

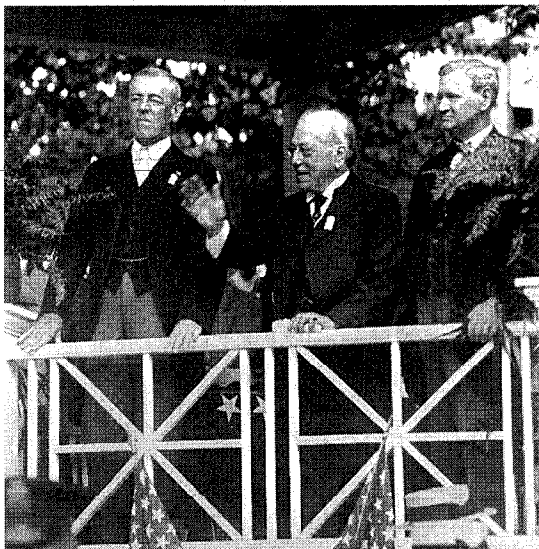
C H A P T E R O N E



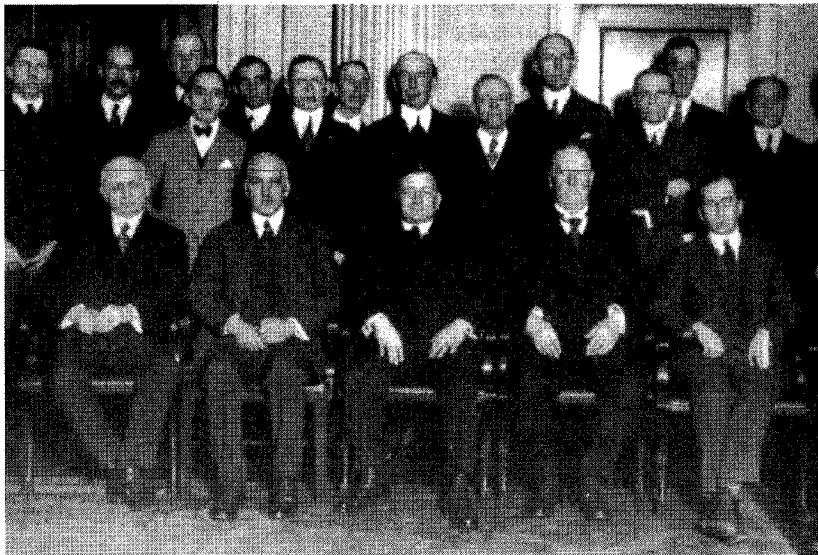
DRILLING DEPARTMENT, NATIONAL CASH REGISTER Co., DAYTON, OHIO, 1902.

IN SEARCH
OF A NATIONAL
LABOR POLICY

WAR LABOR BOARD: WORLD WAR I



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THE STRUGGLE of workers in 18th and 19th century America led to the beginnings of a national labor policy. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the labor movement had grown to three million members. President Woodrow Wilson took steps to promote labor peace by creating a tripartite War Labor Board in 1918.

Although the War Labor Board did not have enforcement powers, labor and management agreed to refrain from strikes or lockouts as a result of its mediating efforts. The War Labor Board recognized the "right of workers to organize in trade unions and to bargain collectively through chosen representatives." During its short life, the Board handled 1,200 cases affecting 700,000 workers.



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1. President Woodrow Wilson, AFL President Gompers and Secretary of Labor William Wilson at dedication of AFL building, Washington, D.C., July 1916.

2. War Labor Board, 1919.

3. Workers manufacturing weapons parts, World War I.

4. Browning Machine Guns plant, New Haven, Conn., 1917.



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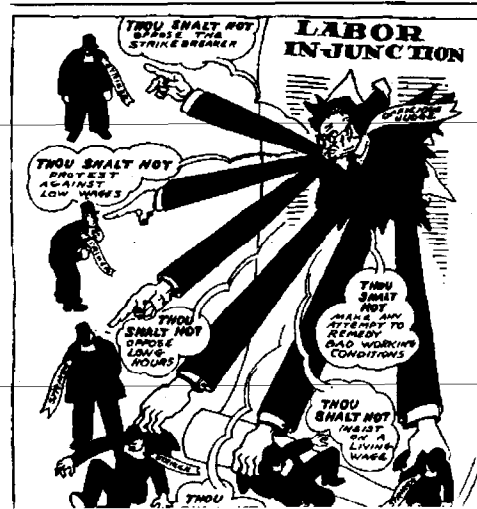


POST-WAR DISCORD

THE LABOR-MANAGEMENT truce during World War I evaporated after the armistice in 1918. The following year, unions lost major strikes in the steel, coal and rail industries. Union membership dropped from more than five million in 1920 to three million members in 1933—just 300,000 more than in 1914.

Hostility between labor and management ran high in the 1920s. It was during this period that the use of the labor injunction to stop strikes reached its peak.

“... Justice For All” -



1. Police attacking striking textile workers, Passaic, N.J., 1926.

RAILWAY LABOR ACT

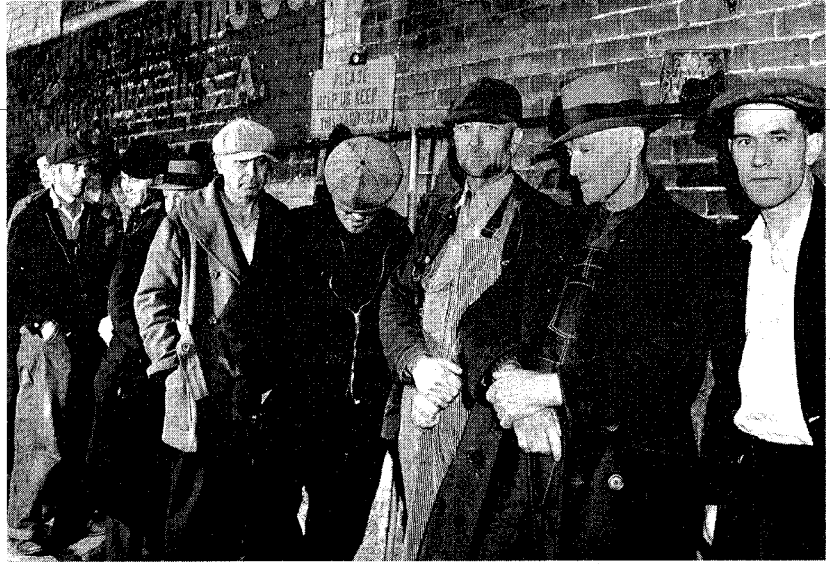
PASSAGE OF the Railway Labor Act in 1926 was a breakthrough in paving the way for a national labor policy. It stressed the importance of collective bargaining to minimize strikes and lockouts on railways and gave railroad workers the right to select their own bargaining representatives “without interference, influence or coercion.”

NORRIS-LA GUARDIA ACT

THE GREAT Depression of the 1930s changed the face of labor relations by creating a climate in which Congress was willing to experiment with new approaches to industrial conditions and economic policy.

In the depths of the Depression, during the last year of the Hoover Administration in 1932, Congress passed the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which curbed the power of the courts to issue injunctions or restraining orders against strikes, absent violence or fraud.

More importantly, Congress declared the policy of the United States to be that workers were free to join unions and bargain collectively. The search for a national labor policy was coming closer to fruition.



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1. City Mission,
Dubuque, Iowa,
April 1930

2. Rep. Fiorello H.
LaGuardia of
New York

3. Sen. George Norris
of Nebraska