

XIX: Industrial Conference

The work was spiked from the start.

(See Introduction) As soon as the body was organized there came a resolution purely political from Samuel Gompers, head of the Labor group. At that moment^a/serious strike against the steel industry was under way. Watching the strike I had been convinced that Mr. Gompers was being pushed beyond his candid judgment by the radical groups inside attempting to control the Federation of Labor. It happens time and again of course in strikes, that this boring within has driven experienced labor groups, steadily making their way towards the machinery of cooperation through arbitration, to turn to force. It is happening now. But this Conference had not been called by the President to settle^{existing}/labor troubles. It was called to form a plan for the peaceful future/conduct of industry and before any step had been taken towards that plan here came this purely political group. It threw the Conference^{into}/confusion. It was like a brand of fire thrown to in/a yard where building materials had been gathered. What were we to do with that brand? Could it be put out?

