

Labor movement - U.S.  
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# Important Events in American Labor History 1778-1978.



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# Important Events in American Labor History

**1778** Journeymen printers of New York City combined to demand an increase in wages. After the increase was granted, the organization was abandoned.

**1786** The earliest authenticated strike of workers in the United States in a single trade occurred when Philadelphia printers gained a minimum wage of \$6 a week.

**1791** Philadelphia carpenters struck unsuccessfully in May for a 10-hour day and additional pay for overtime. This was the first recorded strike of workers in the building trades.

**1792** The first local craft union formed for collective bargaining was organized by Philadelphia shoemakers. It disbanded in less than a year.

**1794** The Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers was formed in Philadelphia by the shoeworkers. It lasted until 1806, when it was tried and fined for conspiracy. (See below.)

The Typographical Society was organized in New York by the printers. It remained in existence for 10½ years.

**1805** A Journeymen Cordwainers union in New York City included a closed-shop clause in its constitution.

**1806** Members of the Philadelphia Journeymen Cordwainers were tried for criminal conspiracy after a strike for higher wages. The charges were (1) combination to raise wages and (2) combination to injure others. The union was found guilty and fined. Bankrupt as a result, the union disbanded. This was the first of several unions to be tried for conspiracy.

**1825** The United Tailoresses of New York, a trade union organization for women only, was formed in New York City.

**1827** The Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations, made up of unions of skilled craftsmen in different trades, was formed in Philadelphia. This was the first city central type of organization on record.

**1828** The Workingmen's Party, including wage earners, craftsmen, and farmers, was organized in Philadelphia in July. It went out of existence in 1832.

**1834** The National Trades Union was formed in New York City. This was the first attempt toward a national labor federation in the United States. It failed to survive the financial panic of 1837.

**1836** The National Cooperative Association of Cordwainers, the first national labor union of a specific craft, was formed in New York City. There is no further record of this organization after 1837. Other trades which formed national organizations within the next few years were the printers, comb makers, carpenters, and hand-loom weavers.

**1840** An Executive Order issued on March 31 by President Van Buren established a 10-hour day for Federal employees on public works without reduction in pay.

**1842** In the case of *Commonwealth v. Hunt*, the Massachusetts Court held that labor unions, as such, were legal organizations, and that "a conspiracy must be a combination of two or more persons, by some concerted action, to accomplish some criminal or unlawful purpose, or to accomplish some purpose not in itself criminal or unlawful by criminal or unlawful means." The decision also denied that an attempt to establish a closed shop was unlawful or proof of an unlawful aim.

Massachusetts and Connecticut passed laws prohibiting children from working more than 10 hours a day.

**1847** The first State law fixing 10 hours as a legal workday was passed in New Hampshire.

**1848** Pennsylvania passed a State child labor law setting the minimum age for workers in commercial occupations at 12 years. In 1849, the minimum was raised to 13 years.

**1852** The Typographical Union, the first national organization of workers to endure to the present day, was formed. The first law limiting working hours of women to 10 hours a day was passed in Ohio.

**1859** The Iron Molders' Union, the forerunner of the present Molders' and Allied Workers' Union, was organized in Philadelphia.

**1862** The "Molly Maguires," a secret society of Irish miners in the anthracite fields, first came to public attention. The "Mollies" were charged with acts of terrorism against mine bosses. They went out of existence in 1876, when 14 of their leaders were imprisoned and 10 were executed.

**1863** The present-day Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers was founded.

Laws providing fines and imprisonment for strikers preventing other persons from working were passed in Illinois and Minnesota.

**1866** The National Labor Union, a national association of unions, was organized. A federation of trades' assemblies rather than of national craft organizations, it included radical and reform groups. Drifting into social rather than trade union endeavors, it lost craftsmen's support and went out of existence in 1872.

**1867** The Knights of St. Crispin was organized on March 7 to protect journeymen shoemakers against the competition of "green hands" and apprentices in the operation of newly introduced machinery in the shoe industry. The last vestige of the order disappeared in 1878.

**1868** The first Federal 8-hour-day law was passed by Congress. It applied only to laborers, workmen, and mechanics employed by or on behalf of the United States Government.



The first State labor bureau was established in Massachusetts.

**1869** The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor was organized in Philadelphia. It maintained extreme secrecy until 1878, then began organizing skilled and unskilled workers openly. By winning railroad strikes against the Gould lines, and advancing the program for the 8-hour day, the Knights of Labor gained many followers, claiming over 700,000 members in 1886. It declined rapidly thereafter with the emergence of the AFL.

**1870** The first written contract between coal miners and operators was signed on July 29. It provided for a sliding scale of pay, based on the price of coal.

**1873** The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen was organized.

**1874** The Cigar Makers International Union made first use of the union label.

**1878** The Greenback-Labor Party was organized by a fusion of the Greenback Party and Workingmen's Party.

**1881** The Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU), which later became the American Federation of Labor, was organized in Pittsburgh in November with 107 delegates present. Leaders of 8 national unions attended, including Samuel Gompers, then president of the Cigar Makers' International Union.

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, later to become one of the largest AFL unions, was organized.

**1882** The first Labor Day celebration was held in New York City in September.

**1883** The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen was organized.

**1884** A Bureau of Labor was established in the Department of Interior. It later became independent as a Department of Labor without Cabinet rank. It then was absorbed into a new Department of Commerce and Labor, which was created in 1903, where it remained until the present Department of Labor was established in 1913.

**1886** Under the initiative of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, some 340,000 workers participated in a movement for an 8-hour day.

The Chicago Haymarket riot, in which one policeman was killed and several others were wounded, aroused public opinion against unionism and radicalism and for several years stopped the movement for the 8-hour day. The meeting in Haymarket Square had been called as a peaceful protest against the killing of four strikers and wounding of others during the strike for the 8-hour day.

The American Federation of Labor was organized at a convention in Columbus, Ohio, in December as successor to the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions. Other trade unions and city councils which had failed to gain autonomy within the ranks of the Knights of Labor also joined the AFL.

**1887** The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees was organized.

Pennsylvania  
coal miners,  
1880's



**1888** The first Federal labor relations law was enacted. It applied to railroads and provided for arbitration and Presidential boards of investigation.

The International Association of Machinists was organized in Atlanta, Ga.

**1890** The United Mine Workers was organized in Columbus, Ohio.

**1892** The Homestead strike by the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel & Tin Workers at the Carnegie steel mills in Homestead, Pa., resulted in the death of several strikers and Pinkerton guards. The strike failed and the union was ousted from most mills in the Pittsburgh area.

**1894** A strike of the American Railway Union led by Eugene V. Debs against the Pullman Co. was defeated by the use of injunctions and by Federal troops sent into the Chicago area. Debs and several other leaders were imprisoned for violating the injunctions, and the union's effectiveness was destroyed.

**1898** Congress passed the Erdman Act, providing for mediation and voluntary arbitration on the railroads, and superseding the law of 1888. The act also made it a criminal offense for railroads to dismiss employees or to discriminate against prospective employees because of their union membership or activity. This portion of the act was subsequently declared invalid by the United States Supreme Court.

**1900** The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (AFL) was formed.

**1901** The International Federation of Trade Unions (then International Secretariat of National Trade Union Centers) was formed on August 21. The AFL affiliated in 1910, disaffiliated in 1921, and reaffiliated in 1937. It remained a member until IFTU was formally dissolved in 1945.

The Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel & Tin Workers (AFL) lost 14 union contracts after a 3-month strike against the United States Steel Corp.

The United Textile Workers of America (AFL) was organized.

**1902** The United Mine Workers of America ended a 5-month strike on October 21 against anthracite operators, agreeing to arbitration by a Presidential commission. The Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, appointed on October 16, recommended on March 18, 1903, a 10-percent wage increase and conciliation machinery, but denied union recognition.

**1903** The Department of Commerce and Labor was created by an act of Congress, and its Secretary was made a member of the Cabinet.

**1905** The Industrial Workers of the World was organized in Chicago.

The Supreme Court held that a maximum hours law for bakery workers was unconstitutional under the due process clause of the 14th amendment. (*Lochner v. New York.*)



*Steelworkers, Circa 1900*



**1906** The International Typographical Union (AFL) struck successfully in book and job printing establishments for the 8-hour day, paving the way for extension of shorter hours in the printing trades.

**1908** Section 10 of the Erdman Act applying to railroad employees, whereby the "yellow-dog" contract was outlawed and an employer was forbidden to discharge a worker for union membership, was declared unconstitutional. (*U.S. v. Adair.*)

The boycott by the United Hatters of Danbury, Conn., against D. E. Loewe and Co. was held to be in restraint of trade under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. In January 1915, the individual union members were held responsible for the union's acts and were assessed damages and costs totaling \$252,000. This was the first application of the treble damage provision of the act to a labor union.

**1909** The 2-month strike of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (AFL) was settled by providing preferential union hiring, a board of grievances, and a board of arbitration. This laid the foundation for the impartial chairman method of settling labor disputes.

**1911** The Supreme Court upheld an injunction ordering the AFL to eliminate the Bucks Stove and Range Co. from its unfair list and to cease to promote an unlawful boycott. A contempt charge against union leaders, including AFL President Samuel Gompers, was dismissed on technical grounds. (*Gompers v. Bucks Stove and Range Co.*)

The Triangle Shirtwaist Co. fire in New York on March 25, which caused the death of 146 workers, led to establishment of the New York Factory Investigating Commission on June 30, and eventual improvement in factory conditions.

**1912** Massachusetts adopted the first minimum wage act for women and minors.

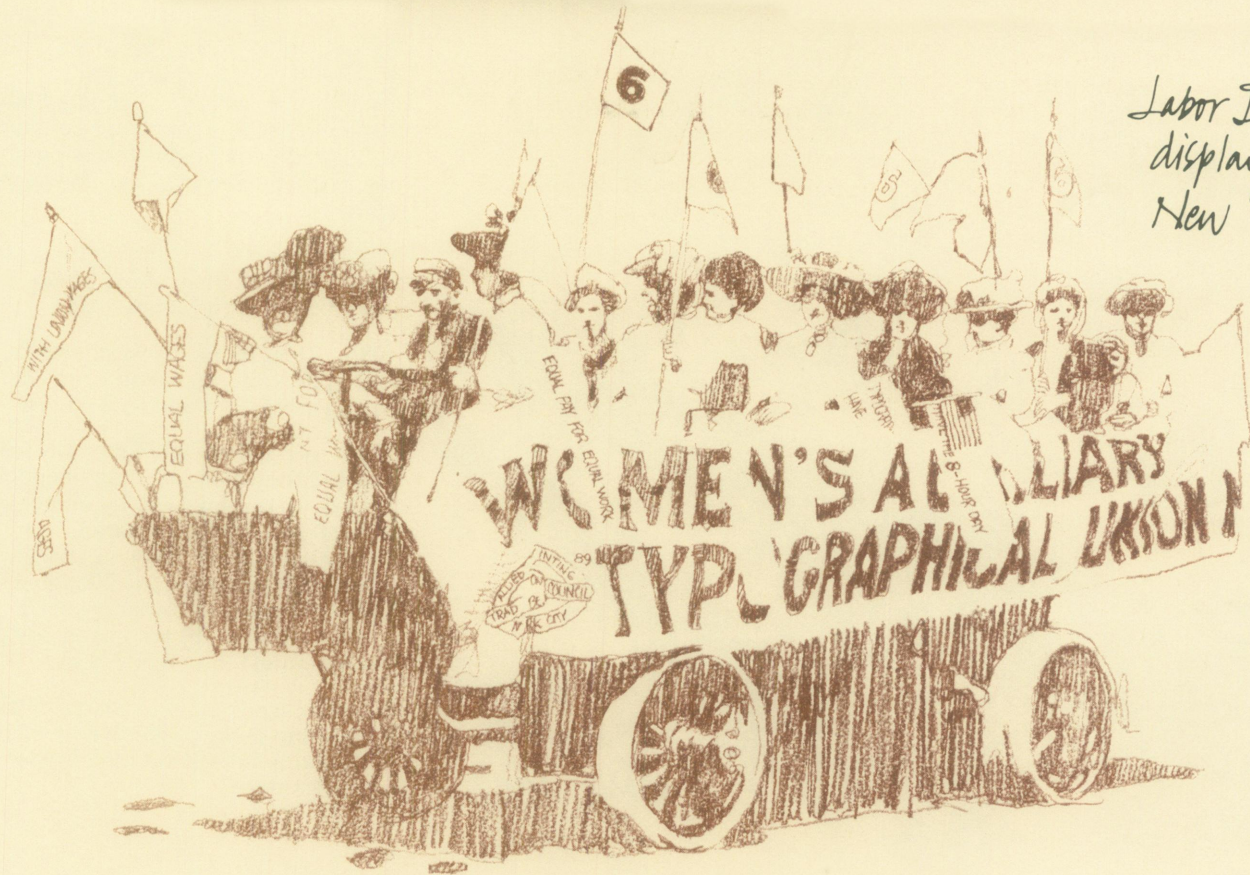
The (Walsh) Commission on Industrial Relations was created to investigate industrial unrest. In 1916, it rendered a comprehensive series of reports on the status of labor-management relations.

**1913** The United States Department of Labor was established by law. It included the Bureau of Labor Statistics (created in 1884 as the Bureau of Labor, see above), the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (created in 1891), and the Children's Bureau (created in 1912). Power was given the Secretary of Labor to "act as mediator and to appoint commissioners of conciliation in labor disputes," and in 1918 the Conciliation Service was established as a separate division of the Department. William B. Wilson, a trade unionist and Member of Congress, became the first Secretary of Labor.

The Newlands Act set up a Board of Mediation and Conciliation to handle railroad disputes.

**1914** The Clayton Act was approved, limiting the use of injunctions in labor disputes and providing the picketing and other union activities shall not be considered unlawful.

Labor Day parade  
display wagon,  
New York City.  
1909







*Weapons  
assembly  
plant, 1917*

On December 1, the President appointed the Colorado Coal Commission, which investigated the Ludlow Massacre and labor conditions in Colorado coal mines following an unsuccessful strike by the United Mine Workers.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers was formed by a seceding group of the United Garment Workers (AFL).

**1915** The LaFollette Seamen's Act was approved, regulating conditions of employment for maritime workers.

**1916** A Federal child labor law was enacted (declared unconstitutional on June 3, 1918); followed by an act of February 24, 1919 (declared unconstitutional on May 15, 1922); followed by a proposed child labor amendment to the Constitution on June 2, 1924. Only 28 of the necessary 36 States ratified the amendment.

The Adamson Act, providing a basic 8-hour day on railroads, was enacted to eliminate a threatened nationwide railroad strike.



**1917** A strike led by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the copper mines of Bisbee, Ariz., was ended when the sheriff deported 1,200 strikers.

The President appointed a mediation commission, headed by the Secretary of Labor, to adjust wartime labor difficulties.

The "yellow-dog" contract was upheld and union efforts to organize workers party to such contract were held to be unlawful. (*Hitchman Coal & Coke Co. v. Mitchell.*)

**1918** The Federal Government took control of the railroads from December 1917 until March 1, 1920, under existing Federal legislation which provided for government railroad operation in wartime.

The President named the Secretary of Labor as War Labor Administrator on January 4.

The President created the National War Labor Board on April 8 "to settle by mediation and conciliation controversies . . . in fields of production necessary for the effective conduct of the war." It went out of existence in May 1919.

**1919** Led by President Gompers of the AFL, a commission created by the Peace Conference at its second plenary session in January recommended the inclusion in the Peace Treaty of labor clauses creating an International Labour Organization.

The United Mine Workers of America struck against bituminous-coal operators on November 1. In December, the union agreed to arbitration by a Presidential commission. The Bituminous Coal Commission appointed by the President on December 19 awarded a 27-percent wage increase, but denied the 6-hour day and 5-day week.

**1920** The AFL Iron and Steel Organizing Committee ended an unsuccessful 3½-month strike in the steel industry on January 8 after most of the strikers had drifted back to work.

The Women's Bureau was established in the Department of Labor by an act of Congress.

The Kansas Court of Industrial Relations provided the first experiment in compulsory arbitration in the United States. (Held unconstitutional in part in 1923.)

The Transportation Act provided for a tripartite Railroad Labor Board and terminated Federal control of railroads on March 1.

**1921** The Supreme Court held that nothing in the Clayton Act legalized secondary boycotts or protected unions against injunctions brought against them for conspiracy in restraint of trade. (*Duplex Printing Press v. Deering.*)

An act restricting the immigration of aliens into the United States and establishing the national origin quota system was approved.

The President's Conference on Unemployment placed the main responsibility for unemployment relief upon local communities.

The Arizona law forbidding injunctions in labor disputes and permitting picketing was held unconstitutional under the 14th amendment. (*Truax v. Corrigan.*)

**1922** The United Mine Workers was held not responsible for local strike action, and strike action was held not a conspiracy to restrain commerce within the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Labor unions, however, were held liable for their acts. (*Coronado Coal Co. v. UMW.*)

A 2½-month unsuccessful nationwide strike of railway shop workers against wage reductions began July 1.

**1924** Samuel Gompers, president of the AFL, died on December 13.

**1926** The Railway Labor Act required employers to bargain collectively and not discriminate against their employees for joining a union. The act also provided for the settlement of railway labor disputes through mediation, voluntary arbitration, and factfinding boards.

**1927** The Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act was enacted.

The Journeymen Stone Cutters' action in trying to prevent purchase of nonunion cut stone was held to be an illegal restraint of interstate commerce. (*Bedford Cut Stone Co. v. Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association, et al.*)

**1929** The Hawes-Cooper Act governing the shipment of convict-made goods in interstate commerce was approved.

The Communist-inspired Trade Union Unity League was formed in September. It was dissolved in 1935.

**1930** The Railway Labor Act's prohibition of employer interference or coercion in the choice of bargaining representatives was upheld by the Supreme Court. (*Texas & N.O.R. Co. v. Brotherhood of Railway Clerks.*)

**1931** The Davis-Bacon Act provided for the payment of prevailing wage rates to laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on public construction.

**1932** The Anti-Injunction (Norris-La Guardia) Act prohibited Federal injunctions in labor disputes, except as specified, and outlawed "yellow-dog" contracts.

Wisconsin adopted the first unemployment insurance act in the United States.

**1933** Frances Perkins became Secretary of Labor, the first woman named to the Cabinet.

Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act provided that every NRA code and agreement should guarantee the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively through their representatives without interference, restraint, or coercion by employers. (Title I of act declared unconstitutional in *Schechter v. U.S.* on May 27, 1935.)

The Wagner-Peyser Act created the United States Employment Service in the Department of Labor.

**1934** The first National Labor Legislation Conference was called by the Secretary of Labor to obtain closer Federal-State cooperation in working out a sound national labor legislation program. Annual conferences were held until 1955.

The United States joined the International Labour Organization.

**1935** The National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act established the first national labor policy of protecting the right of workers to organize and to elect their representatives for collective bargaining.

The Bituminous Coal Conservation (Guffey) Act was passed to stabilize the industry and to improve labor conditions. (Labor relations provisions declared unconstitutional on May 18, 1936.)

The Federal Social Security Act was approved August 14.

The Committee for Industrial Organization (later the Congress of Industrial Organizations) was formed on November 9 by several AFL international unions and officials to foster industrial unionism.

**1936** In the first large "sitdown" strike, the United Rubber Workers (CIO) won recognition at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.

The Anti-Strikebreaker (Byrnes) Act declared it unlawful "to transport or aid in transporting strikebreakers in interstate or foreign commerce."

The Public Contracts (Walsh-Healey) Act established labor standards on Government contracts, including minimum wages, overtime compensation for hours in excess of 8 a day or 40 a week, child and convict labor provisions, and health and safety requirements.

**1937** General Motors Corp. agreed to recognize the United Automobile Workers (CIO) as the bargaining agent for its members, to drop injunction proceedings against strikers, not to discriminate against union members, and to establish grievance procedures.

United States Steel Corp. recognized the Steel Workers Organizing Committee as the bargaining agent for its members. A 10-percent wage increase and an 8-hour day and 40-hour week were negotiated.

The National Labor Relations Act was held constitutional. (*NLRB v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp.*)

Ten people were killed and 80 wounded in a Memorial Day clash between police and the members of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee at the plant of the Republic Steel Co. in South Chicago.

The Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 was approved, followed by the Carriers Taxing Act of 1937. (Similar laws of June 27, 1934, and August 29, 1935, had been declared unconstitutional.)

The 5-week "Little Steel" strike was broken on July 1 when Inland Steel employees returned to work without union recognition or other gains.

The National Apprenticeship Act was passed, establishing the Bureau of Apprenticeship in the U.S. Department of Labor.

**1938** The Merchant Marine Act of 1936 was amended to provide a Federal Maritime Labor Board.

The Fair Labor Standards Act provided a 25-cent minimum wage and time and a half for hours over 40 a week. Subsequent amendments raised the minimum wage, so that as of 1976 it was \$2.30 an hour for most employees.

The Railroad Unemployment Insurance (Crosser-Wheeler) Act was passed.

**1940** A sitdown strike was held not to be an illegal restraint of commerce under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act in the absence of intent to impose market controls. (*Apex Hosiery Co. v. Leader.*)

**1941** Actions by the Carpenters' union in jurisdictional disputes were held to be protected by the Clayton Act from prosecution under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. These actions were construed in light of Congress' definition of "labor dispute" in the Norris-La Guardia Act.

The UAW (CIO) won recognition at Ford Motor Co. after a 10-day strike. The union and the company signed a union-shop agreement—the first with a major automobile manufacturer.

The President on December 24 announced a no-strike pledge by the AFL and CIO for the duration of the war.

**1942** The United Steelworkers of America was organized. It replaced the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, which was first established by the CIO in 1936.

The President established the National War Labor Board to determine procedures for settling disputes.

The NWLB laid down the "Little Steel" formula for wartime wage adjustments (i.e., based on a 15-percent rise in living costs from January 1, 1941, to May 1, 1942).

The Stabilization Act authorized the President to stabilize wages and salaries, as far as practicable, based on September 15, 1942, levels.

**1943** The President created by an Executive Order a Committee on Fair Employment Practices, empowering it to "conduct hearings, make findings of fact, and take appropriate steps to obtain elimination" of "discrimination in the employment of any person in war industries or in Government by reason of race, creed, color, or national origin."

The War Labor Disputes (Smith-Connally) Act, passed over the President's veto, authorized plant seizure if needed to avoid interference with the war effort.

**1944** The Railway Labor Act, authorizing a labor union chosen by a majority to represent a craft, was held to require union protection of the minority in that class. Discrimination against certain members on ground of race was held enjoined. (*Steel v. Louisville & Nashville Railroad.*)

**1945** The CIO affiliated with the newly formed World Federation of Trade Unions. (It withdrew in 1949.) The AFL, which held that the labor organizations of Soviet Russia were not "free or democratic," did not affiliate with the WFTU.

*Women shipyard welders,  
California, 1943*



The President's National Labor-Management Conference convened in Washington, D.C., but produced few tangible results.

**1946** The United Steelworkers (CIO) ended a 1-month strike and established a "first round" wage pattern of increase of 18½ cents an hour.

The Employment Act of 1946 committed the Government to take all practicable measures to promote maximum employment, production, and purchasing power.

The United Automobile Workers (CIO) ended a 3½-month strike against General Motors Corp. by negotiating an hourly wage increase of 18½ cents, after a Presidential factfinding board had recommended 19½ cents.

Locomotive Engineers (Ind.) and Railroad Trainmen (Ind.) ended a national 2-day strike following an injunction and under threat of legislation to draft the workers. They accepted the 18½-cent-an-hour increase recommended by the President.

The UMWA bituminous-coal miners won a health and welfare fund from the Federal Government, which had seized the mines.

The President provided for the termination of all wartime wage and salary controls.

**1947** The Norris-La Guardia Act prohibition against issuance of injunctions in labor disputes was held inapplicable to the Government as an employer. (*U.S. v. John L. Lewis.*)

The Portal-to-Portal Act was approved, "to relieve employers and the Government from potential liability . . . in 'portal-to-portal' claims."

The Labor Management Relations (Taft-Hartley) Act was passed (June 23) over the President's veto.

**1948** General Motors Corp. and the United Automobile Workers (CIO) signed the first major contract with an "escalator" clause, providing for wage increases based on the Consumer Price Index.

The President appointed the Commission on Labor Relations in the Atomic Energy Installations, which, on April 18, 1949, recommended establishment of a panel to protect free collective bargaining in atomic plants.

The Federal Government's first national conference on industrial safety met in Washington, D.C.

**1949** An amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938) directly prohibited child labor for the first time.

The Supreme Court, by denying review of a lower court's action, upheld a decision that the Labor Management Relations Act requires employers to bargain with unions on retirement plans. (*Inland Steel Co. v. United Steelworkers of America.*)

Settlement of a steel industry-United Steelworkers (CIO) strike on the basis of noncontributory \$100 monthly pensions at age 65, plus death, sickness, and accident benefits, followed a recommendation by a Presidential factfinding board.



The CIO anti-Communist drive culminated in expulsion of two unions at its annual convention. Trial and expulsion of nine other unions followed early in 1950.

The International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers was founded at the CIO convention following the expulsion of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers.

Free, democratic trade unions of various countries, including the CIO in the United States, withdrew from the World Federation of Trade Unions, which had become Communist dominated.

A new worldwide labor organization—the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)—with the AFL, CIO, and United Mine Workers participating, was formed at a meeting in December at London, England, of labor representatives from 51 countries.

**1950** A 5-year contract with no reopening provisions was negotiated by the United Automobile Workers (CIO) and the General Motors Corp. It provided for pensions, automatic cost-of-living wage adjustments, guaranteed annual increases, and a modified union shop.

A United Labor Policy Committee composed of representatives of the AFL, CIO, and railroad unions was formed in December for the purpose of presenting labor's views to the Government on problems arising from the national emergency. The AFL withdrew from the committee in August 1951, thereby dissolving the group.

The Defense Production Act authorized the President to curb inflation and promote defense production.

**1951** The International Association of Machinists reaffiliated with the AFL in January after being independent since 1945 due to jurisdictional disputes. In August, the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, formerly an affiliate of the AFL United Textile Workers, rejoined the AFL as a separate union.

The Inter-American Regional Workers Organization (ORIT) of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was established at a meeting in Mexico City in January. It claimed to represent 17 million workers in North, South, and Central America.

Labor representatives withdrew in February from all participation in the Government's mobilization and stabilization program in protest over what they felt was labor's secondary role in its operation. They voted to return in April after being given a stronger voice in policymaking.

The CIO participated with the AFL as part of the United States delegation to the International Labor Conference of the ILO for the first time since 1946.

The first amendment to the Taft-Hartley Act, permitting negotiations of union-shop agreements without previous polls of employees, became law in October. The union shop for workers on the nation's rail and air lines had previously been approved under the National (Railway) Mediation Act in January.

**1952** A Presidential emergency board, in February, recommended agreement on the union shop between the railroads and nonoperating railroad unions representing about 1 million workers.

A strike of nearly 8 weeks' duration ended in July when the United Steelworkers of America (CIO) signed agreements with basic steel producers employing about 500,000 workers. Following the companies' rejection of Wage Stabilization Board recommendations, the Government seized the steel industry. The strike began after a district court granted an injunction restraining the seizure order, but it was halted at the request of the President pending review of the decision by the Supreme Court. The strike was resumed after the Supreme Court held that the President exceeded his constitutional powers when he ordered the seizure.

Presidents of the principal labor federations, Philip Murray of the CIO and William Green of the AFL, died in November. The AFL Executive Council elevated George Meany, former secretary-treasurer of the Federation, to

the presidency. Walter P. Reuther, president of the United Automobile Workers, was named president of the CIO by the CIO convention.

**1953** The Supreme Court upheld the right of the International Typographical Union (AFL) to compel a newspaper to pay for the setting of type not used, and of the American Federation of Musicians (AFL) to demand that a local "standby" orchestra be employed when a traveling orchestra was hired for an engagement. The Court said that neither practice violated the "featherbedding" ban in the Labor Management Relations (Taft-Hartley) Act.

The AFL and CIO, meeting in their respective conventions, approved a no-raiding pact to extend for 2 years from January 1, 1954. The agreement was binding only upon those member unions accepting it. Both organizations hailed the pact as the first step towards organic unity.

The convention of the AFL revoked the 60-year-old charter of the International Longshoremen's Association, charging corruption within the union. A new union

was immediately chartered by the AFL. A bitter struggle for representation in the east coast longshore industry, between the old ILA and the newly chartered AFL union, took place on the docks, in the courts, and in NLRB hearing rooms during the last 3 months of 1953. (Following a representation election in which the AFL union was defeated, the unaffiliated ILA was certified by the NLRB in August 1954 as collective bargaining agent for the dock workers.)

**1954** A "no-raiding" agreement was activated by the AFL and CIO in June. After a series of meetings, unity committees of the two federations agreed in October upon merger without resolving in advance the jurisdiction of competing AFL and CIO unions. (Unity committees and the executive boards of the AFL and CIO approved the terms of the merger in February 1955.)

Proposals for guaranteed annual employment or wage plans were developed by the United Automobile Workers, the Steelworkers, the Electrical Workers, and the Rubber Workers.

**1955** In June, the Ford Motor Co. and the United Auto Workers (then CIO) negotiated a new 3-year agreement which established a supplementary unemployment compensation plan financed by company contributions of 5 cents an hour. By the end of 1955, similar plans were negotiated for more than a million workers, including the remainder of the auto industry.

The founding of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) on December 5, 1955, brought under one roof unions representing approximately 16 million workers—over 85 percent of the membership claimed by all unions in the United States. The last conventions of the separate organizations, held on December 1 and 2, approved the merger agreement, a new constitution, and an implementation agreement designed to combine the two federations without dissolving either organization. The first convention of the AFL-CIO elected its president (George Meany), secretary-treasurer (William F. Schnitzler), and 27 vice presidents, of whom 17 had been proposed by the AFL and 10 by the CIO. Under the

constitution, these 29 officers constituted the Executive Council, the governing body between the biennial conventions.

**1956** In the first year of unity, former AFL and CIO State labor organizations merged in 19 States. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen—unaffiliated throughout its 83-year history—joined the AFL-CIO in September. Although several international unions proposed and discussed mergers, only a few were carried out. On the other hand, a number of unions signed mutual assistance pacts or no-raiding agreements. The Federation's Ethical Practices Committee recommended to the Executive Council after hearings, that three unions (the Allied Industrial Workers, the Laundry Workers, and the Distillery Workers) should show cause why they should not be suspended because of domination by "corrupt" influences in the administration of employee welfare funds.

**1957** The biennial convention of the AFL-CIO expelled the Teamsters, Bakery Workers, and Laundry Workers, having a combined membership of approximately 1.6 million, on charges of domination by corrupt influences. This action followed upon a refusal on the part of the three unions to accept the corrective recommendation of the Executive Council.

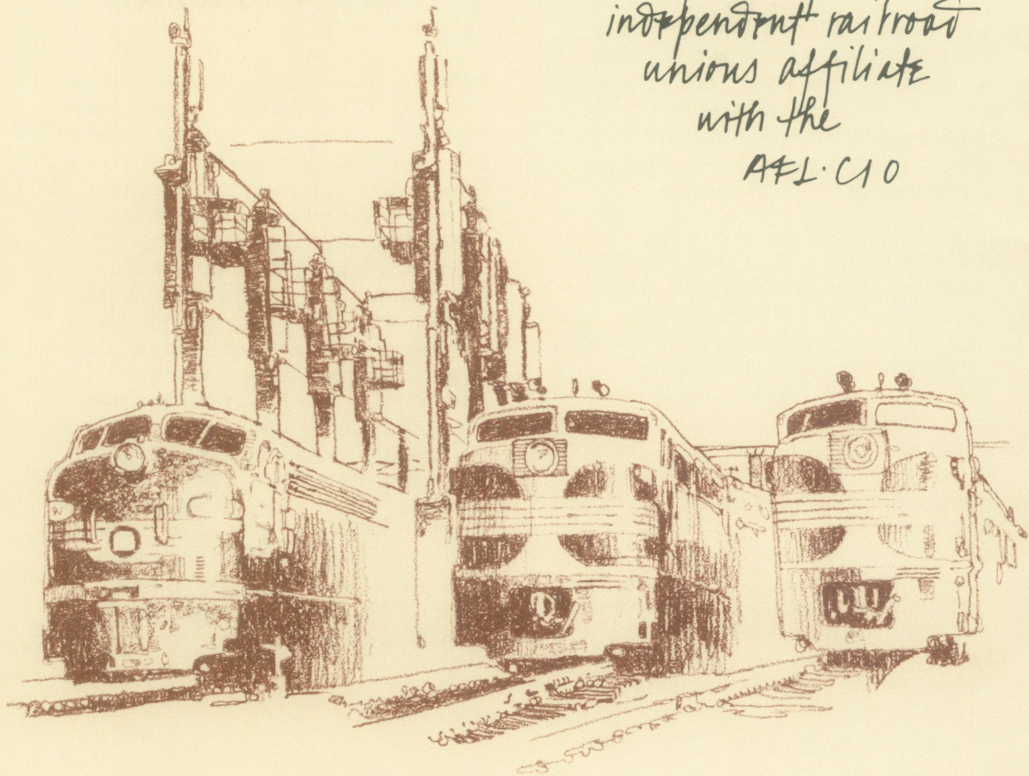
Three formerly independent railroad unions became affiliated with the AFL-CIO during 1957: The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, the American Train Dispatchers Association, and the American Railway Supervisors Association.

**1958** Federal legislation passed during 1958 included a Welfare and Pension Plans Disclosure Act, which required administrators of all health, insurance, pension, and supplementary unemployment compensation plans covering more than 25 workers (amended 1962) to file with the Secretary of Labor descriptions and annual financial reports, to be available for public inspection. Reports also had to be made available for plan

participants. Other laws included one for optional Federal loans to States for a temporary 50-percent extension of unemployment payments to workers who had exhausted their benefits under Federal and State programs.

**1959** The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, designed to eliminate improper activities by labor or management, was signed by the President on September 14. The act provided certain protection for the rights of labor organization members; provided for the filing of reports describing the organization, financial dealings, and business practices of labor organizations, their officers and employees, certain employers, labor relations consultants, and unions in trusteeship; safeguarded union election procedures; set standards for the handling of union funds; amended the Taft-Hartley law to eliminate the "no-mans land" in NLRB cases; closed previously existing loopholes in the protection against secondary boycotts; and limited organizational and jurisdictional picketing. The statute was to be administered by the Department of Labor, except for the provisions

*Three formally  
independent railroad  
unions affiliate  
with the  
AFL-CIO*



amending the Taft-Hartley Act, which were to be administered by the National Labor Relations Board.

The longest major strike ever to take place in the steel industry began on July 15. Attempts to resolve the dispute through negotiation continued until October 21, when the national emergency provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act were invoked. After an unsuccessful attempt on the part of a board of inquiry to promote a settlement, a back-to-work injunction was issued. After a court battle over the constitutionality and applicability of the injunction, the Supreme Court upheld the injunction on November 7, the 116th day of the strike. Workers then returned to their jobs for the 80-day "cooling off" period. (Negotiations were successfully completed and new contracts signed early in January 1960.)

**1960** The Nation's railroads and the five operating brotherhoods agreed to refer their longstanding dispute involving work rules and practices to a tripartite Presidential commission for study and recommendations.

An agreement which opened the way to relaxation of restrictive working rules and the increased use of laborsaving equipment on the waterfront was signed by the Pacific Maritime Association and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. In return for the union's acceptance of the changes, the association agreed to contribute \$5 million a year to a fund to provide each of the 15,000 registered longshoremen \$7,920 upon retirement at age 65 with 25 years of service, and to guarantee union members certain minimum weekly earnings and no layoffs as a result of decreased work opportunities under the new contract provisions. However, the fund would not protect longshoremen from reduced earnings resulting from a decline in business.

**1961** Amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act went into effect September 3, 1961, extending coverage to an additional 3.6 million workers, mostly in retail trade and construction. Minimum wage rates of workers already covered were increased. Newly covered workers were brought gradually under the overtime provisions of the act until

they received time and one-half pay for hours after 40 per week by September 1965.

The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Order of Railroad Telegraphers negotiated an agreement guaranteeing each telegrapher his job or equivalent wages during his lifetime.

The fourth biennial convention of the AFL-CIO, approved a constitutional amendment setting up a procedure for the peaceful resolution of jurisdictional disputes, a problem that had been disruptive since the 1955 merger. Constructive steps were also taken by the convention in the campaign to eliminate all vestiges of racial discrimination in the ranks of the AFL-CIO.

**1962** The Manpower Development and Training Act was approved on March 15. It required the Federal Government to determine manpower requirements and resources and to "deal with the problems of unemployment resulting from automation and technological changes and other types of persistent unemployment." The act was to be

administered by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Federal employees' unions were granted the right to bargain collectively with Government agencies under an Executive Order signed January 17. The order guaranteed to unions of Federal workers certain rights of organization, consultation, and processing of grievances.

**1963** The Equal Pay Act of 1963 was signed by the President on June 10. This act prohibited wage differentials based on sex for workers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

After negotiations to resolve the longstanding railroad dispute involving operating railroad workers failed to produce any concrete results, Congress passed legislation calling for arbitration of the two principal issues: the use of firemen on diesel locomotives in freight and yard service, and the makeup of train crews. The report of the arbitrators, issued on November 26, provided for the gradual elimination of firemen in 90 percent of freight and yard service. The

crew "consist issue" was returned to the unions and carriers for further negotiations, and arbitration, if necessary.

**1964** The 4½-year dispute between the railroads and operating brotherhoods over work rules and other collective bargaining issues ended when final agreement was reached on all issues not resolved by the arbitration award of November 1963. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Fireman and Enginemen ratified the agreement on June 25, the last of the five operating unions to do so.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed by the President on July 2, to become effective a year later. Title VII—Equal Employment Opportunity—barred discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in hiring, apprenticeship, compensation, and terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, and union membership. An Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was charged with investigating and adjudicating complaints under this title.

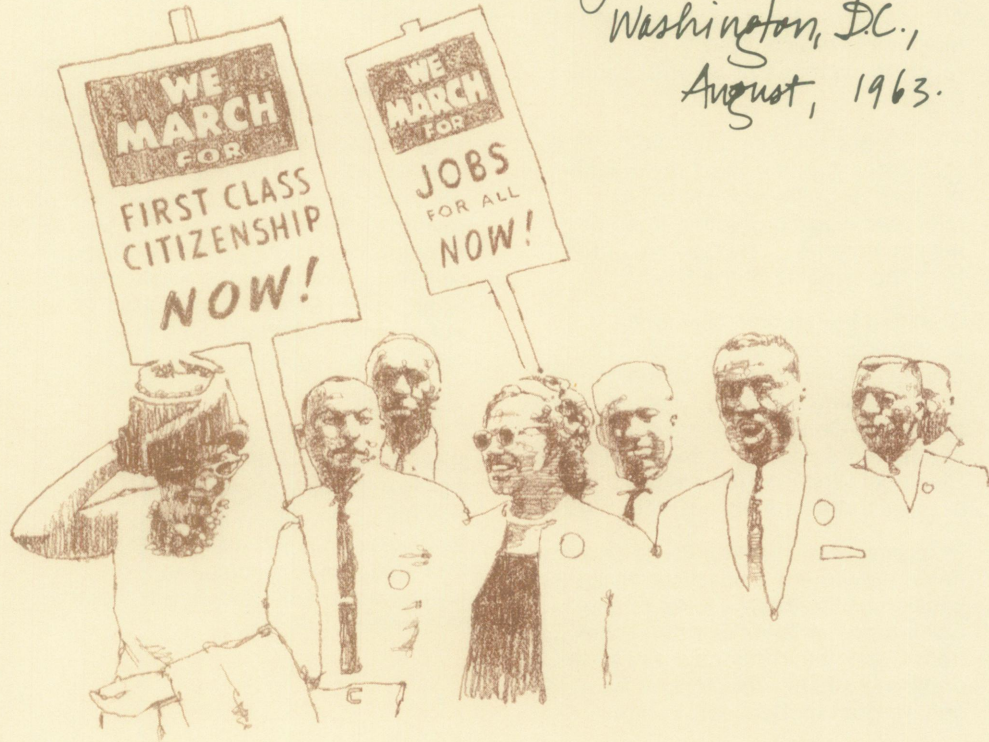
The inability of the International Longshoremen's Association and the New York Shipping Association to agree on the terms of a new contract and the union's rejection of recommendations made by a special Board of Mediation on the basis of a Department of Labor study of labor utilization and job security led to a strike of all east coast and gulf coast ports on October 1. The strike was immediately halted when the President invoked the 80-day injunction provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. This was the sixth application of the national emergency provisions of the act to east coast longshoring.

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was signed into law on August 20. The measure provided for work and education programs, loans to low-income farmers and businesses, and various other national community antipoverty programs.

**1965** The longshore dispute erupted into a strike beginning January 11, after New York longshore workers voted down an agreement reached just before the injunction expired (see entry in 1964). The strike lasted about a month



*March for Jobs and Freedom,  
Washington, D.C.,  
August, 1963.*



in major ports, but all east and gulf coast ports were not back to work until another month had elapsed.

The Hosiery Workers union was formally dissolved after 50 years of existence, and its members were absorbed by the Textile Workers Union of America (AFL-CIO). Once a union of 50,000 members, the Hosiery Workers union had declined to around 5,000.

The enactment of the McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act on October 22 provided wage standards for employees performing work on Federal service contracts. These standards were similar to those long applicable to employees on Federal construction and supply contracts.

Agricultural employers became subject to revised regulations governing applications for temporary foreign agricultural workers under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. In addition to making a "reasonable effort" to recruit domestic workers, a grower was required to offer American workers minimum wages, varying by States, before foreign labor was

permitted to be used. Beginning April 1, 1965, "nonadverse" higher wages became effective. The revised regulations were issued after expiration of the Mexican farm labor program.

Social security amendments of 1965 included the so-called "Medicare" plan, which provided partial coverage for those over 65 for hospitalization, nursing home care, home nursing, and diagnostic expenses. An optional supplementary plan provided coverage for most major medical expenses. Benefits became available on July 1, 1966.

In November, the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO arranged with 10 insurance companies to underwrite a pooled pension plan for employees of small companies. The program was available in 1966 for employers having fewer than 100 workers.

**1966** Two transportation strikes tested the adequacy of legislation designed to prevent work stoppages. New York City's transit system was shut down for 12 days in violation of a State law

banning public employee strikes. Union leaders were subsequently jailed for violating a court injunction. Five major airlines were struck on July 8, after the Machinists rejected the recommendations of an emergency board.

The 1966 amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act, the most far-reaching in the history of the act, extended minimum wage protection to some 10 million workers previously excluded from the benefits of the law.

Coalition bargaining, that is, the coordination of strategy and action among different unions having contracts with the same company, passed a major test when General Electric Co. negotiated a new agreement with the Electrical Workers (IUE) in the presence of representatives from 10 other unions.

Delegates representing the U.S. trade union movement walked out of the 50th session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva when a delegate from Communist Poland was elected as presiding officer. The boycott led to an open argument between Walter

Reuther, who protested the action, and George Meany, who defended it, over the international program of the AFL-CIO.

**1967** Professional workers employed both their own independent associations and traditional trade unions during the year in increasing collective bargaining activity. AFL-CIO unions which organized professional workers moved towards closer cooperation. In March, they formed the AFL-CIO Council of Scientific, Professional, and Cultural Employees (SPACE), dedicated to enhancing organizing, collective bargaining, legislative, and public relations activities for the member organizations.

Early in the year, the unaffiliated Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers merged with the United Steelworkers. In mid-July, the merged unions and 25 others joined in a strike against major copper producers which continued through the remainder of the year.

A 5-man arbitration board, established by Congress in July after a 2-day railroad stoppage, imposed a 2-year settlement within the framework of previous bargaining on railroads and six shopcraft unions when the parties were unable to reach agreement within the time limits specified in the legislation.

**1968** On June 12, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, signed by President Johnson the previous December, went into effect. The act made it illegal for employers, unions, and employment agencies, in interstate commerce to discharge, refuse to hire or otherwise discriminate against persons aged 40 to 65. On November 27, the Secretary of Labor in response to a requirement under the statute, recommended that no changes be made in these age limits.

Provisions restricting wage garnishment—the practice of attaching portions of a debtor's salary or wage for satisfaction of creditors—were enacted as part of the Consumer Credit Protection ("Truth in Lending") Act of 1968.

A major Fair Labor Standards Act case was decided by the Supreme Court in *Maryland v. Wirtz*. The Court held that coverage of employees of State and local government hospitals and schools was a valid exercise by the Congress of article 1, sec. 8 (the commerce clause) of the Constitution.

The AFL-CIO created a new department to coordinate its urban rehabilitation programs, and pledged cooperation with business and government in placing the hardcore unemployed in jobs. The Federation's Building and Construction Trades Department announced a new program to facilitate minority race entry into trades apprenticeships. A number of AFL-CIO affiliated and independent unions also announced programs to aid underprivileged groups.

The United Mine Workers of America expelled its affiliate, District 50, in April, in a dispute over the latter's endorsement of atomic energy.

In July, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of America and the United Packinghouse, Food and Allied Workers, with a combined membership of about 500,000 completed a merger.

Following a long series of policy disputes and an earlier suspension, the United Automobile Workers formally disaffiliated from the AFL-CIO in July. The event marked the first major schism in the labor movement since 1957, when the AFL-CIO expelled the Teamsters and two other unions, charging corrupt practices. Shortly thereafter, the UAW and Teamsters formed the Alliance for Labor Action, to coordinate their efforts toward organizing, bargaining, community, and political goals. When other labor organizations were invited to join the new group, the AFL-CIO charged the two unions with attempting to set up a rival federation, and warned its affiliated unions that supporting or joining the ALA would be grounds for suspension. In November, following charges and countercharges of raiding, the ALA stated that it would be willing to enter into negotiations for a no-raiding pact with the Federation.

**1969** Four railroad brotherhoods—the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, the Switchmen's Union of North America, and the Order of Railway Conductors and Brakemen—merged to form the United Transportation Union (AFL-CIO), having a combined membership of over 200,000. At the same time, the 2,500 member Railway Patrolmen's International Union merged with the 270,000 member Brotherhood of Railway, Airline, and Steamship Clerks.

In December, the Bakery and Confectionery Workers, expelled from the AFL-CIO in 1957, returned to the Federation by merging with the American Bakery and Confectionery Workers' International Union (AFL-CIO).

The UAW-Teamster sponsored Alliance for Labor Action held its first convention. The ALA resolved to "revitalize the labor movement," organize the unorganized, and campaign for social and political action, tax reform, national health insurance, urban renewal, and cuts in military spending.

In February, the AFL-CIO withdrew from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), in disapproval of ICFTU attitudes toward Soviet bloc nations and for ICFTU failure to comply with AFL-CIO demands to reject admission of the United Auto Workers to the world labor organization.

After expiration of an 80-day Taft-Hartley injunction on December 20, east coast dockworkers shut down major Atlantic and Gulf ports in a dispute over wages and benefits; "containerization" was a key issue. Settlement was reached in New York City in mid-January, 1970, and strikes at other ports ended shortly afterward.

A new Department of Labor drive to open construction jobs to minorities began and focused first on the Philadelphia area. Builders were asked to submit specific minority hiring goals. The joint Department of Labor-National Alliance of Businessmen JOBS program announced expansion from 50 to 125 cities. The NAB reported in early 1969 that firms participating in JOBS had hired 120,000 hard-core unemployed. The program's goal was to hire 600,000.

On October 29, the President issued Executive Order 11491, Labor-Management Relations in the Federal Service, which replaced Executive Order 10988, Employee-Management Cooperation in the Federal Service, issued in 1962. Changes made by the new order included the establishment of a Federal Labor Relations Council to administer the program, and a Federal Service Impasse Panel to resolve disputes over new contract terms.

**1970** The first mass work stoppage in the 195-year history of the Post Office Department began March 18 with a walkout of letter carriers in Brooklyn and Manhattan, and soon involved nearly 210,000 of the Nation's 750,000 postal employees, virtually paralyzing mail service in New York, Detroit, and Philadelphia, and affecting service in other major cities. Agreement was reached after 2 weeks, but not before the President declared a state of national emergency, assigned military units to New York City post offices, and promised to begin discussions of all issues including pay.



Hawaii became the first State to allow State and local government employees the right to strike. Strikes were to be permitted only if efforts to reach an agreement failed and if the public health was not endangered.

After a 4½-year boycott of California table grapes, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO) reached agreement with most producers. In August, the UFWOC and Teamsters signed a no-raiding pact giving the UFWOC jurisdiction over all field workers, while the Teamsters retained the right to organize food processing and cannery workers.

In December, following expiration of an emergency strike ban, a nationwide rail strike—the fourth since World War II—was called by four rail unions. The strike was ended after 1 day by issuance of a Federal injunction, and Congress hastily voted to extend the strike ban until March 1, 1971, and to increase retroactive pay.



*First mass postal  
workers strike in the  
195 year history  
of the Post Office  
Department,  
March 1970*

On December 29, the President signed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which authorized the Secretary of Labor to establish occupational safety and health standards in the Nation's workplaces. Under provisions of this law, effective April 28, 1971, the Secretary and an independent review commission appointed by the President were given authority to impose civil penalties and fines. Criminal action was permitted in cases of willful violations that resulted in death and in certain other cases. The review commission was to hear appeals of citations and of proposed penalties for alleged violations. The party losing the appeal could seek further review by a U.S. court of appeals. The law also provided for State development and enforcement of occupational safety and health standards, subject to approval by the Secretary of Labor.

**1971** Five postal unions—the United Federation of Postal Clerks, the National Association of Post Office and General Services Maintenance Employees, the National Federation of Post Office Motor Vehicle Employees,

the National Association of Special Delivery Messengers, and the National Postal Union (Ind.)—merged to form the American Postal Workers Union (AFL-CIO) having nearly 300,000 members.

The Alliance for Labor Action, formed by the Auto Workers and Teamsters in 1968 to coordinate their organizing efforts and other common objectives, was disbanded in December.

**1972** On January 17, West Coast longshore workers resumed a strike that had been halted by a Taft-Hartley injunction issued in October 1971. The strike ended February 19 after 139 days, making it the longest dock strike in the nation's history.

One of the longest labor disputes in U.S. labor history was settled by a July agreement between the United Transportation Union and major railroad companies to gradually phase out firemen's jobs on diesel freight locomotives. The dispute began in 1937, and at various times involved arbitration boards, presidential panels, Congress, and the courts.

Three mergers of major unions took place during the summer. District 50, Allied and Technical Workers, once a division of the Mine Workers, merged with the United Steelworkers, bringing Steelworker membership to more than 1.25 million. The United Papermakers and Paperworkers Union combined with the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers to form the 345,000 member United Paper Workers International Union. The Lithographers and Photoengravers International Union and the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders combined to form the Graphic Arts International Union, with more than 120,000 members.

**1973** The United Steelworkers and the Steel Industry Coordinating Committee, representing 10 major steel producers, approved an "Experimental Negotiation Agreement" designed to avert crisis bargaining and stockpiling in the steel industry. Affecting 300,000 workers the agreement provided for voluntary final and binding arbitration of unresolved issues in the 1974 negotiations.



Under a law effective June 1, Washington became the first State to allow the union shop for civil servants.

As a result of an agreement reached on June 1, the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union of North America and the International Stereotypers', Electrotypers', and Platemakers' Union of North America merged on October 2, forming the 135,000-member International Printing and Graphic Communications Union (AFL-CIO).

On June 13, as a prelude to Phase IV, the President announced a freeze of up to 60 days on prices. Wages, interest, and dividends continued to be exempt from controls. Phase IV, implemented on June 18, reaffirmed the wage standards of Phase II and III on a voluntary basis and required prenotification of price increases in key industries.

The International Union of Brewery, Flour, Cereal, Soft Drink and Distillery Workers approved a leadership decision to merge with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, ending a

long-term rivalry between the two unions. Local unions representing about 25 percent of the Brewery Workers' 40,000 members rejected the merger, however, preferring direct affiliation with AFL-CIO. The Federation had averted possible legal obstacles to direct affiliation by revoking the Brewery Workers' charter during the AFL-CIO Convention in October.

The President signed the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973, designed to consolidate and decentralize the numerous and sometimes overlapping Federal employment programs. Under the law, the Federal Government was to provide funds to State and local governments, and the latter, as prime sponsors, were to determine the type of employment services to be provided within their jurisdictions. Additional Federal funds were to be made available to communities having disproportionately low earnings or high unemployment.

**1974** On January 3, the President signed amendments to the Social Security Act. The bill provided for

automatic cost-of-living adjustments whenever the Consumer Price Index rose 3 percent.

About 3,000 women unionists from 58 labor organizations assembled in Chicago in late March to establish the Coalition of Labor Union Women. The Coalition was dedicated to promoting equal rights and better wages and working conditions for women workers. The organization was to work toward increasing union membership of women, greater participation by women in union affairs and policymaking, and favorable legislation affecting women workers.

In May, the New York Times and the New York Daily News signed an 11-year agreement with the International Typographical Union. The contract gave the newspapers the unrestricted right to introduce automated typesetting procedures, in return for lifetime security for current employees. The companies were obligated to retrain employees displaced by new processes, and the work force could be reduced only through attrition. The papers agreed to encourage retirements

through paid 6-month productivity leaves (trial retirements) and retirement bonuses.

On June 1, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (AFL-CIO) called their first nationwide strike since 1921, involving 110,000 workers in 30 states. The union reached agreement with the Clothing Manufacturers Association on June 8.

On June 3, the 2,500-member Cigar Makers' International Union of America (AFL-CIO) was merged into the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (AFL-CIO). One of the oldest national unions, dating back to 1864, the Cigar Makers once numbered Samuel Gompers, first president of the American Federation of Labor, among its members.

On Labor Day, the President signed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, which regulated all private pension plans and, to a much more limited extent, all private welfare plans.

To assure workers that pension promises will not be broken, pension plans were required to observe certain

funding standards to assure the payment of adequate contributions and to purchase termination insurance. The insurance, provided by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation headed by the Secretary of Labor, was to pay pensions up to \$750 a month if a plan terminated without sufficient funds to pay all of its nonforfeitable benefits.

A new Public Employee Department of the AFL-CIO was formed. It included 24 affiliated unions representing 2 million public employees, including those of the U.S. Postal Service. The 30-year-old Government Employees Council was merged with the new organization.

**1975** On January 2, the President signed the Trade Act of 1974. The Act was designed to help workers who lose their jobs because of imports, as well as to provide financial and technical assistance to companies and communities hurt by foreign competition. It provided displaced workers with up to 52 weeks of payments (78 weeks for workers 60 or older), and assistance in retraining, placement, and relocation.

About two-thirds of 3,000 physicians represented by the Committee of Interns and Residents struck 22 New York City hospitals for 3 days in March. Long working hours and other pressures associated with hospital training were at issue. A 2-year agreement with the League of Voluntary Hospitals achieved improvements in hours, working conditions, salaries, and fringe benefits. The walkout was backed by the American Medical Association, which said it was the first by interns and residents in the Nation's history, excepting minor "job actions."

The highest unemployment rates since 1941, reaching 9.2 percent in May, inspired considerable union criticism of administration policies. Heavy layoffs caused by declining auto sales resulted in depletion of Chrysler's supplementary unemployment fund in March, and that of General Motors in May. Financial crises of city governments in New York and other major cities forced service cutbacks and wide-spread layoffs of municipal employees.

Early in July, the Nation witnessed the first legal large-scale strike of State employees, involving more than 80,000 employees of the State of Pennsylvania. The majority, represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, reached agreement and returned to work within a week, partly as a result of court injunctions claiming danger to the public. Employees represented by the Pennsylvania Social Services Unions and the Pennsylvania Nurses Association reached agreement later in the month.

In August, California became the first State to enact legislation covering farm labor relations. Its Agricultural Relations Act provided for secret ballot representation elections and established machinery to resolve unfair labor practices complaints.

**1977** I.W. Abel retired as Steelworkers' president after reaching the mandatory retirement age of 68. He was succeeded by Lloyd McBride, who defeated Edward Sadlowski in a vigorously fought election. Auto Workers' president Leonard Woodcock,

65, also retired after reaching the union's mandatory retirement age. Douglas Fraser, 60, replaced Woodcock, who had held the post since 1970. Floyd R. Smith retired as chief of the International Association of Machinists and was succeeded by William W. Winpisinger.

On November 1, the President signed an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act, raising the minimum wage to \$2.65 an hour as of January 1, 1978, and to \$2.90, \$3.10, and \$3.25 as of January 1 of the following 3 years.

The United States officially withdrew from the International Labour Organization (ILO) on November 5 because of continuing dissatisfaction with the increasing political involvement of the United Nations agency.

**1978** One of the longest strikes in coal industry history ended with a March 24 agreement between the United Mine Workers (UMW) and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. The strike, which began December 6, 1977, was marked by internal union dissent, and terms agreed upon by UMW President

Arnold Miller twice were rejected, once by the union's bargaining council and once by UMW members. The latter rejection prompted President Carter to invoke the emergency dispute procedures of the Taft-Hartley Act, but many miners refused to obey the court order to return to work. The 3-year agreement provided for substantial wage increases, and significant improvements in health, retirement, and vacation benefits. Employers were permitted to establish incentive wage plans, subject to majority approval by local UMW members, but failed to retain language, negotiated in the agreement previously rejected by members, that would have allowed management to discipline leaders of "wildcat" strikes.

In June 1978, a Senate filibuster defeated the Labor Law Reform Bill, which was strongly supported by the Labor movement, and had been passed by the House of Representatives. The bill, designed to strengthen union organizing efforts and curb alleged employer abuses and violations of current laws, would have expanded the National Relations Board (NLRB) from 5 to 7 members, expedited union

elections, protected employees during union organizing campaigns, penalized employers for refusal to bargain in good faith, and prohibited issuance of government contracts to companies that willfully violated NLRB or Court orders.

There were three union mergers. The independent, 260,000-member Civil Service Employees Association in New York joined the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), bringing AFSCME membership to over 1 million. The 140,000-member Bakery and Confectionery Workers combined with the 32,000-member Tobacco Workers Union to form the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers International Union. The Sleeping Car Porters, founded in 1925 by civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph, voted to become a division of the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRASC). Drastic reductions in railway passenger service had reduced membership in the porter's union from a World War II peak of 12,000 to about 1,000.

An amendment to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, raising the compulsory retirement age for most workers from 65 to 70, and eliminating the age 70 mandatory retirement for Federal workers, became effective October 1, 1978, for Federal workers and 3 months later for most other workers in private and public industry.

In October, the President signed the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978, establishing, as a priority, reduction of unemployment to 4 percent over a 5-year period, with corollary goals of lowering inflation rates and Federal budget and foreign trade deficits, and maintaining economic growth. The act called for close coordination and periodic reviews of programs and policies of the President, Congress, the Federal Reserve System, and many other agencies at all government levels.

The President signed the Civil Service Reform Act on October 13. The changes constituted the most comprehensive reform of the rules governing the Federal work force since the passage of the Pendleton Act of 1883. Among the key features of the act were an independent appeals process, protection against abuse of the merit system, and incentives and rewards for good work and skilled management. A new agency, the Federal Labor Relations Authority, was to administer the Federal labor relations program and investigate unfair labor practices.

On October 24, the President, faced with continuing high levels of inflation, announced a plan calling on labor and management voluntarily to restrain compensation increases to 7 percent, and for management to exercise similar restraints on prices. The President said efforts also would be made to hold down increases in the Federal deficit.

# An Album of Secretaries of Labor



William B. Wilson  
March 6, 1913  
March 4, 1921



James J. Davis  
March 5, 1921  
Nov. 30, 1930





William N. Doak  
Dec. 9, 1930  
March 4, 1933



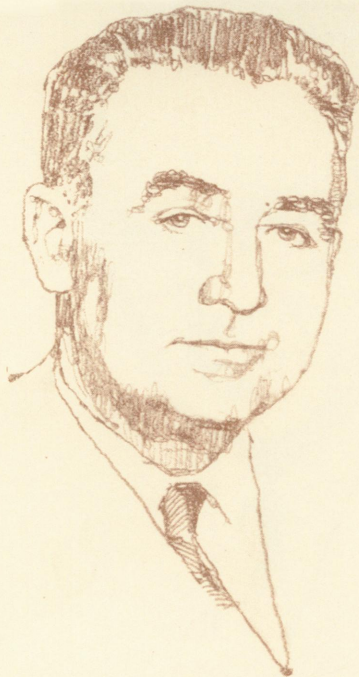
Frances Perkins  
March 4, 1933  
June 30, 1945



Lewis B. Schwellenbach  
July 1, 1945  
June 10, 1948  
(Died in office)



Maurice J. Tobin  
Aug. 13, 1948  
Jan. 20, 1953



Martin P. Durkin  
Jan. 21, 1953  
Sept. 10, 1953



James P. Mitchell  
Oct. 9, 1953  
Jan. 20, 1961





Arthur J. Goldberg  
Jan. 21, 1961  
Sept. 20, 1962



W. Willard Wirtz  
Sept. 25, 1962  
Jan. 20, 1969



George P. Shultz  
Jan. 22, 1969  
July 1, 1970



James D. Hodgeson  
July 2, 1970  
Feb. 1, 1973



Peter J. Brennan  
Feb. 2, 1973  
March 15, 1975



John T. Dunlop  
March 18, 1975  
Jan. 31, 1976





W. J. Usery, Jr.  
Feb. 10, 1976  
Jan. 20, 1977



Ray Marshall  
Jan. 27, 1977