Notes on Industrial Conference
for Taylor Society.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the first industrial conference called by the President in October went to pieces on the rock of collective bargaining. The shipwreck was so sudden and so dramatic that the public in general had little reason to suppose that the conference did anything towards realizing the purpose for which it was called. That purpose was clearly enough stated by the President of the United States in convening the gathering. Its business was finding some common ground of agreement and action with regard to the future conduct of industry. It was supposed to concern itself with new, not old, phases of industrial association. In the comparatively few moments that the conference was allowed to give to the business for which it was called, something of what was in the minds of its members who really were looking to the future and not to the past did come to the surface. A rough analysis of this output is sufficient to show that the first industrial conference had at least the making of a ~~program~~ plan for the future relations the President had in mind.

Under the rules of the conference any member could bring before the body any resolution that he had in mind, providing that his group considered the matter of his resolution relevant. In submitting a resolution be presented on the floor, it was understood that the group itself did not ~~by any means~~ necessarily approve of the subject matter, only that it consented to its relevancy. According to the order of business the resolutions which passed a group were read at the opening of each day's session. After the reading, they were passed on to the General Committee, where they were to be

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Employer = Statement of Principles
Labor - Proposition -

assigned to various subcommittees which were to be appointed. A large number of resolutions came before the conference in this way, and ctually were assigned to committees. So far as I know not one of these subcommittees was ever able to do any more than begin organization for work

It is not fair that this work actually begun under very great difficulties, so absorbed was the gathering in the collective bargaining discussion should not be considered. It really offered the bones at least for what is so greatly needed in industry today, and that is a thorough going program for industrial reorganization. An examination of the propositions arranged in something like logical shape sgows that the conference would have had before it, if it had succeeded in going to work at its real purpose, in the first place a very interesting definition of that thing for which the industrial organization exists, and that is, production This definition came from the employers' group. It defined the industrid organization as an association of management, capital and labor, established for economic production through cooperative effort.

(~~Page 3~~)

2-7

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Co-operation was offered as a weapon against H.C.L.
Resolution came from a farmer & called attention to fact that

The labor income of the producing farmer is based on the price received for his products. This represents to him the equivalent of the wages paid in what has been termed in the call for this conference "Industry." To maintain a proper standard of living and efficient production, the farmer must receive for his products their cost and a reasonable profit. In the present development of trade and commerce it has become necessary in many instances for producers of farm products to form co-operative marketing organizations in order to secure a money return, from the sale of the products, to the producers thereof sufficient to justify the continuance of the industry. It asked that The necessity which has led to this organized activity and the rights of farmers to organize for this purpose is recognized by the Conf. as sound and justifiable.

Certainly this would have been done & probably the whole sale of co-operation in production & distribution would have received attention

Social Insurance

Labor did not ask for it
Employers did .. refer to it
A resolution on Unemployment Insurance
came from Mr Dennis

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This tendency to classify and define came out also in another resolution brought before the conference by Mr. Paul Feiss

8-1

It is quite probable that if the conference had gone on, it would sooner or later have cleared up its mind by a thorough going set of definitions of industrial terms.

It will be noticed that in this definition of the employers group on production management is recognized. It was not recognized by anything brought in by the labor group, that is, in the sense in which this Society understands management; but it did begin to receive attention from the public group through Mr. Dennison. He brought before the conference two excellent resolutions, one providing that a substantialnumber of the governing body of the corporation should be chosen from the managerial forces, and the other that mamagers and employees should work together etc. etc.

(See resolution.)

We had thus before the conference the basis at least for a thrashing out of the subject of management, making clear its part in the industrial organization and giving an opportunity to clear up the mind of labor capital and the public as to its place and its function.

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Employers - Statement of Principles
-Labor- Series of Propositions

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My own attention is attempt to drive put before conf. if discussion had been technical - expert opinion on management of [illegible]

Stated management part of [illegible]

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Much attention was given in the resolutions brought in to those matters which at present are the chief concern of all cooperative bargaining. Wages - Hours - Conditions

Take the matter of wages. The Proposals Resolutions offered by labor and the capital group were substantially the same. They both recognized the right to a living wage, that is a wage sufficient to maintain the workman and his family. Labor defined this living wage as one that would insure that the worker and his family should live in health and comfort according to the standards of American life. The employers group recognized a standard of living that should be satisfactory to a right-minded man in view of the prevailing cost of living. This seemed to require explanation of what the group meant by a "right minded man." Probably there would have been considerable difficulty in getting the labor and employer group to have settled on a definition // Both the labor and the employer group agreed to the principle of equal pay for equal work in the case of women. A set of resolutions covering woman's work, founded on the standards advanced by the Woman's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, defined the basis for determining her wage, that is they should be established on the basis of occupation, and not on the basis of sex; and that woman's wage should cover the case of dependents in her case, and not merely the individual. These provisions, it will be noted, are covered in an interesting resolution which would have been stimulating in the discussion on wages which the conference would have taken up if it had continued its work. It came from Mr. Russel, and defined the basic principle of wages.

" 4.A.

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Here it will be seen was ample material for a beginning at least of this great subject. The labor group did not look beyond a daily wage. The employer group looked beyond the daily wage In its proposition regarding wages, it declared that they should recognize the quality and quantity of the worker's productige effort, the value and length of his service and reflect a participation in the enterprise to which he is devoting his energy. Here of course was pregnant matter for discussion. It would have carried the conference undoubtedly into some expression on profit sharing and to a consideration of their various forms. It was ell enough known that various members of the public group had it in mind to present resolutions on this subject, notably Dr. Elliot. Only one such resolution did come out, that from Mr. Brookins

" A combination resolution - looking not only to profit sharing but to participation in management & to the encouragement of thrift. See 5 I

Hours were considered in the program of both the labor and Employer ~~capital~~ group, and in the set of resolutions concerning women and children. It was obvious from the tenor of the employers group that the flat 8-hour day asked for by labor would have been combatted, as too inflexible to suit all industry, ~~also that there would have been a fight on the short day on the ground that in many forms of industry it was impracticable~~ -- that is the employers would have made the week, rather than the day, the standard , and would have allowed variation according to the peculiar needs of the individual industry. It was obvious too that the employer group was prepared to fight the 8-hour day on the ground that many interests could not afford it. No other expression came excepting that contained in the resolution concerning women and children; and in both these the restrictions were demanded on the ground of health.

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" A combination resolution covering participation in management - profit sharing & staff planning "

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Under the broad head which includes so many important things, "Conditions of work" little came before the conference. Labor had little specific to say. The statement of employers could not possibly have been accepted, which laid down that the conditions under which labor worked should be "as safe and satisfactory to the worker as the nature of the business permitted". It came into immediate clash with so great and powerful an institution as the National Safety Council which lays it down as a principle that whatever the nature of the business, it ~~must~~ can be made safe and satisfactory. and can be if scientifically attached This provocative declaration was almost certain to have launched the conference into a discussion of many things occupational diseases certainly included.

The only resolution coming from the public group which could be classified under the head of "Conditions of Work" was presented by Mr. Feiss It asked "

6-1

The problem of unemployment received only enough attention in the resolutions presented to make certain that it would have been taken up. Labor had nothing to say about it, while the employers made the general statement that each establishment should study carefully the causes of unemployment and study them in cooperation with other establishments in the same and other industries to endeavor to maintain such business methods and conditions which would result in the greatest possible stability in the employment relations.

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The only resolution made from the public group referred to employment agencies, and came from Miss Barnum. That the subject would have received a thorough thrashing out and that ~~many~~ members of this society would have been called in to help with the problem was I know intended.

It asked the conference to urge upon Congress the immediate consideration of the bills now before it to establish a permanent National Employment Agency

Un-employment within employment.

The High Cost of Living in Resolution directed against Profit Sharing - A resolution originating in the Employee group on Co-operation thrust the ~~important matter the~~ relation of that important matter before us. This resolution to the High Cost of Living

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"On Employment within Employment".
report of Committee on Federation

High Cost of Living - in Resolution directed against profiteering - Mr Russell.

7-a.15.

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Which undoubtedly must have been

Social Insurance

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know that I have ever been more discouraged with efforts to advance by public conference as when this body with really remarkable material met and very promptly declined to accept the President's instructions, resigned and went home.

The only speech I made at that Conference, bewildered was I by the politics which took hold at the first, was now. I rose and protested ~~to the best of my ability~~ against the cowardly business of deserting the ship. Ithink most of the members were thinking of something else while I talked, probably what train they could catch. To my mind this new sally of mine into the business of serving the public was humiliating and disillusioning. True, there was the second try with what I considered very good results. The President called an entirely different Second Industrial Confsrence and instead of working in the open they went into Conference and produced an excellent scheme for peaceful cooperative industry, a scheme which if could have been put into practice would have put a very different face upon things from what we have now. But that scheme fell on political ears, political labor, political capital.

My next fling at serving the public was in President Harding's Unemployment Conference. The slump was so disastrous, so alarming in 1922 that I have always supposed by the suggestion of Secretary of Commerce Hoover a Conference was called, to see what could be done about it.