
Gregory, Thomas Watt

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Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 E. 19th Street,
New York City.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

Yours of the 15th would have been answered sooner but for some pressing matters pending in my office, and because of a persistent attack of flu.

I served with Owen D. Young for some five months on President Wilson's Second Industrial Conference. With the exception of Sundays, we met almost daily and sometimes at night, and you doubtless have a realization of the fact that we discussed many matters and listened to the views of many people, usually distinguished, who appeared before us in advocacy of what were frequently conflicting views.

You probably know personally all the members of that conference; if not, then you at least know who they were and their antecedents. On the whole, it was the most distinguished body of men I was ever intimately associated with for anything like so great a length of time.

To refresh your memory I give you a list of the officers and members:

William B. Wilson, Chairman
Herbert Hoover, Vice Chairman
Martin H. Glynn
Thomas W. Gregory
Richard Hooker
Stanley King
Samuel W. McCall
Henry M. Robinson
Julius Rosenwald
George T. Slade
Willard E. Hotchkiss,
Henry R. Seager,
Executive Secretaries.

Among these men were some (Mr. Young not being one of these) with whom I had previously had long and intimate associations and for several of whom I have for many years had a genuine affection.

The discussions were on a very high plane, and I recall no instance in which any ill feeling was displayed by any member, or in which it could be fairly said that there had been even a discourteous expression. We differed widely on many matters, but there was a tremendous amount of give and take
in the making of the final report, which was signed by all. You may note on pages 26 and 27 of the report that Governor Stuart and I dissented because the report did not provide some machinery which would prevent suspension of operations of public utilities by lock-outs or strikes during the period that the proposed tribunals were acting in an attempt to adjust a controversy, especially in view of the facts that the controversy was required to be voluntarily submitted by both sides, that there could be no decision except by unanimous vote, and that both sides to the controversy were required to accept the conclusion reached in order to make it binding. I believe the point just referred to was the only one on which all the members did not finally agree.

Never having come in personal contact with Mr. Young prior to serving with him on this conference, and knowing that he had been a corporation lawyer and was then head of one of the largest of industrial organizations, I had not expected from him the progressive views which he constantly expressed as our work advanced. I am a progressive, and I think there was not a man on this conference who could be properly classed as a reactionary, yet on more than one occasion Mr. Young championed views more radical than those entertained by me on the relations between labor and capital.

I can safely say that he was one of the leaders in the conference, and I have frequently said that in my judgment he was its ablest member. His personality is extremely pleasing and he has a faculty of adjusting conflicting opinions which makes him invaluable.

I have no objection to your quoting the views above expressed, or any portion of them.

I answer the latter portion of your letter by saying that I did not come in contact with Mr. Young in the years before the War when he was engaged in re-organizing the street railway systems in Galveston, Houston and Dallas for Stone & Webster. In fact my only contact with him has been during the five months above referred to.

Though you doubtless have a copy of the report of the Second Industrial Conference I herewith enclose one with the portions above referred to on pages 26 and 27 marked with red pencil.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]

TWG:F