine in the House and from forty-one to twenty-one in the Senate. Most of the losers were progressive Republicans. The Democrats took complete control of state government for the first time in the state's history.[38]

In the direct legislation elections the WSFL was largely responsible for the defeat of the Reapportionment Amendment, but it could not prevent passage of the forty mill property tax initiative. The WSFL blamed its passage on "unprecedented unemployment which prevented many from paying taxes." As the WSFL had feared the bill led to cuts in school funds and in the salaries of school teachers and other school officials. Within a year the WSFL was organizing a movement to pass a new law to shift the tax burden to "intangible property." At the same time, however, Initiative 61, to repeal the state's prohibition act, also passed by the overwhelming margin of 341,450 to 208,211.[39]

The Democratic victory was based primarily on the defection of progressives from the Republican ranks. To a certain extent labor had missed the boat by remaining in the non-partisan ranks for so long. Luckily for the labor movement most of the new officeholders supported labor legislation. In the years which followed labor reaped numerous benefits from this fact although they had done little to bring it about.

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[38]For more on state and local races, see: Minutes, 7,21 Sept., 12 Oct., 9,16 Nov. 1932, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Election Returns, 1932, Box 53-3, WSFL Records; See also: Cole, p. 292.

[39]Call, p. 29; WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 7; Clark, The Dry Years, pp. 224-228.

Chapter 19:

Unemployment, Relief, Recovery, and Organization: Labor and the New Deal, 1933

In 1933 the nation's dizzying economic decline stopped and the economy began to recover. The national index of industrial production, which had declined by 47.27 per cent between 1929 and 1932, rose by 18.98 per cent. Even though unemployment continued to rise, the rate of increase slowed.[1]

In the Pacific Northwest, however, most economic indexes continued to fall, although at a slower rate than in 1929-1932. Business activity in eastern Washington declined by 6.38 per cent but in the Puget Sound area it fell by only 0.13 per cent and in the Lower Columbia River region business activity actually picked up by 2.80 per cent.[2]

In the Inland Empire indexes of trade and commerce continued their downward slide for the most part. Spokane newspaper advertising fell by 21.88 per cent. And while department store sales rose by 5.6 per cent, it was less than half what it had been in 1929. Meanwhile, gross postal receipts fell by 3.75 per cent and bank debits in major urban areas fell by 17.48 per cent to $383 million, a decline of 62.53 per cent since 1929. Eastern Washington agricultural production also

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[1] "Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111.
[2] Ibid.

continued to decline. While wheat production rose sharply and freight carloadings of grain increased by 17.68 per cent, shipments of fruit fell by 19.43 per cent and shipments of livestock fell by 49.50 per cent. Since the labor movement in eastern Washington was heavily dependent upon agricultural production these statistics spelled continued hardship for the workingmen of the region.[3]

Even more important for the labor movement economic conditions in western Washington remained at a low ebb. Indexes of trade, such as department store sales, fell by 9.87 per cent, to 59.21 per cent of sales in 1929. Gross postal receipts fell by 3.37 per cent to $3,663,000 while bank debits fell by 5.43 per cent to $1,771 million. On the other hand, most indexes of production seemed to rebound from their historic low levels. Lumber production, the economic foundation of the region, increased by 36.50 per cent to 4,252 million board feet. Even so it stood at only 58.01 per cent of production in 1929. At the same time freight carloadings of logs and forest products from Washington, Oregon, and northern Idaho increased by 30.43 per cent to 283,000 cars while freight carloadings of all products increased by 5.31 per cent to 665,000 cars. Not much of this increase filtered down to benefit consumers. Gasoline sales in Washington State fell by 4.02 per cent to 237 million gallons, life insurance sales fell by 17.74 per cent to $79 million, and the value of building permits in eleven western Washington cities fell by a further 37.77 per cent, to $3.4 million, down by 92.39 per cent from 1928.[4]

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[3]Ibid; Johansen, pp. 626-627.
[4]Ibid.

The impact of these conditions on the labor movement was severe. Unemployment in the Building Trades was particularly heavy. Although factory employment in Washington State rose 30.90 per cent to 82,500, since 1929, factory employment had fallen by 41.93 per cent. Meanwhile, the deflationary cycle continued. The cost of living index in Seattle fell by 5.32 per cent and total income in Washington State fell by 1.56 per cent to $598 million, a decline of 45.83 per cent from 1929. And, despite the increase in factory employment, total employment in Washington State fell by 0.79 per cent to 506,000, and unemployment continued to rise, climbing by 5.86 per cent to 178,700, or 26.24 per cent of the total labor force. (Table No. 1)[5]

For the labor movement 1933 was the hardest year it had known since its beginning. Membership in WSFL affiliates declined by 28.04 per cent to 13,796, or 2.02 per cent of the labor force, the fewest since 1909. (Table No. 2) The number of WSFL affiliates declined by 18.36 per cent to 200, also the lowest level since 1909. By 1933 labor had lost virtually all of the membership gains made in the previous twenty-four years.[6]

The WSFL's annual survey of its vice-presidential districts generally confirms this impression. The Bellingham district reported that the period June 1932 to June 1933 was the "worst year in living memory." Only the Teamsters Union and Meat Cutters Union locals picked up strength. Similarly, in Spokane all the locals lost members. Central Labor Council President Andrew J. Fabian lost his bid for

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[5]Ibid.

[6]WSFL Procs., (1919), p. 53; (1933), p. 27.

reelection to the city council, but Len Funk won reelection as mayor. In the Yakima-Walla Walla district, labor reported similar conditions.[7]

In the Grays Harbor-Willapa Harbor district labor conditions were the "same as elsewhere." Labor was handicapped by a revival of the Four L's, the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen. Sponsored by the lumber operators the Four L's were recognized as bargaining agent for the workers under the National Recovery Administration's codes. According to the WSFL, the Four L's began to tell workers that "they were now under direct federal jurisdiction," and that joining the Four L's was "mandatory," in a "desperate effort to forestall real labor organizations." Fighting back, the AFL chartered a number of lumber unions, its first serious effort to organize the woods since the war. Shortly, these unions formed the Northwest Council of Sawmill and Timber Workers to coordinate their activities, but found the task nearly impossible. In the competition between the Four L's and the AFL, the former had many advantages. In particular, the AFL unions complained that the Federal Labor Adjustment Board, set up under the National Industrial Recovery Act to hear labor grievances, was stacked with employers and members of the Four L's. By the end of the year, the AFL still had not made much progress.[8]

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[7]For more on the Bellingham district, see: Ibid., (1933), pp. 13-14,16; Dave Beck to Taylor, 8 Feb. 1933, Box 23-16, WSFL Records.

For more on the Spokane district, where the Teamsters and Engineers locals were "waging (a) courageous fight against the unfair breweries (which employed United Brewery Workers members)," see: WSFL Procs., (1929), pp. 8-9; (1930), p. 31; (1933), pp. 16-17; Yearbook, (1925), pp. 31,33.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla district, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 17.

[8]For more on conditions in the Grays Harbor-Willapa Harbor district, see: Ibid., (1933), pp. 17-18,69; John M. McClelland, Jr.,

In the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district labor lost "considerable membership" in 1933. The only signs of vigor came in the mining areas, where a new wave of organization took place and a number of locals in Carbonado and Roslyn asked to affiliate, but unemployment was so widespread that the union leaders asked for outside help. Similarly, in the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district labor conditions were as "bad as the rest of the state" and labor was involved in a number of strikes and injunction cases.[9]

In contrast, labor conditions improved significantly in the Kitsap-Mason-Clallam County district, which reported that "things are looking better now" that the lumber camps and pulp mills had started up again. The improvement was most noticeable in the Port Angeles-Port Townsend area. In Shelton, too, business improved and the mills started up again with union labor. The workers showed strong interest in forming an industrial organization for the industry. But conditions in the district were best in Bremerton, where work on the cruiser "Astoria" was reaching a peak. Even so, Navy yard workers had to accept two wage cuts.[10]

R.A. Long's Planned City, the Story of Longview, (Longview, Wash.: Longview Publishing Co., 1976), pp. 209-216; T.J. Linton to Taylor, 6 Oct., 23 Nov. 1933, Box 1-39; DeHart to All Affiliates, 27 Nov. 1933, Box 1-35, WSFL Records.

[9]For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 18; Taylor to R. Francis, 28 Sept. 1933, Box 38-6; Tuttle to Taylor, 23 March, 10 April 1933, Box 17-16; A. Hunter to Taylor, 11 Sept. 1933, Box 15-17; J. Lyons to Taylor, 12 Oct. 1933, Box 26-63, WSFL Records.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 15,19.

[10]For more on the Kitsap-Mason-Clallam County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 19; Minutes of the Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers Conference, 29 Oct. 1933, Box 20-65, WSFL Records.

Conditions in the King County district remained worst of all, with 70,000 people on relief. The SCLC and SUCL protested the poor wages provided for relief work and the "coercive methods" used by the King County Relief Committee to "force men to work for practically nothing." The SCLC invited the SUCL to join it in encouraging those who "resist attempts to use them as instruments to break down American standards," but they did not have much success. The pro-labor county commissioners threatened to stop all relief work, if the SCLC continued to complain about their methods. The SCLC then sought to build political support by developing their own relief program and the SUCL called a mass demonstration to back the program, but the effort failed when the cooperation between the two organizations broke down. The SCLC refused to endorse the SUCL's "unwise" action. Later, however, when the SUCL organized a "strike against forced labor" on Federal Emergency Relief Administration projects, the SCLC did endorse the action. Still, they achieved no noticeable results.[11]

In March 1933 the Roosevelt administration took office and immediately moved to rekindle faith in the economy and the government. Rapidly, Roosevelt forced through Congress a stunning series of federal initiatives, which raised hopes in the labor movement. Above all Roosevelt forced through Congress a $500 million program of direct federal grants to the states for relief, public works, and conservation.[12]

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[11] WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 18-19; Minutes, 22,29 March, 5 April, 3,10 May, 8,15 Nov. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[12] William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 41-62; Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 206,209,211,214,290,2178-

Most of the measures of Roosevelt's first 100 days echoed labor's long-held beliefs, but not all. The AFL bitterly opposed Roosevelt's request to cut $400 million from veterans' payments and a further $100 million in the pay of federal workers and, despite labor's opposition, the Economy Act passed after only two days of debate. Other administration proposals failed to go far enough or fast enough for labor. A case in point was Roosevelt's industrial recovery program. Despite his vigorous actions in other spheres Roosevelt took no immediate action to increase industrial production beyond urging Senator Wagner of New York and others to study the matter. By April Roosevelt had decided not to take any further steps. Labor, however, was adamant in supporting action. In particular, John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, and other leaders of the AFL's industrial union minority, pressed for federal action to promote industrial "stabilization" as a pre-requisite for unionization. Finally, Roosevelt was stung to action when the Senate approved a bill, introduced by Hugo Black of Alabama, which barred from interstate commerce articles produced in plants where employees worked more than five days a week, or six hours a day. Even conservative William Green, who feared government intervention in the economy, supported the bill and declared that it struck "at the root of the problem--technological unemployment." Roosevelt, however, opposed the concept, believing it unconstitutional as well as rigid and unworkable. As a result, he was forced to come up with an alternative, the National Industrial Recovery

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2179,5245; See also: United States Senate, Thirty-Hour Work Week Hearings Before the Sub-Committee on the Judiciary, 72d Cong., 2d Sess., on S. 5267, 5-19 Jan. 1933, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1933), pp. 1-23.

Act, which took a more moderate approach to the industrial problem. Although Roosevelt's alternative passed the House, it faced strong opposition in the Senate where the supporters of the Black bill regarded it as a "sell-out." Finally, however, after a hard struggle, the NIRA bill passed both houses of Congress and was signed by President Roosevelt. The bill contained a little something for everyone, but not enough for anyone. Business received government authorization to draft industry-wide price and wage code agreements which would be exempt from anti-trust proceedings. The proponents of government planning won their demand for government licensing of businesses. Labor won inclusion of Section 7(a), modelled on the practices of the World War I-era War Labor Board. Section 7(a) guaranteed labor the right to organize and bargain collectively and provided that the codes should set minimum wage and maximum hours standards. The bill also provided $3.3 billion for public works. Never before had the federal government gone so far to endorse the demands of the labor movement.[13]

The National Industrial Recovery Act infused the labor movement with new hope and vigor. The SCLC appointed a committee to investigate the possibilities it presented and decided to begin an "aggressive organization campaign in order to protect themselves under the Act." Soon numerous locals reported special meetings to draw up

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[13]Leuchtenburg, pp. 55-62; Auerbach, pp. 363-364; United States Statutes at Large, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., XLVIII (16 June 1933), pp. 195, 198; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, The History of the American Worker, 1933-1941, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1971), pp. 27-35,57,150,195-196,638-639; Bernstein, The New Deal Collective Bargaining Policy, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950), pp. 29-39; WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 6; Minutes, 26 Jan., 22 March, 12 April, 7 June 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

trade and industrial codes. During the summer optimism prevailed. Locals reported generally favorable progress. By August, however, complaints began to pour in. The Retail Clerks, for example, reported that some department stores were violating the "spirit of NRA." Even the State Highway Department continued to pay below-code wages and the Seattle City Council tried to cut the wages of Street Carmen and Technical Engineers. On the other hand some unions continued to report favorably on the law. The Retail Clerks reported that they had made some progress in organizing grocery clerks under the codes. And Dave Beck reported the Teamsters had met with "splendid success with the NRA" and believed if the locals contacted the SCLC's NRA committee with their complaints, they would get better results.[14]

Still, governmental opposition continued to present a difficult challenge. When the Seattle City Council passed an ordinance granting the Firefighters Union one day off in six with no reduction in pay, Mayor Dore vetoed it. This was a serious blow. The measure had first been passed in 1930 to become effective in 1932. In August 1931 the council had postponed enforcement until 1932, due to economic conditions. In 1932, it had been postponed a second time. This third rejection of the measure was a clear sign to labor that it could not rely solely upon governmental programs.[15]

Perhaps the most important change in labor-government relations, however, was a new spirit of cooperation. For the first time in many years the federal and state government began to enforce existing labor

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[14]Minutes, 31 May, 28 June, 2,16,30 Aug., 6,13,27 Sept., 4,18 Oct., 8,15 Nov., 6,13 Dec. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[15]Minutes, 19,26 Aug. 1931, 31 May 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

laws equitably. This new spirit first showed itself in the government's handling of the Puget Sound ferry strike. The Ferryboatmen of Puget Sound Union had affiliated with the SCLC in the spring of 1932. By late summer they had changed their name to Masters, Mates, and Pilots Union Local No. 6 and had become embroiled in a conflict with the Puget Sound Navigation Company which operated the Black Ball Lines ferries between Seattle and Bremerton. When the company refused to meet with Local No. 6's representatives, the local had appealed to the WSFL convention for assistance. The convention had responded by giving the company thirty days to reach a settlement but, despite several invitations, the company had still refused to negotiate. Therefore, on 15 August the SCLC and the WSFL had placed the company on their unfair lists and had begun a boycott against the company. In retaliation the company had dismissed several licensed officers for their union activities and continued to operate with non-union crews. In September Local No. 6 had responded by chartering their own ferry boat and had begun carrying about 200-250 passengers per trip between Seattle and Bremerton. In the next ten months the local's ferryboat operations carried 250,000 commuters who would otherwise have patronized the Black Ball Lines. The Black Ball Lines had also been hurt when other companies expanded their capacities.[16]

Although the boycott ate into its revenues the company still resisted the union. In October 1932 it fired 100 employees who were members of the union. The company might have been able to keep up its

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[16] WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 11-12,65; (1934), p. 8; Minutes, 4 May, 10,17 Aug., 14 Sept., 5 Oct. 1932; 24, 30 Aug. 1933, KCCLC Records; J.M. Fox to Taylor, 28 Aug. 1933, Box 16-34, WSFL Records.

resistance indefinitely had not labor received timely assistance from the new Roosevelt administration. In May 1933 a United States Steamboat Inspector arrived in Seattle at the request of Local No. 6 and the WSFL. In the words of the WSFL report, the inspector promptly "enforced the 50 hour law on all the Black Ball Lines; thereby establishing conditions we were fighting for" and ordered the company to put two crews on its boats "formerly operated with one crew at 12-18 hours per day." This convinced the company that it was futile to resist any more and within a few months it accepted the right of its employees to bargain collectively. This was the first time, in living memory, when the federal government had come to the aid of a union local in Washington State.[17]

By September labor realized that the NRA codes would be insufficient. George D. Early of the Seattle Plumbers Union Local No. 32, secretary of the building trades council, wrote to the SCLC on behalf of a number of his colleagues that it would be "criminal if the labor movement fails to take advantage of...the legalizing by Congress of the right of workers to organize...(under Section 7(a) of the NIRA)." He urged that the Washington and Oregon State Federations of Labor initiate a joint organizational drive. He called for reductions in the AFL's initiation fees and for mass organizational meetings. "Since success depends on inclusion of the lumber industry...(he said it would be) important to bring federal (i.e., provisional) unions in this industry into the campaign; when enough locals (had been) formed

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[17]Ibid; For more on the strike, its settlement, and labor-management relations in the industry, see: Virginia B. Smith, "A History of Labor Relations in the Puget Sound Ferry Boat Trade," (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1950).

by direct (i.e., WSFL) affiliation, then (they should be formed into) an International Union." But by December Early's plans were unrealized. He reported that the building trades were in retreat. They had found that the local branch of the Federal Re-Employment Bureau was "breaking down all their conditions (and) defeating the aims of the NRA." There had been no progress in organizing the lumber industry.[18]

Indeed, the building trades suffered most in 1933, when seventy-five per cent of the members were unemployed. The rest could find only part-time work at less-than-union scales and conditions. Only a few unions seemed to benefit and some of them were locals which had scarcely existed during the 1920's. The Longshoremen Union Local No. 38-12, for example, burst to life in the spring of 1933. For the first time since 1922, it began an organizational campaign. With aid from the Masters, Mates, and Pilots Union they continued to work through the summer. They did not win recognition, but they laid the groundwork for the much greater successes they achieved in 1934 and after. By the same token, the Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers also showed signs of life and won union recognition from the Northwest Steel Rolling Mills which became the only organized mill in the Pacific Northwest. But these were the exceptions. More typical was the case of Seattle Typographical Union Local No. 202 which was forced to strike to preserve its organization. In May 1933 the three major Seattle daily papers--the Star, the P-I, and the Times--locked out the 237 union members they employed

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[18]Early, et al. to All Central Labor Councils, 6 Sept. 1933, Box 9-21, WSFL Records; Minutes, 13 Dec. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Call, p. 50; WSFL Procs., (1930), p. 67; (1931), p. 10.

"because the union refused to set aside many of the rules which had been in force for 25 years on the West Coast." This was especially bitter for the local since it had already accepted a wage cut. The companies tried to operate with imported strikebreakers for a while but local sentiment was with the unions. Finally, after several weeks, federal negotiator E.P. Marsh helped negotiate a settlement.[19]

Overall membership in SCLC affiliates fell 17.89 per cent to 9,749, the lowest since 1915. Every single trade section lost membership. The sharpest drop occurred in the Building and Printing Trades sections. (Table No. 3) The number of SCLC affiliates, however, declined by only two, to eighty-three and the number of WSFL affiliates declined by five, to sixty.[20]

One of the first acts of the Roosevelt administration was to obtain passage of a bill to allow production and sale of beer. This act raised problems dating back to before World War I and indirectly promoted the craft-industrial split-up of the AFL. The central question which the Beer Act raised for the labor movement was who would have jurisdiction over the workers in the breweries? The Brewery Workers Union, an industrial organization, mainly represented the inside workers--the brewers and other skilled workers in and around the breweries--but claimed the right to organize all workers employed by breweries. This brought them into conflict with the Teamsters Union. The Teamsters, who operated according to craft

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[19] WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 18-19; Minutes, 5 April, 17,31 May, 7,28 June, 5 July 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[20] WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 27; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1933, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

principles, agreed to the Brewery Workers jurisdiction over the brewers and their assistants but claimed the right to organize the beer truck drivers as part of their jurisdiction. The conflict had long been one of the sharpest craft-industrial controversies in the AFL. Several times in the past, when the Brewery Workers had sought to organize beer truck drivers, the Teamsters had convinced the AFL to vote against the industrial principle. On more than one occasion the Brewery Workers had withdrawn from the AFL over the issues. During prohibition the controversy had subsided because the Brewery Workers practically ceased to exist. They had agreed to settle their conflicts with the Teamsters and had returned to the AFL. But now that the industry showed signs of revival, the conflict quickly reemerged.

Both sides in the brewery dispute held important advantages which neither would easily relinquish. The Brewery Workers monopolized knowledge of beer-making. If they did not work the companies could not brew beer and the beer truck drivers would have nothing to haul. They also had the advantage of a strong, militant, central organization willing to support their locals' efforts. The Teamsters, on the other hand, easily matched these advantages, but only in Washington State. Though they had a weak national organization, they had an extremely vigorous and capable local leadership under the direction of Dave Beck. Under him, Joint Council No. 28 had begun to organize on a large scale in every region of the state. He would not abandon his claim to any part of the Teamster jurisdiction. The AFL had specifically granted the Teamsters jurisdiction over the beer truck drivers,

a fact which Beck repeatedly pointed out. Most importantly, through their trucking jurisdiction, the Teamsters controlled all access to the breweries: the arrival of all raw materials and the departure of all beer shipments. No beer manufacturer or distributor could operate without their approval. If the Teamsters needed the Brewery Workers to make the beer they delivered the Brewery Workers needed the Teamsters just as much. But lacking the willingness to compromise no compromise was possible. Immediately upon passage of the Beer Act both unions rushed to organize the breweries.[21]

In March 1933 the SCLC recognized the jurisdictional problem and appointed a committee to help organize the breweries. Fearing that the committee would come under Teamster influence the Brewery Workers opposed the measure. When the council went ahead with its plans the Brewery Workers decided to organize the breweries by themselves, even without SCLC cooperation. This alarmed Dave Beck and other local leaders who felt they had jurisdictional interests in the breweries. They contacted the AFL and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters' leadership. In May the AFL's executive council confirmed that the Teamsters had jurisdiction over all brewery truck drivers, but Teamster President Dan Tobin, who had convinced the executive council to make this move, refused to provide funds from the Teamsters' treasury to defend their jurisdiction, even though the national treasury was full. Tobin was prepared to lose the entire jurisdiction rather than commit international funds to the struggle. It is this fact which, in the

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[21] Washington State Labor News 31 Aug. 1934; Westine, p. 10; Garnel, Vol. I, p. 189.

end, preserved the Brewery Workers Union from destruction.[22]

Thereupon, Beck vowed to launch his own local organizational campaign and began to contact the heads of all the breweries planning to open in Washington State. He gave them a difficult choice: recognize the Teamsters, or face a boycott. He said that they informed him that they wanted to sign a contract with the Teamsters but that the Brewery Workers had threatened to strike if they did so. The employers were, indeed, in a difficult position. No matter which way they turned, they could see no way to avoid a labor conflict. Beck sympathized with their plight but told them that he still meant to organize the beer truck drivers. He informed the SCLC that, if the employers and the Brewery Workers did not transfer the truck drivers to his jurisdiction within two weeks, he "would wage a fight against all breweries who had not complied with the Executive Council's decision."[23]

In city after city the Brewery Workers succeeded in organizing the truck drivers without opposition from the Teamsters. Only in Washington State were they met with implacable opposition. In June Teamster pressure forced the SCLC and the Spokane Central Labor Council to unseat their Brewery Workers locals for refusing to abide by the executive council's decision. Beck also succeeded in getting the SCLC to endorse the Teamster boycott of Brewery Workers-produced beer. Later, under Beck's pressure, the WSFL convention voted to expel the Brewery Workers and declare "unfair" those breweries employing Brewery

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[22]Beck Interview; Washington State Labor News 31 Aug. 1934; Minutes, 12 April, 24 May 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[23]Ibid.

Workers in jobs claimed by other trades. The Brewery Workers, however, refused to abandon their claims and, shortly after the WSFL convention, the executive board expelled them.[24]

In September the AFL convention officially transferred jurisdiction of the beer truck drivers to the Teamsters. A month later the Brewery Workers struck back boycotting the Heinrich's Breweries, "whose only crime was employing Teamsters," and the conflict broke into the open. The struggle was long and hard. Beck retaliated by supplying inside workers to breweries struck by the Brewery Workers Union. The main fight occurred at the Northwest Brewing Company plants at Seattle and Tacoma. In late 1933 Peter Marinoff, the head of the company, recognized the Teamsters union but in 1934 the fight erupted again. When the Teamsters struck Northwest Brewing, Marinoff hired Brewery Workers strikebreakers to produce beer. The Teamsters countered by refusing to handle Marinoff's beer. After the strike was briefly halted by an injunction Marinoff signed with the Teamsters. Still, this did not end the controversy. In 1935 the Teamsters struck, again, charging Marinoff with contract violations. Teamster pickets followed Marinoff trucks and sought to "persuade" customers not to accept delivery of his beer. The climax came when gunmen hired by Marinoff shot and killed a Teamster picketer. For this crime Marinoff and three other men were convicted of manslaughter. After this the Teamsters gradually won the upper hand in Washington State. By 1937 the Teamsters had successfully isolated the Washington market and

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[24]Beck Interview; WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 72,74; (1934), p. 9; Minutes, 14 June 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records; SCLC to WSFL Convention, 8 July 1933, Box 9-21; R. Watson, et al. to All Affiliates, 15 Nov. 1933, Box 9-21, WSFL Records.

were even preventing the importation of Brewery Workers beer made in California and the mid-West. The boycott lasted until the 1950's, during which time only locally brewed beer was available in Washington. Until then Washington beer drinkers could not buy such national brands as Budweiser and Schlitz anywhere in the state. Their success in defending their beer truck driving jurisdiction was paralleled in other areas of the Teamsters jurisdiction. Under Beck's leadership membership in Joint Council No. 28 grew from 12,000 in 1936, to 21,500 in 1940, to 55,000 in 1952.[25]

The struggle within the labor movement, between the Teamsters and the Brewery Workers, like the conflict between the Federal Employees and the Machinists, helped to draw the industrial-craft organization battle lines in the AFL more clearly. For the first time, the Teamsters emerged as the champions of the craft form of organization.

While the Washington labor movement remained on the defensive in 1933 it became more aggressive politically. The first signs of this renaissance came at the 1933 legislature. Although many of the new members elected in 1932 had professed progressive principles, they had yet to be tested. Despite this uncertainty, labor achieved many of its most cherished goals. For the first time in a decade labor broke through the legislative logjam. Though not entirely successful--a number of important bills died in committee, or passed only one

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[25]Beck Interview; WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 9; Washington State Labor News, 31 Aug. 1934; Minutes, 11 Oct., 15 Nov. 1933, 18,25 April, 28 Nov., 12 Dec. 1934, 13 Nov. 1935, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Lectures given by Dr. Robert Burke, 1960, Notes in the Possession of Dr. Burke, University of Washington.

house--much of its legislative program passed. Had not President Taylor been felled by a "serious heart attack" midway through the session, even more of this program might have become law.[26]

Much of this legislation had been on labor's agenda for years. The legislature ratified the Child Labor Amendment (SJR 1), despite "determined" efforts to kill it in the House Constitution Revision Committee and on the floor. It also ratified the amendment to end "lame duck" sessions of Congress (SJR 3) and approved an election for a constitutional convention to approve the prohibition repeal amendment, becoming the thirty-first state to do so.[27]

Of even more immediate importance to the labor movement, however, were a number of House bills passed giving direct benefits to workers, the unemployed, and the injured who lacked other forms of income. Under the Hartley administration none could have escaped the governor's veto. These included the Eagles' old age pension bill (HB 14), the removal of electric machines from gaseous mines bill (HB 70), a rehabilitation of cripples bill (HB 300), and a credit union bill (HB 240). The most important piece of legislation originating in the House which eventually became law, however, was the unemployment relief bill (HB 35) which called for appointment of a five-man

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[26]For more on the many bills labor supported, which did not become law, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 9-10; Legislative Voting Records, 1933, Box 3-1, WSFL Records; Minutes, 15 Feb. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[27]For more on the Senate bills, which labor supported and became law, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 8-9; Legislative Voting Records, 1933, Box 3-1, WSFL Records; Minutes, 1 Feb., 3,22 March, 19 Aug. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Call, pp. 22,28; Clark, The Dry Years, pp. 236-238.

commission to administer federal relief funds supplied to the state under the Reconstruction Finance Corporation grants. Although the bill did not totally satisfy labor President Taylor "reluctantly" accepted a non-salaried position on the commission when he became convinced that the RFC funds would not be spent for compulsory work relief or "forced labor" at below-union scale wages or conditions. The legislature then appropriated $10 million, to be financed by a bond issue, to support the commission (HB 263).[28]

Meanwhile, a coalition of employers mobilized for a last-ditch struggle against the threat of higher workmen's compensation costs. For several weeks prior to the session, the WSFL had observed the activities of the Associated Industries of Seattle and the Federated Industries of Washington, knowing that "they intended to introduce a bill which would wipe out the present law." When the session opened the employers, fortified by the "largest lobby assembled in years," did come forth with an optional insurance bill (HB 268), which would have undermined the existing state-run system. The WSFL, prepared for battle, vigorously opposed this measure. Despite labor's opposition, the bill passed the House by a vote of fifty-four to forty-two, and the Senate by a vote of thirty-one to thirteen. Labor was thus forced

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[28]Despite the successful passage of the bill the dreams of the labor movement remained unfulfilled. The main problem was the reluctance of the commission to spend the state money. As late as June 1933 none of it had yet been spent. The commission, however, was not completely inactive. During the winter it helped to spend as much as $1.240 million per month on relief thereby helping up to 82,000 families. This did not resolve the basic problems of unemployment as far as labor was concerned and President Taylor continued to complain that counties were forcing men to work at below-scale wage levels and failed to provide industrial insurance protection. For more on the labor position on compulsory work relief, or "forced labor", see: Blumell, pp. 92,104.
For more on the labor bills, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 9,

to carry its fight to Governor Martin. In previous years they could not have hoped for support from the governor. Thus it was most pleasing when Governor Martin decided to veto the bill. Labor had doubted his credentials. In the primaries he had been the most conservative of the three Democratic candidates and the WSFL had not endorsed him. When he threw his support behind the labor movement it meant that labor had arrived politically. At the same time Martin signed another workmen's compensation bill (HB 35) much desired by labor. It permitted collection of insurance premiums from employers based on the man-hours worked instead of on payrolls and cut down on the ability of "safe" employers to put the burden of insurance on "unsafe" employers. For the first time in many years, labor discovered a Governor who was politically responsive to its needs.[29]

When the WSFL convention met, a few weeks after the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act, it greeted the new measure warmly. Mine Workers delegate Andrew Hunter said he was "looking forward to great accomplishments by labor (because of the Act) under which labor has everything to gain. Americans have been restored our independence as citizens of this country." President Taylor, recovered from his heart attack, praised the NIRA "as formulated by our most resourceful and far-seeing President, Franklin D. Roosevelt." He described the act as a boon to "small businessmen" who had, under the Republicans, dissociated themselves from the interests of labor. He

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11; Legislative Voting Records, 1933, Box 3-1; Minutes, 26 June 1933, Box 60, WSFL Records; Call, pp. 22,28.

[29]Ibid.

pledged that the WSFL would support the administration of the measure. "Have no fear," he said, "we will do our share to make NIRA work...." He also pledged to "organize the unorganized."[30]

The WSFL then approved a four-sided program to deal with the economic crisis in view of the government's new helpfulness. The first side of this program concerned the federal government. It called for a number of new legislative initiatives to reduce the hours and improve the conditions of federal employees, particularly postal workers. It called for a thirty-year optional retirement plan for federal workers and encouraged the Navy to refit some of its older battleships at Bremerton and to improve the wages and conditions of Navy yard apprentices. The WSFL also called on the Federal Trade Commission to investigate oil and gas prices and telephone rates.[31]

The second side of the WSFL program was a call for a renewed organizational effort to take adventage of the NIRA code-making process. On the success of this drive hinged the future unity of the AFL. If the AFL failed to organize the unorganized many of the industrial union leaders hinted that they would break away. To direct the drive the WSFL convention approved a plan to reorganize the Union Label Division and begin a strong centralized union labor organization with a paid secretary or organizer. This plan might have proved quite successful had not the craft union leadership succeeded in amending the proposal

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[30]Despite these hopes, the act did not prove to be as efficacious as labor anticipated.

For more on the impact of the bill in Washington State, see: WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 37-38,45-46; (1934), pp. 31-32,48-49.

[31]Ibid., (1933), pp. 65-71.

to read "...if and when funds available." The WSFL also asked all international unions to forgive per capita taxes during the Depression in an attempt to staunch the flow of withdrawals. Locally it called for a campaign to organize sheep shearers and asked all local affiliates to include a clause in their contracts allowing them to join sympathy strikes. Then it endorsed the Teamsters and other craft unions in their struggle with the Brewery Workers and placed all those breweries which failed to employ Teamster drivers on the unfair list. In addition the WSFL also endorsed the Tacoma Garment Workers strike against the Schull-Day Company and the Tacoma Teamsters strike against the General Petroleum Company.[32]

The WSFL also approved a political program urging all WSFL affiliates to cooperate more closely. It recommended a "united progressive program of affiliation" and a "solid political policy to get representation in the legislature." But, to prevent the reemergence of radical political or industrial policies, the convention referred the entire matter to the executive board for final action. For the first time in a number of years the convention did not endorse anti-immigrant or anti-oriental legislation, but it did approve a plan to cooperate politically with the American Legion. Later, the executive board appointed a committee to work for prohibition repeal.[33]

Finally, the convention approved its legislative program. After a spirited debate the delegates reendorsed repeal of prohibition.

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[32]Ibid., (1933), pp. 69-74.

[33]Ibid., (1933), pp. 67,71-73,75; Minutes, 26 June, 8 July 1933, Box 60, WSFL Records; Minutes, 16 Aug. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

It also supported a resolution appointing President Taylor a head of a delegation to petition the governor to reorganize the Department of Labor and Industries "in the interests of the wage earners." Among the specific recommendations the convention also called for were the adoption of NIRA codes for the mining and construction industries and for an initiative petition drive to repeal the certificate of necessity act, which made it impossible to organize taxicab drivers. Basically, however, the WSFL made no new demands. Its program emphasized old ideas and old directions.[34]

Following this the convention reelected the entire executive board--for the fifth consecutive year. Nothing better illustrates the WSFL's increasing rigidity and resistance to change than the stability of its leadership. While all about them were losing their heads the WSFL continued placidly along its course.[35]

Up to a certain point this consistency had beneficial consequences. But, in a period of rapidly changing circumstances, the board was increasingly isolated. In large part this had to do with the rise of industrial union forces within the AFL. We have already seen how the Federal Employees and Brewery Workers unions had vigorously challenged the old craft unions. They were but the forerunners of many other challenges the AFL would have to meet. Following passage of the NIRA the industrial union forces on the AFL's Executive Council, led by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, pressed for

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[34] WSFL Procs., (1933), pp. 48,66-70,73-75; Minutes, 13 July 1933, Box 60, WSFL Records.

[35] WSFL Procs., (1933), p. 32.

initiation of an organizing campaign in the mass-production industries. Lewis had in mind creation of a single industry-wide organization, for each industry, which would cut across international union jurisdictions. The conservative craft union majority, which dominated the council, on the other hand, continued to urge delay and to promote the use of federal labor unions as a device to this end.[36]

At first the federal labor solution seemed to work well. In the latter half of 1933 the AFL received 1,205 applications for federal labor union charters and, encouraged by President Green, granted 1,006 of them. But gradually the old problems came to the fore again. The industrial unionists wanted to form the federal labor unions into new industry-wide national or international unions. The craft unions, especially those in the Metal Trades Department, wanted to split them up and divide their members among the existing craft unions.[37]

When the AFL convention met in October 1933, the federal labor union issue had become the main issue before the delegates. Although the industrial unions--particularly the Garment Workers and the Mine Workers--had been rapidly regaining members, the dominant craft unions

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[36]A federal labor union was a local union directly chartered by the AFL. It could accept as temporary members workers in any trade or craft in its vicinity--until enough had been organized to form regular locals in each particular trade union. Ideally it would go out of business as soon as it had parcelled out its members to the internationals with jurisdiction. The conservatives hoped to organize and store up workers in the federal labor unions, in order to forestall the necessity of having to organize industrial unions. They were a temporary expedient designed to delay jurisdictional questions arising between the internationals.

Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 355.

[37]Ibid.

retained the initiative. Led by John P. Frey, head of the Molder's Union and the Metal Trades Department, they introduced a resolution to prevent the federal labor unions from keeping jurisdiction over workers that were within the jurisdictions of any existing international union. A majority of the convention's Resolution Committee, including its Chairman Matthew Woll of the Photo-Engravers, supported the resolution. However, a minority, including John L. Lewis and Tom Kennedy of the United Mine Workers, Harvey Fleming of the Oil Workers, and Charles P. Howard of the Typographers--all except Howard industrial unionists--opposed it. If the motion passed, the AFL could not charter federal labor unions unless the internationals gave their consent. The AFL organizers would not be able to "compete" with the international organizers but would have to "cooperate" with them.[38]

The minority report on the resolution condemned the proposal and warned that, if the AFL did not now adapt to the new conditions, events would pass labor by. The craft unionists, however, were more interested in maintaining their control of the AFL than in structural reform. Under their influence, the convention voted to refer the minority resolution to the executive council, where it lay, unattended.

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[38]Behind this dispute over union jurisdictions lay other economic and ethnic issues. The workers in the unorganized industries were poorer than and less skilled than craft unionists. They worked for the largest, most powerful corporations. Thus, they could not pay high craft union dues. Craft unionists looked down on them. They faced much stronger opposition than craft unions. Most importantly, however, they came from new immigrant groups. The craft unionists feared that, if they organized in industry-wide units, they would be swamped by the newcomers.

Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 355-356.

Instead, the debate shifted to another industrial union proposal to enlarge the executive council to include more industrial unionists. This proposal would have had the same effect as the earlier unsuccessful one and fooled no one. It too failed by a better-than-two-to-one margin. These votes demonstrated to the embittered industrial unionists that they would have little chance in the AFL. The chief effect of the decisions was to poison relations between the two blocs.[39]

Meanwhile, following the successful passage of the prohibition repeal referendum in August 1933, Governor Martin called a special session of the legislature to approve new state liquor laws.[40] The WSFL saw this as an opportunity to enact even more its legislation. The Everett and Seattle Central Labor Councils, in particular, sought to turn the session to labor's purposes and gain increased funding for old age pensions. Many local unions also hoped to make gains. Ultimately they were highly successful. While Governor Martin won approval of a new State Liquor Control Board, the labor lobby won passage of several more important pieces of labor legislation.[41]

The two most important successes the WSFL achieved during the special session, however, were passage of the anti-injunction Yellow Dog Contract bill (HB 28) and the state wage code bill (HB 136). Of the two, the anti-injunction bill had the easier time, although it was by no means the less important. The bill was an exact copy of the

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[39]Bernstein, The Turbeulent Years, pp. 357-358.

[40]Clark. The Dry Years, pp. 236-248.

[41]For more on the labor-supported measures passed during the special session, see: WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 5-7; Legislative Voting Records, 1933-1934, Box 3-1, WSFL Records; Minutes, 6,20 Dec. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Call, pp. 22,28.

bill introduced earlier during the regular session, which had passed the Senate but had got held up in the House Rules Committee. Introduced on 8 December the House Judiciary Committee gave it a favorable recommendation on the 14th. On the 22d it passed the House by a vote of sixty-six to one, under a suspension of the rules. No labor bill had ever moved with such alacrity. On 27 December it was introduced into the Senate. Two days later the Labor Committee recommended passage. On the same day the Rules Committee considered the bill and gave it a favorable report and the Senate approved it by a vote of thirty-four to seven. When Governor Martin signed the bill on 4 January 1934 labor considered it one of their greatest victories since 1911. The bill provided that a union could picket a firm, even though it employed none of their employees, and thus it served to guarantee the right of pickets to advertize non-union establishments.[42]

The state wage code bill faced higher hurdles. It was, essentially, a state version of the NIRA. Patterned after similar California legislation, it contained about a dozen amendments to make it "more effective" under Washington State conditions. The main accomplishment of the bill was creation of the State Relief Commission to administer state and local relief programs.[43]

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[42]In 1935, however, the State Supreme Court, in Safeway Stores v. Retail Clerks Union, Local No. 148, 184 Wash. 322 (51 Pac. (2d) 372), ruled that the act was unconstitutional.

WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 6; "Picketing Without Having Members," (Mimeo), n.d., Box 6; Minutes, 13,20,27 Dec. 1933, 3 Jan. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Call, p. 22.

[43]WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. -7; Call, p. 22; Legislative Voting Records, 1933-1934, Box 3-1; Minutes, 20,27 Dec. 1933, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

The results of the 1933 legislative sessions demonstrated that nothing less than a revolutionary change in labor's political position had occurred. Ironically these changes, which so benefited labor, had not been foreseen by labor. Neither had labor actively worked to encourage them on a statewide level. Rather they were the results of local actions. While labor had been paralyzed politically on a statewide level local labor leaders had effectively worked to elect pro-labor legislators. And, while the WSFL had been unable to decide on a gubernatorial candidate, local leaders had succeeded in electing numerous mayors and city councilmen. Most importantly, the political results demonstrated a shift of the progressives out of the Republican Party and into the Democratic Party.

After the 1933-1934 special session of the legislature labor gained in political prestige. In 1934, for example, much of President Taylor's time was spent as a member of the State Relief Commission. Whereas in the past labor's successes had always been due, primarily, to the good will of others, now labor's political allies needed labor's support. Thus, when Taylor objected strenuously to the commission's efforts to "force" relief recipients to work for below-union scale wages, the commission backed up labor's demands. And, when he "insisted" that all relief work on the Grand Coulee and Bonneville dam projects should be done at the "prevailing" wage levels and protested against the use of untrained, non-union men on Federal Emergency Relief Administration projects, the commission was forced to comply with labor's demands. This was a great watershed. But it was only a beginning. Labor's new power was not overwhelming and there were

occasions when labor's demands were completely rejected. Still, it is clear that labor was no longer as isolated and ignored as it had been under the Republicans. It is also clear that labor was rapidly growing in power and influence even as the economy began to rebound from the low point of the Depression.[44]

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[44]The federal government helped Taylor when it agreed to transfer jurisdiction of the dam projects from the Public Works Administration to the United States Reclamation Service. This allowed an increase in the minimum wage scale paid from $0.60 per hour to $1.20 per hour for skilled mechanics. And subsequent rulings that contractors had to hire local workers first, before hiring unemployed building tradesmen from Seattle and other urban centers, were cancelled by the Columbia Dam Commission after the WSFL complained that they interfered with unionization. For the first time in the history of the state, the state government was beginning to be truly responsive to the needs of labor.

WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 7-8,11,71,73-77.

Chapter 20:

Revival:

The Longshore Strike and the Rise of Industrial Unionism, 1934

In 1934 the nation's economy improved dramatically. Washington State's economy also improved, but less dramatically. While the composite index of national industrial production increased by 20.38 per cent, the composite index of business activity in the Puget Sound area increased by only 7.92 per cent. Business activity in the Inland Empire and Lower Columbia regions increased faster than regional averages, rising by 18.60 per cent and 8.06 per cent, respectively. In the Pacific Northwest as a whole business activity increased by 9.75 per cent.[1]

Regional indexes of production rose as well. In the Seattle-Tacoma region, production of electric energy increased by 8.46 per cent to 1,110 million kilowatt hours. West of the Cascades lumber production increased 1.25 per cent to 4,305 million board feet. But, despite this improvement, production remained sluggish. Trade, finance, transportation, and construction indexes performed better. In western Washington department store sales increased by 5.47 per cent, the value of building permits increased by 14.28 per cent to $4 million, gross postal receipts increased by 4.73 per cent to $3,834,000, bank

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[1]Indexes of Business Activity, pp. 108-111.

debits increased by 14.86 per cent to $2,036 million. Statewide sales of life insurance increased by 16.21 per cent to $91.8 million and gasoline sales increased by 10.14 per cent to 261 million gallons. Meanwhile, freight carloadings of logs and forest products, in the Pacific Northwest as a whole, increased by 5.71 per cent to 299,000 and carloadings of all products increased by 13.70 per cent to 756,000.[2]

As a result of these improvements in production and business activity total income in Washington State increased 8.99 per cent to $708 million. And the consumer price index in Seattle increased by 2.38 per cent, its first rise since 1928. Small as they were, these improvements signalled the end of the long-term deflationary cycle. Except for the sharp, but short-lived, "Roosevelt Recession" of 1937-1938, economic growth continued into the 1950's.[3]

The economic improvement is reflected in the employment indicators. The number of production workers in manufacturing industries increased dramatically. Factory employment in Washington State increased by 11.11 per cent to 92,600. Total employment increased by 5.97 per cent to 532,000 and total unemployment fell by 13.48 per cent to 154,600, or 22.53 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1)[4]

These statistics do not tell the whole story, however. In 1934 labor entered a transition year. Even though the economy had showed some signs of improvement in 1933 the overall direction for the labor movement was downward until the end of the first quarter of 1934.

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[2]Ibid.
[3]Ibid; Johansen, p. 626.
[4]Ibid.

At the end of the first quarter, membership in the WSFL had declined to 8,504, lower than it had been in 1907. This was the true low point of the Depression for the labor movement. It was in the second quarter of 1934 that economic recovery truly began. This was a period of unprecedented economic growth. By June 1934 the WSFL had gained 5,000 new members and President Taylor was able to report to the convention that, since the previous convention, the WSFL had lost only 293 members and now represented 13,504 rank and file members, 1.96 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 2) The total number of WSFL affiliates increased by 7.00 per cent to 214. Then began a period of very rapid growth, comparable to period 1917-1919. By 1938, membership in the WSFL had more than doubled.[5]

The annual report of the WSFL vice-presidential districts also reflects this turn-about. Most districts reported more organizational activity and improved conditions.[6]

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[5]WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 22,33; (1935), pp. 25-26; (1936), pp. 28-29; (1937), pp. 30-31; (1938), pp. 34-35; (1939), pp. 37-38; (1940), pp. 139-140.

[6]For more on the Bellingham district where the Teamsters were striking the Whatcom County Dairymen's association and the Barbers were challenging a city council ordinance passed under the Barbers Licensing Act (1933), see: Ibid., (1934), pp. 9-10,12,67-68; Minutes, 9 May, 12 Dec. 1934, 16 Jan. 1935, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

For more on the Spokane district, where organizational activity was particularly noticeable and the Teamsters, under Dave Beck, had successfully organized a local on the Grand Coulee dam project, see: WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 12-13.

For more on the Yakima-Walla Walla district, where the vice-president reported "wonderful progress" many new locals were organized including six Federal Labor Unions for Farm Workers, see: Ibid., (1934), p. 13; Minutes, 4 April 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; "The 'Yakima Incident' of 1933," Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin, Appendix K, 836 (1945), pp. 437-439; Joseph Campbell Scroggs, "Labor Problems in the Fruit Industry of the Yakima Valley," (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1937), passim.

For more on the Grays Harbor-Willapa Harbor district, where the

Among the most important developments of 1934 was the start of a vigorous organizing campaign in the lumber industry. It was particularly important in the Grays Harbor-Willapa Harbor district. At first, the Timber Workers made "some progress" in their efforts, especially in Grays Harbor County, but after these initial gains, progress slowed. The Paper Makers, on the other hand, continued to make "good progress" and soon were "well-organized" throughout the district. The Plywood Workers, however, responded slowly, even to the initial efforts, though some individual union members showed "good fighting spirit."

Among the lumber industry workers' most intractable problems was their under-representation on federal public works boards. This allowed the Four L's to claim to represent the workers. The lumber workers, however, desired stronger representation. In the fall of 1934 the Longview mill workers decided they should organize and demanded union recognition and struck the Long-Bell and Weyerhaeuser Company plants when it was not granted. Most of the mill workers respected their picket lines and they might have succeeded had not the Four L workers at the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Company mill supported

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vice-president noted "slight improvement in all lines," and where the lumber unions began a vigorous organizational drive, see: WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 13.

For more on the Pierce-Thurston-Kittitas County district, see: WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 13-14,54,63.

For more on the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district, where conditions were less active, see: Ibid., (1934), p. 15.

For more on the Kitsap-Mason-Clallam County district, where almost every Bremerton local had increased in membership, where business and labor conditions were better than they had been in three years, and in Port Townsend and Shelton, where the lumber industry showed definite signs of revival, see: Ibid., (1934), p. 15.

the employers and demanded that its striking AFL members resign. This led to a bitter struggle between the AFL and Four L's. The AFL union, the Longview Loggers and Sawmill Workers Union, filed charges against the Long-Bell and Weyerhaeuser Lumber companies for violating Section 7(a) of the NIRA. This led, in turn, to Regional Labor Board hearings in Kelso. Although the board ruled against the companies, the companies and the Four L's joined forces to denounce both the NIRA and the AFL and refused to be bound by the decision. The AFL appealed and demanded compliance with the board's order, but even though the AFL won its appeal, the companies continued to refuse to accept the decision.[7]

In the coal mining districts economic conditions continued to be very bad. Coal production had declined continually since 1920. By 1933 it was barely one-third what it had been during World War I. Employment in the industry had fallen by one-half to 2,500 over the same period. In 1934 conditions continued to deteriorate, yet labor began a strong recovery in the industry. Through the efforts of President Taylor and federal conciliator E.P. Marsh the Pacific Coast Coal Company, the largest in western Washington, agreed to recognize the United Mine Workers. After reaching agreement with the company Taylor and Marsh called in Sam Nicholls, president of Miners District

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[7]Ibid., (1934), p. 13; McClelland, Jr., pp. 209-216; Roger Jones to Harry Hopkins, 18,21 Jan. 1934, Box 1-39; Roger Jones to Taylor, 27 March, 28 Nov., 6,14 Dec. 1934, Box 1139; Flanders to Taylor, 2 July 1934, Box 20-10; Dyer to Taylor, n.d., Box 9-9, WSFL Records; See also: Francis C. Vause, "The Administration of the NIRA, With Special References to the Lumber Industry," (B.A. Thesis: Reed College, Portland, Oregon, 1934), passim: Vernon H. Jensen, Lumber and Labor, (New York: Farrar & Rhinehart, 1945), passim.

No. 10, and national representatives of the United Mine Workers Union, to approve the settlement. The agreement provided for dissolution of the existing company union, established the union as bargaining agent for the company's employees, and provided for joint labor-management settlement of all disputes.[8]

By spring nearly every miner in the state had been brought under union jurisdiction. Only a few locals in the Cle Elum region refused to sign agreements because they disliked the idea of top-to-bottom organization. It looked too much like labor-management collusion. Some locals also objected to the "check-off" system whereby the company automatically deducted union dues from workers' paychecks. This resulted in "much strife" in the Cle Elum-Roslyn area and hearings of the Federal Mine Commission. When the commissioner ruled in favor of the Mine Workers, a dual organization, the "so-called Western Miners Union," struck to prevent the AFL men from working in the mines. Ultimately, however, the AFL union won control and eliminated the dual union. Among the Miners' greatest achievements in 1934 was a new contract providing for eight hours pay for seven hours work.[9]

In the King County district, however, it was hard to find signs of improvement. Overall membership in the SCLC increased by

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[8]WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 8-9,14; Sam Nicholls and Richard Francis, "Why We Should Promote the Coal Industry of the State of Washington," (n.p., 1934), Box 17-18; Baldwin to Taylor, 5 Feb. 1934; Taylor to Baldwin, 8 Feb. 1934, Box 38-7; Taylor to McDonald, et al., 16 Aug. 1934, Box 38-8, WSFL Records.

[9]Ibid.

10.51 per cent to 10,774 (Table No. 3), the number of SCLC affiliates increased by five to eighty-eight, and the number of WSFL affiliates in the SCLC increased by four to sixty-four, but the council reported "deplorable conditions" and "no relief in sight."[10]

The Building Trades Council reported that construction was "slow, mostly small repair jobs." With many still unemployed and on relief, the only work being done was government-funded. Among the few bright spots were the University of Washington construction projects. Despite this, the Building Trades Council managed to reach a new area-wide agreement with the employers association, covering western Washington north of Longview. The new contract provided for the six hour day, the five day week, and continued the 1931 pay scale. Membership in Building Trades section locals in the SCLC recovered somewhat, increasing by about 150 to 1,657, but the Building Trades had not yet recovered their full strength. Since 1933, the Brewery/ Provision Trades section had overtaken the Building Trades in membership.[11]

To back up the efforts of the locals and the trade councils, the SCLC conducted a "strong" organizational campaign. As a result, a number of new locals affiliated, or reaffiliated. Machinists Union Local No. 79 reported the beginnings of an effort to organize the Boeing Airplane Company, relying on the provisions of the new NIRA.

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[10] WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 14-15,22; (1937), p. 22; (1940), p. 139; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1934-1940, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

[11] Ibid.

Boeing workers voted 1,300 to 300 to make the union their bargaining agent but faced strong company opposition. Despite this the men continued their efforts and, eventually, won recognition.[12]

Other locals, too, began to make some progress. Electrical Workers Union Local No. 77, for example, reached its first agreement with the Puget Sound Power & Light Company. But, for the most part, the SCLC's efforts did not prove successful. Garment Workers Union Local No. 17, which was involved in disputes with several unfair firms, could make little headway despite the SCLC's support. They begged uniformed workers to buy only union-made products but, at year's end, the local had only two contracts: with the Black Manufacturing Company and the Haggerty Manufacturing Company. Similarly, the Butchers reached accord with Swift and Company's Seattle branch, but failed to win a union contract, and the Bakers, Auto Mechanics, and Retail Clerks unions failed to resolve strikes. Of all the trades sections, however, only the Amusement Trades and Printing Trades sections actually lost membership.[13]

Despite these hardships the old moral fervor of the SCLC revived. Early in the year, in response to a call from AFL President Green, the SCLC voted to boycott German imports and called on merchants to join the campaign. The SCLC vowed to continue the boycott until the German government recognized the workers' right to organize

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[12]WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 14-15; Minutes, 24,31 Jan., 7,14,21 Feb., 4 April, 27 June, 5 Sept. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[13]Yearbook, (1938), p. 40; WSFL Records, (1934), pp. 14-15,62; Jussett to WSFL, 27 Dec. 1934, Box 16-44, WSFL Records.

"bonafide" trade unions and ceased to "repress and persecute the Jews." At the same time, however, the SCLC rejected political opportunities to move to the Left. It refused to seat Leon Glaser as a delegate from the Ladies Garment Workers Union because he admitted that he was a communist. It also refused a SUCL request to endorse a general strike to protest the use of police to "repress" the Longshoremen. This did not, of course, mean that the SCLC rejected all unorthodox solutions. It was attracted by a number of them, including the Technocracy movement, a plan to end the Depression through a massive expansion of public works and a sort of planned society run by engineers. In December the SCLC heard Robert Day, Jr. speak on the subject and received him with "tremendous applause." In the national struggle for control of the AFL the SCLC strove to maintain its non-alignment, without alienating the AFL's dominant craft unions or its industrial union minority.[14]

This posture became every-more-difficult to maintain as the strife between the industrial and craft unionists intensified. In particular, the struggle between the Teamsters and the Brewery Workers forced the SCLC to choose. All through 1934 the fight continued with the Teamsters rapidly gaining strength. They successfully prevented the Brewery Workers from being re-seated in the SCLC. In 1934 Joint Council No. 28 signed its first statewide highway trucking contract. Previously, highway truckers operated under local contracts, depending on their local affiliation. The growth of the

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[14]Minutes, 17 Jan., 28 Feb., 20 June, 12 Dec. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 47.

industry and the creation of an independent Motor Freight Association justified the separate contract.[15]

Despite the poor economic conditions and employer resistance to its organizational efforts the SCLC profited politically in 1934. The Political Welfare Committee was very active in the municipal elections and through its efforts, labor won the balance of political power in the city for the first time in its history. Charles L. Smith won the mayoralty, with the SCLC's "unqualified endorsement," though his subsequent policies in the Longshoremen's strike (see below) led some to regret their action. Robert Harlin won election to the city council with labor's support as did James Scavotto. David Levine, former president of the SCLC, editor of Washington State Labor News, and a member of the city council since 1931, won reelection to the council. James Duncan won a seat on the school board, decisively shifting the balance on the board in favor of labor.[16]

In the SCLC elections Vice-president George D. Early of the Building Trades Council, succeeded Sam R. Gibboney of the Teamsters, who did not run again. Early was succeeded as vice-president by Claude

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[15]Garnel, Vol. II, p. 518; Washington State Labor News, 31 Aug. 1934; WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 9; Minutes, 18,25 April, 28 Nov., 12 Dec. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[16]Meanwhile, labor was also increasing its influence on the county council. In the November 1933 elections Louis Nash, former president of Retail Clerks Union Local No. 174, founder of the Retail Clerks International Union's official organ, The Outlook, and of the first Retail Clerks local in the United States, won election to the King County Council.

WSFL Procs., (1920), pp. 56-62; (1921), p. 53; (1928), p. 38; (1931), pp. 16,48; (1934), pp. 14-15; Washington State Labor News, 31 Aug. 1934; Minutes, 10,17,31 Jan., 7,14,21,18 Feb., 7,14,21 March 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Guy C. Knott, et al. to SCLC, 7 March 1934, Box 9-21, WSFL Records.

O'Reilly. C.W. Doyle, the SCLC's long-time business agent and secretary, won reelection, defeating E.M. Weston 117 to 76 in the only contest of note. The council remained firmly in the grip of the old guard conservatives.[17]

The most important labor-management controversy in Seattle was the 1934 Longshoremen's strike along the Pacific coast. Since 1921 most Pacific coast longshore operations had been run on an open shop basis. On the entire coast, only the Tacoma Longshoremen remained unionized. They had left the WSFL in 1921 rather than give up their radical leaders. Elsewhere on the Pacific coast the only form of organization in the longshore industry was the "tame" company union or "Blue Book" unions.

In the spring of 1933 the International Longshoremen's Association succeeded in reaching an agreement with the Atlantic Coast Longshore Employers Association. Although they could not reach a settlement with Pacific coast employers, the new agreement raised hopes for an eventual contract. But, as long as the Pacific Coast employers refused to negotiate, there was little hope. The employers refused to agree to labor's wage demands or to an NIRA code for the industry. Finally, after all hope had been extinguished, the ILA began to plan for a strike, albeit without much enthusiasm.[18]

On 10 December 1933 Senator Robert Wagner of New York and Joseph Ryan, president of the ILA, sought to delay plans for a strike vote. They asked Pacific coast ILA locals to vote on the representation issue. The locals agreed and when the results were known, they

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[17]Minutes, 1-8 Aug. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records.
[18]WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 52-53.

showed that ninety-eight per cent preferred the ILA. The ILA then tried to set up another meeting with Senator Wagner and the employers. The employers, however, refused and sought to arouse public opposition to longshore unionism by pointing to the influence of radicals in many of the ILA's Pacific coast locals. In particular, they attacked Harry Bridges, leader of the Joint Maritime Strike Committee of the San Francisco Bay district, who they charged was a communist. Rather than deal with such "communists" they granted a "unilateral" wage increase of 10¢ per hour to convince the men they had no need or representation.[19]

In response, on 25 February 1934 the ILA called a conference in San Francisco to select representatives to go before Regional Labor Board and ask for their intercession with the employers. The board agreed but the employers argued that they were not obliged to negotiate because their employees were not yet union members. This so "exasperated" the delegates to the San Francisco conference that they decided that there was no point in continued discussion and voted to demand a single, coastwide contract, creation of a union-controlled hiring hall, $1.00 per hour straight time, the six hour day, and the thirty hour week. If the employers refused to come to terms by 7 March, the conferees vowed to take a strike vote.[20]

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[19]Ibid., (1934), pp. 52-53; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 252-261,266; For more on Bridges and the Longshoremen, see: Richard L. Neuberger, "Bad Man Bridges," Forum 101 (April 1939), pp. 195-199; Paul Eliel, The Waterfront and General Strike, San Francisco, 1934, (San Francisco: Industrial Association, 1934), p. 130; Betty H.V. Schneider and Abraham Siegel, Industrial Relations in the Pacific Coast Longshore Industry, (Berkeley: Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, 1956), pp. 4-12.

[20]Ibid; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 261-262.

The employers, however, remained sure of their ability to destroy any union and allowed 7 March to pass without taking any action. This forced the ILA to go ahead with its strike vote. In mid-March longshoremen from San Diego to Puget Sound voted overwhelmingly for the strike. By this time, both sides seemed equally eager for a fight. Each anticipated victory.[21]

At this point the federal government interceded. Fearing that a coastwide strike could jeopardize President Roosevelt's recovery program George Creel of the San Francisco Labor Board and candidate for governor of California asked Joseph Ryan and Senator Wagner to help him avert that possibility. Intent upon demonstrating the reasonableness of the labor movement they agreed to try. But, when Senator Wagner requested another delay in the strike, the local militants in the ILA refused. They only agreed to extend their deadline when President Roosevelt himself asked for one in the national interest, promising to appoint a "Federal Mediation Board" to arrange a settlement.[22]

Despite all this evidence of labor's moderation the employers persisted in arguing that the longshoremen were revolutionaries at heart. They continued to refuse to negotiate and rejected the solutions suggested by the President's Mediation Committee, hoping to delay until the unity of the longshoremen frayed. Their rigidity, however, weakened union conservatives. When some local conservative leaders did try to get the ILA to approve the Mediation Committee's recommendations, they

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[21] Ibid.

[22] WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 53-54; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 262-263; Roger Buchanan, Dock Strike, History of the 1934 Waterfront Strike in Portland, Oregon, (Everett: The Working Press, 1975), pp. 50-51.

were easily over-powered by the union militants. Thereupon, the militants offered a compromise. They agreed to leave the issue of wages and hours to arbitration. The only issue that they still held firm on was the union hiring hall. Still, the Waterfront Employers Association refused to negotiate, arguing that merely to talk with their employees was tantamount to recognition.[23]

On 9 May 1934 all ILA locals on the Pacific coast struck their employers. Locals in Seattle, Tacoma, Aberdeen, and Grays Harbor walked off their jobs. Along the entire coast only 75 men, out of a labor force of 12,000, crossed the picket lines. In Seattle only three men went to work. The Teamsters and other waterfront crafts offered "splendid support" to the strikers and refused to transship freight on or off the piers. On the first day of the strike Seattle Longshoremen's Union Local No. 38-12 picked up two new members and, within weeks, had gained the support of numerous other longshoremen. Other unions also offered their support. The Seamen, Marine Firemen, Masters, Mates, and Pilots, and the Marine Cooks and Stewards joined the strike. Leading intellectuals, civic, and political leaders, including Governor Martin endorsed the strike and the SCLC appointed a committee to funnel aid to the strikers.[24]

On 15 May the governors of California, Oregon, and Washington appealed for federal intervention. In response the administration sent Assistant Secretary of Labor Edward F. Grady to the Pacific coast.

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Buchanan, p. 47; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 263-265; Minutes, 14 March, 9,16 May 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; O.J. LeBlanc to Regional Labor Board, 2 May 1934, Box 19-48, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 54.

He arrived on 17 May and called for renewed negotiations. But the rank and file refused to allow their moderate leaders authority to settle the strike. Instead, the ILA militants continued to stand by their basic demands: exclusive union control of the hiring hall and the closed shop. The WEA rejected both. In fact, neither the strike, nor the pressure of the public or government had any outward effect on the employers. They continued to wait for splits to develop in the labor movement. They advertised for strikebreakers at twice the regular pay. In the past these techniques had been successful in forcing the end of strikes, but this time they failed. Within a month the strikers had hospitalized over 150 of the strikebreakers and had succeeded in discouraging new recruitment. By the end of the first month of the strike neither side was yet willing to compromise.[25]

The first union efforts to break the stalemate did not come from the local strike leadership. Rather, it developed out of the international's overwhelming desire to maintain their friendly relationships with the employers and their fear of the growing independence of the Pacific coast locals. On 24 May President Ryan arrived in San Francisco ostensibly to aid in the three-sided talks between the government, employers, and the strike leadership. Without consulting either Pacific coast or local ILA leaders he announced that the only important issue in the strike was union recognition and that the closed shop was was unimportant. He endorsed, instead, a concept he defined as a "joint hiring hall" which the employers had already suggested. Federal arbitrators would settle the differences arising out of the joint hall.

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[25]Buchanan, pp. 89-91; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 264-266.

In making this proposal, Ryan demonstrated his lack of understandinf of the local situation.[26]

Ryan then began to negotiate a settlement based on the joint hiring hall concept. After he won WEA approval for his basic plan, he announced on 28 May that he had managed to convince the union's Pacific Coast Division leadership to accept it. The WEA, he said, had offered to recognize the ILA on an open shop basis and to accept a jointly run hiring hall. In addition, they offered to pay the rent and salaries of all the joint hiring hall's officials, even those of the ILA representatives--a proposal which was indistinguishable from the existing company unions. Finally, they offered to submit all wage and hours disputes to arbitration. In essence then, the employers had reiterated their pre-strike position with one notable exception. In agreeing to negotiate, they had granted de facto union recognition. When they heard of Ryan's plan, the San Francisco rank and file and their officers took the lead in denouncing both him and his plan. They voted to condemn Ryan and reasserted their demands for the closed shop and the union hiring hall.[27]

Still totally out of touch with rank and file sentiment, Ryan proceeded to try to sell his plan to the membership. Travelling to Portland and Seattle in search of support, he was rudely disillusioned. His call for a membership referendum on his proposal met with strong opposition. In Seattle the vote on his proposal passed narrowly due to the influence of conservatives in the SCLC. But in Tacoma and most other Pacific coast ports it lost overwhelmingly.[28]

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Buchanan, pp. 115-118; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 267-268.

[28] Ibid.

By June the strike was beginning to have a serious impact on the economy. On 5 June the President's Mediation Commission approved a so-called Triple Partnership Plan, which would allow the Federal Employment Service to control hiring and dispatching of Pacific coast longshoremen. But, when both the ILA and the WEA rejected it, this plan collapsed.[29]

The strike was also having serious regional and local consequences. As long as the ports of the Pacific coast were shut down, no food shipments could get through to Alaska. A prolonged stoppage could have led to starvation. This prospect produced intense pressure on political leaders to force a settlement at any cost. Finally, Seattle's new Mayor Charles L. Smith approached the local Longshoremen's Strike Committee and said that the Alaska trade must be reopened. He promised to abandon his support for the non-Alaska shippers if the Longshoremen agreed to release the Alaska cargoes.[30]

Thereupon, the committee agreed that an emergency existed and agreed to meet with officials of the Alaska Steamship Operators Association, the Teamsters Union, and the Department of the Interior, representing the Territory of Alaska. On 8 June 1934 the representatives agreed to a settlement of the strike insofar as the Alaska trade was concerned. This "Alaska Agreement" meant that the Longshoremen would remove their pickets and return to work on ships carrying goods to and from Alaska. In return, the Alaska Steamship Operators agreed

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[29] WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 55; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 270; Buchanan, pp. 86-91,103-109,111-113,119-121.

[30] Ibid.

to hire only ILA members on their Alaska port operations. In addition, they agreed to pay pre-strike standard union wages and to hire ship crews under conditions agreeable to the maritime unions. The two sides agreed to arbitrate all disputes. The Alaska Agreement, coming in the middle of the strike, proved the strength of the labor movement. From now on it was the employers who were forced to ask for terms.[31]

Following this, between 11 and 15 June 1934, Oregon Governor Julius Meier decided to set up his own mediation committee in an effort to settle the overall dispute. The Meier Committee plan, like the Ryan Plan, was based on the assumption that the men would settle for union recognition. Under the Meier Committee's plan, "the so-called Portland Plan," the WEA would recognize the ILA as the sole bargaining agent for their employees on the Pacific coast and the question of the hiring hall would be left to arbitration.[32]

It is an indication of the growing weakness of the employers' position that they agreed to the Portland Plan, for it involved official recognition of the union which they had been unwilling to do before the strike. But all Pacific coast locals of the ILA except San Pedro rejected the plan because it did not guarantee the union hiring hall. Increasingly desperate, the employers seized upon the ILA's rejection of the plan to denounce the unions and to seek to build public support for police action against the strikers. In many ports, including Seattle and Tacoma, the employers began to organize "Citizens Committees" to break the strike by providing strikebreakers

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.

while conveying the illusion of public support for the operators.[33]

The Citizens Committees put great pressure on local politicians to end the strike through the use of police or militiamen. Mayor Smith of Seattle, who had brought about the Alaska Agreement, now was under pressure to open the rest of the city's trade. He asked the Longshore Union leaders to appoint a committee to discuss reopening of the entire port. The Longshoremen agreed but the two sides failed to reach agreement when it became apparent to the ILA that the WEA still refused to match the conditions approved under the Alaska Agreement.[34]

This forced Mayor Smith to accede to the demands of the employers. Violating his earlier agreements, he ordered his police chief to protect the strikebreakers. This quickly led to a series of violent confrontations between police and strikers trying to prevent strikebreakers from working.[35]

In response the Longshoremen declared that the Alaska Agreement had been abrogated and called their men off the job again. This led to more violence until the city council voted fo force the mayor to remove some of the policemen from the docks.[36]

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[33] Ibid; See also: Minutes, 20,27 June, 18,25 July, 1,8,15,22 Aug. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Tacoma Central Labor Council Statement, 20 June 1934, Box 9-26, WSFL Records; WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 31-33,42-43,52,55,58,71-72,77-78,81; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 283-294.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] In California and Washington employers also attempted, unsuccessfully, to get the governor to use the National Guard to keep the docks open.

Ibid.

Despite the council's actions many locals endorsed a proposal to call a general sympathy strike to show labor's solidarity with the longshoremen. While this issue was being raised in the SCLC sporadic violence continued on the docks. On several occasions police tear gassed picketers. Although the police actions did not break the ILA's stranglehold on the docks they did heighten the possibility that the strike would spread. The SCLC voted to demand that the mayor remove all his policemen from the docks and, when he refused, began to consider a motion to initiate a recall movement. The motion to suspend the rules and take an immediate vote on the issue passed sixty-eight to fifty-two, although it fell short of the necessary two-thirds vote.

Not only did these developments frighten public officials, they alarmed the conservative leaders of the SCLC. They could now imagine a repetition of the general strike of 1919, with the leadership being forced to consider the disagreeable alternatives of risking a radical strike action, or trying to restrain the enthusiasm of the rank and file for a hopeless cause. Luckily for the conservatives they never had to take the plunge. Though the SCLC voted, over the objections of President Early, to endorse the recall it never did endorse a sympathy strike. And, the week after the vote on the recall, the SCLC voted in executive session after an "acrimonious debate," to refer the matter to the Political Welfare Committee. Finally, after the AFL, the WSFL, and the international unions registered their opposition and called a sympathy strike "suicidal," the Political Welfare Committee issued an unfavorable report and support for both initiatives

died away.[37]

But in the meantime the strike was won. On 20 July 1934 the WEA notified the National Longshoremen's Board, set up under NIRA, that it was willing to arbitrate all the issues in the strike on a coast-wide basis. Since this meant arbitration of the hiring hall and closed shop issues the ILA immediately agreed and, on 23-24 July, held a rank and file referendum which ratified the decision by a vote of 6,378 to 1,471. On 31 July 1934 the Pacific Coast Longshoremen's district returned to work. Although the employers granted neither the closed shop nor any other labor issue, the strike was a nearly complete victory for labor. By agreeing to submit all issues to arbitration the WEA made acquiescence in labor's demands inevitable.[38]

The arbitration proceedings lasted nearly two and one-half months but, when the National Longshoremen's Board made its award on 12 October 1934, it granted the strikers more pay, the thirty hour week, and gave the ILA majority control of the hiring halls on the

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[37]Though pressure for a strike and recall died away in Seattle, the turmoil it produced did not. In San Francisco, the central labor council did vote for a general strike and actually carried it out. The San Francisco general strike lasted for nearly a week in early July.

The WSFL argued that as long as Governor Martin refused to use the National Guard to break the strike, "labor should keep cool," and not endorse a general strike.

Joe Reed, international vice-president of the Boilermakers, opposed the general strike on the grounds that it was the work of a "certain radical element (which) had injected itself into the San Francisco situation and was working for control; however the situation is different in Oakland, Portland, and Northwest ports where this radical element...is not permitted to interfere with proper conduct of the strike."

Ibid.

[38]Buchanan, pp. 94-95; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 294.

Pacific coast. While the unions didn't win all their demands, they did win a powerful position on which to build for the future. While non-union men could use the hiring halls, they would have to pay the same fees as ILA members and the dispatchers had to be ILA appointees. In each port equal labor-management labor relations committees were set up to appoint all hiring hall personnel, prepare and maintain a register of all longshoremen, and deal with such matters as work rotation and grievances. All outstanding disputes were subjected to this arbitration procedure.[39]

The board's award disappointed many of the most militant union members who objected to the failure to win an out-right closed shop and total control of the hiring hall. The militant leaders, however, realized that with union recognition secured and the arbitration procedure established, the closed shop was practically inevitable. The board's wage and hours award helped to make the failure to win the closed shop palatable. The ILA won the six hour day and the thirty hour week. Wages were increased from $0.85 per hour, to $0.95 per hour, straight time; and from $1.25 per hour, to $1.40 per hour, overtime, retroactive to 31 July.[40]

Meanwhile the WSFL also attempted, indirectly, to support the organizational activities of the longshoremen and lumberworkers. On 14-15 February 1934, President Taylor attended a labor legislation conference in Washington, D.C., called by Secretary of Labor Frances

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[39]Buchanan, pp. 99-101,123-128; Minutes, 26 Sept., 17 Oct. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 294-298.

[40]Ibid.

Perkins, to establish closer cooperation between state and federal Labor Department officials, to determine what a "sound, modern labor code" should contain, and to determine the specific legislative needs of the states in various labor-related fields. In view of labor's increasing political power in Washington, Taylor hoped to have growing national influence as well. Thus, he may well have been disappointed in the legislative results of the conference. Despite Secretary Perkins' obvious sympathy, the congressional actions in 1934 were quite meager. Congress approved a bill replacing the ineffective National Labor Board and replaced it with a new five-man National Industrial Adjustment Board, which was hardly any better. The new board, which consisted of three public members and one business and one labor member, who were selected by the chairman from panels submitted by the president, was a weak response to labor's demands for increased representation. Congress did pass a wage and pension bill, sponsored by the Railroad Brotherhoods, and it did appropriate a further $2 billion for relief, but it did little to force employers to obey Section 7(a) of the NIRA and most of labor's other requests did not pass.[41]

At the WSFL convention, all but one of the WSFL's vice-presidents won reelection. Henry Arends, vice-president of the Island-Snohomish-Chelan County district since 1923, who had first joined the labor movemen in his native Netherlands in 1899, declined to run for reelection.

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[41]For example, the Senate voted to restore the wages cut and vacations eliminated by the Economy Act (1933), by a narrow margin of forty-one to forty, but the House voted to retain the cuts and the bill failed to pass. And Senator Wagner's bill to enforce Section 7(a) of NIRA was defeated as was the Wagner-Lewis unemployment insurance bill and the thirty-hour week bill.

WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 5,10,75-76,82; Minutes, 7 Feb., 4, 11 April, 16 May, 6 June 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

In his place Edward A. Anderson, secretary of the Everett Teamsters Union Local No. 38 and a trustee of Joint Council No. 28, won election to the executive board.[42]

The convention also approved a two-pronged organizational drive, a federal and state legislative program, and a political campaign strategy in anticipation of the fall elections. The organizational drive, which focussed on white collar workers such as the office workers, retail clerks, engineers, technicians, and school teachers, also included efforts to prevent labor journals from publishing unfair advertising by requiring them to submit all such advertisements to the secretary of the central labor council in the vicinity prior to publication. Besides adding a number of new firms to the "unfair" list, the convention also attempted to re-invigorate the campaign against unfair firms in the Seattle, Tacoma, and Spokane clothing, dairy, and bakery industries. It included an effort to strengthen demand for the union label, card, and button by beginning an educational campaign in the newly organized locals. Interestingly, the WSFL justified the drive by pointing out that such workers were "fertile fields for Communists, Fascists and Nazis." Thus, the WSFL sought to

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[42]After immigrating to the United States in 1911, Arends became an official of Everett Painters Union Local No. 339, which he represented in both the central labor council and the building trades council. Later, he also served as secretary of the Northwest Painters Conference and as a local AFL organizer. For many years he served as editor of the Everett Labor Journal, published by the central labor council and Northwest Painter. In addition, Arends had a locally important political career, serving as city clerk, city commissioner, and mayor of Everett. As William Short's friend and ally, he consistently supported the conservative element in the WSFL.

Call, pp. 49,51; Yearbook, (1927), p. 13; Washington State Labor News 31 Aug. 1934; WSFL Procs., (1934), p. 3; Arends to Short, 9 Dec. 1926, Box 19-52, WSFL Records.

forestall radicalization of non-union workers by conducting an educational campaign which focussed on the least radical workers. The campaign ignored the radical potential of the lumbermen and longshoremen.[43]

The WSFL's federal legislative program consisted of recommendations to improve conditions for federal employees, to encourage the government to engage in public works, to nationalize various industries, and to protect American jobs by limiting imports. In substance, the WSFL's program did not differ from its previous programs. The major positive change was a reduction in the emphasis on immigration restriction. Due to the Depression immigration had practically ceased.[44]

The WSFL's state legislative program had two basic aims: promotion of public health and education, and amending state laws regulating business and labor. The first included proposals to investigate different forms of health insurance, reorganization of the State Board of Health, reform of the industrial insurance act, and to continue funding public schools at their present level. The second included recommendations to support amendments to the state liquor act to allow service in hotels, restaurants, and "bona fide clubs," to allow easier liquor advertising, to amend the state barber shop act to prevent student tuition defaults, assure proper supervision, and prevent barber colleges from paying compensation to students, to revise the firemen's pension fund act (1929) to keep it solvent, and to oppose passage of a bill, licensing radio repair shops, which would require fees which labor considered prejudicial to the smaller shops. Like

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[43] WSFL Procs., (1934), pp. 59,72-73,75,78-81.
[44] Ibid., (1934), pp. 56-57,60,73,82-86.

the WSFL federal legislative program, it was not an innovative program.[45]

Finally, the WSFL convention approved a direct legislation program for the 1934 elections. The convention endorsed two initiatives, Initiative 77--the only one which had already gained enough signatures--which prohibited the use of fish traps, regulated trolling, and established open and closed seasons, such as those already established in Oregon, and Initiative 87--not yet on the ballot--which was intended to amend the industrial insurance act to give injured workmen the right to select their own physicians. At the same time, the WSFL opposed Initiative 94, which it said was "presumably" to strengthen the forty mill property tax levy limit in the constitution, "but actually (was intended) to cripple education institutions, and to restrict services performed by political subdivisions of the state.[46]

The election of 1934 was a great triumph for the labor movement. Redistricting had increased the influence of urban, labor voters. All of labor's congressional candidates won seats, including Lewis B. Schwellenbach, who replaced Senator Dill as the Democratic senatorial nominee. Dill, who was handicapped by his recent divorce, had become anathema to the labor conservatives in the WSFL, and had declined to run again.[47]

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[45] Ibid., (1934), pp. 56-57,59,73-74,81,83-84,86-87.

[46] Ibid., (1934), pp. 7,86; Minutes, 11 April, 23 May, 6 June, 15 Aug., 10 Oct. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records; Minutes, 28 Jan. 1935, Box 60, WSFL Records.

[47] For more on these races and on state and local contests, see: Johansen, pp. 500-504,618,625; Washington State Labor News 31 Aug. 1934; Minutes, 9 July 1934, Box 60; Carter to WSFL, 30 Oct. 1934, Box 8-52; SCLC Political Welfare Committee Report, 16,23 Oct. 1934, Box 9-21, WSFL

By the end of 1934 anyone could tell that the nation was in better shape than it had been when Roosevelt was inaugurated. The economy had improved, unemployment was down, farm prices had risen, and the banks were open. As yet, however, the New Deal had accomplished none of the reforms it had promised, except the original banking legislation, the Tax Act of 1934, the Securities and Exchange Commission Act, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. None of these measures addressed the basic causes of the Depression, nor promised to alleviate its continuing symptoms. After the elections of 1934 reform became the Roosevelt administration's highest priority. The Democrats had turned back a Republican challenge and even picked up fourteen more House seats in Congress. The Republicans won only eleven Senate seats and retained only seven governorships. With many groups clamoring for government support, Roosevelt's main challenge was to direct their energies in responsible directions.[48]

Thus, in the spring of 1935, Roosevelt initiated his Second Hundred Days of reform legislation. Among the most important pieces of legislation to become law during this period were the Wagner Labor Relations Act, the Wealth Tax Act, the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, and the Social Security Act. The passage of the Wagner Act was Roosevelt's direct response to the Supreme Court ruling which struck down the National Industrial Recovery Act (the "Sick Chicken Case"). By destroying Roosevelt's industrial recovery program and threatening

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Records; Minutes, 25 July, 1,8,15,22 Aug., 3,10 Oct., 14 Nov. 1934, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[48]Shannon, Between the Wars, pp. 160-162.

the balance of the New Deal, the court pushed Roosevelt in the direction of reform. He abandoned his efforts to keep a coalition of all interests behind him and moved his influence into the scales on behalf of labor, the poor, and the unemployed. The Wagner Act, which incorporated the principles of Section 7(a) of the NIRA and added the power of enforcement, threw the weight of the federal government behind the right of labor to bargain collectively and compelled employers to accede peacefully to the unionization of their plants. It imposed no equal, or reciprocal, obligations on labor unions. Together with the Social Security Act, the Second Hundred Days addressed nearly all of labor's basic demands.[49]

By the same token, the 1935 session of the Washington legislature proved enormously successful for labor. A definite majority in both houses were prepared to be guided by the policies of the WSFL labor lobby. Never before had labor been so influential. A dozen labor organizations sent lobbies to Olympia where they worked together on behalf of labor's program.

The most important elements of labor's program were several bills to enact unemployment and old age pensions. In addition labor endorsed a number of special interest bills, including tax and labor law reform proposals. And, labor endorsed an effort to initiate a blanket primary election ballot bill to allow cross-over voting in primary elections. Most of these measures had long been on labor's agenda but had never been enacted due to opposition from labor conservatives. Even the Roosevelt landslide of 1932 had not eliminated

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[49]Ibid., pp. 160-167; Leuchtenburg, pp. 143-166.

this strong conservative opposition. It took the 1934 elections to do so. As a result all of these proposals passed, although a number of other bills did fail.[50]

The WSFL's growing political influence, however, did little to settle labor's internal jurisdictional disputes. Relations between the craft and industrial unionists continued to deteriorate. At the AFL's 1934 convention, in San Francisco, an open rupture was averted only because the industrial unionists did not feel themselves strong enough to take on the craft unionists in a head to head contest and because the craft unionists were willing to paper over the differences, in hopes of reaching some compromise before it was too late. At the convention, John L. Lewis, the leader of the industrial union minority, found himself strengthened by the great increase in federal labor union membership and by the rapid growth of membership in industrial unions, including his own United Mine Workers Union. Growth of industrial union sentiment in the longshore and lumber industries also added to his strength. Yet the craft unionists were unprepared to compromise their jurisdictional authority. The convention approved an industrial union policy which, although moderately worded, was "fully protective of the craft unions and their interests."[51]

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[50]For more on the WSFL's specific legislative achievements in 1934, see: Call, pp. 22-23,53; Minutes, 28 Jan., 16 Feb., 15 April 1935, Box 60; Resolution, 29 Jan. 1935, Box 17-25; James Barr to Taylor, 25 Oct. 1925, Box 31-22; Taylor to Officers, Members of Miners Local No. 2510, 9 Feb. 1935, Box 38-9, WSFL Records; Minutes, 6,13,27 Feb., 6 March, 15,22 May, 30 Oct. 1935, Box 8, KCCLC Records.

[51]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 363-368,386-396ff, 400-420.

When Lewis and his allies realized that the craft unionists had no intention of ever compromising their jurisdictions, this set the stage for the great show-down fight at the AFL's Atlantic City convention in 1935, which resulted in the decisive break between the industrial and craft unionists. Lewis demanded that the AFL strengthen and clarify their stand on industrial unionism taken at the San Francisco convention and asked that the AFL come out strongly in favor of such forms of organization. But although he managed to win thirty-eight per cent of the delegates' votes he failed to budge the craft union die-hards. It was this failure, evident to all since the San Francisco convention, that led Lewis to organize the Committee of Industrial Organizations from among those who had supported his stand at the 1934 and 1935 conventions. Although the committee tried to operate as a caucus within the AFL structure, it was obvious that the craft unionists would not long tolerate this potential dual movement. The expulsion of the industrial unionists in 1936 followed by the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the bitter rivalry between the two labor federations, brought to an end labor's dreams of unity and shattered the House of Labor.[52]

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[52]Ibid.

Chapter 21:

Aftermath, 1935 - 1940

After 1935 outside forces gained more and more control over the Washington State labor movement and changed forever the pattern of its industrial relations. The passage of the Wagner Labor Relations Act and the Social Security Act in the spring of 1935 contributed to the growing importance of out-of-state forces. They marked a dramatic reversal in relations between labor and the federal government. Government became labor's ally in the struggle for collective bargaining and economic security.

Under the New Deal the structure of Washington State's economy also changed. Washington's business and labor organizations became more and more integrated into the national and regional economy and more and more subject to outside influences both economic and political. The growing role of the federal government was largely responsible for the corresponding decline in the economic role of the state government. This, in turn, contributed to the relative decline of the state labor movement.

At the same time dramatic changes occurred within the labor movement which had similar effects. As a result of the rise of industrial unionism and the creation of intermediate labor organizations, between local and international union organizations, the WSFL lost much of its ability to guide the labor movement as a whole. Despite the conflict for control of the labor movement which resulted from

the formation of industrial unions and the AFL-CIO split, however, the labor movement, itself, grew rapidly. Even as the number of regional and national labor organizations with an impact in Washington State multiplied and the authority of the WSFL eroded, the number of organized workers increased rapidly.

The economic recovery itself also marked a decisive break from the past. After 1935 the pace of economic activity increased rapidly. Between 1935 and 1940 the national index of industrial production advanced by 43.67 per cent. Except for the year 1937 the economy improved continuously and although the depression had not been completely vanquished by 1940 it was clearly on the wane. In the Pacific Northwest the economy also improved rapidly after 1935. The composite index of business activity increased by 26.61 per cent between 1935 and 1940. In the Puget Sound region the economy grew even faster, advancing by 28.55 per cent. Except for the impact of the "Roosevelt Recession" of 1937-1938, which struck the Inland Empire and Lower Columbia regions much harder than the Puget Sound region, regional economic growth might have been much higher.

In the Puget Sound area the recession affected primarily the financial sectors of the economy. It also affected production, but to a far lesser extent. Over the whole 1935-1940 period the indexes of trade, transportation, and construction rose rapidly in the Puget Sound area. Department store sales rose 43.52 per cent; gross postal receipts increased by 28.77 per cent to $5,252 thousand; freight car loadings of logs and other forest products advanced by 54.20 per cent to 552,000 cars; and shipments of all products in the Pacific Northwest

increased in value by 354 per cent to $27.7 million. Indexes of finance and production also rose although they suffered during the 1937-1938 set-back. Bank debits increased by 44.24 per cent to $3,337 despite a 14.39 per cent decline in 1938. Production of electric energy in Seattle and Tacoma increased by 48.23 per cent to 1,757 million kilowatt hours. Similarly, lumber production west of the Cascades rose by 48.10 per cent to 7,397 million board feet but might have been much higher had not the recession and labor disputes interfered with production. Only coal production showed a consistent pattern of decline throughout the whole period.[1]

In this same period the average worker in Washington State benefited tremendously from economic growth--except for the period of recession noted above. Factory employment grew by 25.14 per cent to 108,000. While the total labor force increased by only 3.76 per cent to 717,000, total employment grew by 12.17 per cent to 608,000. This led to a 27.22 per cent decline in unemployment to 108,800 or 15.17 per cent of the labor force. (Table No. 1) At the same time, total annual income in the state increased by 40.96 per cent to $1,100 million.[2]

The statistics also show that despite the split between the AFL and the CIO, the WSFL benefited greatly from the renewal of economic growth. Membership in WSFL unions increased by 171 per cent to

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[1]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111; For the volume of federal spending in Washington State, see: Don C. Reading, "New Deal Activity and the States, 1933 to 1939," Journal of Economic History 33 (Dec. 1973), p. 794.

[2]"Indexes of Business Activity," pp. 108-111; For more on the growth of the labor force, see: Miller, Ann R., "Components of Labor Force Growth," Journal of Economic History 22 (March 1962), p. 51.

51,734 or 7.21 per cent of the labor force in the years between 1935 and 1940. Not even the recession stopped this growth. (Table No. 2) Over the same period the number of WSFL affiliates grew by 57.14 per cent to 407.[3]

Along with the rapidly improving economic environment, however, the labor movement had to adjust, internally, to massive structural changes. Conflicts even greater than those of 1919-1924 wracked the labor movement. Again the disputes arose out of the struggles between the industrial and craft unionists--the new versus the old immigrants, the Left-wing versus the Right-wing, the third party forces versus the non-partisans, the old leadership versus militant rank and file leaders--for control of the labor movement. These conflicts spread across the whole spectrum of labor relations in the nation. Their effect on Washington State can best be seen by examining the evolution of labor relations in several key industries.[4]

In the lumber industry the conflict grew out of the continued failure of the AFL to organize the unorganized. The AFL had compounded this failure by refusing to accept poorly paid industrial lumber workers as equal members when they did join the AFL's federal (i.e., provisional) unions. Following the unsuccessful efforts of the

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[3]During the later 1930's membership in the SCLC also increased rapidly. The number of SCLC affiliates increased by 44.33 per cent to 153 of which only 104 were also WSFL affiliates.
WSFL Procs., (1940), p. 139; Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1935-1940, Box 11, KCCLC Records.

[4]For more on the AFL-CIO struggles in the 1930's, see: Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 682-714; Walter Galenson, The CIO Challenge to the AFL: A History of the American Labor Movement, 1935-1941, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 30-43,50-54,521-522.

industrially organized Northwest Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers to win union recognition in 1934, William "Big Bill" Hutcheson, the empire-building president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, had then convinced the AFL to give the UBC jurisdiction over the 90 federal unions in the Pacific Northwest's lumber industry. At the time these unions contained at least 7,470 members and may have contained as many as 17,000 members. "Now," said UBC Secretary Frank Duffy, the lumber workers "belong to us." But instead of working to grant the lumber workers equal access to union benefit plans and an equal voice in UBC conventions, the national leadership continued to place obstacles in the path of the industrial unionists.[5]

The unwillingness of the UBC leadership to make real concessions quickly led to conflict. In March 1935 Hutcheson sent UBC Executive Board Member A.W. Muir to the Northwest to take control over the NCLSW. On 23 March the council accepted both the UBC's jurisdiction and Muir's leadership, but without enthusiasm. For a while things went well. Under Muir's direction the NCLSW began negotiations with two of the largest firms in the industry, the Weyerhaeuser Timber and

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[5]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 623-624; The following material on the AFL-CIO struggle for supremacy in the lumber industry is based largely on Bernstein and on the following works: Vernon H. Jensen, Lumber and Labor, (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1945), Ch's 8-13; Galenson, Ch. 11; Margaret S. Glock, Collective Bargaining in the Pacific Northwest Lumber Industry, (Berkeley: Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, 1975), passim; Robert A. Christie, Empire in Wood, (Ithaca: New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, 1956), Ch. 19; For a contemporary account, see also: Henry T. Buechel, "Labor Relations in the West Coast Lumber Industry," (M.A. These: State College of Washington, 1935), passim; Blaine G. Crawford, "Activities of the C.I.O. and A.F.L. in the Pacific Northwest Lumber Industry, 1935-1940," (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1942), passim.

Long-Bell Lumber companies. Before Muir could get agreements with these two firms and establish an industry-wide pattern of settlements, however, wildcat strikes broke out among the rank and file. Inspired equally by anger at the obstinacy of the employers and by the arbitrary nature of the union's leadership, the strikes spread rapidly. By 3 May over 2,400 loggers and 3,700 mill workers were on strike. The potential for internal disruption of the union had also been increased when, on 17 April, the communists abandoned their own dual union and renewed their attempts to "bore into" the AFL union.[6]

By 6 May 10,000 lumber workers were on strike. A like number continued to work while negotiations proceeded. On 9 May Muir reached an agreement with the two big firms along the lines he had originally demanded except that he was forced to accept the forty hour week. This produced a split in the union which took the leadership completely by surprise. Egged on by the communists, the rank and file rejected the contract offer by large majorities and denounced Muir for selling them out to the employers. The communists claimed credit for the rejection of the contract. By 12 May ninety per cent of all Douglas fir operations were closed down.[7]

In an effort to regain the initiative, Muir then launched an attack on the union dissidents. This produced a bitter confrontation and further damaged relations between Muir and the rank and file. At

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[6]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 624-626; "Strikes on the Pacific Coast," Monthly Labor Review 41 (July 1935), p. 86.

[7]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 625; "Significant Strikes in July's Northwest Lumber Strike," Monthly Labor Review 41 (Sept. 1935), p. 656-659.

the NCLSW's convention at the end of May, Muir won control of the convention by charging that the dissidents were communists and threatening to expel them and the locals which supported them. Reluctantly, the convention endorsed Muir's contract settlement, but the cost was high. Following the convention a group of dissidents calling themselves the "Northwest Strike Committee" seceded from the union vowing not to accept the settlement.[8]

The division in the union's ranks strengthened the employers, angered the militants, and failed to end the wildcat strikes. On 5 June some 400 rank and file delegates belonging to still-striking locals voted to re-affirm their original demands and called upon Hutcheson to fire Muir. Meanwhile, the strike grew violent and Governor Martin called out troops in Tacoma and Grays Harbor to maintain order. As Muir lost control of his own rank and file, it seemed that the drift toward radical control of the union was growing stronger. Finally, on 26 June Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins stepped into the situation and appointed a special mediation board which, case by case, managed to work out settlements. By 14 August all the strikers were back at work. The conflicts within the union, however, had not been resolved.[9]

The strike did accomplish a number of significant results, however. Although the men returned to work at the same basic terms which they had earlier rejected, they achieved several long-sought goals. Most importantly, they managed to establish collective bargaining in

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[8]Ibid.
[9]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 626.

the lumber industry and to destroy the Four L's. But the strike had also exposed the deep divisions within the union. Following the strike settlement these grew even deeper. Muir managed to head off dissident elements to unseat him at the NCLSW's 12 October convention only by delaying the convention and changing its location from Olympia to Portland. He further weakened them by pushing through measures abolishing the Northwest Council and establishing in its place ten district councils. But by this gerrymandering he only succeeded in delaying a final reckoning. All during 1936 tensions built between him and the militants until an open breech could no longer be avoided. The UBC leadership, like the ILA leadership under Joseph Ryan, was losing control over its own rank and file. On 18 September militant delegates from all the locals in the district councils held an unsanctioned gathering in Portland. There they formed the Federation of Woodworkers and elected Harold Pritchett, the pro-communist president of the British Columbia district council, as their president. Despite strong support for industrial unionism, however, they voted to remain in the UBC and to send delegates to the annual UBC convention in hopes that the international leaders would make significant concessions to the industrial union point of view. The militants still hoped to work within the AFL.[10]

When the Federation's thirty-four delegates arrived for the 1936 UBC convention in Lakeland, Florida, however, they found the

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[10]Ibid; Galenson, pp. 383-384; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 626-627; See also: "Action of American Federation of Labor Convention on Industrial Policies," Monthly Labor Review 41 (Nov. 1935), pp. 1242-1247.

leadership just as adamant against change as before. The UBC's executive board denied them the right to vote on the grounds that they were "non-beneficial" delegates and represented workers who paid a lesser per capita tax (25¢ per member per month) than regular UBC members (75¢ per member per month). The craft unionists who dominated the UBC leadership had no wish to be out-voted by the large numbers of industrial workers.[11]

Taking up the challenge the lumber workers' delegates then travelled to Washington, D.C. to enlist the support of John L. Lewis, organizer of the Committee of Industrial Organizations. Lewis was sympathetic but pointed out that the CIO was also still trying to work within the AFL and could not afford to encroach upon the jurisdiction of member international unions. By early 1937, however, the CIO had been expelled from the AFL and had begun to win its great organizational victories in the steel and rubber industries and Lewis had lost his inhibitions about raiding AFL jurisdictions. In May 1937 the Grays Harbor-Willapa Harbor district council asked the Federation of Woodworkers to reexamine the possibilities of obtaining a CIO charter. The Federation promptly called a convention for 7 June to consider the suggestion. This so alarmed President Hutcheson that he travelled to the Pacific Northwest in an effort to head off the secession. John Brophy, Lewis' lieutenant in the CIO, also travelled West. Recognizing that the militants would control the convention Hutcheson refused to attend and tried to influence events through underlings.

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[11]Ibid., pp. 626-627; Galenson, pp. 384-385.

Meanwhile, Brophy and other CIO leaders, including Harry Bridges, attended in force and vigorously supported Pritchett's pro-CIO militants. Muir was left to face them with only a small minority of AFL loyalists. As a result the convention voted to submit the issue to a membership referendum.[12]

Unfortunately for the cause of labor peace, the referendum merely muddied the waters further. While 16,754 members supported affiliating with the CIO and only 5,306 voted to retain their AFL connection, the total vote was only a small minority of the Federation's claimed membership of over 90,000. Thus the matter remained undecided until the Federation's 1937 convention in Tacoma. When the convention met in July most delegates favored the CIO but many had specific objections. Many disliked Pritchett and his pro-communist line and feared his dominance over the union. After five days of heated debate, however, the delegates voted 365 to 75 in favor of the CIO. This prompted most of the seventy-five AFL loyalists to secede from the Federation. The remaining delegates proceeded to adopt the name International Woodworkers of America for their new organization.[13]

On 20 July when the first IWA convention met, new problems confronted the leadership. Pritchett and a Left-wing slate of officers under his leadership won election to the executive board, but they faced stiff resistance. Many of the pro-CIO industrial unionists were

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[12]Ibid., pp. 627-628; Galenson, pp. 385-386; "A.F.L. vs. C.I.O.: Battle Between Industrial and Craft Union Reaches Open Break," Literary Digest 122 (15 Aug. 1936), pp. 5-6.

[13]Ibid., p. 628; Galenson, p. 387.

not prepared to accept communists in leadership roles. This opposition was centered in the Portland-based Columbia River Council. When the executive board attempted to counteract their influence by moving the IWA's "temporary" headquarters to Seattle, instead of Portland, their opposition grew even stronger.[14]

This conflict in the new-born IWA gave Hutcheson the opening he needed to organize a counterattack. With the support of pro-AFL lumber workers in Longview, Tacoma, Seattle, and with the support of area Carpenters locals, building trades councils, and central labor councils, he set up a widespread boycott of IWA products. With the additional support of favorable court rulings, Hutcheson established nuclei of loyal unions among those who had refused to join the IWA in each of the districts. In August 1937 he organized these into the Oregon-Washington Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers to replace the Federation of Woodworkers.[15]

Hutcheson's actions constituted a virtual declaration of war on the CIO forces in the Northwest lumber industry. The key struggle, however, occurred not in Washington but in the Portland mills. On 14 August the Portland Central Labor Council suspended the CIO locals and the Building Trades Council successfully shut down the seven major mills employing IWA members by placing one picket at each plant gate. The IWA charged that the employers were preparing to agree to "sweetheart" deals with the AFL to prevent organization by the IWA. Soon sporadic violence broke out. In September the National Labor Relations Board stepped in and called for a consent election, but the matter was

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[14]Ibid.
[15]Ibid., pp. 628-629; Galenson, pp. 387.

not so easily resolved. The AFL, led by Dave Beck's Teamsters, vigorously criticized the NLRB and physically attacked IWA drivers. On 21 October the NLRB published the results of their card check and certified the IWA as the bargaining agent at the seven mills in question. The AFL, however, refused to accept the ruling, tightened their boycott, and launched an attack on the NLRB for its "high-handed act" and for becoming "a subservient ally of the C.I.O." In an effort to aid the AFL, Oregon Governor Charles A. Martin called his own election at the Inman-Poulson Lumber Company, but the IWA won this vote, too, 376-183. Despite vigorous opposition it seemed that the IWA was gaining the upper hand.[16]

By the end of 1937, however, the AFL boycott had begun to take a toll on IWA resources. The IWA locals had been on strike for four months. Their resistance began to weaken. Their effort suffered also because of their conflict with Pritchett and the IWA leadership for control of the union. The December 1937 convention became a bitter arena for these factions. The Portland anti-communists charged Pritchett and his allies with communism and in return were accused by the Portland faction of red-baiting.[17]

By January 1938 the Portland IWA locals had become so weakened by the strike and the deepening recession that the pro-AFL employers were able to reopen their mills without IWA agreements. For the rest

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[16]Ibid., p. 629; Galenson, pp. 387-389; See also: Jacob J. Weinstein, "The Jurisdictional Disputes in the Northwest Lumber Industry, With Particular Reference to Portland, Oregon, 1937-1938," (B.A. Thesis: Reed College, 1939), passim.

[17]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 629; Galenson, pp. 389-392.

of 1938 and into 1939 they continued to operate without union agreements, leaving the NLRB with an increasingly chaotic situation to deal with. Finally, in mid-1939 the NLRB was able to hold another series of elections. In the Portland area the IWA won in six mills, containing two-thirds of the workers, and the AFL won five, mostly smaller, mills. As a result continuing conflicts between the AFL and CIO and within the CIO were assured.[18]

While the Portland struggle was the most important in the Pacific Northwest lumber industry, it was not the only one. The AFL-CIO conflict spread to numerous other localities. Throughout, the IWA was hampered by ideological splits. As the issue of communism grew more and more divisive within the IWA, reaching a peak at the 1939 Klamath Falls convention, it became more and more likely that the union would fall apart and that the AFL would be able to pick up the pieces. To prevent this both factions reluctantly agreed in 1940 to bring in CIO mediators. Although they failed to agree on terms for unification of the union, Lewis was able to convince them to accept the leadership of his able lieutenant Adolph Germer. Taking over as director of organization, Germer embarked on a highly successful organizational campaign in the Longview area. Despite much violence he ultimately reached agreement with the Weyerhaeuser and Long-Bell companies on union recognition. Following this, Germer set out to destroy the communist influence within the IWA. He was aided in his campaign when the immigration authorities denied Pritchett readmission to the United States from his native Canada. Although Pritchett succeeded in having his ally, O.M. Orton, named to

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[18]Ibid.

replace him as president of the IWA, the communists' influence in the union waned. At the 1940 Aberdeen convention Orton barely retained his seat.[19]

After the convention the anti-communist opposition, which claimed to represent seventy per cent of the membership, called upon Lewis to take over control of the IWA. Orton countered by calling upon Lewis to remove Germer, but Lewis refused. Orton then prevailed upon the IWA's executive board to fire Germer and they complied, but were prevented from carrying out their decision when the non-communists won a court injunction to prevent Germer's removal.[20]

Early in 1941 the anti-communist trend continued. The CIO's new president, Philip Murray, a devout Catholic, appointed a committee to look into conditions in the IWA. In February, however, before the committee had even issued its report, Orton and his communist allies in the IWA's executive board voted to pull out of the CIO. Meanwhile the anti-communist opposition organized the CIO Woodworkers Organizing Committee to oppose the secession.[21]

It was the war which broke the stalemate, finally united the IWA, and ended the domination of the communists. On 9 May 1941 Orton

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[19]Ibid., p. 630; Galenson, pp. 395-402; Richard L. Neuberger, "Trouble in the Tall Timber," New Republic 102 (1 April 1940), pp. 434-436; "Again, Trouble in Lumber Camps; Industry Torn by A.F.L.-C.I.O. Fight," Business Week 581 (19 October 1940), p. 20; Herbert Lundy, "The Laura Law Murder," The Nation 150 (25 March 1940), p. 384, and "Trouble at Aberdeen," Portland Oregonian Magazine (18 Feb. 1940); "Timber Trouble: Widespread Shutdowns in Northwest's Lumber Industry," Business Week 588 (7 Dec. 1940), p. 14.

[20]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 630; Galenson, pp. 395-406.

[21]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 630-631; Galenson, pp. 403-406.

called a strike of 22,000 lumber workers still loyal to him, against the recommendations of the National Defense Mediation Board. The board had issued a ruling providing for wage equality for both AFL and IWA workers which the AFL had already accepted. Orton, following the policy of the Kremlin during the period of the Hitler-Stalin Nonaggression Pact, attacked the board of which Murray was a leading member, calling it "an all-out labor-busting...device." In retort Murray accused Orton of uttering "a most reprehensible, lying defamation." Orton's credibility was destroyed when, in late June 1941, the Germans invaded Russia and Stalin's line on cooperating with United States defense programs changed 180 degrees. Orton obligingly changed his tune and accepted the board's recommendation.[22]

Orton's abrupt reversal of policy cost the communists dearly. At the 1941 IWA convention he did not even stand for reelection. An anti-communist slate, headed by former-Wobbly Worth Lowery, was elected. Under Lowery the IWA rejoined the CIO and pushed through an anti-communist constitutional amendment. By the end of 1941 communist influence within the IWA was completely broken.[23]

The factional struggle set off most of the fireworks, but the real story in the lumber industry was that by 1940 about four-fifths of the 100,000 lumber workers in the Pacific Northwest had become organized. The IWA had about 50,000 members and the Carpenters had about 35,000 members. The former was the strongest in the Douglas fir regions, the latter was strongest in the California pine and redwood regions. For the most part the raiding of memberships between the

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[22]Ibid.
[23]Ibid.

unions had ceased and their relationship had developed into a "mature rivalry."[24]

Neither was the conflict between the AFL and the CIO in the lumber industry the only important intra-union contest in the Pacific Northwest in the later 1930's; the relations between other industrial and craft unions in the region followed a similar pattern. In only a few localized cases did industrial and craft unions actively co-operate with one another. One such case was the American Newspaper Guild's strike against William Randolph Hearst's Seattle P-I. The Guild inspired by passage of the Wagner Act had begun to organize in Seattle in 1935-1936 and had quickly succeeded in winning the allegiance of several influential P-I staffers. Hearst, who had purchased the P-I in 1921 and converted it into a mass readership daily, hated both the Guild and the New Deal and refused to recognize the union. When, in August 1936, the P-I's management fired staff photographer Slim Lynch and drama critic Everhardt Armstrong, who were both Guild activists, the Seattle chapter was forced to strike.[25]

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[24]Ibid., pp. 631-632; For more on the post-1940 history of the lumber industry in Washington State, see: Paul W. Parks, "Labor Relations in the Grays Harbor Lumber Industry," (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1948) and Margaret L. Schleef, "Rival Unionism in the Lumber Industry," (M.A. Thesis: University of California, Berkeley, 1950).

[25]"Hearst," Fortune 12 (Oct. 1935), p. 46; Heywood Broun, "Broun's Page: Post-Intelligencer Shut Down," Nation 143 (29 Aug. 1936), p. 243, and "Brown's Page," Nation 143 (26 Sept. 1936), p. 365; "Hearst Autocracy Meets its Match," Christian Century 53 (9 Sept. 1936), p. 1180; "Seattle Post-Intelligencer Replies to NLRB Charges," Newsweek 8 (12 Sept. 1936), p. 21; "Hearst Settles in Guild-Post-Intelligencer Strike," Newsweek 8 (5 Dec. 1936), p. 18-19; Rodney Carlisle, "William Randolph Hearst's Reaction to the American Newspaper Guild: A Challenge to New Deal Labor Legislation," Labor History 10 (1969), pp. 74-99.

The whole Seattle labor movement rallied to the Guild's defense and shut down the P-I completely until after the crucial 1936 elections. In the interim the striking Guild workers published their own newspaper, the Guild Striker. Finally, Hearst recognized defeat and agreed to recognize the union. The breakthrough came only, however, when he agreed to bring in a new publisher who was less antagonistic to the Guild. The new man was John Boettiger, President Roosevelt's son-in-law. It was only after this that NLRB intervention proved effective.[26]

After the Guild affiliated with the CIO, even this labor unity broke down and in the Guild's subsequent battles against other Seattle papers some AFL locals opposed the Guild and helped the newspapers stay in operation.[27]

More typical were the relations between the industrial seamen's and longshoremen's unions and the craft unions on the Pacific coast.

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[26]"Furious Strike of Guild in Far West: Hearst-owned Seattle Post-Intelligencer Suspends Battle," Literary Digest 122 (29 Aug. 1936), p. 25; Ellen McGrath and J.P. Dallas, "Boettiger, His Master's Voice," Nation 144 (6 Feb. 1937), pp. 150-151; "Hearst Loses to Public Opinion," Christian Century 53 (9 Dec. 1936), pp. 1654-1656; "Seattle Guild Chapter Closes One of Hearst's Shops," Newsweek 8 (22 Aug. 1936), p. 36; "Seething Seattle: Hearst Seattle Strike," Literary Digest 122 (5 Dec. 1936), p. 5; See also: John A. Wolfard, "The History and Significance of the American Newspaper Guild Strike Against the Seattle Post-Intelligencer," (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1937).

[27]P.M. Hammond, "Unions Divide in Labor Dispute: A.F. of L. Local Joins Seattle Star Against C.I.O. Strikes," Christian Century 54 (1 Sept. 1937), p. 1085; "Guild Referendum," Time 30 (2 Aug. 1937), p. 21; See also: U.S. Department of Labor, National Labor Relations Board, Transcript of Hearings (No. 301F), July 27, 28, 29, 20, 1937, at Seattle, Washington, Regarding Case No. C-238 (XIXC 141) Star Publishing Company, A Corporation, and Seattle Newspaper Guild, Local 87, (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1964); and "Matter of Star Publishing Co. and Seattle Newspaper Guild, Local 87," Official Report of Proceedings Before the NLRB, Case No. C-238, (11 Dec. 1937), p. 262.

If anything they were even more complicated and tortuous than labor relations in the lumber industry. Again, jurisdictional jealousies, personal rivalries, federal and state intervention, and employer opposition had marked effects on the outcome. As in the case of the lumber industry regional and national organizations determined the outcome. The key problem in union ranks arose in the relations between the Seamen's Union of the Pacific, led by Harry Lundeberg, and the Pacific Coast District of the International Longshoremen's Association, led by Harry Bridges. As a result of their 1934 strike the ILA had won improvements in their wages and conditions but, more importantly, had won effective control of their hiring hall. When, in January 1934, the SUP finally reached agreement with the shipping companies, they failed to win as much. Their wage and conditions were improved, almost as impressively as the ILA, but they did not get control of their hiring hall. As a result, the jealousy and ideological differences between the unions and their leaders festered even as they were forced to cooperate for their mutual benefit. It was an unhealthy situation for the labor movement.[28]

Both unions also differed with the AFL leadership. Because of his successes in the 1934 strike Bridges had emerged as the hero of the day in the maritime labor movement. He had, however, antagonized both the leadership of the ILA and the AFL with his industrial union and pro-communist policies. In combination with his differences with the SUP these greatly complicated his efforts to maintain the unity of the

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[28]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 296-297; "Agreement and Arbitration Award in Shipping Industry on Pacific Coast," Monthly Labor Review 41 (July 1935), pp. 107-109.

maritime unions. Lundeberg's independent policies had also alienated the international leadership.

Between 1935 and 1937 the bulk of Bridges' efforts were directed at welding the disparate maritime unions into a single organization through the Maritime Federation of the Pacific. He was not very successful. The MFP was formed on 15 April 1935 in the wake of the successful 1934 strike and consisted of the ILA, the Pacific coast affiliates of the International Seamen's Union (which included the SUP, the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union, and the Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders, and Wipers), the Marine Engineers Union, the Masters, Mates, and Pilots Union, and the Radio Telegraphists Union.[29]

As may be expected Bridges' effort to unite these unions into a single bargaining unit was a thankless task. The smaller, weaker unions and the SUP feared the power and influence of the ILA over the MFP. As a result they resisted efforts to give the MFP sufficient power to bargain effectively. Thus, for example, when Bridges urged that the MFP be given the right to sanction strikes, the smaller unions, led by the SUP, refused categorically to go along. In addition they worked to keep the MFP's leadership weak and refused to allow any ILA

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[29]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 296-298,574-478; Galenson, pp. 430-431; In addition the following discussion of maritime labor relations in the later 1930's draws heavily upon: Joseph P. Goldberg, The Maritime Story, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 130-197; Wytze Gorter and George H. Hildebrand, The Pacific Coast Maritime Shipping Industry, 1930-1948, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), Vol. 2, pp. 173-285; Galenson, pp. 427-458; William L. Standard, Merchant Seamen, A Short History of Their Struggles, (New York: International, 1947); and Hyman G. Weintraub, Andrew Furuseth, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 198; For more on Bridges, see: Charles P. Larrowe, Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the United States, (New York: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1977).

members on the executive board. Bridges went along, reluctantly, hoping for more unity as time went on.[30]

The MFP's solidarity, weak as it was, persisted for a surprisingly long time. It was held together by the unions' mutual fear of the employers, who were working assiduously to disrupt the unions, and by the fact that both the SUP and ILA were having serious conflicts with their international leaders over disregard of craft union principles.[31]

Meanwhile, relations between Bridges and Lundeberg continued to deteriorate. Lundeberg was a job-conscious business unionist loyal only to the seamen; Bridges was a strong industrial unionist whose radical sympathies forced him to view his role in a wider perspective. Their points of conflict were numerous. Lundeberg approved the concept of "job actions" or quickie strikes, even if they violated legal contracts, when they were in the interests of the SUP. Bridges, however, opposed them because they led to strained relations with non-striking unions whose members lost work. He felt the MFP should strike together or not at all. Relations between Bridges and Lundeberg nearly reached a breaking point when Bridges and the ILA voted to renew the Longshoremen's Board awards when they expired on 30 September 1935, and forced Lundeberg and the SUP to go along. The SUP retaliated by refusing to honor a "hot cargo" boycott of non-union cargoes shipped from ports in the Gulf of Mexico loaded by non-ILA crews. This forced Bridges to respond in kind. When the SUP struck the steam schooners and refused to work longer than longshoremen's hours, Bridges refused

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[30]Galenson, p. 431.
[31]Ibid.

to support their efforts.[32]

Even as Lundeberg's relations with Bridges reached a crisis, his relations with the ISU reached a new low. In January 1936 Lundeberg and the SUP were expelled from the ISU and from the AFL. This cost Lundeberg his seat on the San Francisco Central Labor Council and left him totally isolated from the bulk of the labor movement. To avoid this, Lundeberg attempted to gain support from the CIO. Hypocritically denying his craft union philosophy, he announced that he favored "the industrial form of unionism." To allay rank and file fears of isolation, he also launched an effort to win a union-controlled hiring hall. The CIO, however, was as yet too weak to get into a fight with the AFL, and declined his offer of support. The one major result of this crisis was the destruction of the ISU's power on the Pacific coast.[33]

Soon after this Bridges became president of the ILA's Pacific Coast District, giving him effective autonomy within the ILA. Thus the two major unions within the MFP had become independent of their international unions and the AFL, albeit for different reasons. These divisions opened the way for the employers to attempt to regain the open shop. Even as Bridges was attempting to renegotiate longshore work rules (to spread the limited amount of work available among more of his members) the employers organization, the Industrial Association, was attempting to undermine his bargaining authority by going over his head and negotiating with the ILA leadership. They attempted the same

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[32]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, p. 578.

[33]Ibid., pp. 578-581; "Waterfront Trouble: Labor Harasses Shipowners as Organizer Spreads Activities," Literary Digest 121 (11 Jan. 1936), p. 35.

strategy with the ISU.[34]

Throughout 1936 tensions and antagonisms in the MFP built up. Like those in the NCLSW they were caused both by the actions of the employers and by disputes within the unions. The 1934 strike had firmly established the maritime trade unions, but had not succeeded in winning collective bargaining or complete union control of the hiring halls in the industry. Since then both sides had gained in strength and set plans for a new show-down. The employers sought to divide the labor forces and to focus on the longshoremen. They demanded arbitration of all issues, including the union-management hiring hall. Bridges, of course, refused to arbitrate anything his union had already won. But while the newly created federal Maritime Commission investigated and debated the issues, relations between Bridges and Lundeberg collapsed and a rank and file referendum overwhelmingly endorsed a strike. The employers thereupon adopted new tactics in an effort to further divide the unions. They virtually conceded all of the longshoremen's demands, but refused to grant a union hiring hall to the seamen. Despite the Bridges-Lundeberg split, however, labor unity did not break down immediately and on 30 October the entire Pacific coast maritime industry shut down, idling 40,000 men. The question was: how long could the MFP's unity last in the face of all the obstacles?[35]

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[34]Ibid; "Case of Harry Bridges: Crisis in Maritime Labor Situations," Business Week 333 (18 Jan. 1936), p. 22.

[35]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 580-582; Galenson, pp. 431-432; Heywood Broun, "Down to the Sea in Haunted Ships," Nation 143 (26 Dec. 1936), p. 763; Coast Committee for the Shipowners, A.B.C.'s of the Maritime Strike: A Primer of Basic Facts: Hiring Halls, Ship Subsidy, Arbitration Awards Enforcement, (San Francisco, 1936).

As it turned out the fragile front of labor unity lasted about a month and a half. During the strike the employers consistently tried to force the labor allies apart. One of their most effective tactics involved abandonment of the use of strikebreakers. In the 1934 strike the use of strikebreakers had strengthened labor unity and inflamed public sentiment against the employers without leading to large increases in production. By simply shutting down their operations and trying to "starve the unions out" the employers were enabled to sow dissension within the union ranks without harming their public relations.[36]

The MFP contributed to its own problems. Most MFP leaders, with the notable exception of Lundeberg, used the strike to advance their own jurisdictional interests against those of the AFL and other international unions. The most important of these efforts was Bridges' famed "inland march" to organize warehousemen in the Pacific ports. There was a clear logic to Bridges' plans. He had learned from experience in the 1934 strike that even with the docks shut down, goods could be shipped by rail so long as the warehouses continued to operate. He therefore set out to organize them. Using the "hot cargo" technique Bridges succeeded, with the support of the Teamsters Union, in organizing the San Francisco Bay area warehouses. As a result the ILA strike made significant gains. Elsewhere on the coast, however, Bridges' techniques had less success and led to conflicts with the AFL, the ILA, and other international unions. In Washington State, for example, he ran into fierce opposition from Dave Beck and the

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[36]Galenson, p. 431-432.

Teamsters. Beck sent Teamster organizers into the warehouses and filed vigorous protests with Dan Tobin and William Green. Beck realized that the warehouses were just as important to the truck drivers who picked up the goods from them as to the longshoremen who delivered goods to them and used his influence on the AFL's executive council to undercut Bridges' claims. On 14 December the AFL decided in favor of the loyal Teamsters Union. President Green informed Tobin that the AFL had not granted the ILA jurisdiction over the warehousemen and encouraged Beck to resist Bridges' incursion. Green also ordered ILA President Joseph Ryan to call off Bridges' campaign. Ryan complied and when Bridges refused to give way, cut off all ILA support for the Pacific Coast District, stopped paying Bridges' salary, and removed him from the executive board. Thus both major MFP unions had cut their ties to the AFL. On 16 February 1937 the AFL executive council awarded jurisdiction over the contested warehousemen to the Teamsters. With his ties to the AFL severed, Bridges became free to affiliate with the CIO and openly challenge AFL jurisdictions.[37]

Having won AFL sanction, however, Beck proceeded with great vigor to organize the bulk of the warehousemen. And, outraged by the failure of the San Francisco Teamsters to resist Bridges' efforts more strongly, by their reluctance to organize their long distance trucking jurisdiction more effectively, and by California labor's inability to

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[37]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 582-583; Mariam A. DeFord, "Waterfront Showdown," New Republic 89 (18 Nov. 1936), p. 72; "Dock Strike: Stevedore's Tie-Up on Pacific Coast Spreads to Atlantic Ports," Literary Digest 122 (14 Nov. 1936), pp. 8-9; For more on the march inland, see: Harvey Schwartz, The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division, (Los Angeles: Institute of Industrial Relations, 1978), pp. 106-142.

organize in Los Angeles, Beck moved to organize in California by himself. Using the financial resources of Washington State Joint Council No. 28, he first organized the California Highway Drivers Council to organize the over-the-road truckers. Then, using the resources of the northern California locals, he proceeded to use the HDC to organize the Los Angeles area, long the center of open shop forces on the Pacific coast. By refusing to handle non-union goods shipped out of the Los Angeles region, Beck quickly brought the shippers to their knees and within weeks had successfully organized the largest operators. By the end of 1939 Beck had used this same technique to organize the Western Conference of Teamsters which joined together the Teamsters organizations in all eleven western states and had become the most powerful local or regional labor leader in the nation. Soon Beck was leading the coastwide AFL campaign against the CIO.[38]

The pressure from this two front struggle soon began to tell on the strike leaders. Even as Beck was challenging Bridges' march

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[38]Galenson, pp. 459-478; For more on the Teamsters' struggle to organize the Los Angeles areas under Beck's leadership, see: Garnell, vols. 1 and 2; For more on the Teamsters jurisdictional disputes with the longshoremen, in the later 1930's, see: Carter Brown, "The Teamsters Union in Seattle," (B.A. Thesis: Reed College, 1938), passim; A. Johnston, "Seattle's One-Man Revolution," Saturday Evening Post 209 (16 Jan. 1937), pp. 5-7ff; "Life on the American Newsfront: Labor Leader Dave Beck is the Boss of Seattle," Life (25 Oct. 1937), pp. 38-39; Richard L. Neuberger, "Labor's Overlords--Bridges and Beck," American Magazine 125 (March 1938), pp. 16-17,166-170; Herbert C. Prouty, "Seattle's A.F. of L.-C.I.O. War of the Warehousemen..." (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1938), passim; "Showdown Between Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union and the Teamsters Union," Time 30 (20 Sept. 1937), p. 10; Carl G. Westine, "The Seattle Teamsters..." (M.A. Thesis: University of Washington, 1937), passim: "Union Defies Bridges: Teamsters Oppose Longshoremen's Leader," Business Week 339 (24 April 1937), p. 34.

inland, the unity of the MFP eroded steadily. Finally, Lundeberg gave it a fatal blow. On 18 December 1936 he reached an independent accomodation with the shipowners. By the agreement, the SUP won a non-discriminatory system of dispatching sailors from a union hiring hall, a $10 per month wage increase, and payment of overtime pay in cash. Thus did Lundeberg win revenge for his failure to match Bridges' success in 1934. Lundeberg did promise to keep the SUP on strike until the other MFP unions settled with their employers, but his unilaterial actions undermined their bargaining positions. Most were forced to make considerable concessions in order to reach agreements.[39]

Lundeberg's independent settlement ended all hopes of MFP solidarity and began a personal feud with Bridges which lasted until the former's death in 1957. After the dissolution of the MFP, their paths diverged more and more. In May 1937 Lundeberg rejected the opportunity to affiliate with the CIO's National Maritime Union. Later, in June, SUP delegates walked out of the MFP convention and, the following year, affiliated with the AFL's new Seafarer's International Union. In contrast, on 11 August 1937 Bridges converted his renegade ILA district into the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union and received a CIO charter. Bridges thereupon became the CIO's Pacific coast director. He called for and won a ruling from the NLRB transfering the ILA's coastwide jurisdiction to the ILWU, leaving the

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[39]Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 583-584; Galenson, pp. 432-433; "Seamen Win Main Points in Strike Settlement," Scholastic 30 (20 Feb. 1937), p. 8; "United Only in Front; West Coast Ship and Dock Unions Lining Up In Two Factions," Business Week 385 (16 Jan. 1937), pp. 44-45.

ILA with only three small Puget Sound ports. As the split between the MFP's two largest unions expanded the other, smaller MFP unions soon went their own ways. The Masters, Mates and Pilots rejoined the AFL. The Marine Firemen's Union chose to become an independent. Only the smaller Marine Cooks and Stewards, the Marine Engineers, and the Radio Telegraphists unions followed the ILWU's example and joined the CIO. By 1941 the MFP was totally defunct.[40]

Under Bridges the ILWU adhered closely to a Left-wing ideology and espoused the philosophy that cooperation with the "bosses" was impossible. For this Bridges was subjected to frequent attacks by AFL and business leaders, by the courts, and by the press. In fact, however, despite his political sympathies, Bridges proved to be the very model of an effective business unionist. Under his leadership the wages and conditions of the ILWU members improved dramatically. The more non-ILWU groups attacked Bridges for his radicalism and for his refusal to disavow his communist supporters, the stronger grew his position within the union. But while Bridges retained the loyalty of his rank and file membership, his influence in other unions was affected negatively as was his position as a leader of the CIO. The frequent reversals of the party line hurt his credibility. Although Bridges never admitted membership in the Communist Party, he did lead the ILWU through several phases which corresponded closely to shifts in the Communist Party line and the foreign policy needs of the Soviet

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[40]Galenson, pp. 437-441,444-449; Bernstein, The Turbulent Years, pp. 584-589; U.S. Department of Labor, National Labor Relations Board, "Awarding Jurisdiction Over Three Pacific Northwest Ports to the A.F.L.," Decisions of the NLRB 32 (1941), p. 668.

Union. In 1937-1939, prior to the Hitler-Stalin Nonagression Pact, he favored collective security and an end to isolation; in 1939-1941, during the Pact, he favored isolationism; after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, he favored all-out war against the Fascists and accepted non-strike agreements to support the American war effort; but as soon as the war ended he resumed his opposition to activist American foreign policies. Soon after the war Bridges' pro-communist sympathies led to his ouster as CIO director. By 1950 Bridges' political sympathies had so undermined confidence in the CIO that the CIO expelled the ILWU. Since then the ILWU has continued as an independent union.[41]

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[41]Galenson, pp. 444-449; "I.L.A. Fires on Bridges: A.F.L. Longshoremen Tie Up Three Washington Ports to Break C.I.O.'s Coastwide Strike," Business Week 576 (14 Sept. 1940), p. 52; Paul Eliel, "Industrial Peace and Conflict: A Study of Two Pacific Coast Industries," Industrial and Labor Relations Review 2 (July 1949), pp. 477-501; Paul Eliel, "Labor Peace in the Pacific Ports," Harvard Business Review 19 (Summer 1941), pp. 429-437; Harold T. Gilliam, "Arbitration Procedures in the Pacific Coast Longshore Industry," (M.A. Thesis: University of California, Berkeley, 1942), passim; and Betty V.H. Schneider, "The Maritime Industry..." Monthly Labor Review 82 (May 1959), pp. 552-557.

Chapter 22:

Conclusion

Nothing like the ferment and turmoil between the industrial and craft unionists had disturbed the somnolent backwaters of the Washington State labor movement since the early 1920's. But whereas in the previous conflicts the radical industrial unionists had been crushed by the conservative craft unionists, with only slight intervention of outside forces, the conflicts of the 1930's were not so simple. By the 1930's regional and national organizations had come to dominate not only the economic and political life of the state, but the life of the labor movement as well. The state labor movement had become integrated into national and regional labor organizations. While this gave added strength to the forces of conservative resistance, it also benefited the industrial unionist reformers. By the end of the 1930's the large minority of "new immigrants" in the industrial labor force was organized and engaged in collective bargaining. Although the unity of the labor movement had broken down, the struggle for dominance between the labor factions had proved beneficial to both sides and rendered the organizational-ideological conflicts increasingly irrelevant. Both sides were eagerly organizing the unorganized and growing rapidly. As a result, with the return of prosperity during the war, both sides could claim that they had fought labor's great "civil war" and won.

The competition with the CIO forced the AFL to abandon its rigid craft union principles and adopt more aggressive organizing techniques. The resiliance of the AFL forced the CIO to moderate its more radical demands and come to grips with the practical problems of collective bargaining. Ultimately, practical men, holding moderate trade union views as opposed to radical ideological principles, came to dominate both organizations. By the time he retired from the labor movement even Harry Bridges had won the respect of the maritime employers for his honesty and bargaining ability. In the end the ideological arguments of Left and Right were less significant than the clamant needs of the workers for independent, effective, representation.

A large part of the blame or credit for this must go to the changing nature of the state, regional, and national economies. The economic data show quite clearly how the structure and development of the state's economy affected the evolution of labor organizations. As the state's economy became more integrated into regional, national, and international markets both industrial workers and their employers increasingly found themselves at the mercy of forces they could not control. In response they sought to organize industry-wide trade unions and employers associations and sought to transform radically the political and social systems for their own benefits. These efforts produced great internal schisms in both groups. Established craft unions resisted efforts to reorganize labor along industrial lines. At the same time middle class reformers vigorously opposed the efforts of employers to destroy the unions. Until 1919 those who advocated industrial unionism constituted a small but rapidly growing

minority of the state labor movement. Especially during World War I their influence grew. After the war, however, their influence declined as war-related industries retrenched. By 1925 the craft unionists had attained complete dominance of the labor movement. It was not until the 1930's that industrial unionism won a strong permanent foothold in Washington.

As much as they are economic institutions trade unions are also political organizations. The fundamental political issues which continually confronted the opposing factions in the labor movement centered around the question as to what should be the proper goals of trade unionism: whether or not labor should engage in politics. If so, should labor remain politically independent or endorse a political party?

Subsidiary questions concerned the goals of political activity: whether labor should seek reform of the existing political and economic systems, or its destruction and replacement. Within each ideological faction differences arose over the appropriate tactics of reform and revolution.

It is important to remember that at no time did a majority of trade unionists ever advocate revolutionary solutions. While many disagreed with many elements of the existing society, most continued to have faith in evolutionary reform. Neither did that minority of trade unionists which favored revolutionary solutions ever agree on tactics or on a coherent view of the society to come.

Support for revolutionary solutions arose primarily from among the industrial unionist minority concentrated in the Puget Sound central labor councils, from those affiliated with the various socialistic

parties, and from those affiliated or sympathetic with such revolutionary industrial organizations as the Industrial Workers of the World. On the other hand, support for gradual political and economic reform came from the craft unionist majority associated with the American Federation of Labor and was particularly strong in the central labor councils away from Puget Sound and among those affiliated with the major political parties. Reformist sentiment expressed itself in non-partisan political alliances and opposition to the endorsement of third parties.

For the most part, the non-partisan reformers dominated the state labor movement. Only under extraordinary circumstances did the third partyists succeed, even briefly, in determining labor's political policy. By 1925 they had been decisively beaten and their influence in the labor movement destroyed by the non-partisans. The non-partisans, however, were also split by factional, regional, and personality conflicts. Their ideological, organizational, and ethno-cultural prejudices prevented them from strong organizing efforts in the state's largest unorganized industries. As a result, they too found it impossible to unite the labor movement for long. Not even in the depths of the depression were they ever truly united.

It is not enough, however, to know the economic and political influences which governed the structural development of the labor movement. It is equally important to know the origins of the men who belonged to the labor movement and how they differed from each other and from other groups in society. It is abundantly clear that these ethno-cultural factors vitally effected labor's political and economic

evolution. The issues of industrial versus craft unionism and revolution versus reform become fully understandable only upon consideration of the fundamental ethno-cultural differences between the proponents of each viewpoint. Alone, neither ideology nor economic interest can explain the conflicts. The majority non-partisan craft unionists derived primarily, although not exclusively, from older immigrant groups who had arrived in the United States prior to the 1880's. Native-born, they stemmed from the parliamentary democracies of Protestant northwest Europe, especially from the British Isles. A large minority consisted of Irish and German American Catholics who had left Europe prior to the rise of Marxism. Not class conscious they identified more with their ethnic, religious, and national communities. Already well-integrated into the existing political system they were divided by the same issues which divided the nation. Because of this disunity the organization of trade unions proved to be very difficult. Employers took advantage of ethnic divisions to isolate and weaken the trade unions. It was only after much trial and error that the early trade unions, under the leadership of Samuel Gompers, made the decision to rely primarily upon ethnically homogeneous craft unions as the foundation of the labor movement. By the same token the labor movement sought to maintain its fragile political unity by keeping its distance from all political parties. In Washington State the early trade unions reached the same conclusion.

The industrial unionists, on the other hand, derived from very different sources. This had a large effect upon their economic and political ideas and led them into conflict with the established craft

union leadership. For the most part they consisted of "new" immigrants, that massive wave of immigrants which poured into the United States after the 1880's. They differed from the earlier arrivals in that they came primarily from the tyrannical autocracies of eastern and southern Europe. Predominantly Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox in religion they found themselves culturally isolated in the New World. Lacking the capital of many of the earlier immigrants, unable in many cases to write or speak English, without education or marketable skills, the new immigrants did not make good craft union materials. They were forced to take the only other jobs available: those in the new, rapidly growing mass production industries, where for the lowest pay they endured the harshest conditions of industrial capitalism. Under the economic, religious, and ethno-cultural repression of the Czar or Emperor these peoples had in many cases adopted the ideology of Marxist revolution. In America this ideology predisposed them to turn to revolutionary politics and industrial unionism: it was one of the few things the polyglot industrial workers found that they had in common. Lacking established institutions, elite models, or a strong stake in the existing society, their interests conflicted with those in the already established craft unions who not only saw the newcomers as threats to their jobs, wages, and conditions, but who also distrusted them for their alien tongues, customs, and religions.

Until 1914 the wave of new immigrants crested higher and higher. They provided the mass of recruits for the socialist parties, the Industrial Workers of the World, and, later, the communist parties.

Even after World War I, the post-war depression, and the immigration restriction act (1924) stemmed the flow of new arrivals, however, they continued to represent a growing percentage of the labor force. Their influence in the labor movement, on the other hand, declined. After reaching a peak during and shortly after World War I as a result of labor shortages which had artificially stimulated the growth of trade unions, their influence in the labor movement rapidly diminished. The same factors which led to retrenchment in the war-related industries and which caused the decline of the radical industrial unionists also hurt the new immigrants. As the industries which employed them retrenched and the craft unions purged their radical members fewer and fewer new immigrants remained in the labor movement. By the late 1920's the older immigrant groups had reestablished dominion over the labor movement. It was not until the 1930's that the new immigrants, led by militant, young, rank and file leaders were again able to reenter the ranks of organized labor in large numbers. It was they who constituted the mass of wage earners who joined the new industrial unions organized by John L. Lewis and the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Paradoxically, the success of the industrial unionists did not cause the failure of the craft unions. Spurred on by the challenge of the CIO, the AFL and its international affiliates adapted rapidly. Dropping many of its hidebound restrictions against industrial unionism the AFL survived and prospered. Indeed, the competition between the labor organizations greatly stimulated growth of both factions of the labor movement. The realization that there was room in the

American economy for both forms of organization, increasingly clear after 1940, ultimately paved the way for AFL-CIO reunification.

TABLE NO. 1

ANNUAL LABOR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT, AND UNEMPLOYMENT SURVEY

WASHINGTON STATE, 1900-1940

YEAR	LABOR FORCE		EMPLOYMENT		UNEMPLOYMENT		PER CENT UNEMPLOYED
	* NO.	% CHANGE	* NO.	% CHANGE	* NO.	% CHANGE	
1900	224		212		12.7		5.66
1901	255	13.83	240	13.20	14.6	14.96	5.72
1902	286	12.15	281	17.08	4.6	- 68.49	1.49
1903	316	10.48	301	6.64	15.1	228.26	4.77
1904	341	7.91	326	8.30	14.9	1.32	4.36
1905	375	9.97	368	12.88	6.9	53.69	1.84
1906	407	8.53	409	10.02	- 1.7+	- 124.63	- 0.41+
1907	439	7.86	430	5.13	9.3	118.27	2.11
1908	470	7.06	440	2.32	29.5	217.20	6.27
1909	498	5.95	489	11.13	9.6	- 67.45	1.92
1910	520	4.41	513	4.90	7.5	- 21.87	4.44
1911	528	1.53	507	- 1.16	21.5	186.66	4.07
1912	535	1.32	522	2.95	12.6	- 41.39	2.35
1913	541	1.12	527	0.95	13.9	10.31	2.56
1914	545	0.73	515	- 2.27	30.4	118.70	5.57
1915	550	0.91	518	0.58	32.3	6.25	5.87
1916	553	0.54	551	6.37	2.6	- 91.95	0.47
1917	560	1.26	587	6.53	-26.6+	-1123.07	- 4.75+
1918	565	0.89	608	3.57	-42.6+	- 60.15	- 7.53+
1919	566	0.17	578	- 4.93	-12.0+	71.83	- 2.12+
1920	578	2.12	570	- 1.38	7.7	164.41	1.33
1921	584	1.03	518	- 9.12	66.1	758.44	11.31
1922	591	1.19	549	5.59	41.5	- 37.21	7.02
1923	600	1.52	588	7.10	12.3	- 70.36	2.05
1924	610	1.66	579	- 1.53	30.6	148.78	5.01
1925	615	0.08	601	3.79	14.6	- 52.28	2.37
1926	627	1.95	617	2.66	10.4	- 28.76	1.65
1927	639	1.91	612	- 0.81	26.8	157.69	4.19
1928	651	1.87	620	1.30	30.7	14.55	4.71
1929	656	0.76	644	3.87	11.9	- 61.23	1.81
1930	664	1.21	618	- 4.03	46.6	289.91	6.98
1931	670	0.90	563	- 8.89	106.4	129.31	15.88
1932	675	0.74	506	-10.12	168.8	58.64	25.00
1933	681	0.88	502	- 0.79	178.7	5.86	26.24
1934	686	0.73	532	5.97	154.6	- 13.48	22.53
1935	691	0.72	542	1.87	149.5	3.29	21.63
1936	696	0.72	565	4.24	130.6	12.64	18.76
1937	701	0.71	579	2.47	121.3	7.12	17.30

TABLE NO. 1-Continued

YEAR	LABOR FORCE		EMPLOY-MENT		UNEMPLOY-MENT		PER CENT UNEMPLOYED
	* NO.	% CHANGE	* NO.	% CHANGE	* NO.	% CHANGE	
1938	706	0.71	549	- 5.18	156.9	29.34	22.22
1939	712	0.84	577	5.10	134.1	- 14.53	18.83
1940	717	0.70	608	5.37	108.8	- 18.86	15.17

SOURCE: John P. Hering, Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Annual Estimates By States: 1900-1940, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1951), p. 41.

*Figures in thousands. +Negative unemployment rate.

TABLE NO. 2

RANK AND FILE MEMBERSHIP,
WASHINGTON STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR, 1902-1940

YEAR	NO. OF AFFILIATES	PAID-UP MEMBERSHIP	PER CENT CHANGE	PER CENT OF LABOR FORCE
1902	132	5,760		2.01
1903	143	5,720	- 0.69	1.81
1904	106	8,025	40.29	2.35
1905	162	7,228	- 9.93	1.92
1906	130	7,981	10.41	1.96
1907	143	9,778	22.51	2.22
1908	188	10,846	10.92	2.30
1909	221	12,257	13.00	2.30
1910	232	15,420	25,80	3.07
1911	254	17,612	14.21	3.33
1912	257	18,706	6.21	3.49
1913	254	18,122	- 3.12	3.34
1914	254	19,914	9.88	3.65
1915	277	16,131	-18.99	2.93
1916	232	15,093	- 6.43	2.72
1917/18	224	23,343	54.66	4.13
1918/19	243	53,544	125.09	9.28
1919/20	263	55,257	5.16	9.56
1920/21	334	39,910	-27.77	6.83
1921/22	284	23,117+	-42.00	3.91
1922/23	261	23,237+	0.51	3.87
1923/24	240	20,263	-12.79	3.32
1924/25	240	21,385	5.53	3.47
1925/26	250	22,762	6.43	3.63
1926/27	238	27,080	18.79	4.23
1927/28	274	25,230	- 6.83	3.87
1928/29	272	25,353	0.48	3.86
1929/30	274	26,915	6.16	4.05
1930/31	279	24,805	- 7.83	3.70
1931/32	272	19,172	-22.70	2.84
1932/33	245	13,796	-28.04	2.02
1933/34	200	13,504	- 2.11	1.96
1934/35	214	19,090	41.36	2.76
1935/36	259	21,592	13.10	3.10
1936/37	265	33,896	56.98	4.83
1937/38	340	46,032	35.80	6.52
1938/39	396	48,392	5.12	6.79
1931/40	413	51,734	6.90	7.21

SOURCES: Washington State Federation of Labor, Proceedings of the Annual Convention, 1907-1951, (Olympia, 1907-1951); and John

P. Hering, Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Annual Estimates By States, 1900-1940, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1951), p. 40.

The membership figures for these years are inflated by the presence of striking mine workers which later disbanded. True membership may have been 1,500 lower. (See: WSFL Procs., (1924), p. 40.)

TABLE NO. 3

RANK AND FILE MEMBERSHIP, SEATTLE CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, 1907-1935

YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTALS	% CHANGE
1907	325	700	1,781	850	2,748	540	317	7,261	
1908	275	685	1,721	838	3,139	497	370	6,525	- 10.13
1909	310	527	1,717	1,263	2,189	565	513	7,084	8.56
1910	395	592	1,466	1,029	2,139	543	526	6,681	- 5.68
1911	377	370	1,869	1,020	2,422	597	518	7,193	7.66
1912	397	285	1,796	1,255	1,578	597	550	6,458	- 10.21
1913	555	533	1,802	1,709	1,974	690	600	7,863	21.75
1914	630	758	2,186	2,398	3,558	673	656	10,859	38.10
1915	775	660	1,779	2,050	2,075	706	628	8,673	- 20.13
1916	1,044	1,598	1,380	2,342	2,299	722	651	10,036	15.71
1917	1,368	2,910	1,780	4,349	3,658	895	609	15,569	55.13
1918	2,183	3,899	1,714	7,051	4,841	1,150	605	21,443	37.72
1919	1,765	3,424	2,191	6,602	5,935	1,083	712	21,712	1.25
1920	1,421	3,112	2,551	6,428	6,589	675	725	21,501	- 1.23
1921	764	2,149	2,135	5,716	3,247	574	740	15,335	- 27.67
1922	270	1,110	1,932	5,384	2,843	391	725	12,665	- 17.47
1923	260	1,052	1,876	4,334	2,733	736	712	11,703	- 7.52
1924	200	1,009	1,943	4,802	2,950	707	709	12,320	5.27
1925	200	940	2,043	5,595	3,591	723	709	13,801	19.02
1926	240	876	2,020	6,256	3,454	843	775	14,464	4.80
1927	260	958	2,036	5,723	3,519	949	740	14,185	- 1.92
1928	170	980	2,041	6,149	3,588	1,009	1,022	14,959	5.45
1929	170	1,168	2,215	6,026	3,483	998	1,047	15,107	0.98
1930	170	1,026	2,113	6,244	3,524	983	916	14,976	- 0.86
1931	170	807	2,106	5,897	3,737	953	917	14,587	- 2.59
1932	220	499	2,109	4,982	2,349	830	885	11,874	- 18.59

TABLE NO. 3-Continued

YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTALS	% CHANGE
1933	200	432	1,743	4,428	1,415	697	834	9,749	- 17.89
1934	275	678	2,307	4,634	1,657	613	610	10,774	10.51
1935	1,164	591	2,433	5,097	1,936	603	637	12,561	15.46

LEGEND: 1: Maritime Trades Section, 2: Metal Trades Section, 3: Brewery/Provision Trades Section, 4: Miscellaneous Trades Section, 5: Building Trades Section, 6: Printing Trades Section, 7: Amusement Trades Section.

SOURCE: Membership and Per Capita Tax Records, 1907-1935, Box 11, King County Central Labor Council Records, University of Washington Library.

TABLE NO. 4

ETHNIC ORIGIN OF LABOR LEADERS,
SEATTLE AND WASHINGTON STATE, 1900-1940

ETHNIC ORIGIN	SEATTLE		WASHINGTON STATE	
	A	B	A	B
ENGLAND	11	191	14	461
IRELAND	8	55	10	81
SCOTLAND	4	28	5	68
WALES	-	12	1	30
NO. IRELAND	1	9	9	26
OTHER BRITISH ISLES	4	7	7	12
NORWAY	-	5	3	11
SWEDEN	-	25	3	47
DENMARK	-	7	-	10
OTHER SCANDINAVIAN	-	-	-	6
FRANCE	1	20	2	39
GERMANY	6	74	12	155
NETHERLANDS	-	8	1	27
SPAIN	-	-	-	3
OTHER N.W. EUROPE	5	12	18	22
ITALY	1	4	1	7
OTHER SO. EUROPE	-	-	-	13
RUSSIA	2	4	2	4
OTHER E. EUROPE	1	16	1	13
ASIA	-	1	-	1
BLACKS	2	4	2	7
TOTALS	46	482	91	1,061

NOTE ON METHODS: This table is based on two kinds of evidence: direct and indirect (A and B, respectively). Type A evidence consists of interviews, published biographical sketches, newspaper articles, or other definite information. Type B evidence is less reliable and less definite. It consists of surnames. Where no Type A information was available, I deduced the ethnic origin of Washington State labor leaders from their surnames. I have included this evidence because it tends to confirm the direct evidence.

SOURCES: In assigning ethnic origins to labor leaders, where direct evidence was lacking or insufficient, I consulted three etymological dictionaries. Basil Cottle, The Penguin Dictionary of Surnames, (Baltimore, 1969); Henry Harrison, Surnames of the United King-

dom: A Concise Etymological Dictionary, (Baltimore, 1969); and Elsdon C. Smith, American Surnames, (Philadelphia, 1969). The latter was by far the most useful.

TABLE NO. 5

INDUSTRIAL DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNIC GROUPS, WASHINGTON STATE LABOR LEADERSHIP, 1900-1940*

ETHNIC ORIGIN+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL NO.	%
ENGLAND	3	4	10	22	22	6	16	6	5	94	12.25
IRELAND	6	9	2	15	16	3	5	1	5	62	8.08
SCOTLAND	1	2	-	3	3	-	1	1	-	11	1.43
WALES	-	2	-	3	2	1	-	3	1	12	1.56
NO. IRELAND	-	1	4	3	6	-	-	1	1	16	2.08
OTHER BRITISH ISLES	15	23	25	67	72	3	26	7	10	248	32.33
NORWAY	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	5	0.65
SWEDEN	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	4	0.52
DENMARK	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	5	0.65
OTHER SCANDINAVIA	-	8	3	9	12	2	6	1	2	43	5.60
FRANCE	-	3	2	7	4	1	-	-	1	18	2.34
SPAIN	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	3	0.39
GERMANY	4	12	22	32	27	4	9	-	9	119	15.41
NETHERLANDS	-	2	-	5	5	1	1	1	2	17	2.21
OTHER N.W. EUROPE	5	-	5	15	19	2	5	-	4	55	7.17
ITALY	-	1	-	3	1	-	-	2	4	11	1.43
OTHER SO. EUROPE	2	7	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	13	1.69
RUSSIA	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	0.26
OTHER E. EUROPE	1	2	2	6	-	1	-	6	3	21	2.73

TABLE NO. 5-Continued

ETHNIC ORIGIN+	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL NO.	%
BLACKS	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	0.91
ASIA	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.13
TOTAL NO.	44	76	78	196	198	27	70	30	48	767	
%	5.73	9.92	10.16	25.55	25.81	3.52	9.12	3.91	6.25		

*LEGEND: 1: Maritime Trades Section, 2: Metal Trades Section, 3: Brewery/Provision Trades Section, 4: Miscellaneous Trades Section, 5: Building Trades Section, 6: Lumber Trades Section, 7: Printing Trades Section, 8: Mining Trades Section, 9: Teaming Trades Section.

+NOTE ON METHODS: Membership in ethnic groups was determined using both Type A and Type B evidence (See Table No. 4). Membership in Trade Sections was determined only by Type A evidence.

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APPENDIX: LIST OF ACRONYMS

AP - Aircraft Production Board
ACWU - Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union
AFL - American Federation of Labor
AIB - American Industrial Brotherhood
ALU - American Labor Union
ARU - American Railway Union
AUAM - American Union Against Militarism
AIS - Associated Industries of Seattle
BCC - Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth
CTLC - Canadian Trades and Labor Council
CLC - Central Labor Council
CRC - Charter Revision Committee (Spokane)
CN-PL - Citizens Non-Partisan League
CPPA - Committee for Progressive Political Action
CIO - Committee (Congress) of Industrial Organizations
CND - Council of National Defense
DP - Seattle Daily Press
DLL - Direct Legislation League of Washington State
DPL - Direct Primary League of Washington State
EFC - Emergency Fleet Corporation, United States
FLP - Farmer-Labor Party
FFLP - Federated Farmer Labor Party
FUS - Federated Unions of Seattle
HDC - Highway Drivers Council of California
IIC - Industrial Insurance Commission, Washington State
IWW - Industrial Workers of the World
IBT - International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen, and Helpers of America
ILA - International Longshoremen's Association
ILWU - International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union
ISU - International Seamen's Union
ISWU - International Shingle Weavers Union
IUSWSWW - International Union of Shingle Weavers, Sawmill Workers, and Woodsmen
IUTW - International Union of Timber Workers
IWA - International Woodworkers of America
IWPA - International Working People's Association
IWA - International Workingmen's Association
JLC - Joint Legislative Committee
KCTA - King County Triple Alliance
KofL - Knights of Labor
LLBD - Labor Legal Bureau Department of the SCLC
LLLL - Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen (or Four L's)
LPA - Lumbermen's Protective Association
MFP - Maritime Federation of the Pacific
MBA - Master Builders Association of Seattle
MTA - Metal Trades Association of Seattle
MTC - Metal Trades Councils of Seattle and Tacoma
MOL - Municipal Ownership League of Seattle

MOP - Municipal Ownership Party of Seattle
NEC - National Executive Committee of the SPA
NIRA - National Industrial Recovery Act
NLP - National Labor Party
NLRB - National Labor Relations Board of the U.S. Department of Labor
NRA - National Recovery Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor
NWLB - National War Labor Board of the U.S. Department of Labor
NPL - Non-Partisan League
NCLSW - Northwest Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers
OBU - One Big Union movement
PCAPD - People's Council of America for Peace and Democracy
PWC - Political Welfare Committee of the SCLC
P-I - Seattle Post-Intelligencer
PMC - President's Mediation Commission
PPA - Progressive Political Alliance of Washington State
RPC - Railwaymen's Political Club of Washington State
RFC - Federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation
SUP - Seamen's Union of the Pacific
SCLC - Seattle Central Labor Council
SEL - Seattle Economic League
SEC - Seattle Electric Company
SML - Seattle Municipal League
SUCL - Seattle Unemployed Citizens League
SLAB - Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board (Macy Board)
SDP - Social Democratic Party of Washington State
SLP - Socialist Labor Party
SPA - Socialist Party of America
SPW - Socialist Party of Washington State
SSWC - Soldiers, Sailors, and Workingmen's Council of Seattle
SPC - Spruce Production Corporation, United States
SPD - Spruce Production Division, United States Army
SCD - Council of Defense of Washington State
SRL - Referendum League of Washington State
TS - The Socialist (Seattle and Toledo)
UR - Seattle Union Record
UBC - United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners
UGWU - United Garment Workers Union
ULP - United Labor Party of Seattle
UPLW - United Producers League of Washington
WEA - Washington Education Association
WSFL - Washington State Federation of Labor
WSLC - Washington State Labor Council
WSTA - Washington State Triple Alliance
WEA - Waterfront Employees Association
WCLU - Western Central Labor Union
WFM - Western Federation of Miners
WLU - Western Labor Union
WPG - Western Progressive Grange
WCTU - Women's Christian Temperance Union
WP - Workers' Party (Communist)
WLCP - Workingmen's League for Clean Politics (Seattle)
WLMO - Workingmen's League for Municipal Ownership (Seattle)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Jonathan Dembo was born in Bombay, India on 9 February 1948. He was the first child of Morris and Doris Hannah Roth Dembo. He attended public schools in New Delhi, India; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Brooklyn, New York; Karachi, Pakistan; and Arlington, Virginia. He graduated from Prince of Wales School, Nairobi, Kenya, in December 1964. Mr. Dembo received his A.B. from Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, in 1969 and his M.A. in History from the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1972. His Ph.D. was awarded by the University of Washington in 1978. Mr. Dembo was married in 1972.