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A Study of the Labor Philosophy of George M. Harrison, Grand President of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Union

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A STUDY OF THE LABOR PHILOSOPHY OF GEORGE M. HARRISON,
GRAND PRESIDENT OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF
RAILWAY CLERKS UNION

by

Donald Patrick Klein

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Institute of
Social and Industrial Relations of Loyola University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of
Industrial Relations

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the purpose of the thesis; profile of Harrison; the method used; the description of primary and secondary sources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. HARRISON'S VIEWS ON LABOR MOVEMENT OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow labor movement objectives--aspirations coincident to railway unions; Broad labor movement objectives--aspirations affecting the nation and aspirations affecting the international area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. HARRISON'S VIEWS ON MEANS OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic means--organization, collective bargaining, settlement of disputes, and job security; Political means--getting out the vote and partisanship--a third party.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. HARRISON'S VIEWS ON SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE LABOR MOVEMENT</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of government--in industrial relations, general areas and limitations; Role of management--conflict aspects and co-operation; Harrison's views on automation; Views on International Labor Organization; Views on Civil Rights and Views on Education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical review of Harrison's labor philosophy. Author's conclusions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the labor philosophy of George M. Harrison, Grand President of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks Union. It is the author's intention to explore those significant attitudes, beliefs, and opinions which form the overall intellectual conviction of Mr. Harrison in relation to the trade union movement in the United States.

This study of Mr. Harrison's labor movement philosophy will explore his viewpoint on union objectives, the means to obtain those objectives and other critical problem areas effecting the trade union movement.

This thesis is part of a joint research project undertaken by several members of the Graduate Institute of Social and Industrial Relations of Loyola University. The goal of the research project is to shed some new light on the relatively uninvestigated labor movement convictions of several significant American labor leaders. There have been few studies made of American labor leaders. To properly understand the real trends of the American trade union movement, an empirical study of the
basic trade union convictions of the significant American labor leaders was deemed helpful. Others have commented on the lack of knowledge which exists concerning American labor leaders. C. Wright Mills and Helen S. Dinerman have commented on this problem. "There have been only three or four studies of labor leaders. . . . We probably know more about the business executive and small businessman than about labor leaders in the large and small unions. We also understand more of the factors that enter into business decisions than we do those that enter into labor decisions."¹

Labor union leadership, like the unions themselves, has changed since the turn of the century. It has been shaped by the pressure of social, economic and political forces which have helped form modern corporative life and society as a whole.² A study of the labor philosophy of George M. Harrison must consider the varied socio-economic relationships facing the union leader of today. These relationships demand from the union leader a competency in a variety of executive skills. Labor leaders at the turn of the century undertook a far less complex set of responsibilities:


It must not be construed as criticism when we recognize frankly that the labor leaders of 1900 needed only a few qualifications that were, however, extremely important. First and foremost was physical courage and stamina, intelligence that could direct the physical courage, third, the psychological ability to win and hold leadership for groups of workers who had been rendered almost inarticulate by the injustices of the economic system. The ability to seek out the suppressed thoughts of the rank and file and translate them into spoken words was important.

The labor leader of today possesses some of the same basic characteristics that typified the leader of 1900. The ability to seek out the thoughts of the rank and file is certainly important in today's labor movement. Yet, successful leadership in the unions of today's labor movement demands more than physical courage and spellbinding ability. James B. Carey, President of the United Electrical Workers Union has said, "In addition to being an executive, the modern labor leader must in effect be an economist, a psychologist, a public relations expert, an editor, a sociologist, legislative analyst, a politician, a commentator on international affairs, and an analyst of domestic affairs in the fields of education, religion, agriculture, race relations, and a dozen other categories."

The author chose to investigate the labor philosophy of George M. Harrison for several reasons. He is the Grand President of the largest railway union in the country, the Railway Clerks. The union has a membership of approximately 300,000 men and women.

3Ibid., 487.
4Ibid., 488.
From his position as Grand President of the Railway Clerks, Harrison influences a significant sector of the American labor movement, the railroad brotherhoods. Another reason for choosing Mr. Harrison as subject for this thesis is that he has held various important union leadership positions since 1917 and it can be assumed that a study of his labor philosophy will point up the development of labor movement convictions and reveal a broad range of interests and participation in the trade union movement.

George M. Harrison's activities in the trade union movement reveal that he has been exposed to a wide variety of union and governmental responsibilities demanding an executive competency while providing maturing experiences.

A research review of George M. Harrison's activities from the time he was a local leader to his present position of influence in the labor movement indicates that Harrison has achieved a degree of competency in those skills listed by James Carey as essential to modern labor leaders.

PERSONAL PROFILE

Harrison started his union career at the local level, assuming a variety of union positions while establishing a reputation as a competent and articulate leader. Philip Ziegler, Secretary-Treasurer of the Railway Clerks Union commented on Harrison's early career in unionism. "George M. Harrison came from the ranks and like most successful labor leaders took his
preparatory work in leadership organizing, negotiating agreements, and handling grievances on the local level.⁵

Harrison became a General Chairman and from this position was elected Grand Vice-President of the Railway Clerks Union in 1922 by convention vote. In 1928, Harrison was elected Grand President of the Railway Clerks Union which at that time numbered 98,000 members.⁶ When he took the Presidency of his Union, the Clerks were experiencing difficulties. Philip Ziegler, in reviewing that period of union history states:

Harrison assumed leadership when the Brotherhood's state of health was low. Energetic, competent and fired with a conviction that the clerks could develop into a strong international union, he inspired competence in the officers and in the rank and file. He acquired a prodigious amount of information about wages and working conditions, he mastered the intricacies of railway finance, and revamped the Brotherhood's organizational structure. He proved an able, aggressive, but fair fighter for his organization and gained respect and admiration.⁷

The 'open shop' drive waged so fiercely by railroad management during the 1920's waned with the start of the 1930's and Roosevelt's administration.⁸ The Railway Clerks gained strength along

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⁶Ibid., 765.

⁷Ibid.

with other unions with the advent of the New Deal and the passing of legislation favorable to union organization and security. With his own strength increasing, Harrison assumed wider responsibilities and grew in stature among the executives of the railroad brotherhood. He was elected Chairman of the Railway Labor Executive Committee in 1934.\(^9\) The RLEA is the top policy making board among standard railway labor unions.

Harrison's stature also increased on the national political scene. He was appointed to President Roosevelt's Commission on industrial analysis in 1934. In this same year, Harrison helped to write amendments to the basic labor legislation for the railroad industry, the Railway Labor Act. In 1936, Harrison was the prime leader behind the Washington Job Protection Agreement which governs the rights of railway union men involved in mergers and liquidations of railway companies.\(^10\)

As a preview of a life-long interest in the international scene, Harrison went to Geneva, Switzerland in 1936 as an American delegate on the governing board of the International Labor Organization. In 1938 and 1939 he served as a member of the Railway Investigation Committee. In 1940 Harrison was a key figure on a

\(^9\) Ziegler, p. 766.

\(^{10}\) Ibid.
special governmental committee whose recommendations were the basis of the Transportation Act of 1940, which sought to correct the competitive ills existing in the transportation industry at that time.

Harrison's experience in top labor and governmental positions was used during World War II. He served on the Executive Committee of President Roosevelt's Management-Labor Commission in 1945. Harrison also served on a National Defense Mediation Board.

After the war, Harrison continued to assume wide responsibilities in the labor movement and government. He was the major witness before the House Interstate Commerce Committee hearing testimony on the union shop amendment to the Railway Labor Act. In 1948 Harrison was a member of the American Delegation to the International Transportation Workers meeting in Oslo, Norway. He took part in the founding of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in London in 1949. In the same year Harrison testified before a Congressional Committee holding hearings on the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Treaty.

12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., XLVIII, (January 1949), 21.
It was during 1949 that the Railway Clerks Magazine reprinted a statement by Victor Riesel in the US News and World Report. Riesel said, "Watch the Railway Clerks chief, George M. Harrison of Cincinnati. He's the closest labor friend President Truman has and has been meeting him secretly. George is becoming the real liaison between the AFL and the White House." In this same article in the Railway Clerks Magazine, was this comment of Riesel: "Mr. Truman's favorite labor leader is George M. Harrison, President of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks." 

Harrison's stature as a labor statesman was increased during the Korean war. In 1950 and 1951 he was a member of the United Labor Policy Committee. In 1952, Harrison was appointed to the 15 member advisory committee to Secretary of Labor Martin Durkin. During this same year, he accepted the position of Director of the Labor Division of the Democratic National Committee.

The American Arbitration Association elected him to its Board of Directors in 1953. Harrison continued his close association with the Democratic party by again serving as Director of the Labor Division of the Democratic National Committee in 1956. Harrison has been Co-Chairman of the AFL-CIO Ethical Practices

14 Ibid., 23.

15 Ibid.

16 George M. Harrison, United States Information Service Feature, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1957.).
Committee and a permanent member of the AFL-CIO Committees on Human Rights and International Relations.

Harrison's reputation as an articulate, highly capable labor leader and elder statesman of the American labor movement has been achieved with little controversy and only a small degree of publicity. When Harrison was appointed an alternate delegate to the United Nations, his hometown newspaper, the Cincinnati Inquirer commented, "The appointment is quite an honor for Mr. Harrison who heads the largest white-collar union in the world. He has been head of the 323,000 person union since he was 33. And although he avoids the spotlight, he has enjoyed considerable prestige in labor ranks. He also enjoys a clean record."

Harrison's integrity has won the respect of fellow labor leaders and management representatives. George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO, speaking at a testimonial dinner for Harrison said, "Through my personal association with George Harrison on the Executive Council of the AFL; I can testify to his calm judgment, his deep sense of loyalty to the American way of life. He has been the trusted confidant of Presidents. He has helped labor come of age. He has truly earned the title of Labor Statesman."

17 Ziegler, p. 768.


19 Ibid., LII, (August 1953), 4.
William Green, a former president of the AFL, lauded Harrison on an earlier occasion. "This is a happy occasion to speak of the leadership of your Grand President and my close personal friend and associate, George Harrison. The American Federation of Labor owes a debt of gratitude to the Railway Clerks for allowing us to have George Harrison even part of the time."

Management has praised Harrison also. Martin W. Clement, Chairman of the Board of the Pennsylvania Railroad told a gathering of the Railway Clerk members, "George Harrison is one of the country's really big men. He has been an advisor to Presidents, selected by government for important missions, respected by labor leaders and management, and he is looked up to by members of Congress."

Harrison's integrity has had its unusual aspects. An article in the Chicago Tribune on May 16, 1959 reported that George Harrison, at the Railway Clerks Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, turned over to his union $127,000.00 to which he was entitled as salary but never took. Harrison has been credited with a $76,000.00 annual salary since 1951 but thought it was too much and accepted only $60,000.00 annually.

This brief profile indicates the broad impact Harrison has had not only in the railway labor field, but also in the entire

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20 Ibid., XLIX, (January 1950), 2.
21 Ibid.
American labor movement and in government.

This thesis uses a special method in analysing Harrison's labor philosophy. This method is common to all theses in the group research project on the philosophy of American labor leaders. In the method, the term 'labor philosophy' is broken down into significant elements: Harrison's views on union goals, union means, and those critical problem areas influencing the labor movement such as the role of government, the role of management, automation, and etc. Under the major headings of union goals and means the author has researched the economic, political and social aspects of these topics.

The writer used for his major source of material the statements and writings of George M. Harrison from 1948 to 1959 inclusive. The primary source for this material was the bi-monthly official magazine of the Railway Clerks Union called The Railway Clerks Magazine. Primary source material was also found in the reprints of speeches given by Harrison and collected from the files of the Railway Clerks Union. Primary material was also found in magazine articles in the Catholic World and US News and World Report.

Primary source material was found in the convention records of the Railway Clerks Union. Books which were used for orientation on specific topics: The House of Labor, Labor in America, The New Men of Power, Industrial Conflict, and Unions, Management, and the Public.
CHAPTER II

HARRISON'S VIEWS ON LABOR MOVEMENT OBJECTIVES

To survey what George M. Harrison considers the legitimate objectives of the American labor movement this writer first undertook to establish the particular categories of legitimate labor objectives as they apply to Mr. Harrison's philosophy. Objectives for the labor movement can be considered as narrow and broad. Under the heading of narrow objectives would be those aspirations Harrison considers as legitimate for his own union and its members. These objectives can be considered from an economic, political and social frame of reference. Also under the heading of narrow labor movement objectives would be those aspirations considered coincident with other union members and the labor movement as a whole. These aspirations can also be considered in their economic, political and social aspects.

Under the term "broad" objectives this writer placed those labor goals which can be considered as affecting the entire country. In the economic, political and social areas. In addition, under broad objectives are also those labor movement goals in Mr. Harrison's labor philosophy which affect the international labor movement and the international economic, political and
1. NARROW LABOR MOVEMENT OBJECTIVES

A. ASPIRATIONS COINCIDENT TO RAILWAY UNIONS

Harrison is explicit in equating the railroad industry to the rest of American industry in seeking economic objectives for his union members. A veteran of the railway brotherhood's long fight to raise railway working conditions to equitable levels with the rest of American industry, Harrison reviewed several facets of this struggle and mentioned that inequities still exist. In a speech discussing railway problems Harrison said:

In the matter of working conditions, our problems are much more serious. The delays are longer. The forty-hour week became standard for American industry between 1933 and 1938. Non-operating railway employees did not win the forty hour week until 1949 and most operating employees are still to come to that level. Vacation and holiday privileges in other industries came much earlier than other workers. Many of the standard conditions prevailing in other industries are wholly absent in the railway industry. Others are only partly applied to our industry.¹

While the railroad brotherhood received early legislative help towards more stable collective bargaining procedures with the enactment of the Railway Labor Act in 1926, the railway worker has not been able to keep abreast of the rest of American labor in attaining economic objectives. This view is an important

bulwark in Harrison’s philosophy on the economic objectives of railway labor. He points out this lag again when he cites the right of railway union employes to keep pace with the rest of American labor in working conditions. In 1957, analyzing railway problems, Harrison said: "We are surely asking only the minimum of consideration when we advocate that our working and living conditions should not lag behind those of the rest of American labor."  

The railway brotherhoods with their long association with health and welfare measures stemming from their early history of benevolent association place a premium on economic objectives in the area of health and welfare. Harrison, intimately acquainted with the railway brotherhood history and sharing the traditional leaning of rail labor towards protection against illness lists health protection as a strong economic goal. Sufficient medical care not only to protect workers after illness has struck, but to prevent illness, is a prime labor goal, according to Harrison. He told his members:

Sickness strikes so many and with such frequency that protection against the expense of illness at present day costs is of greatest importance to wage and salary earners. And let us not forget the very important collateral benefit of better health when, instead of deferring needed medical and surgical attention as so many of our members have had to do because of the expense, they may now get the services

2 Ibid.
they need in time to prevent a serious illness, or to save a life. This is in truth a health and welfare plan.\(^3\)

Harrison favors a non-contributory type of medical plan and inciting his view on this matter in an article in his union magazine stated, "The protection we have provided our members against the expense of sickness and accident will, I believe be looked upon increasingly as one of the most beneficial things we have ever accomplished for our members, especially now that they have been relieved of any expense in maintaining the plan."\(^4\)

Retirement benefits have also been a prime railroad economic objective. As an important member of the labor committee which helped draft basic rail retirement legislation in the amended Railway Labor Act of 1934, Harrison is a firm believer in providing the security necessary to a life of comfortable retirement. He was quoted in his union magazine, "Harrison recommended that benefits be strengthened to a realistic level which permits retirement in comfortable circumstances."\(^5\)

In addition to his strong traditional leanings to an emphasis on retirement benefits, Harrison gives an indication that the fight for such benefits is deeply involved with his basic convictions for being associated with the trade union movement as a labor leader. Harrison, writing for the United States Information

\(^3\) Railway Clerks Magazine, LV, (January 1956), 9.

\(^4\) Ibid., 10.

\(^5\) Ibid., 20.
Service, stated, "When we fight for increased retirement benefits, it means security and reward for faithful service. These are the deep-down reasons why honest trade unionists can never quit trying to help those who need it most." 6

The railroad brotherhoods are craft unions. Craft unions have for the most part concerned themselves primarily with the task of seeking better working conditions for their members and with achieving constant wage increases. Harrison has inherited the craft union tendency to "bread and butter" unionism and his philosophy concerning the economic objectives legitimate for his union reflect this heritage particularly in the area of wages. Harrison keynotes his views on this area of economic objectives by reiterating the idea of Samuel Gompers. He told a Railway Clerks convention, "At the first opportunity, we'll go after more." 7

In Harrison's reasoning there is good cause to "go after more." He cites the principle of need. Living costs have placed a burden on the rail worker which must be lifted by higher wages. Harrison gave his reasoning to his workers on commenting on wage increases. "To know anything about the struggle that scores of thousands of our members have to go through to raise a family on

6 George M. Harrison, United States Information Service Feature, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1957).

the wages they get at today's living costs is to appreciate the importance of raising their wages. You can count on your brotherhood to continue to battle to bring your wages up to the levels that will enable you to enjoy higher standards of living, which you have every right to demand."8

Going beyond the principle of need, Harrison, a student of economics, cites another reason why the worker has a right to seek increased compensation through collective bargaining. He states that higher wages are deserved through increased productivity and that rail workers have a right to share in the increased benefits produced through technological progress. The Railway Clerks Magazine outlined Harrison's view and stated, "The Grand President put the full weight of our Brotherhood behind the effort to convince the Wage Stabilization Board of the desirability of including in its stabilization program provisions for compensating workers for their increased productivity. This is not a new demand on the part of railway labor. On the contrary, it is a traditional policy of these organizations to claim for the wage earner a fair share of the increased wealth produced by technological advances."9

8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
Harrison cites the lag in rail labor wage structures in comparison to the rest of American labor just as he did in speaking about comparative working conditions. Harrison compared wage differentials and noted deficiencies in the railway industry in shift premiums. He said, "Men and women in other industries are paid as much as 15% higher for night work, and differentials of 10% are quite common. But in the railway industry, as far as I know, there is not one single night shift differential of any amount." He reiterated his views on shift premiums for rail workers before a management group and said, "I am concerned, naturally enough, with the working conditions of our members. I believe that they are underpaid when they do not have second and third shift differentials, or when they are not paid for premium work."

This writer found no profitable statements of Harrison in the area of social and political objectives explicitly aimed at the clerks union or the railway labor section of the trade union movement. On this point it can be mentioned that Harrison, in speaking of political and social objectives linked rail labor with the entire trade union movement. He also considered social and political objectives primarily from a national or international frame of

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10 Harrison, *Railway Problems Today*.

reference. Social and political objectives in Harrison’s labor philosophy are therefore discussed in the following sections on labor movement objectives coincident with national or international aspirations.

B. ASPIRATIONS AFFECTING THE ENTIRE LABOR MOVEMENT

In reviewing collective bargaining objectives as they affect the trade union movement, Harrison expands on the narrow concept of 'bread and butter unionism' to include a broader goal. This goal would be that of citizenship in industry. Writing in his union magazine, Harrison stated, "The immediate objective sought at the bargaining table was the promotion of the well-being of the workers and its broader and more profound purpose was to provide a democratic force within industry to provide a fair division of funds of the joint efforts of workers and owners and the amicable settlement of their differences. In short, to establish for the workers citizenship in industry." 12

An important part of the worker's 'citizenship in industry' is the 'promotion of the well-being of the worker'. Harrison is more explicit on what he means by the well-being of the workers when he lists health and welfare benefits as legitimate objectives of American labor. Harrison outlined these objectives in an article in the Catholic World:

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Labor unions are placing more and more emphasis upon job security, relief from the impact of automation, old age security and disability, sickness and unemployment benefits. We feel these are of tremendous importance and some of the rights which should accrue to workers under our economic and political systems. Organized labor accepts those systems but it will diligently strive to bring to the working people their just share of the benefits produced by them.\(^{13}\)

A certain consistency is seen in Harrison's views on economic objectives. In his statements on legitimate objectives of railway labor, Harrison has said that rail labor must have comparable remuneration to that received by the rest of American labor. In giving his views on the objectives of the entire labor movement, Harrison states that wage earners in general should be compensated just as well as other segments in the American economy. He said, "Everyone sought to improve his living standards and wage earners deserve the same rights extended other groups in an expanding economy."\(^{14}\)

Harrison's theory on expanding wages for the entire labor movement is linked closely with the vital economic functions labor performs in the economy from other standpoints. First, according to Harrison, labor by its struggle to increase purchasing power through wages and thus achieve a higher standard of living has aided industry by providing a market for its goods. Secondly, by

\(^{13}\) George M. Harrison, Article in Catholic World, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1959).

increasing the product demand, labor as consumers forces management
to constantly devise more efficient methods to meet this demand and
increase profit ratios. Harrison has stated:

The demands of organized workers for a larger share of the
products of industry in the terms of wages, hours, and
working conditions and their insistence upon progressively
higher living standards has been a principle factor in
bringing about improvements of the productive process. As
the living standards of millions of wage and salary earners
has improved, the demand for goods and services has been so
great as to tax the ingenuity of the private enterpriser and
provide jobs for an increasing number of workers.15

It is industry's inability to understand the importance of
this link between increased wages and product demand that lies at
the root of American economic problems, Harrison believes. In his
Labor Day address of 1956 he stated, "To our mind that is the
really basic economic problem in this country today—the inability
of industry to understand that every dollar it pays in wages is
pumped back into the economic bloodstream. It is the millions of
American workers who are consumers who are the backbone of our
economy."16 In this same Labor Day address he stated his demands
for higher wages, again citing his reason that rising wages pro-
duce expanding markets. He told his radio audience, "We must
recognize that full production and higher living go hand in hand.
Unless our people have the means to buy what we produce, then
factories must close for lack of a market. Rising wages, on the

15 Ibid., LV, (February 1956), 8.

16 George M. Harrison, Labor Day Address, Railway Clerks Union
Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1959).
other hand, will provide expanding markets. Full employment and steady healthy growth of American business will then continue. Our economy's future depends upon these twins, mass production, and rising living standards. Each depends upon the other and we as a nation depend upon both of them.17

Harrison also does a historical comparison between the deep depression of 1930 and the recession of 1958 in pointing out the basic contribution labor has made recently through its collective bargaining strength of holding up the economy through the steadying influence of constant purchasing power. He stated, "Trade union strength and collective bargaining gains have given the nation a healthier economic structure. Unlike the reversals of the 20's and 30's, this recession did not lead to mass wage cutting. Because of our unions there have been wage increases throughout the downturn. These have helped to bolster purchasing power and have helped to keep personal income high."18

Harrison links wage improvements to the workers' increasing production and the contribution of labor to industry by product consumption. He told the Managing Editor's Association, "There are three points I would like to elaborate on...the first...is the worker's right to be paid more when he produces more."19

17 Ibid.
18 George M. Harrison, Address to British Trades Union Congress, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1958).
19 George M. Harrison, Address to Managing Editors Association Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1957).
Reiterating this point, Harrison told his YMCA audience, "The workers are entitled to their fair reward, and without undue hardships on the general front of technological progress." 

Diverting from the path of the traditional craft union leader and absorption in the narrow economic objectives of the labor movement, Harrison links more noble aspirations to traditional goals of better working conditions and higher wages. The mundane economic objectives sought at the bargaining table have meaning in relationship to the ennobling character of their end which is to make man live better, to develop as a person and a personality. In this area, Harrison would claim for the labor movement a part in the process of supporting the creative man, the union man and his fellow Americans. Speaking to a railway management group, Harrison stated, "We must realize that health and decency and learning are integral part of a progressive modern day world. Genius does not thrive on a crust of bread any more than you would thrive; the potentially great musician or painter who is underfed and the victim of disease is not going to write great music or paint great pictures. If they do not, it is not their loss as much as ours." Again stating this point, Harrison said,

20 George M. Harrison, Address to Railway YMCA, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1957).

21 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs of America.
"That is our job, your job and mine, to make it possible for the men and women in our industry to find freedom along the frontier of the mind. We must see to it that they are able to earn a good living, a secure living, a respectable living at a job which gives them some inward satisfaction." 22

Recognition of individual responsibility to integrity and the development of personal ethics absorbs Harrison when he speaks of social goals for the entire labor movement. He states:

It is up to us to develop in ourselves the things we urge upon others. . . the love of God, the recognition and encouragement of individual achievement; the development of human as well as the industrial side of our nation; the return to the teachings of our religions; the realization that man was not made to serve the things he creates, but that they were made to serve him; that we are our brother's keeper, and that we are all creatures of God. . . . These things we must do because the destiny of our country and that of humanity rests upon individuals, not nations, or companies, transportation systems, or unions. Like a bridge that stands on individual concrete piles driven into the bed of the river, our world can only be as strong as the individual human beings upon which it rests. 23

2. BROAD LABOR MOVEMENT OBJECTIVES

A. ASPIRATIONS AFFECTING THE NATION

To understand Harrison's philosophy on labor movement objectives which affect the national purpose and activities, it is necessary to comment on Harrison's interpretation of the term 'labor'. For Harrison, the term labor means more than an individual union or group of unions. Harrison, despite his craft union

22 Ibid.

23 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs of America.
background has imbued the spirit of "uplift unionism." He equates
the laboring men and women traditionally viewed by craft unionism
in a commodity sense, with society as a whole, with a broad sociological concept of societal relationships which transcend the narrow dynamics of traditional craft unionism and its philosophy of strict economic concerns. In his Labor Day radio address in 1955, Harrison said:

Labor is the public. The interests, the aims, and ideals of millions of individuals who make up the labor force are no more narrow than those of humanity as a whole. Labor asks no more than to bring its opinions to bear on public and private decision. Labor cannot be kept in its place. He who says that the minimum wage should not be improved advocates poverty for some; he who says labor should not bargain collectively advocates injury to economic freedom in America; he who disputes the right of labor to participate in political life disputes the essence of democracy.  

By transcending his traditional railroad brotherhood philosophy of narrow craft unionism, Harrison links economic realities to more profound philosophical concepts which include such national aspirations as individual freedom and economic opportunity for all. The basic processes of collective bargaining must reflect this societal notion of labor, Harrison believes. In speaking to his union members, Harrison stated, "The broad objectives of collective bargaining are to secure a more abundant life, to make our private enterprise system work; and to make democracy a living

According to Harrison, labor through its collective bargaining process, and management through its industrial enterprises must join national common good to the specialized economic goals normally sought. Speaking to the Railway YMCA's, Harrison pointed up this need in explicit terms. He said, "It has been my belief that all of us in industry, owners, workers, and managers, have an overriding responsibility to see that our industry never loses sight of its primary responsibility to serve our country."26

Again, on this point, Harrison links the economic objectives of the labor movement with a national pattern of aspirations. His address on Labor Day, 1958, shares a consistency in thought on this subject with his address to the YMCA association in 1955. He states, "We think it is economically and morally right and decent and honorable to win for American families a better standard of living... their share of the American dream of a better tomorrow."27

Harrison's view that the people as a nation could be served through the collective bargaining process and industrial enterprises is reiterated when he states, "We must always remember that the end purpose of industry is human satisfaction, human development. The battle is only half won when our scientists and inven-

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26 Harrison, Address to YMCA Railway.
27 Harrison, Labor Day Address, 1958.
tors have discovered or devised a product that will contribute to that end. It remains for the trained mind of management of industry to devise the methods whereby the product can be produced at a cost low enough to place it within the reach of the people generally. "28

Harrison firmly believes technological proficiency is not enough. The products of an efficient economy must be distributed broadly to raise living standards. In his Labor Day address of 1958 Harrison stated, "So far as the technical knowledge is concerned, there is no longer any necessity for anyone to be poorly clad or hungry, but in the face of all this knowledge there still remains one mystery, one great unsolved problem, namely, how can we distribute the products of industry so that all persons shall enjoy living standards of health and decency."29

In order to maintain the economic strength possessed by the American economy increased production is needed. Labor has a stake in the national economic objective of a healthy economy by the pressure it puts on management. Harrison stated, "It is this ever-increasing production which has made America great and, I repeat, it is due to the pressure put on management to be more efficient, pressure applied by workers through their trade unions."30

29 Harrison, Address to British Trades Union Congress.
30 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs of America.
Expansion is the vital link in the American economy, according to Harrison. In order to react strongly to any depressed period in the economic cycle, the economy must be geared to expansion. During the recession of 1958, Harrison spoke before the British Trades Union Congress. He stated, "We have emphasized that the key to recovery in the United States is expansion, not retraction or restriction. The theme of balanced economic growth is foremost in our consideration of current economic conditions in the United States."\(^{31}\)

To insure expansion and increased productivity, labor and management must use the technological tools at their disposal and use them wisely, according to Harrison. In this way, industry can serve the nation. Harrison stated this view to the Railway YMCA. "We have an overriding responsibility to see that our industry serves America. . . . We must be efficient; we must progress as technology becomes available, because after all, in our economic society, you can't have more unless you produce more."\(^{32}\)

Economic progress and expansion must be used to offset the serious problem of unemployment during recessed periods, according to Harrison. With consistency, he spoke out in 1955 and again in 1958 on the relationship between expanded markets, purchasing power and increased production and the goal of putting America

\(^{31}\)Harrison, \textit{Address to British Trades Union Congress}.

\(^{32}\)Harrison, \textit{Address to Railway YMCA}.
back to work. In 1955 Harrison stated, "Unemployment is a most serious factor in the 1955 economic outlook. We need to direct our efforts toward expansion of markets for the products of our farms and factories. Attention should be given to an increase in foreign trade and more purchasing power for working people."  

As America hit the recession of 1958, Harrison pointed up the need for a quickened economy to battle unemployment. He stated in his Labor Day Address, "Yes, on this Labor Day, 1958, there is no gainsaying the fact that the number one problem in this country is unemployment. Our major domestic job must be to achieve full employment and the full use of our productive capacity. For it does us no good at all to have the ability to produce great quantities of consumer goods, if the consumers haven't the money to buy the products that roll off the production lines." In this same speech, he commented wryly, "We are convinced that a people who possess the skill needed to discover the secret of atomic power can solve the problem of unemployment."  

Harrison cites specific national political objectives as vital to the labor movement. In his union magazine, he listed the following objectives, "Attention should be given to the need for, (1) increase in foreign trade, (2) tax relief for lower income
groups, (3) increase in unemployment benefits, (4) more purchasing power for working people, and (5) repeal of punitive and restrictive labor legislation."  

Beyond the need for specific national political goals, Harrison sees a broader task for the labor movement. This task involves the basic milieu in which political decisions are made and influenced. Because labor is the public and its goals are as broad and diversified as the collective national political aspirations, labor must act to influence the broad base of political life. Harrison gave this view to the Harvard Business Club in 1958, "Our first task is to create conditions of political stability and social responsibility. And by political stability, I mean the confidence of the people in their government as an instrument of service."  

In bringing his viewpoint to the rank and file of his union, Harrison mentioned labor's struggle to apply constitutional freedoms to the reality of the market place. He stated, "The Constitution of the United States means more to the working man perhaps than to any other part of the nation; but it took us decades of savage economic and political fighting to get that Constitution and its guarantees of human freedom applied within the mills and factories of this country."  

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38 Ibid.
Labor must be socially conscious, Harrison asserts. Because its influence has justification on the national economic and political spheres, so too the labor movement must be concerned with the broad social causes which shape and propell the national culture. Harrison sees the need for the labor movement to be concerned with social problems. History shows that labor has taken its responsibilities in this area seriously, Harrison states. He remarked briefly, "You will find that labor is concerned with the problems and future of society more than anyone else. It takes only a quick glance over the history of our country to note advances which can be traced directly to the House of Labor."39

B. ASPIRATIONS AFFECTING THE INTERNATIONAL AREA

The labor movement must exert its influence also in the area of foreign policy and international relations, Harrison believes. He states his reasons for labor participation in the international area and comments:

The strength of every democratic society depends upon the willingness and ability of its citizens to support it and accept its responsibilities. Our second convention undertook to encourage a greater interest, knowledge, and participation in international affairs among our members and their families to the end that the wage earner's great stake in our country's foreign policy and in the world peace and prosperity will be more clearly recognized and reflected in the formulation of that policy and its day to day implementation.40


40 Harrison, United States Information Service Feature.
Management and labor must look to the entire world and accept broad political responsibilities, Harrison asserts. "The future of our own people and of the entire world depends in large measure on how we look to the outside world. The ability of our American business and of American labor also to recognize and meet their social responsibility may well be the deciding factor in our world relationships."41

In working for peace the nations of the West must co-operate in socio-economic areas, Harrison states. He said, "...the democratic nations must move swiftly to pool our resources and step up our efforts in the military, economic, educational, scientific, and technical fields."42

Labor unions must use their resources to help the struggling workers of other nations achieve economic and political stability. Harrison noted, "The free trade unions of the more industrially developed countries can do much to help the workers of the recently established independent states. Ours is a humanitarian movement, dedicated to peace."43

American labor must help the underdeveloped nations achieve economic growth. Our greatness as a nation lies in supporting the

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41 Harrison, Address to British Trades Union Congress.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.
depressed countries of the world to economic prosperity, Harrison states. He said:

The road to national greatness today lies in promoting human well-being, freedom, social justice, and peace and friendship among all nations. This is our conviction. That is why we of the AFL-CIO have been insisting that the United States has a great responsibility for stimulating and sustaining increased international co-operating for the advancement of human well-being, especially by helping the less industrially developed nations provide their people with food, housing, education, health, and an increasing standard of living.44

By helping other nations to increased prosperity, this country proves the worth of its democratic institutions, in Harrison's view. He stated this conviction to the Harvard Business Club and said, "In our own interests we must convince the world that American democracy is genuine and devoted to the welfare of humanity. But because we are dedicated to human welfare, we must also use our wealth and our power to help the people of these new nations into higher living standards."45

In 1949 Harrison stated the need for international commitments on the part of American labor. In succinct terms he said, "The British and American labor movements must lead the way in doing more to aid the less fortunate people of the world. Peace will always be endangered until the problem of the underprivileged and half-starved is solved."46

44 Ibid.
45 Harrison, Address to Harvard Business Club.
In his philosophy on international political objectives Harrison is firm in the belief that American labor cannot be narrowly nationalistic in its political objectives. The realities of the international economic and political systems demand that labor keep informed and alert to the shifting trends in foreign affairs and actively co-operate on the international political scene. Harrison asserts the commitment of organized labor in the area of international politics when he says, "We in the labor movement have had a growing interest in international affairs, especially since the last war. Ours is an active and not an academic interest. The AFL-CIO believes that a democratic and an affluent America can survive and thrive in these perilous times if our nation has a sound foreign policy and pursues it with consistency and vigor."47

In his speech before the Foreign Policy Association, Harrison stated, "American labor has taken the stand that foreign and domestic policy are organically bound up with each other. . . . American labor has always insisted that our nation must pursue sound democratic policies within our own land in order to be able to win the confidence and support of people abroad in our country's foreign policy."48

47 George M. Harrison, Address to the Foreign Policy Association, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1958).

48 Ibid.
Democracy must win and hold friends abroad to survive, Harrison believes. In order to accomplish this, every citizen must be concerned with developments in problems affecting the international scene:

Today foreign policy is the greatest concern to every citizen, since the present crisis involves the gravest threat to democracy throughout the world. As free trade unionists, our outlook is humanitarian and, therefore, as international as the human race itself. As free trade unionists, we are particularly concerned, since the very existence of the free labor movement depends upon the outcome of this crisis. Without democracy there can be no free trade unions. 49

Organized labor must fight the threat of international Communism through its own participation in solving the economic and political problems made more complex by the exploitation of any crisis by Communism. Economic areas must receive attention internationally in this fight. In a report written for distribution by the United States Information Service, Harrison said, "Until the working people everywhere are made to feel that they will share the benefits of improved economies in their own countries, they have no incentive to work for much needed production. In such economic improvement which helps the worker improve his freedom and dignity, Harrison sees the best answer to Communistic effort at subversion." 50


50 Harrison, U. S. Information Service Feature.
Economic freedom is essential in the present struggle to win friends for democracy. Workers around the world must feel the influence of American organized labor, Harrison believes. On this point he comments, "We are doing our best to help bring economic and political freedom to workers all over the world. That is essential to the peace of the world. The fight against Communist totalitarianism cannot be won on the battlefield alone. In the last analysis the fight for human freedom and decency will be won in the factories and on the farms." 51

While strengthening foreign economies and contributing to the development of economic freedom, American labor must make sure that its own country is an example of sound learning and progressive socio-economic programs. Harrison asserted that "...an economy of abundance is necessary in the fight against Communism which feeds on poverty and exploitation. Thus, it doesn't make sense when a farmer's acreage is idled under soil conservation and farm production is curtailed—particularly with millions in this country and hundreds of millions the world over in need." 52

A healthy democracy can point the way in the struggle against Communism by providing an example of a better life. The American economy must be such that it benefits all stratas of society and


52 Ibid., LV, (February 1956), 8.
shows constant expansion. In the dynamics of international political struggle, Harrison believes a sound U. S. economy is a prime political tool. He states:

We can show by example that the democratic way of life is the better way. We can demonstrate that the improvement of living standards and the raising of the status of the working people is the controlling objective of our national life. We can go on from our already high standards to a life of abundance using our skills and our resources to banish poverty and want. By constantly improving our civilization, we can prove that ours is a successful, permanent way of living and not the transitory, decadent, doomed society that is being pictured by Communist propaganda.53

While American labor must turn its attention to the task of making democracy work it must not be hindered by laws which shackle the union organization. On this point, Harrison stated, "We oppose dictatorship of any kind. We believe in democracy and we believe it should serve the needs of the people. The best guarantee against the spread of Communism is to make democracy work and this cannot be done by making second class citizens of the people who belong to trade unions as Senator Taft has tried to do through the Taft-Hartley Act. Through the enactment of equitable, forward-looking labor legislation labor could effectively discharge the responsibilities it has to the welfare of the people."54

53 Ibid., LI, (June 1952), 3.

54 Ibid., LXIX, (June 1949), 7.
After strengthening its own economy, the U.S. must support those organizations abroad which are fighting Communist tyranny. In an address written for publication overseas, Harrison stated, "We reaffirmed our full support to the further strengthening and development of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, its services and its influence. . . . American labor will spare no effort to make the ICFTU stronger in its fight against all forms of political dictatorship and tyranny and in the positive work of extending democracy in political life and on the job."\(^5\)

The United Nations must be strengthened as an instrument of peace. Labor is pledged to this end, Harrison states, "Our last convention demanded that our government do its utmost to strengthen and extend the influence and effectiveness of the United Nations as a force for peace and human progress in the world."\(^6\)

The United States labor's political objectives include international goals which touch controversial areas. Harrison lists disarmament as one of these objectives in a speech before the British Trades Union Congress:

We of American labor have urged that through the UN or other diplomatic channels, there be set up effective international machinery of inspection, supervision, and enforcement to assure the gradual elimination of all atomic and conventional weapons of mass destruction. . . . Let us hope that the

\(^5\)Ibid., LVII, (June 1958), 10.

\(^6\)Harrison, Address to British Trades Union Congress.
proposal of your government and mine for a one-year suspension of military nuclear tests will hasten an accord by the big powers for systematic reduction of all armaments, and the maintenance of lasting peace. 57

The free world must turn its attention to the national aspirations of its colonial peoples. Unionism should become a bulwark for democracy in the young independent nations of the world, Harrison states, "It should be our objective to hasten the day when all colonial peoples shall have attained their national independence. The period preceding the date of independence should be utilized for building free trade unions and other democratic institutions, promoting self-government, and fostering economic development for the good of the people and not for a privileged few." 58

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

HARRISON'S VIEWS ON MEANS OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Harrison comments on the variety of means accessible to the labor movement in attaining these objectives. The writer has divided the means category into two major divisions, economic and political. Under the major division of economic means would fall such topics as organization, which include the abuse of organization such as corruption and racketeering, collective bargaining, the settlement of disputes which includes the areas of strikes and arbitration, and job security. Political means would include Harrison's views on political structures such as a labor party, partisan labor support for one party, and topics including political education, contributions, voting and labor legislation.

1. ECONOMIC MEANS

A. ORGANIZATION

The union organization in its strength and weakness is the prime tool with which the union leader shapes his course of labor movement activities. The philosophy of a union leader in this key issue of union organization and the processes of organizing is of paramount importance in forming a total view of any specific labor leader's philosophy. George M. Harrison is the leader of a rail-
road brotherhood, a craft union, the Railway Clerks. While it is true that the Clerk's union encompasses more than merely railroad clerks, ticket agents, and baggage room personnel, the union strongly follows the craft principle of emphasis on constant organizing, the policing of the jurisdictional areas given to the union, and the jealous guarding of the old line local lodges, the core strength areas in any railroad brotherhood.

To achieve union strength from the local lodge through the national executive council, Harrison believes firmly in the union shop provision in the railway union contract. He first cites the broader example of national society to cite the need for union shop. He states, "Non-member 'free riders' who now enjoy the full benefits of wage increases and improved working conditions obtained for them by railway unions, would assume their obligations in the labor community exactly as our democratic society requires them to support schools, government and the progress of the communities in which they live."¹

Important adjuncts to the democratic principle behind union shop provisions are the more self-centered reasons of binding the union together, providing some sanction for union rules and in giving positive support to the cause of industrial peace.

¹ Railway Clerks Magazine, XLIX, (July 1950), 1.
Harrison comments on the policing aspects of the union shop provision and its beneficial effects on management when he states:

Unions require union shop because it would give them the disciplinary power necessary to guarantee fulfillment of contracts. In the absence of disciplinary power against the individual employees which the union shop gives the union is seriously handicapped in preventing unauthorized work stoppages, poor workmanship, lack of efficiency and other conduct which is the frequent source of management complaints.

To strengthen this argument, Harrison uses this reasoning, "As proven in other industries, there are many additional reasons why inclusion of the union shop provision in collective bargaining agreements offers the best avenue to improved labor relations and industrial peace within the railway industry." 3

The union shop also lessens the cost of bargaining for the labor organizations and gives them added power in seeking contract improvements, Harrison states. "The union shop brings other members into the organization to help share the cost of bargaining for benefits enjoyed by all employees. It increases the bargaining power of our organizations to improve their conditions, to protect our gains, and to concentrate upon more labor harmony within our industry." 3

Commenting on management attempts to enact anti-union shop

\(^2\text{Ibid.}, \text{(May 1950), 2.}\)
\(^3\text{Ibid.}, \text{(July 1950), 1.}\)
\(^4\text{Ibid.}, \text{LI, (January 1951), 3.}\)
laws, Harrison states these attempts are really attacks on union organization. He claims that management does not have the working man's interest in mind when it works to enact "right to work" law. He said, "With amazing effrontery these management representatives profess to be trying to protect the individual American working man against his union. They claim to be fighting for his "right to work". I am reminded of the employer representatives in our old society who were ready to fight for the right of the working man to work long hours for starvation wages."

A well-run union organization with devoted leadership and an active, interested membership are essential to the progress of the labor movement Harrison believes. In order to stay strong, to provide the mechanism to carry out union programs, the rank and file membership must be active and knowledgeable. Harrison stated his convictions in this area:

The individual union must depend upon active membership support. The continued progress of our Brotherhood depends upon increased rank and file interest in the problems which affect our organization. Leadership alone cannot accomplish the job. A doctrine of unity and strength is derived from the members. I am talking about the interest shown and the work volunteered for the local lodges, boards of adjustment and every field activity which represents our Brotherhood. Progress is not achieved by throwing the bulk of such work upon a few willing shoulders.

5 Harrison, Address to Harvard Business Club.

6 Railway Clerks Magazine, L, (September 1951), 2.
The union must rely on the local membership to implement the progress planned during convention time. Harrison urges his members to take an active part in union work when he says, "The objectives of the Brotherhood, framed at the convention, can only be made effective by their application, and the democratic principles of our organization can only be upheld by the efforts of every member to work seriously at doing things which a majority of his fellow members have considered to be the best road toward strength and future accomplishments for our Brotherhood."  

Union conventions are important facets in union progress, Harrison asserts. Speaking to his membership, Harrison stated this belief.

Conventions are truly the Congress of our Brotherhood, for it is here that laws are enacted which vitally affect the welfare of each individual member. It is here that policies are determined which govern the ability of the brotherhood to progress toward better conditions for our members. In this same Congress, convention delegates are entrusted with guiding a four-year period, and decisions must be surrounded with a deep sense of responsibility for building our organization into a more effective agency for the advancement of each individual member.

In addition to cementing the programmatic approach of union leadership to the realities of local problems an active rank and file serves as a deterrent to labor racketeering. Harrison, a

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member of the AFL-CIO Committee on Ethical Practices is adamant on this subject. The Railway Clerk magazine reported, "The Grand President urged members to participate fully in Railway Clerk affairs to eliminate any chance of improper individuals infiltrating our organization." 9

In giving his views on the shortcomings of organization, i.e. labor racketeering and labor's existing undesirable elements, Harrison states his philosophy in simple terms. "I have always boasted that ours is a good clean union and that is the way it is going to continue, and, I believe in the long run other unions will find that the best policy because the time is shorter than he thinks for the union leader who indulges in shoddy deals." 10

In commenting on labor's past troubles with racketeers and dishonest officials, Harrison states, "We were caught with a lot of dirty faces, a lot of sticky fingers, and a lot of full pockets which we cannot excuse. Just because a man does a good job for the members of his union is no reason for him to tap the till. There is no more excuse for him than for any banker or churchman who would do the same thing." 11

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9Ibid., LVII, (February 1958), 5.

10Ibid., (April, 1958), 4.

11Ibid.
Harrison identifies the ethics of the labor movement with those of society as a whole. He states, "People want labor to have a standard of ethics separate from and superior to the rest of society. I don't think we can do it because labor is a part of society." Harrison points this out again in commenting on the McClellan Committee disclosures. He told newsmen:

I think the manner in which the disclosures of irregular practices in some few labor unions was handled by the Senate Investigating Committee and the press has emphasized the bad practices. Undoubtedly the entire labor movement has been hurt by these disclosures. I think what has been revealed in the labor movement as a result of the McClellan Investigation is symptomatic of a general deterioration in ethical standards among all groups in our country. The labor movement is no different from what you would find in any cross-section of our society. The searchlight is on us, that's the reason the labor situation is emphasized. If similar searchlights were placed on other groups you would find similar, if not worse, conditions.

Harrison also believes that other groups should adopt their own systems of ethical codes. Again he feels that labor must be identified with society and seen as a part of it. He stated, "I think it would profit the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce and other bodies of businessmen if they would follow the lead of labor and pass ethical practice codes for their own members."

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12 Ibid., 5.
13 Ibid., (January 1958), 19.
14 Harrison, Address to Managing Editor's Association.
Harrison believes that labor must recognize its shortcomings, its inadequacies in the area of corruption, and labor racketeering. Yet, he believes that the labor movement must not be singled out and indicted in vague generalities and vast assumptions. The labor movement must be judged fairly, honestly, with no weighted arguments by national news media. In his talk to the Managing Editor's Association, Harrison gave his views on the reporting of stories about union racketeering. He said, "I am not going into the whole field of labor news down through the years. You can probably guess that I don't think we've had a fair shake. And that, incidentally, is all we ever ask, a fair shake. We don't believe that stories about crooked men in the labor field should be buried in the back of the newspaper. We believe that they should be printed and that they should be given prominence."\(^{15}\)

It is Harrison's belief that the merger of the AFL and CIO strengthened the entire labor movement. He gave his views on the merger and said, "I look forward with renewed confidence to the future because of the strengthening of the entire labor movement by the AFL-CIO merger. This development came at a most opportune time."\(^{16}\) Harrison's own union benefits by the merger, he states. "I believe, moreover, that our Brotherhood will be strengthened by the merger of the two federations, thus increasing its use-

\(^{15}\)Ibid.

fulness in advancing the interests of its own members." The merger was timely and will help labor to work on common tasks. Harris stated, "The merger of forces came at the right moment. While it is true that the 20 years apart from each other spurred both the AFL and CIO to great organizational efforts, it is also true that the time is now come when the ranks of labor must close so that all their energies can be used for common tasks."

The merger will strengthen industrial relations harmony, Harrison states. And he comments that while helpful the merger is not the total solution to labor's problems. "Yet, even with a united and strengthened labor movement, there is no pat solution to labor's problems, or any easy road to achieving labor's goals. There is no miracle cure for labor's problems, benefits can only be gained by work and the application of basic trade union principles." Again Harrison commented, "In many ways the merger was an unavoidable act of faith. The merger of the AFL-CIO was not a solution of problems confronting labor organizations but may in effect become a method by which problems can be solved. The key factor in the whole thing is the willingness of people to adjust."

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17 Ibid., 8.
18 Ibid., (December 1956), 16.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., (March 1956), 4.
B. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Harrison, who rose from the ranks to union leadership during the formative stages of the American labor movement's emergence as an economic and political power structure is imbued with a sense of historical perspective in viewing the collective bargaining processes. He has seen abuses in working conditions and wages. He has seen improvements in the contract provisions. Yet, like most labor leaders, he has a share of pragmatism and skepticism in his make-up. In a sense, Harrison and many other labor leaders nervously glance back to early beginnings, see the fight for recognition and growth through collective bargaining. He has said, "American labor knows far better than American business the evils of dictatorship and domination and the benefits of freedom and democracy. We know, because in the not too distant past American workers were denied industrial and economic freedom. They lived under the power of some petty despots and dictators in American industry. American labor will fight against that kind of oppression in this country as vigorously as it has fought to rid other spots where it still exists."\footnote{Ibid., L, (November 1951), 3.}

In this same vein of thought, Harrison believes that the unity of strength shown by union members through the collective bargaining processes can overcome management resistance. He
states, "Working people have won progress over the resistance of business and industry only by pooling their collective strength to say, "This is what we want and this is what we've got to have." 22

The collective bargaining process is more than a means for channeling economic gains to the workers. Collective bargaining, when functioning properly, can extend the bounds of the usual union management relationship and have this relationship embrace broader and more ennobling characteristics. Harrison states, "The broad objectives of collective bargaining are to secure a more abundant life; to make our private enterprise system work; and to make democracy a living reality." 23 Harrison, in a Labor Day address also stated, "The working man does not gain his full measure of freedom until he joins an effective union." 24 And he also stated, "He who says labor should not bargain collectively advocates injury to economic freedom in America." 25

Harrison believes the collective bargaining process is a tool to be used for union defense and for settling disputes. On the first point, he is explicit in stating, "The labor movement has

22 Ibid., L, (February 1951), 6.
23 Ibid., XLVII, (April 1948), 189.
developed collective bargaining as the only effective and democratic method of preventing abuses in employment practices.\textsuperscript{26} Unions and management can settle differences at the bargaining table, Harrison believes. He said, "I have confidence in the ability of railway management and their employes to work out their own differences. Disagreements have seldom prevented the parties from meeting at the bargaining table."\textsuperscript{27}

Harrison believes that free collective bargaining must be relied upon as a prime method for industrial peace although adjustment boards are satisfactory for settling interpretations of the agreements. Harrison states, "In 1934, we said that so long as we were free to bargain collectively with the aid of government machinery, to arrive at a bargain on wages and working conditions, the making of a contract, we would agree to have that semi-quasi-judicial board set up for the purpose of settling disputes between parties over the interpretation or application of agreements."\textsuperscript{28}

Union shop is an essential requisite of collective bargaining, Harrison feels. To insure that all employes are represented in the bargaining process, union shop must be secured. Harrison

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., XLIX, (September 1950), 5.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
stated:

I think it is in the interest of industrial peace that when collective bargaining is established, and the bargaining procedures are invoked, that all employees who are going to benefit by the bargaining processes should have the opportunity to express their views about demands and conditions. Unless these minorities are compelled to join the unions that have the bargaining rights, then they shirk their responsibility to exercise their influence in the processes of our industrial democracy.29

Collective bargaining is deeply involved in the wage-price spiral controversy. By seeking wages through bargaining, some persons feel labor incites inflationary trends. Harrison does not think so and states, "Inflation is usually due to a shortage of goods, but no such shortage now exists. Big business apparently feels that the way to curb inflation is to hold down wages rather than reduce prices in a time of plentiful supply."30 During the recession year of 1958, Harrison was asked if labor should hold the line on wage demands. He said, "I don't think there is any need for freezing wages."31

C. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

If the collective bargaining process breaks down, labor has the right to strike to achieve its demands, Harrison believes. He states, "Under free enterprise there is an absolute right to

29 Ibid., LVII, (January 1958), 17.
30 Ibid., (February 1958), 5.
31 Ibid., (January 1958), 16.
strike. Laws which force a man to work against his will oppose the force of human nature and incite pressures which will explode in labor warfare. Strike-bound railways should not be permitted to earn profits while operated by the government for public interest. Harrison is explicit in his own convictions that the worker can strike when he says, "I take the position that it is certainly morally wrong and a great prostitution of our great democratic Constitution to compel a human being to work against his will for private industry and private profit."

There are exceptions to the working man's right to strike, Harrison states. He says, "I understand that certain government functions must be carried on, and when you render these services, you forego the right to strike against the government."

When industrial peace is threatened, Harrison does not believe that compulsory arbitration is the answer to settling disputes. He states, "Compulsory arbitration to determine wages and fix conditions of employment for labor will inevitably compel the extension of arbitrary control to production, prices, markets and profits."

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32 Ibid., XLIX, (June 1950), 1.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 2.
35 Ibid.
In one sentence, Harrison gives his total view of compulsory arbitration. "Compulsory arbitration would be the first step toward dictatorship."  

D. JOB SECURITY

Job security is a necessary means to economic progress in Harrison's philosophy. He asserts, "But the work of the Brotherhood is not confined to these great nationwide movements to improve your wages and working conditions. It constantly stands guard and goes into action when your rights and the rules of your working agreement are denied you. It safeguards your job and provides you with a degree of economic security you would not otherwise enjoy." When Harrison was asked where the labor movement was placing its program emphasis, he stated, "Labor unions are placing more and more emphasis upon job security...."

Harrison is adamant on the point of protecting his members' jobs against attacks by management. He states, "If you get what you want we wouldn't have any agreements in the industry.... Collective bargaining is to be carried on in the industry without interference by management. We have actual cases of abuse. There is a human problem involved here. You cannot kick people around. Now the carriers have the unmitigated gall to come in here and ask

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36Ibid., LVII, (January 1958), 16.
37Ibid., LV, (January 1956), 2.
38Harrison, Article in the Catholic World.
this board to give them authority to make work subject to the collective labor agreement and give it to those people they took outside the agreement in violation of the law."39

The labor contract is the working man's link to economic life and livelihood. A man's job is the most important single facet of his economic well-being. If this point is understood, unionism can be better understood, Harrison believes.

You will understand union organization better and you will approach closer to an understanding of the appeal of the Communists if you keep in mind the fact that everything geared to the working man ultimately depends upon what happens on his job. The food, clothing, and shelter of his family, the education of his children, the security against unfair discharge, against sickness, against old age dependence--all these things are determined in his paycheck and in the agreement between his union and his employer.40

2. POLITICAL MEANS

Harrison also brings historical perspective to labor's political participation and his philosophy concerning political means. He expresses the fear that labor's achievements in wages and working conditions might be taken away, except for political vigilance. He states:

We in America speak proudly of our free labor, of our great labor organizations, and of the high living standards and respected place we have won in the wage earners' of the nation. But you will not understand even our own labor unions and their programs unless you realize that the freedom we have


40 Ibid., L. (November 1951), 3.
today has been gained only by bitter and sometimes violent struggle. Our wages, our working conditions and our union influence have been so recently won that we not only remember the conditions from which we rose, but we also have a real fear that these things may be taken from us.41

To keep the labor movement moving forward, Harrison believes it must rely on political participation. Union members must realize its importance, Harrison states emphatically, "You have to be politically active so that labor's political enemies won't put you out of business."42 Harrison also states in making his point for political influence, "The average working man today who is so foolish as to believe he does not need to supplement his economic power as a member of a labor union with his political power is just kidding himself and living in a fool's paradise."43

A. GETTING OUT THE VOTE

Getting the union men to vote is an important task, according to Harrison. This labor political means must be used both to achieve labor's political objectives and to protect labor's economic gains. Harrison states, "Our goal is to get the greatest possible number of our members, their families and friends to register and cast their ballots on election day for those who will support our interests in the legislative halls of the nation."44

41 Ibid.
43 Ibid., L, (June 1951), 2.
44 Ibid., LV, (February 1956), 17.
He again speaks out on the need for getting out the vote when he says, "All labor families should bring home the facts and vote." He enlists the support of his women members and says, "Women when they are organized can accomplish much more than men in securing legislation needed to safeguard and improve the economic conditions of families." 46

In order to effectively use its vote, the labor movement must be made aware of the importance of the political struggle, Harrison believes. He stated, "The development among union members of an awareness of the great influence politics has on the struggle to improve their living standards is more important than ever before." 47 Political education is important in achieving labor's political objectives, Harrison feels. He said, "We all know it is an election year, but some of our folks need reminding of the importance of the issues involved. Every trade unionist should acquaint himself with the issues and realize how the forthcoming national elections would affect his own welfare. We're not partisans, except in matters which endanger our opportunity to seek improvements for our members and progress for our Brotherhood." 48

46 Ibid., (February 1956), 15.
48 Ibid., (February 1956), 8.
Those in politics must be made aware of labor's concern over this vital area, Harrison believes. This will take a long, concerted program by labor. Harrison stated, "You've got to start developing from the grass roots up, a much overworked phrase, but there's wisdom in it. You have got to find your friends in political life and cultivate them and, yes, nurse them along. You have got to make them understand that this is not a hit and run situation for the union. We're in the business of politics to stay—for the duration." 49

In the area of political contributions, Harrison states that labor's campaigns are of a voluntary nature. He said, "We ask our members to contribute voluntarily to funds which we use to help candidates who hold political and economic views that are much the same as those held by the labor unions." 50

B. PARTISANSHIP -- A THIRD PARTY

Harrison is explicit in stating that labor is, must be, non-partisan. He delivered this point home to his membership when he said, "This does not mean that the labor movement should become beholden to any political party. It does mean, however, that the development among union members of an awareness of the great influence politics has on the struggle to improve their living standards

49 Ibid., (March 1956), 5.
50 Ibid., LVII, (January 1958), 17.
is more important than ever before. We must not be fooled by warnings of disaster to the labor movement by too much emphasis on politics...they are for the most part fearful of labor's growing influence in the field of politics."\textsuperscript{51} Harrison, himself, is non-partisan in principle but a Democrat in practice. This point will be mentioned again in those paragraphs which show Harrison's Democratic leanings.\textsuperscript{7}

Harrison also answers those who fear that labor is heading in the direction of a third party or even a labor party. The trade union movement has no such goal in mind, according to Harrison. Talk of a labor party is propaganda aimed at injuring the labor movement, stated Harrison:

Organized labor has no desire to control government notwithstanding such propaganda from some anti-labor groups. Let me nail these misrepresentations of labor at the outset. In this country organized labor is committed without reservation to the support of our democratic institutions and private enterprise. But we also feel that democracy must always serve the best interests of all the people. The very purpose of democratic government is to afford the people a means of solving economic and social problems they cannot cope with as individuals.\textsuperscript{52}

While labor is not working towards a labor party, the trade union movement does have a sense of purpose in its political activity. Its objectives, according to Harrison, are to ". . . get

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., (February 1958), 9.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., XLIX, (April 1950), 2.
people into state and public office who will sense the public interest instead of the special interests. The trade union movement is a non-partisan movement, historically and politically, with no purpose but to serve the best interests of our country."  

Harrison expands on his conviction that labor is forced by economic realities to elect representatives who are fair in their dealings with the working man, those representatives who recognize the rights of labor. In outlining this view, Harrison stated,  

Organized labor has no political axes to grind; no selfish interests to serve. It wants no special privileges for the trade union movement and the hundred and sixty million men and women it serves. Organized labor's sole objective is to see representatives elected to Congress who will deal fairly with working people; who will safeguard their legitimate rights in the enactment of laws dealing with industrial relations and labor and social problems -- representatives who believe that the protection of the legitimate rights of labor and the advancement of the general welfare is the highway to better living, better industrial relations, and the strengthening of our democratic form of government.

Labor must elect representatives who are working for the public interest, Harrison states. "Labor must get people into state and public office who will sense the public interest instead of the special interests. The trade union movement is a non-partisan movement historically and politically with no purpose but to serve the best interests of our country."  

53 Ibid., LV, (July 1956), 7.  
54 Ibid., XLIX, (September 1950), 3.  
55 Ibid., LV, (June 1956), 7.
While labor is non-partisan, according to Harrison, it does favor Democratic Party principles and lean heavily on Democratic support. Harrison has stated, "...while labor political action has been carried out on a non-partisan basis in the last 25 years, we have endorsed more Democrats than Republicans because there were more liberals among the Democrats." More pointedly, Harrison made use of the possessive pronoun in speaking of the Democratic party. He said, "All people who felt the need for security against unemployment and dependent old age supported the Democratic party because they knew our party was the friend of these social justice measures." It is to the Democratic party that Harrison looks for political aid in achieving labor's objectives. He stated, "The Democratic party must reaffirm the principles of the New and Fair Deals by having the government assume its dynamic responsibility to assist all the people to achieve economic growth which is now made possible by new science and skills and to see that there is an equitable part in that progress for labor." As Chairman of the Labor Division of the Democratic National Committee, Harrison again sought help for labor. "Brother Harrison suggested and the platform pledged the party to 'immediate revival of the basic housing program enacted

57 Ibid., XLVIII, (June 1959), 361.
58 Ibid., LV, (September 1956), 6.
by the Democratic Congress in 1949." Harrison's non-partisan pose slipped when he said, "The job in 1950 will be more difficult than it was in 1948 when we had a Presidential election. The Republicans hope that we Democrats will go as many of us did in 1946 when they gained control of the 80th Congress."  

While associating closely with the Democratic party, Harrison attacks the Republicans for their reaction and prejudice against labor. He said, "While the great program of social reform launched by the great President, the late Franklin Delano Roosevelt was arrested by World War II there was no reason to believe that the people were again willing to entrust their welfare to the economic royalists and their political hatchet men in the Republican party." More pointedly, he listed Republican neglect of the farmer and small businessman, saying, "The GOP has neglected the farmer and small businessman. Farm incomes have dropped and small business failures are high. The Republicans have failed to adopt the necessary tax measures, and to provide other aids required to bring these sectors of the economy back to economic health. They fail to realize that when farm income dips, the wage earners prosperity is soon affected; when small business fails, the consumer soon suffers."  

59 Ibid.  
60 Ibid., XLVIII, (June 1949), 361.  
61 Ibid.  
62 Ibid., LV, (September 1956), 6.
In the area of Federal legislation, Harrison comments on specific areas. On the filing of financial reports for unions he stated, "Railway labor does not oppose reporting and filing financial reports to insure honest and competent administration, but it does ask that reporting requirements be kept simple so that they do not become too expensive, particularly for local unions." Management should be included in corrective legislation Harrison asserts. He told a Senate Investigating Committee, "You cannot justifiably make this legislation a one-way street. If it is wrong for the union official to accept a bribe, it is equally wrong for an employer representative to give it." 

Labor itself on an organized basis is a political means in the fight against Communism, according to Harrison. He said, "Most of you recognize that labor is the pivotal force in the world-wide struggle against Communism. The Communists can neither capture nor hold power in any country without first controlling workers through their labor unions. So long as the workers of a country have the right to organize and join democratic trade unions, Communists cannot destroy their economy by establishing permanent martial law or slave labor camps." Harrison cites this same view in an article written for distribution overseas. "The

63 Ibid., LVII, (June 1958), 3.
64 Ibid., 4.
65 Ibid., L, (November 1951), 3.
Communists like to talk of their trade unions. Actually these puppet outfits are pooled on the basis of their value as political pawns. The Commies don't want a strong labor movement dedicated to the improvement of wages and working conditions. They prefer to keep workers in sub-standard conditions as a way to bolster their false promises and thus sell out the worker's interest for political advantage."

International free trade union organizations are a strong means in promoting democracy and fighting Communism, Harrison states. He cites the work of the Transportation Workers Federation. "So long as we have an International Transport Workers Federation, I have no fear that the Communists are going to capture control of the great trade unions in the transportation field because they know how to fight the Communists."
CHAPTER IV

HARRISON'S VIEWS ON SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Harrison's views on several significant problem areas confronting the trade union movement are an integral part of his overall labor philosophy. Harrison's convictions in these areas indicate the importance he attaches to these several problems.

VIEWS ON THE AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM

In several other sections of this thesis, this writer has introduced statements by Harrison on the American economic system. The sections on labor objectives and means touched indirectly on the free enterprise system when expressing Harrison's views on economic objectives and economic and political means. Harrison has definite beliefs in the area of the economic system. Labor is committed to the economic system as it is known today in its formal structure. A traditionalist in his philosophy of preserving the economic free enterprise system, Harrison reveals his craft union, AFL background in commenting on labor's commitment to the structure status quo. Job conscious rather than class conscious, American labor has a vital stake in preserving free democratic economic institutions, Harrison believes. He
told his members, "Our Brotherhood is dedicated to American Democracy, the protection of our free institutions and the promotion of the dignity of man. We are opposed to Communism, Fascism, and all other totalitarian forces. We believe that free men and free industrial competition are the strength of our society."

Speaking as an AFL leader, rather than a Vice President of the merged AFL-CIO, Harrison reiterated his opinions on labor's support to industrial competition in a free enterprise system. He pledged the AFL in 1951 to the fight against all types of totalitarianism. He stated, "The AFL believes in Democracy on the job, in the Community, in the nation and in the world. We are opposed to totalitarianism in all its forms, whether from the right or from the left. The AFL wants continuance of the American Competitive free enterprise system."

The labor movement is not a passive economic structure in the development of free enterprise or capitalism. It has ebbed and flowed, developed and propelled with the system as much as the management structure and political forces. Labor has, in more recent decades, bolstered the system by its economic


2 Ibid., L, (November 1951), 4.
activities. A labor movement committed to the competitive free enterprise system contributes to that system in relationship to its own economic strength, Harrison believes. When labor is achieving results from a job conscious approach to collective bargaining, there is no tendency to class appeal in activity. In addition, by operating actively within the framework of present marginal utility processes, labor causes management to be more efficient, to meet rising labor costs, and to increase productivity. Harrison stated, "We might say that Capitalism has been saved by the strong trades union movement in this country, because unions have done two things; first, they have secured a more equitable portion of the national product for the workers; second, by pushing up wages they have forced management to operate more efficiently, to create labor-saving devices, to produce more and more."3

1. ROLE OF GOVERNMENT
A. IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Government has a direct relationship to the industrial relations activities of unions and management. This has been particularly true since the New Deal era and the legislative programs of the Thirties. Since labor has developed as an economic

3 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs of America.
and political power structure, government has approached the industrial relations area with a new frame of reference. This frame of reference is dependent upon various non-governmental factors such as the state of the economy, the world structure, and public opinion. An important influencing factor is the administration of government, whether it is Republican or Democratic. The traditional animosities and alliances reflect themselves in national politics and legislative programs. Harrison is keenly aware of the influence government has exerted on the development of the American labor movement. He is also an advocate of Democratic principles coincident to New Deal activities. Yet, Harrison strongly opposes government intervention in the internal processes of industrial relations. He states, "The greatest problem of railway labor and railway management alike is government regulation." He emphasizes this in commenting on the efforts of rail management to seek government in settling disputes. Harrison states, "Some rail managements appear willing to sacrifice their industrial freedom in exchange for compulsion which could not be limited to labor alone."

Harrison is explicit in his opposition to government meddling

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4 Harrison, Railway Problems Today.

5 Railway Clerks Magazine, XLIX, (September 1950), 5.
in the internal affairs of unions, "I am opposed to the intervention of all government in the internal affairs of our unions. I don't think it has any more need to intervene in the affairs and processes of elections of local, national, and international officials than it has need to intervene in the elections of the officials of any of our other private organizations or any of our corporate organizations." Harrison cites specific reasons for keeping government out of the industrial relations area. He remarks, "There are four basic reasons the government should not depart from the long established policy of not meddling with the internal affairs of unions. (1) There is no proven need for the legislation. (2) The courts are already equipped to deal with the wrongdoing. (3) The proposals actually would create undemocratic conditions in unions. (4) None of the bills require pursuit of relief available within the unions." Harrison specifically states that union elections should be free of government control. Meddling will disrupt the orderly affairs of the unions, he asserts. Harrison's union magazine quoted him in an article, "He spoke against proposed government interference with union elections, particularly rail unions which Harrison proved had

6 Ibid., LVII, (January 1958), 17.
7 Ibid., (June 1958), 4.
democratic procedures. He said that the proposals would be a
weapon in the hands of an organized minority which would completely frustrate by constant harassment the orderly affairs of a union.

When government interferes needlessly, it aids those employers who are allied against the union movement, Harrison feels. He said, "The government embarking upon the job of writing the union constitutions would simply put a club in the hands of employers with which they may effectively destroy a union."9

Management is using the government as a scapegoat in some rail disputes, Harrison stated. He remarks, "Railway owners want to put the government in the position of being responsible for contract changes. It was not because of the inability of railway unions to bargain that there is frequent government intervention in rail disputes because 95% of all grievances are settled by direct negotiations with the companies."10

B. GENERAL AREAS

Harrison believes that the government should strike a balance in its activities in the American economy. He states, "Present legislation maintains a delicate balance of the interests of the carriers, the employees, and the public. We see no reason why this well-balanced and successful system should be disturbed."11

8 Ibid., 5.
9 Ibid., (January 1958), 16.
10 Ibid., 18.
While maintaining a delicate balance between the various groups in our economic system the government should, according to Harrison, perform certain activities to meet its responsibilities. Harrison lists these activities:

The Federal Government can do a good deal about these problems. It can act to meet some of the great unfilled needs of our times. It can build some of the schools we need, and the highways and hospitals and homes. It can overhaul the Federal Government tax structure so that there is more money in the hands of the consuming public and less in the hands of those interests who already have far more than they need. And there are other ways in which the Federal Government could act to increase consumer income and consumer purchasing power and thus achieve greater sales, more jobs, and higher profits in this country. The Government could, for example, improve unemployment insurance payments to those unfortunate enough to have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. It can increase railroad retirement benefits to assist the aged to meet the increase in the cost of living. The Federal Government could also increase the minimum wage which stands at a ridiculously low figure of one dollar an hour, and it could extend the coverage of this law to the millions of workers now denied its protection. The Federal Government could increase its expenditures for national defense.

"Government is to provide help in those areas, however, which are beyond the capacities of individual persons or groups. He states, "We also feel that democracy must always serve the best interests of all the people. The very purpose of democratic government is to afford the people a means of solving economic and social problems they cannot cope with as individuals."

12 Ibid.

By allying himself with the political sphere of the Democratic party, Harrison leans in the direction of direct government action on a broad social scale. He urged the Democrats to, "Reaffirm the principles of the New and Fair Deals by having the government assume its dynamic responsibility to assist all the people to achieve economic growth which is now made possible by new science and skills, and to see that there is an equitable participation in that progress." Harrison reiterates the need for direct government action in various problem areas when he states, "Government must be alert to the needs of specific economic sectors which need the stimulus of government action to maintain a competitive balance and economic prosperity. I do believe that if we can get a fair and realistic application of the present laws to the railway industry without regard to what effect it may have on our competition, it will be a great help to us. And then, with some additional sympathetic understanding by the legislative, administrative, and executive branches of the government of some of our peculiar problems, we ought to be in good shape."

One of the problem areas needing government action is the railway passenger business, according to Harrison. He comments on this need. "I believe that service should be maintained, if necessary, through some sort of government aid."

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14 Ibid., LV, (September 1956), 6.
15 Harrison, Address to Railway YMCA.
16 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs of America.
Because of the need for railway passenger service in the country, its problems should receive government attention and not be left to the whims of management. Harrison commented, "Perhaps the time has passed when passenger service is merely something for the convenience of the people, maybe it is necessary to their survival. In that event, I believe that service should be maintained if necessary, through some sort of government aid. I do not think its survival should be left up to the capriciousness of management." 17

Government must act to spur a lagging economy, Harrison feels. He favors direct government action to alleviate any recession in the economy. He states, "Serious depression was avoided partly because of the social legislation better known as 'built-in stabilizers' enacted during the New Deal-Fair Deal days of President Roosevelt and Truman." 18 He states this view again when he says, "Some legislation for improving built-in stabilizers and expanding construction and public works has been enacted. While far from adequate, these efforts have helped the economy. Organized labor welcomes these policy changes." 19

Harrison comments on government action in the area of foreign trade. He states, "There are only two alternatives to opening up

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17 George M. Harrison, Address to Railway Purchasers and Stores, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1957).
18 Harrison, Address to British Trades Union Congress.
19 Ibid.
trade channels to normal and unfettered flow of goods. One is for our government to bargain its way into foreign markets, commodity by commodity, and country by country with all transactions carried on by the government."

C. LIMITATIONS

Government has limitations on its activities in the general areas of the economy, Harrison states. Government must not usurp the functions of private enterprise under the guise of exercising its responsibilities to the common good. Harrison states his argument against government competition to private enterprise. When the government suggested change in parcel post procedures, Harrison remarked, "In our opinion it is ruthless when government by the operation of an agency can drive private business to the wall. Private enterprise is the backbone of our entire economic structure. It is private enterprise of the employees of private enterprise who pay the taxes to support and maintain government. It is therefore incumbent upon government to foster private enterprise and to protect it from unwarranted subsidized competition within its power to do so." Government should be fair in its economic actions, Harrison asserts. He states, "Standing as we do for private free enterprise, we are opposed to government

20 George M. Harrison, Address to the Central Railway Club of Buffalo, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1957).

21 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs of America.
operation of the railroads and to subsidies and special favors to any mode of transportation." 22

There have been times when the government did not act to balance the conflicting forces in the economy. Harrison accuses the Republican government of being partisan to business. He states, "The government permitted businessmen to practically fix their own prices. As things stand now, the office of Price Stabilization is being administered by representatives of Republican business in the practical formation of price orders. By contrast, while letting prices soar, the administration sought to freeze and regiment wages. That was what could be expected when the government turns over the handling of wages and prices to representatives of big business. Such a situation is economically unsound, politically unwise, and morally indefensible." 23

2. ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

A. CONFLICT ASPECTS

Harrison's views on the role of management in industrial relations include the conviction that management has responsibilities because of its key position in the economy. These responsibilities are as broad as the areas of management influence, which touches on our total society, according to Harrison. He states:


The term 'management' to me is not confined to those officials and supervisors whose authority is limited to specific, immediate decisions. Management means to me here those men who are responsible for the broad decisions of industrial policy and who derive their authority from the ownership of industrial, commercial, or financial resources. As I look at management in our new society, then I measure it by all the needs and the standards of these American working men and women, and particularly by their needs as American citizens.24

Because of its privileges, management must meet certain responsibilities, Harrison feels. He states, "Those privileges and the whole legal framework by which we protect the property rights of businessmen place upon them the responsibility of serving the needs of the American people."25

Management, labor and the consumer are dependent upon each other, Harrison believes, and must co-operate. He says, "We need management, management needs workers, and we both need consumers. Unfortunately, he added, not all company officials agree with labor's ability to help fulfill those needs."26

Management and labor must co-operate to reduce conflicts, Harrison believes. In answer to a question on how industrial conflicts can be reduced, Harrison stated:

There continues to be a basic hostility by a substantial segment of employers against trade unions; even though they tolerate unions, the greater portion do not really want to deal with them. There can be no great improvement in the

24 Harrison, Address to Harvard Business Club.
25 Ibid.
26 Harrison, Article in the Catholic World.
relations between labor and management until both sides recognize and accept the rights of each other to exist, to live, and to operate. Such a realization must be attained by both employers and labor before they can sit down together and work out their many common problems for the benefits of workers and employers alike.27

Harrison strikes a note of discontent at certain management attitudes which have been carried over from the bitter era of early labor-management relations:

Old employer attitudes have in fact survived into the new era and the new society. That is not to say that all employers are so primitive in their attitudes. Many of them do recognize their obligation to deal fairly with consumers, with their competitors, and with their employees. But the tone of business activity is still too often set by the management representative who refuses to recognize his obligation to support democratic and humane practices in industry. This survival of old attitudes into our new era is now highly dangerous. We are now concerned, vitally concerned, with what is happening outside of the United States. The future of our own people and of the entire world depends in a large measure upon how we look to the outside world. The ability of American business, and of American labor also, to recognize and meet their social responsibility may well be the deciding factor in our world relationships.28

Harrison also urges honesty in bargaining in his statement, "I am dumbfounded that the carriers could come in here and try to bar these notices. What we need is a little good faith in bargaining and more effort to carry out the agreements we make."29

Management has not acted wisely in promoting the railroad

28 Harrison, Address to the Harvard Business Club.
industry, Harrison comments. He attacks archaic thinking on the part of industry executives working on the rail passenger problem. "The railroad industry has many disadvantages working against it. They run all the way from unfair competition from other forms of transportation to inept and unimaginative management, intent on holding on to the past rather than fighting for the future."\textsuperscript{30}

And again he says, "Our industry built a great mass of good will during the war, but it has all but evaporated through management's failure to keep pace with public taste and through the policy of abolishing service rather than providing it."\textsuperscript{31}

It is particularly in the area of passenger service where management has been insincere and inept, according to Harrison. He states, "Speaking of management, I have noticed lately that they are now busy issuing statements that they are investigating and developing new methods of serving passengers. They vow that they are interested in the passenger service and what to keep it. This is merely camouflage to shield them against the criticism of the public, legislators and newspapers for the callous manner in which they have massacred passenger service over the past several years."\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{31} George Harrison, Address to Railway Purchasers and Stores.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
B. COOPERATION

Labor and management must co-operate to achieve economic goals which are means to attain the social objectives needed by society. Harrison cited this need for co-operation on several occasions. In 1948, he commented, "If industry will halt its warfare on unions, if it will stop its efforts to weaken the labor movement by its repressive laws, and labor is free to balance purchasing power with our productive resources, the extreme fluctuations of our business cycle can be eliminated, suffering and hardship of the people can be prevented, and private enterprise and our democratic form of government can be made secure." 33 Further expressing this need for co-operation between management and labor Harrison said, "The development of more wholesome and more co-operative relationships between workers through their unions and those who own and manage industry would strengthen both our systems of private enterprise and democratic government to meet the challenge of Communism." 34

Speaking to a management group, Harrison stressed co-operative efforts in working for a better world. He said:

We here can do our small part in making a better world by pledging to make the transportation industry a model of employer-employe relationships. I do not mean only as far as management and unions are concerned in the everyday doing of the job....It is your job to appreciate the wonderful

34 Ibid.
your employees are doing for you, to give them that needed pat on the back when things are a trifle rough, the reassurance that they are doing a good job. Give them the time and the opportunity and confidence in the future so that they can enjoy life.35

Unions must return management co-operation with serious efforts of their own to achieve industrial peace. The relationships is a give and take, dynamic one. Harrison commented on the efforts of his own union to help management fulfill its tasks. He stated, "We have also co-operated with railway management to improve efficiency, to secure better workmanship and to provide improved services to railway customers."36

HARRISON'S VIEWS ON AUTOMATION

Harrison is keenly aware of the impact of automation and new technology on the industrial relations scene and of its critical importance to organized labor. His views on automation reflect a broad humanitarian approach he exhibits in the general field of labor relations and his conviction that labor and management have social responsibilities which transcend private interests. Harrison does not oppose the introduction of labor-saving techniques, rather he advances a humane program of introduction and operation. He states:

35 Harrison, Address to Associated Traffic Clubs.

I am not opposed to the introduction of automation in the railway industry but workers adversely affected should be treated fairly. Wherever possible, workers should be adequately trained to operate the new equipment and be paid in accordance with their newly acquired skills. Those workers who are permanently dislocated by the introduction of automation are entitled to reasonable consideration on such matters as severance pay and supplemental unemployment benefits, reimbursement for any loss in the sale of homes or obligations under leases, expenses occasioned by transfer of residence to another city, and the continuance of coverage of employees and their dependents under the health and welfare agreements. All of these matters, must be subject to collective bargaining, preferably in the form of a national agreement which would set down the procedure and terms for the protection of employees affected by automation.37

Harrison believes that management neglects the human problem in automation. He states, "It is this direct adverse effect upon faithful employees that concerns the employes, and consequently concerns the Brotherhood. Many employees who are left totally unemployed because of the introduction of the new machinery, are too young to retire and too old to obtain other jobs because of the unrealistic maximum age hiring restrictions enforced by many railroads and other industries."38 And again Harrison states, "It is this human problem that the railroads generally fail to appreciate and frequently endeavor to ignore when making the transition to mechanized operations. Previous skills are made obsolete, and seniority standings and opportunities for employ-

37 Ibid., (September 1957), 4.
38 Ibid., (August 1957), 12.
Railway labor has a right to share in the progress of automation. Increased production from automated devices should bring higher living standards, Harrison believes. He states his views emphatically:

I believe that the railroad industry is entitled to progress with the most modern means and methods of technology that are available, and, at the same time, I think that in introducing these progressive and better methods all the elements that have a claim upon the industry have a right to share in the progress that is made. The workers are entitled to their fair reward and without undue hardships on the general front of technological progress. Management is entitled to a fair return for the services they render in the way of adequate and generous compensation. . . . I believe that all this can be done in the most modern railroad transportation plant that is available to us if we take advantage of these opportunities.

Harrison shows his concern for those persons displaced by new automated devices. He states that management must respect the rights of these employes for some degree of human consideration. "Harrison urged the railroads to adopt the most modern techniques and equipment possible, but warned that progress also included a greater concern for the welfare of employes than railway management has displayed in the past."41

The union is a protective device for its members facing the

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39 Ibid.
40 Harrison, Address to Railway YMCA.
adverse effects of automation, Harrison believes. He said, "Automation, while making railroads more competitive, will result in some displacement of employees. It will be during this period that workers will learn the real value of their union membership. We do not believe that we can fight progress, but we certainly intend to do all that we can to see that progress is regulated to the extent that none of our members will suffer."42

Specialized protective clauses have been written into some railway labor agreements. Harrison comments on this point, "Fortunately we have been able to minimize the effects of the displacement upon members of our union because, along with other railway labor organizations, we had the foresight to negotiate the Washington Job Protection Agreement with the nation's railroads almost 20 years ago. That agreement protects displaced personnel in many ways. Among its most important provisions are seniority rights for re-employment, moving expenses where offices are consolidated and as much as a year's dismissal pay."43

Harrison is definite in his views on how automation should be introduced to the railroad industry. He believes that the Railway Clerks Union should be consulted when management is planning the introduction of automation. He states, "Just as soon as

42Harrison, Railway Problems Today.
43Ibid.
the carrier has determined upon the installation of new machines the Brotherhood should be notified immediately, giving full particulars regarding the work to be mechanized by the new machine and the number of employes and positions to be affected. After that the carrier and the Brotherhood immediately should begin planning for the transition from old work methods to the new machine methods. 44

Harrison believes that the union should have a part in planning automation operations. He states:

We want to be advised about when machines will be installed and what employes are to be affected and such other changes in the work procedures that will affect the employes jobs. The operation of these machines calls for a lot of advance planning. This involves computer applications—methods, coding, flow charting, etc.—and the conversion from former methods to new methods by putting the work into machine language. 45

Harrison feels that present employes should be trained for automated work in consideration of the labor agreement. He comments, "It is more economical and efficient for the carrier to train its own employes for computer application work. That way, the railroad can meet its obligations under the union agreement respecting the rights and interests of the affected employes." 46

45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
To relieve employes from the adverse effects of automation, unions and management should arrange conferences at an early stage in automation planning so that employes will be informed of any change in their job status. He states, "Conferences should be held, therefore, with employe representatives at the earliest possible stage in order that employes may be apprised of possible adverse effects, enabling them to plan their personal affairs and obligations to meet in this change." 47 Seniority rights must be respected, Harrison believes. He says, "The selection of personnel to man and operate the machines must be consistent with the obligations of the parties under the Labor agreement. It must consider, among other things, seniority rights." 48 Again on seniority rights, Harrison states, "We recognize, as do the carriers, that skills will be required which are different from those required in the past. It is likewise recognized that employes can develop such skills only through training and experience; therefore, the employes having the fitness and ability to absorb the training and take the assignment to the new type of positions should have preference in seniority order." 49

Forced reductions due to automation should come only from resignations and retirements, in other words, natural attrition.

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
Harrison states. He remarks, "In order to cushion the impact of the change from the old to the new machine method it is our position that reductions in force should be only that brought about by natural attrition--resignations, retirements, etc." Management has not always acted with due regard for its employees in the past, Harrison states. "Railroads generally have ignored the rights of employees and have moved unilaterally in the 'programming,' organizing and executing of its mechanization plans. Generally they have hired people from outside the industry, sent them to school and trained them in computer application procedures. In the main, carriers have resorted to the employment of outsiders to take over the work of conversion to mechanization, not only denying the employees covered by the agreements the right to perform the work, so coveted, but forcing them out of the industry by such methods." 

VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Harrison feels the work of the International Labor Organization and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions is of paramount importance to organized labor in the countries of the free world. These international organizations bind free labor

50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
together in a program of improving living standards throughout the world, and in fighting against political and economic tyranny, specifically that generated by the Communists. Harrison states, "American labor will spare no effort to make the ICFTU stronger in its fight against all forms of political dictatorship and tyranny and in the positive work of extending democracy in political life and on the job." 52

The ICFTU is doing a good job in fighting for democracy throughout the world, Harrison states. He says, "The ICFTU movement may very well be the best guarantee of peace, freedom, and social justice in the world." 53 The international organizations provide a sounding board for diverse ideas and a meeting ground on which to build democratic labor organizations. Commenting on this phase of labor co-operation, Harrison states, "The ICFTU is a place where ideas can be exchanged and advice obtained in a spirit of helpfulness. No opinions are forced upon anyone in the participating unions in such a world. We have too much respect for your rights. . . . our interests are centered on a sincere desire to help each other and without compulsion to realize that each of us have an obligation to help our neighbors because we are sons of God." 54

52 Harrison, United States Information Service Feature.
53 Harrison, Address to the British Trades Union Congress.
Harrison believes that government should co-operate with organized labor in the international problems so important to both. He states, "The ICFTU holds promise of becoming an effective instrument for co-operation among European free trade unionists. Workers must improve their economic plight through strong labor unions, and give up the idea that European governments can assist them until well organized labor becomes a cohesive force." Harrison reiterates this view on government co-operation with international labor when he says, "Because we of American labor believe that the world should not continue half-impoverished and half-prosperous, our convention decided that our government should promote economic co-operation and free trade with safeguards looking toward the establishment of an international system of fair labor standards and minimizing possible economic dislocations and hardship. Solidarity with the ICFTU permeates our international outlook."

Management also has the chance to participate on the international scene in co-operation with labor. Harrison feels that management has a significant contribution to make through the International Labor Organization. He states:

Work through the ILO gives management in the United States a chance to support U.S. foreign policy, to demonstrate to the world its part in America's achievement of higher living standards and to help influence social and economic evolution in other countries. One international labor organization provides management with a direct voice and

56 Harrison, Address to British Trades Union Congress.
representation in international affairs: the International Labor Organization. If American companies were to make experts available for work through the ILO it could be a means of bringing American experience and therefore American ideas into the development of countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.  

**VIEWS ON CIVIL RIGHTS**

Harrison is explicit on another critical issue affecting the American labor movement, that of civil rights and justice for racial minorities. Harrison's views are plain in support of the idea that organized labor must provide equal opportunity for the Negro. He stated in testifying on the union shop provision amendment to the Railway Labor Act before a Senate committee:

President Harrison stated emphatically that the union shop would protect Negroes. He told the Senate committee that the Railway Clerks long ago opened the door to Negroes but that he understood four rail unions bar Negroes now. He predicted that with time and education this prohibition would be abolished. Moreover, he declared the union shop bill protects the jobs of Negroes through a stiff clause providing that no union shop agreement may be made which requires union membership as a condition of employment with respect to employees to whom membership was not available on the same terms and conditions as are generally applicable to any other member.  

Harrison said he was, "...in full sympathy with the aims of the Negro unionist..." in trying to improve their positions through union participation.  

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57 Ibid.  
58 Ibid., XLIX, (May 1950), 2.  
59 Ibid., (June 1950), 3.
Express Company brought this statement from Harrison, "The Railway Express Company has always discriminated against the Negro in the South. It would not give the Negro seniority rights and paid them substandard rates. We aim to straighten out these problems." 60

Problems of a racial nature occupied Harrison in a speech before the special UN committee investigating Apartheid in South Africa. Turning his attention to the problem of equal opportunity for the Negro minority group in American unions and American society, Harrison stated:

Many of our unions in the United States which have discriminated against non-whites have completely removed all restrictions and their organizations now consist of multi-racial memberships with equality of membership privileges. There are many non-white trade union officials. Our skilled trades are open to the members of all races and they are employed without discrimination or restriction. This advancement is based on the recognition of the majority of our citizens that our nation is genuinely enriched in all aspects of life when we take advantage of an increasing contribution by our non-white millions in the activities of our society. Policies of racial separation breed discontent and non-co-operation, thus weakening the total effort any enlightened society must make to meet its responsibilities in a democratic civilization. 61

Harrison states his view that a society composed of heterogeneous elements cannot be segregated. He states, "It is our belief that a multi-racial and multi-religious society cannot be based on segregation or separation. The history of the United

60 Ibid., LIII, (February 1954), 21.

States proclaims its opposition to concepts based on segregation. In our view, men of all races and religions are the product of a common creation. 62

Harrison recognizes that the task of promoting human rights is a difficult one. He urges patience and sacrifice to achieve social justice. "The effort has continued and will continue for there are no easy solutions, no shortcuts, in promoting human rights. In differing ways this struggle for an increasing measure of justice in the relations among men involves us all. It is our universal task, progress will only come through patience, forbearance and sacrifice. Our problems should give all of us a sense of humility and added responsibility." 63 Narrowing his perspective from the UN to the United States, Harrison states:

We in the United States are especially aware of the problems that arise from the transition of economically and socially disparate groups into a community. We are actively engaged in the complex process of eliminating racial segregation and we are learning that the adjustments are difficult. They sometimes lead to resistance and even violence. Nevertheless, there can be no question as to the direction in which we are moving. Despite the problems involved, we will continue in this direction. To do otherwise would be to disregard our national ideals and way of life. 64

While the task of improving human rights has been and is difficult, progress has been made, according to Harrison. He told

62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
the UN committee of his own experiences and observations in the United States:

In my lifetime, I have seen a revolution in human relationships in my own country. I witnessed tremendous changes in the direction of recognizing inherent rights and human dignity of all our citizens. There was a time when one part of our nation suffered under a complex of racial inferiority with consequent discrimination from another part. Today we find the members of our racial groups holding political office, practising in our professions, and enjoying the same political and economic opportunity. In my time I have seen the United States trade union movement take a firm stand that all its member organizations should eliminate every vestige of racial discrimination. We will soon enjoy that objective.65

VIEWS ON EDUCATION

Consistent with Harrison's views that labor has intellectual, social and moral commitments which cross the entire scope of society, is his belief that labor must be active in the educative process, must exert its influence in promoting a better understanding of the labor movement by and through the country's schools and universities. Harrison states:

The trade union movement of the United States has had an ever-growing interest in the educational system of our country. For over a century the trade unions have been among the foremost proponents of expanding the educational opportunities of our whole population and of free, compulsory universal education. Since those early beginnings, the principle of free education for all has received such wide acceptance that it is now taken for granted by all segments of the population, and in all areas of the nation. The trade union movement is proud of the part it has had in this development.66

65 Ibid.

66 George M. Harrison, Address at Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina for Dedication of Building, Railway Clerks Union Reprint, (Cincinnati, 1956).
Harrison believes that the universities can help the economy by turning their attention to some of the unsolved economic problems. Harrison lists distribution of economic goods as one of these problems. "The solution of this problem of distribution is the challenge of the second half of the 20th century, and an increased emphasis must be given to its study. It is in this field too, that we must look to the universities for leadership. From our universities we must ask not so much the solution of this problem, but rather that they direct upon it the attention of the minds of the thousands of persons who come to their hallowed halls for training." 67

The universities must produce men in the business field who understand the human relations factors in the industrial process. Harrison states:

Those educational institutions must also insure the dedication of the minds they are training. Our constantly improving mass production methods make it increasingly necessary that those management representatives responsible for the programming of production, and the application of personnel policies have a human approach, as well as scientific understanding, of the human problems involved in managing large labor forces. All too frequently our contacts with university-trained representatives of industry in management, supervision and technical positions have disclosed a great lack of understanding of his human problem in industry. It is here that the schools of business administration can be most effective. 68

67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
Universities should treat organized labor fairly in their curriculum. They should make known the positive contributions labor has made to the nation:

It is important that the young men and women attending this school, who are the potential leaders of tomorrow, should be given an objective presentation of the great contribution which the American trade unions have made, and are continuing to make in the development of and the preservation and extension of democracy in this country and throughout the world. The curriculum should contain not only such obvious courses as Labor History, Organizational Structure and Philosophy of Labor, Labor Legislation, etc., but should also include a study of the increasingly decisive role which American labor is playing in world affairs, and of its uncompromising hostility to every brand of totalitarianism.

American labor has increased its interests in labor education and is co-operating with the universities to develop extensive programs:

Many universities are now offering their educational services through their extension divisions to the unions. Courses are held in union halls in such subjects as shop steward training, collective bargaining techniques, job evaluation, time and motion study, labor legislation, grievance procedure, etc. Because American labor unions recognize the importance of training their leaders and members, they finance and conduct educational programs of their own in addition to the many fine programs offered by institutions of higher learning. Today, most of our large unions have established departments of education staffed with professionally trained teachers who conduct a wide variety of educational programs, using the most modern audio-visual techniques. These programs run the complete gamut—from classes for top leadership down through the lower echelon to classes for new members.

69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The author has in the preceding chapters reviewed Harrison's convictions on labor movement objectives, means, and the significant problems facing the trade union movement. In this concluding chapter, the author states his conclusions on Harrison's philosophy of labor. This chapter is a critical analysis. The diverse facets of Harrison's beliefs in the field of trade union activity and industrial relations will be subjected to an individual critical standard.

SCOPE

The most important forming element in Harrison's labor philosophy is his conviction that a union leader, and the union movement, must accept broad responsibilities beyond the scope of the individual or the particular union. Because of this conviction, Harrison broadens the scope traditionally embraced by craft union leaders, that of narrow economic concern and "bread and butter" unionism. Harrison believes that the economic concerns are important. As a craft union leader in the railroad industry, he has
absorbed the strong tendency of rail union leaders to concentrate on business unionism, avoiding any broad social programs. Yet, attached to his philosophy of business unionism is the compelling conviction that the labor movement, in its programs and purpose must be imbued with an intellectual and moral commitment to the common good. It is for this reason that Harrison transcends business unionism and sees broad social action and social purpose as legitimate to the trade union movement. For this reason also, Harrison equates labor with the public in aspirations and activities. Harrison does not view labor as a closed group distinct in mode of operation and aspiration from society as a whole. Rather, he sees labor immersed in society with normal societal relationships, with responsibilities as profound and ethics as exacting as those of the entire nation.

All the forming elements of Harrison's labor convictions follow the channel of moral, intellectual and practical commitments to broad responsibilities. Because of this highly developed sense of group duty, Harrison must be seen as an idealist, a humanist. He believes that labor is subject to more than the give and take of the market place, the impersonal pull of forces which act without regard for the dignity of human beings or the common good. Labor must respect its duties to the nation, the world and to moral conduct and while dispatching broad social responsibilities, Harrison believes the trade union movement cannot forget the individual member, or the individual man. Labor must shoulder a
deep concern for man in his sensitive abilities, the abilities to create beauty and strength and enduring art. Labor must be concerned with man the individualist because without the cooperation of individual members, their interest and enthusiasm, labor will remain a prey to corruption and racketeering.

On this point, it may be well to consider that Harrison heads a white collar union where status and ego satisfaction have more influence than in the larger industrial unions with an unskilled rank and file. Harrison is sensitive to his members' needs for job satisfaction and as a realist includes respect for individual needs on the job, in the union, and at home in his program.

Because Harrison broadens the traditional brotherhood program of economic concern, he has created a definite breach in a solid front of conservative, old line unionism. The brotherhoods, historically, have been bulwarks of the AFL, before merger, and strong traditionalists in their use of means to attain conservative goals.

Harrison has built into the traditional craft union philosophy a much wider concept of what unionism should be and the means necessary to achieve this broader concept. In the area of economic means used by the labor movement, Harrison stays a traditionalist in the functional operation of day to day unionism. He is not a radical in the means he advocates. A strong believer in job security, he is outspoken on automation, seniority, union shop and "right to work" laws. He believes that labor has the right to
strike, but qualifies this in some cases. He would have rail
labor advance as its productivity increases. He believes in
strong health and welfare measures. These are traditional
brotherhood goals. The trademark of craft unionism.

Yet, traditional craft means have been elevated by his philo-
sophy to assume new social importance. The union as a separate
entity is not the first end for which union activities exist,
rather the final end is the union man, as a man in society, as head
of the family, citizen, producer in the industrial processes, and
most important, as a morally responsible, spiritually orientated,
inherently creative being. This is the scope which Harrison gives
to the labor movement and his own union.

While Harrison broadens the scope of union activity on all
fronts, he emphasizes the political area. His own participation
has been vital. While his convictions on national political
participation for the labor movement follow a narrowly traditional
orientation allying him with other craft leaders at least in
method, Harrison's views and participation on the international
labor scene and his influence in its philosophy and direction will
be considered one of his most significant activities. It is in
this area that Harrison stands out not only as a pioneer but a
continuing constructive influence.

It is in relation to his vast influence on international
labor that Harrison's domestic labor record and philosophy is seen
wanting to this writer. While he ascribes broad responsibilities
and a humanitarian view to economic and social objectives, Harrison's early programmatic approach and innovating ability in the economic area have in the last eight years been wanting. He has, it seems, become content to be an administrator rather than a pioneer. He is still more socially orientated than his fellow rail union chiefs, but his influence is relegated to that of elder statesman, rather than shaper of new ideas. He was never a Walter Reuther or Dave Dubinsky in economic programming, although he did work closely on all important economic measures sponsored by rail unions. One fact stands out in this writer's criticism of Harrison in the programming area. He is president of the largest white collar union in the world. The largest block of workers labor still has to organize are the white collar workers. Harrison's union has yet to make its impact felt either by activity or intellectual stimulus in the area of the white collar worker problem. His union cannot be distinguished from the other brotherhoods in program or innovation.

Leadership of this central problem area could have fallen to an alert, pioneering Harrison. Yet he has little or no influence in this field.

While Harrison has been consistent in most areas of his labor philosophy, he has shown a tendency to pragmatism in the political sphere. He states emphatically that labor must be, is, non-partisan. He advocates that labor should cater to no special interests, merely elect men to office who have the public interest
at heart. This is the principle behind his political philosophy. Yet in practice Harrison is a Democrat, an influential one in the labor area, a Democrat who has had privy to top councils of the party, helped form policy, influenced legislation. It is this writer's opinion that such direct, top-level participation in the activities of a particular party indicates the strongest type of partisanship. It is this direct top-level political participation by Harrison which forms an interesting correlation with past labor philosophy exhibited by other leaders. Samuel Gompers would not have tolerated Harrison's prestigious positions of influence with the Democrats. He believed that labor should take care of its friends and fight its political enemies and not be directly involved in political activity. His theory of volunteerism in the political area would not include the broad participation politically which we find with Harrison.

In economic theory, Gompers' volunteerism is close to Harrison's own economic theory. Harrison believes that constantly expanding wage structures will provide a purchasing base to keep the economy moving. Gompers was explicit in always seeking "more."

Harrison in his political philosophy is an exponent of "uplift" unionism. Here he joins that block of American labor leaders who see the labor movement in the terms of broad social uplift. Included in this group would be such leaders as Walter Reuther, David Dubinsky and Al Hayes. Harrison is not a political
innovator such as Reuther. He is more the political administrator.

In his philosophy, Harrison views management with caution. In the terms of industrial relations he would consider the present state of union-management relations as a containment-aggression stage. Unions are tolerated, Harrison believes. Management economically and politically is forcing labor to fight for every inch of advance. Harrison is a realist with historical perspective. He has come through the organizing struggle of the 1930's to see labor achieve a certain degree of security. Yet the memory of that struggle and the evidences of present day management resistance combine to shape his philosophy with strong tones of skepticism. A strong believer in labor's inherent economic and political rights, he is rankled by management's lack of understanding. Particularly in the economic area where management does not generally follow his own belief in the "consumption" theory, Harrison feels that conflict must be reduced.

It is in this area that the author feels Harrison might have exerted a stronger modifying influence. His prestige is vast both with labor and management. He has not made the impact on the economic area that he has exerted in the national and international political areas. His statesmanship, so powerful politically, has not been exhibited economically. Rather, Harrison seems content to await developments, and, if they are unfavorable, counterattack with damaging statements about misunderstanding, lack of interest,
lack of respect for rights, economic exploitation. The imagination, zeal, and intellectual capability so evident in the international area are missing from Harrison's domestic economic activity.

Harrison does exert an unusual leadership capacity in the area of human rights. This leadership is unusual because Harrison is a rail union leader, a member of a group of leaders which has dragged its feet in the field of civil rights. Harrison has championed the cause of minority groups both nationally and internationally, again a break from the traditional rail brotherhood conservatism.

Harrison's philosophy on the economic system is conservative. He upholds competitive free enterprise as it is known today. He believes labor has a place in an industrial system and that its success is tied to the success of the system. Labor must be vocal, not merely a dormant force within the system, according to Harrison. Labor must be a partner with management in making the system operate efficiently and democratically.

Summing up, this writer considers Harrison a labor leader with great capabilities in areas such as national and international politics. He is a competent and articulate champion in specific areas such as human rights and respect for the individual. He has shown only ordinary leadership qualities in the economic area in recent years, and has not pioneered from his pivotal position as the leader of the largest white collar union in the world.

Harrison's philosophy has remained constant with one incon-
sistency standing out. In the political area he has shown a
tendency to vacillate from non-partisanship to direct support of
the Democratic Party. This political pragmatism stands out against
the background of honesty, integrity and vast prestige.

Harrison's statesmanship, particularly in the political area
will continue to influence the labor movement. He is still the
most influential rail union leader the brotherhoods possess. His
experience, administrative talent, and integrity will be needed
to face the problems still confronting the American trade union
movement.
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The thesis submitted by Donald Patrick Klein has been read and approved by three members of the faculty of the Institute of Social and Industrial Relations.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social and Industrial Relations.

February 1, 1960

Date

Signature of Advisor