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November 28, 1919.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
132 East 19th St.,
New York City.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

What the President's second conference, or some other agency, should do, not to solve the labor problem, perhaps, but to open up a competent approach to it through governmental machinery or otherwise, is a question at every man's shoulder.

We feel that there is a service to be performed by drawing into the compass of a few pages the specific suggestions of men who have had experience and shown inventive power with respect to the structure of industrial relations.

To this end we are turning, among others, to creative employers, and labor managers of great industries; to labor organizers who have manifested constructive ability; to representatives of the public as negotiators, conciliators, or arbitrators, who have wrought fairly durable solutions in earlier industrial conflicts; and to war time experts, who have a fund of practical sagacity as to industrial adjustment which needs to be requisitioned at this time.

An earlier symposium in the Survey in 1911, led to the creation of the U.S. Industrial Relations Commission, whose divergent findings by the employer, labor and economist groups gave at least a forecast of the impasse which now seems to confront the public. None of them, however, was taken over as a basis for government policy.

Under the war emergency, the War Labor Board, the War Labor Policies Board, various boards, under shipping and other agencies of the Government, were created to deal with the labor situation in the midst of the war. But all this machinery has been more or less discarded; the U.S. Employment Service has been scrapped. The President called a three ply industrial conference which dissolved without agreement; he has now called another.

With a steel strike on, a coal strike half averted, a railroad strike possible, - what under the circumstances is the way out? How should the public go about it? What should be our practical objectives?

May we have your answer in 500 words or less, by December 8?

Sincerely,

Paul U. Kellogg

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